

CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE - 12TH JANUARY 2005

SUBJECT: FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT - UPDATE

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF THE ENVIRONMENT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members, Management and Trade Union Safety Representatives of the current position regarding Fire Risk Assessments across the Authority.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 There is a legal requirement to carry out fire risk assessments at Caerphilly County Borough Council work places.

2.2 The requirement to carry out risk assessments is set out in the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997 and the Fire Precautions (Workplace) (Amendment) Regulations) 1999. The 1997 regulations required employer to carry out fire risk assessments on workplaces without fire risk assessments and the 1999 amendment extended this requirement to all workplaces.

2.3 Fire Risk Assessment carried out to date have been organised by Directorates therefore the level of compliance and standard of assessment varies across the Authority.

2.4 An overview of the current position is as follows: -

- Environment – estimated less than 10% of premises assessed. Assessments carried out by competent internal personnel.
- Education and Leisure – estimated less than 5% of premises assessed. Assessments carried out by mix of competent internal personnel and external contractors.
- Social Services – estimated 90% of premises assessed. Assessments carried out by building managers.
- Chief Executives – estimated less than 50% of premises assessed. Assessments carried out by Directorate Health and Safety Officer.

2.5 South Wales Fire and Rescue Service are now issuing enforcement action against organisations without up-to-date assessments.

2.6 A recent meeting with South Wales Fire Brigade indicated that a 5 year programme of risk prioritised fire risk assessments would be acceptable to ensure legal compliance. A competent person with the necessary technical competence and experience must carry out all assessments.

2.7 Following the fire risk assessment a detailed action plan must be prepared detailing remedial works and timescales to ensure compliance. There is likely to be a significant cost associated with both the initial assessments and remedial works arising from them.

2.8 The Chief Property Officer is preparing a report for CMT proposing that Property take responsibility for organising fire risk assessments corporately. The preparation of a corporately managed risk prioritised programme of fire risk assessments will best ensure that all fire risk assessments are carried out to a consistent standard that is acceptable to South Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

3. RECOMMENDATION

3.1 That the contents of the report be noted

Author: Emma Townsend, Health and Safety Manager, Ext. 3708
Consultees: Steve Delahaye, Chief Trading Standards Officer, Ext. 5316
Mike Workman, Commercial Service Manager, Ext. 5221
Councillor Paul Ford, Cabinet Member