

<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>STANDARDS COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>16 APRIL 2010</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>2010 ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF STANDARDS COMMITTEES</b>
<b>REPORT BY:</b>	<b>ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC</b>

## **Purpose**

To consider attendance of members of the Committee at the 2010 Annual Assembly of Standards Committees which is to be held in October 2010.

## **Recommendation(s)**

### **THAT:**

- (a) **The Standards Committee considers that member attendance at the Annual Assembly in October 2010 be restricted to no more than four; and**
- (b) **That Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority be requested to support the attendance of joint Standards Committee members.**

## **Key Points Summary**

- The Annual Assembly is to be held in Birmingham on 18 and 19 October.
- The cost of attendance for both days is £430 (plus VAT) and £230 (plus VAT) for one day. Accommodation is charged in addition.
- In previous years attendance costs have been met for all those wishing to attend and have included covering the cost of Standards Committee Members who are joint members with the Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority.
- Consideration is to be given to attendance at the Annual Assembly given the current financial pressures.

## **Alternative Options**

- 1 The Standards Committee is not obliged to send a representative to the Annual Assembly; however attendance of at least one Member would be encouraged.

## Reasons for Recommendations

- 2 That consideration is given to the attendance at the Annual Assembly of Standards Committee Members so that arrangements can be made in advance and places secured.

## Introduction and Background

- 3 This year the Annual Assembly will be held at the International Convention Centre in Birmingham on 18 and 19 October and is entitled 'A place for Standards'.
- 4 The cost of full conference attendance is £430 (plus VAT), and the cost of a one-day place is held £230 (plus VAT). Additional charges apply for accommodation.

## Key Considerations

- 5 There is no formal separate budget to support the Standards Committee members' attendance at the Annual Assembly. In the past these costs have been supported through the Member Services budget as the benefits of attendance for individuals and the organisation has been recognised. Following pressures on this budget in 2009/10 overspending was met from other budgets. All Council Directorate's are required to manage spending to within budget as well as meeting corporate efficiency targets in the Council's medium term financial plan.
- 6 Herefordshire Council has supported the attendance of Standards Committee Members at the Annual Assembly for many years. This support has also included covering the cost for some joint members' of Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority Standards Committee. This year it is proposed that Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority be approached to support the attendance of joint members at the Annual Assembly.
- 7 All Standards Committee members have previously been provided with the opportunity to attend the Annual Assembly, and feedback on attendance has been positive both in terms of information gained, networking opportunities and raising the profile of Herefordshire Standards Committee. Five Standards Committee members attended the Assembly in 2009 and the combined costs of attendance and accommodation (excluding travel costs) was £2897.
- 8 Given the value of this event and national pressures on public sector spending it is important to give appropriate consideration to the attendance at the Annual Assembly of members from the Standards Committee. As motioned previously, the Fire Authority is being approached to cover the cost of any joint member attendance and the Standards Committee is asked to consider how many Members should be invited to attend this year's event and how many places should be funded. A place at the Annual Assembly is being reserved for the post of Monitoring Officer. This cost will be met from the training and development budget as it provides compulsory professional development for the Monitoring Officer.

## Community Impact

9. Attendance at the Annual Assembly whilst not a legal or statutory requirement will ensure that Herefordshire Standards Committee is represented at the leading Standards event of the year and thus provide an opportunity to consider the activities of others and ensure that Herefordshire reflects current best practice.

## **Financial Implications**

10. The cost of member attendance at the Annual Assembly in 2009 was £2897 (excluding travel costs). In light of budgetary pressures consideration should be given to reducing this cost.

## **Legal Implications**

11. There are no relevant legal implications.

## **Risk Management**

12. There are no relevant risk management implications.

## **Consultees**

13. Not relevant.

## **Appendices**

14. There are none.

## **Background Papers**

There are none.