

# Agenda Item 10

Audit & Governance Committee

3<sup>rd</sup> December 2009

SC/TC



## Health & Safety responsibilities of Elected Members

### Summary

Elected Members have a responsibility for ensuring the Council's health and safety arrangements are adequate. They also need to consider health and safety implications when making decisions on behalf of the Council or their electorate.

### Recommendation

To make Members aware of their responsibilities and to make a recommendation to full council that the attached booklet be distributed to Members and that the training offered to Members be encouraged.

**a) Reasons for Recommendation**

To help Members understand their responsibilities for health and safety.

**b) Alternative Options**

None.

**c) Risk Considerations**

The Council has a Duty of Care towards its staff and to the wider community; the Council's corporate risk register contains various risks relating to this.

The Strategic (Corporate) Risks are:

004-RK-0077 – Death, Illness or injury due to a Council act or omission

004-RK-0078 – Failure to exercise our legal duty

004-RK-0079 – Prosecution of Council for public safety contraventions

The Operational (Service) Risks are:

EH-RK-0042 – Failure to ensure adequate food safety and health & safety enforcement

EH-RK-0038 – Failure to ensure health and safety is properly managed

**d) Policy and Budgetary Considerations**

There are no budgetary implications.

**e) Date for Review of Decision**

N/a

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## 1.0 Introduction

Local authorities are major employers and must exercise their Duty of Care for the health and safety of their employees. They are also major purchasers of goods and services from other organizations and use contractors on a regular basis to provide essential works and services. As a major purchaser, the Council has an opportunity to influence the wider business community and to insist on high standards of health and safety.

Local authorities are partners with the health and Safety Executive as regulators of workplaces. Enforcement of the districts health and safety is carried out by the Council's Environmental Health Service.

Members need to understand their responsibilities too, and that they have influence over budget and policies decisions; and have a responsibility to consider the health and safety implications when making decisions.

Members will be given a presentation today, together with a booklet produced by the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, entitled "Think about Health and Safety", which outlines the responsibilities of elected members. Our insurers, AIG, have been asked to provide a half-day course "Health and Safety briefing for Elected Members" which will take place in due course.

Legal Implications

No direct legal implications.

Financial Implications

No direct financial implications.

Consultation on Reports to the Executive

### **Background Papers**

Think about Health & Safety – IOSH booklet

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