



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**  
**Fire & Rescue Service**  
*Creating Safer Communities*

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham  
Fire and Rescue Authority  
Policy and Strategy Committee

# **SHAPING OUR FUTURE ORGANISATIONAL HEALTH UPDATE**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

**Date:** 06 July 2018

**Purpose of Report:**

To updates Members on organisational development and inclusion activities taking place within the organisation.

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## **1. BACKGROUND**

In 2016, it was agreed that the Human Resources Committee would receive performance updates on workforce and recruitment data via an equalities monitoring report and the Policy and Strategy Committee would receive a more narrative-based report on the organisational development and inclusion activity taking place across the organisation. The last report of this type was presented to this committee in July 2017.

## **2. REPORT**

- 2.1 During the last 12 months, Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) has made further progress in moving forward the workstreams within its Organisational Development and Inclusion Strategy and its Sustainability for 2020 Strategy. This paper seeks to provide Members with an update on progress and appraise them of future objectives.
- 2.2 The Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) have three key areas which they focus on to ensure that the organisation maintains high levels of commitment and prioritises work in the appropriate way. These three areas are:
- An engaged and motivated workforce;
  - Deliver high quality services;
  - Good governance and financial sustainability.

### **LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT**

- 2.3 The Aspiring Leaders Programme aimed at firefighters and other non-leaders in the organisation was launched in October 2017. 32 applications were received and these included wholetime and on-call firefighters, support and Control employees. Just under a third of these are women which is positive considering the make-up of the organisation. The programme included an induction, personal action planning sessions, coaching and mentoring opportunities, personality diagnostics and e-learning provided by the Open University.
- 2.4 360-degree feedback for middle and senior leaders has also been rolled out since the last update and the second cohort is nearing completion. This enables managers to complete a self-assessment, but they also receive feedback about their management skills and styles from their teams, peers and line manager. This leads to a 1:1 feedback session and action plan for the manager.
- 2.5 Embedding a coaching culture remains a central part of the Service's approach to developing individuals, teams and the organisation. NFRS continues to train employees to become coaches and mentoring will be a

central part of the induction process for new wholetime firefighters entering the workforce in January 2019.

- 2.6 The 'Little Acorns' staff suggestion scheme is now embedded and has become core work for the Organisational Development and Inclusion Team. Since the last update to the Policy and Strategy Committee there have been 60 more suggestions from employees. The suggestions encompass a wide range of themes including using NFRS vehicles more creatively to advertise services and key messages, ending the use of 'single-use' plastic cups, translation and interpretation services, amongst many others.

## **LGBT+ EQUALITY - STONEWALL**

- 2.7 The Service was unfortunately unable to maintain its Stonewall Top 100 employer status this year, but continues to work hard to promote LGBT+ equality both internally and with partners. Rainbow Flags were again flown for International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia with positive feedback on social media. The Service is rolling out e-learning on Trans equality so that employees and managers can gain a greater understanding of this subject in the workplace and the service delivery environment.

## **DIVERSE WORKFORCE**

- 2.8 The Service has been undertaking a comprehensive programme of positive action for the last 12 months in readiness for the wholetime firefighter recruitment campaign which opened in March of this year. In the run-up to this, NFRS has hosted a range of targeted firefighter awareness days on stations and at the Service Development Centre. These events, in the main, were open to all but were supported by targeted advertising to attract higher numbers of women and people from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds to the role.
- 2.9 Gym sessions aimed at female candidates have been running since September and have, so far, demonstrated to be successful in improving strength and fitness.
- 2.10 Positive action and arrangements for this campaign have been supported by Nottingham City Council, Nottingham Jobs and Futures. Mentoring sessions regarding the process have also taken place. A report on the outcomes of this firefighter campaign will be presented to members of the Human Resources Committee later in the year.

## **BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE (BSL) CHARTER**

- 2.11 The Service has been working with the British Deaf Association (BDA) to improve the way in which NFRS delivers services to people who are deaf or hearing impaired. During May, the Service's Strategic Leadership Team agreed to sign up to the British Sign Language (BSL) Charter. NFRS will be exploring, with the BDA and colleagues at Derbyshire and Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Services, to see if a joint signing and commitment can be

undertaken. This will compel NFRS to deliver improvements in a range of areas, particularly in relation to communication and customer service.

## **STAFF SURVEY 2018**

- 2.12 The Service engaged a third-party supplier, Quality Health, to deliver the Staff Survey for 2018. This was launched in March and closed at the end of April.
- 2.13 One key objective was to try to increase participation in the survey. The response rate achieved was 55% which was a large increase from 40% in 2015. Also, 2018's survey has been more representative of the workforce with a larger proportion of wholetime firefighters completing the questionnaire.
- 2.14 Given the efforts that have gone in to developing and rolling out the Service's new values in the last two and a half years. The results of the survey demonstrate some real positives in a range of areas as well as some areas for development which need to be addressed. Some headline results include:
- 90% of respondents said that they know and understand the Service's values;
  - 90% of respondents also agreed that they understand the need for change at the Service;
  - 84% would recommend the Service as a place to work;
  - 79% are proud to tell others they work for the Service;
  - 83% agree that their line manager recognises when they do a good job;
  - 15% have witnessed inappropriate or discriminatory workplace conversations;
  - 34% disagree that morale is high with the people they work with;
  - 36% agree that middle managers communicate well;
  - 51% agree that behaviour of strategic leaders is consistent with the organisation's values.
- 2.15 Over 70 respondents stated that they were happy to be contacted about their responses and so Quality Health have contacted those people to invite them to be part of the action planning process. An action plan will then be developed for implementation over the next two years.
- 2.16 At the beginning of this year a survey aimed only at female staff was produced. An action plan highlighting a range of issues has now been produced and work is in progress to address the actions.

## **SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY 2020**

- 2.17 The Sustainability Strategy workstreams continue to be progressed with the Crewing Collective Agreement having been agreed in May. Proposals regarding different delivery models (including 'mixed crewing') have been agreed by the Fire Authority and are in the process of being implemented.

## **COLLABORATION**

- 2.18 The Shaping our Future Team continues to work on workstreams relating to the collaboration agenda with local partners including fire services in the region, East Midlands Ambulance Service, Nottinghamshire Police and other local agencies. In particular a range of workstreams are being considered with Nottinghamshire Police (joint headquarters) and Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service (joint control room at DFRS).

## **HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY AND FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES (HMICFRS)**

- 2.19 The Service is in the process of sending information to HMICFRS in readiness for the inspection expected to take place in the autumn of this year. The Service is in the second tranche of inspections following the pilots which took place earlier in the year.

## **COMMUNICATION**

- 2.20 Staff engagement and surveys have historically highlighted communication as a challenge within the Service. Within the last 12 months more middle manager briefings have taken place and the third round of staff conferences has been completed. The Strategic Leadership Team has also visited fire stations to discuss recent Sustainability Strategy proposals and to communicate the Service priorities as well as listen to views from staff. Communication has been highlighted by employees as an issue in the Staff Survey 2018 and so this will remain a key priority going forwards.

## **CONCLUSION**

- 2.21 NFRS continues to make progress against its organisational development and inclusion workstreams. The outcomes of the staff survey demonstrate positive feedback in a range of areas including change management and Service values, but there are also areas which require improvement and attention.
- 2.22 An additional source of information and reference can be found in the People Strategy Update which was presented to Human Resources Committee in May 2018.

## **NEXT STEPS**

- 2.23 The Organisational Development and Inclusion Strategy is at its mid-point and is being reviewed to ensure that it remains in line with the Service's strategic objectives moving to 2020 and beyond.
- 2.24 The inclusion elements of the strategy will focus on the action plans coming from the female survey, whole Staff Survey 2018, BSL Charter and Stonewall feedback.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

### **4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS**

Human resources and learning and development implications for the workstreams outlined above are addressed by the owners of each project, workstream or initiative.

### **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken because this is not a policy, function or service. This report is a part of the agreed reporting arrangements for equalities activities.

### **6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

### **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Some of the work described above will help the organisation to meet its obligations held within the Public-Sector Equality Duty of the Equality Act (2010).

### **8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

### **9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS**

Collaboration workstreams have been highlighted within the report. There is an aspiration to sign up to the British Sign Language Charter in partnership with Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service and Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members:

- 10.1 Note the progress made in the organisational development and inclusion agenda.
- 10.2 Agree to receive further annual updates in this area.

## **11. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)**

None.

John Buckley  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**