



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE
AUTHORITY**

Item 17/48

MEETING	Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority
DATE OF MEETING	8 September 2017
SUBJECT OF THE REPORT	TUC Dying to Work campaign
STATUS OF REPORT	Open publication
PURPOSE OF REPORT	For information
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>Dying to Work is a Trade Union Congress (TUC) campaign to gain support and encourage employers to sign a voluntary charter that sets out how employees will be supported, protected and guided through their employment should they receive a terminal diagnosis.</p> <p>Prior to combination both Services had a history of providing excellent care to our staff who have been diagnosed with a terminal illness or life changing injury and, whilst this has not yet needed to be considered for Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service, it is a legacy we are keen to continue.</p>
RISK ASSESSMENT	<p>Failure to ensure the health and wellbeing of our staff may impact on staff retention and morale which in turn undermines both the performance and reputation of the Authority.</p> <p>The TUC Charter and other health and wellbeing interventions help to mitigate these risks.</p>
COMMUNITY IMPACT	None for the purpose of this report
BUDGET IMPLICATIONS	None with this report
RECOMMENDATIONS	It is recommended that Members note this report.
APPENDICES	None for the purposes of this report

BACKGROUND PAPERS	Trade Union Congress Dying to Work Campaign http://www.dyingtowork.co.uk/our-campaign/ Public Health England Wellbeing Charter http://wellbeingcharter.org.uk/index.php
REPORT ORIGINATOR	Jenny Long, Director of People Services Email: jenny.long@dwfire.org.uk Tel: 01722 691311

1. Background

- 1.1 As part of our staff engagement strategy the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) held a number of staff phone in sessions in order to give staff the opportunity to directly ask the CFO and Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) questions.
- 1.2 A question raised at the April phone-in was whether the Service would sign the Trade Union Congress (TUC) Dying to Work charter.
- 1.3 Dying to Work is a TUC campaign to gain support and encourage employers to sign a voluntary charter that sets out how employees will be supported, protected and guided through their employment should they receive a terminal diagnosis.
- 1.4 The campaign is about providing choices to employees who have been diagnosed with a terminal illness.
- 1.5 To date West Midlands Fire Service, Warwickshire Fire & Rescue Service and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service have all signed the charter.

2. Dying to Work Charter

- 2.1 The Dying to Work Charter states:
 - We recognise that terminal illness requires support and understanding and not additional and avoidable stress and worry.
 - Terminally ill workers will be secure in the knowledge that we will support them following their diagnosis and we recognise that safe and reasonable work can help maintain dignity, offer a valuable distraction and can be therapeutic in itself.
 - We will provide our employees with the security of work, peace of mind and the right to choose the best course of action for themselves and their families which helps them through this challenging period with dignity and without undue financial loss.
 - We support the TUC's Dying to Work campaign so that all employees facing a terminal illness have adequate employment protection and have their death in service benefits protected for the loved ones they leave behind.

3. Sick pay provision

- 3.1 Our sick pay procedure sets out the terms for sick pay entitlement for staff employed on National Joint Council (NJC) Scheme of Conditions for Local Authority Fire Brigades (commonly known as the Grey Book) and the NJC Scheme of Conditions for Local Government Services (commonly known as the Green Book).

These terms are broadly similar in that an individual receives six months full pay and a further six months reduced pay^{1, 2}.

- 3.2 An individual is able to make a representation to the CFO (or nominated representative) against a stoppage or reduction in sick pay. Such requests are considered on a case by case basis.
- 3.3 In some cases, whereby the individual has sustained a severe injury or illness, the CFO has exercised discretion and extended sick pay without the individual needing to request an extension.
- 3.4 Similarly, in the case of terminal or life changing injury or sickness, the CFO has exercised discretion and extended sick pay beyond that set out in the sick pay procedure.
- 3.5 Prior to combination both Services had a history of providing excellent care to our staff who have been diagnosed with a terminal illness or life changing injury and, whilst this has not yet needed to be considered for Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service, it is a legacy we are keen to continue.
- 3.6 We remain committed to working collaboratively with individuals to balance their needs as well as the needs of the Service so that they are supported during this difficult time.
- 3.7 To this end we have advised the TUC Dying to Work campaign that we wish to sign the charter and are in the process of making arrangements for this to be set in place.

4. Our People priority

- 4.1 Our People priority outlines our commitment to supporting and developing our people. One of the four underpinning Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE) (KLOE 19) focusses on how we are ensuring we have the leadership capability to successfully lead and support our staff.
- 4.2 A number of health and wellbeing interventions are being progressed in pursuance of achieving this. We have recently carried out a self-assessment against the Public Health England Wellbeing Charter and will use the associated on line tools to further improve future arrangements.
- 4.3 Signing the TUC charter will proactively demonstrate our commitment to supporting our staff assuring them that we work closely with them to support their decisions to ensure the best outcome for the individual, their loved ones and the Service.

¹ For Green Book staff entitlement is based on length of service.

² Is for Grey Book staff if they sustain a work related injury they are entitled to 12 months full pay and 6 months reduced pay.

5. Bringing the charter to life

5.1 The Service will work collaboratively and sympathetically with the employee and their representative through this difficult time and will:

- Liaise with occupational health, other medical professionals and the employee to consider reasonable adjustments to support them in undertaking valuable work and provide some improved measure of wellbeing. Whilst ensuring health, safety and wellbeing implications for employees, the Service and the community are also considered.
- Support employees with a terminal illness diagnosis to maintain dignity and be empowered to explore appropriate options that provide them with choices giving some peace of mind and financial security to them and their families through this difficult time.
- Work with the employee to assist them to achieve an appropriate work life balance and flexible working to support improved end of life care and support.
- Consider each case on its own merits and create specific support arrangements for each employee diagnosed as being terminally ill.

6. Trade Union Consultation

6.1 In preparing this report, Trade Union Representative's views have been sought and the Dying to Work campaign is a Trade Union Congress campaign. The Trade Unions are supportive of the principles of the Charter and support the services approach.

7. Summary and Key Points

7.1 The Service already works within the spirit of the TUC charter. Whilst the Service will be signing the charter through the CFO's delegations, it is thought useful for Members to be aware of our commitment should this come up in other arenas. In this way we can demonstrate to staff that we are committed to their health and wellbeing and in doing so foster a supportive organisational culture.

7.2 This proactive approach will ensure staff are aware of this support so they and their family will have peace of mind should they receive a terminal diagnosis.

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