



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority
Human Resources Committee

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Agenda Item No:

Date: 24 July 2009

Purpose of Report:

To provide Members with an update of the learning and development provision within the Service.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service is committed to delivering an effective professional service. However, to face the challenges ahead, staff will be required to acquire new skills, knowledge and understanding whilst maintaining their existing skill set. The learning and development (L & D) provision will proceed in accordance with, and within the confines of the Service's learning and development culture and capacity.
- 1.2 Recently the management team and staff at the Service Development Centre (SDC) undertook a two week closedown of service to set the direction for the department over the forthcoming period. This was both timely and relevant, as the last time this had occurred was post the industrial dispute of 2003 and prior to the implementation of the Integrated Personal Development System (IDPS).

2. REPORT

- 2.1 This report outlines the ongoing work at SDC and identifies the Service's capability to meet the development needs of the 1148 individuals currently employed, whilst making effective and efficient use of the L & D resources.
- 2.2 During the recent assessment of need SDC considered;
 - L & D strategy;
 - L & D business planning and performance management;
 - L & D budget management and monitoring;
 - SDC establishment and structure;
 - SDC policies, processes, practices and procedures;
 - SDC provision and capacity ;
 - Organisational requirements and SDC harmonisation.
- 2.3 A SWOT analysis was conducted which highlighted eight potential opportunities and associated considerations which would help address the potential weaknesses and enhance the strengths. As some considerations affected numerous opportunities, rather than risk profile each opportunity, each consideration was risk profiled identifying which considerations would have the most impact. This process identified the priorities and practicalities of implementation.
- 2.4 Appendix A details a number of actions which have commenced in addition to the core training delivery undertaken by SDC staff. These actions are seen as essential if the Service is to meet future expectations in L & D.

2.5 In addition, objectives that also emerged are:

- The introduction of EFAD and Officer driving check tests;
- The introduction of a conflict management course;
- The introduction of the water first responder course;
- The introduction of a new shift system;
- The introduction of stress management training;
- The introduction of B and E trailer driver training;
- The introduction of A to B and impact for assessment of competence;
- New legislation relating to blue light driving;
- Regional workforce development projects;
- Operational assurance assessment;
- Introduction of ACAS training;
- Review of how courses are plotted re determining min and max numbers per district;
- Determining the maintenance of competence folder content and provision.

2.6 Finally, business plan developments for 2009-2010 include:

- Development needs analysis process;
- Competence framework and database;
- Technical Bulletin 1/97 and telemetry;
- CS training (Fire Service College) course requirement review;
- Fire Service College support;
- Strategic middle management development;
- Investigating practices training;
- E-learning platform development;
- Coaching/mentoring leadership development;
- Creating L & D related LPIs;
- High speed driver training (buy skid car);
- Migration development programmes;
- In house managing community safety course;
- 3-4 pump breathing apparatus refresher courses;
- Media training;
- Review equality and fairness delivery with Equality and Diversity Officer.

2.7 The change in focus has resulted in significant change for the staff involved in the delivery of learning and development. The introduction of a central and peripatetic approach has brought greater flexibility. Staff have engaged in the changes and foundations for excellent delivery are in place.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service places a significant investment within its training programme and the ongoing developments will ensure that the Service continues to deliver value for money.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

Significant human resources implications, including underpayment of staff, work location issues, catering arrangements, equalities and financial training have all been dealt with as part of the L&D review and each has been addressed.

5. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

An initial equality impact assessment has been prepared and has identified there are no specific issues for equalities arising from this report.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

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

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Fire-fighting and rescue operations are inherently dangerous. To reduce the risk of death or serious injury those involved need to be well trained in the latest techniques and application of the tools and equipment used in rescue. The L&D dept is the key factor in the provision of such training. Without the right processes and procedures to gather, analyse and select the best learning interventions at National, Regional and local levels Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service would fail in its duty to provide a safe working environment.. A long-term or systemic failure in the provision of training would mean that the Service could not fulfil the duties laid out in the Fire Services Act 2004.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members note the contents of this report, in particular the significant improvements made in the Learning & Development Dept and the increased participation of L&D officers in National and Regional L&D matters.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)

None.

Frank Swann
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

APPENDIX A

Actions commenced to continue to improve the Service's learning and development provision

1. A Training Board has been introduced.
2. The Training Delivery Manager post has been filled following an SMT report, JD production, Role Description production, pay review, advertising, selection process and recruitment, subsequent probation, PDR and development.
3. The Vector post has been filled following an additional SMT report, JD production, Role Description production, pay review, advertising, selection process and recruitment, subsequent probation, PDR and development.
4. The additional Administrator post has been filled following an SMT report.
5. Peripatetic Trainers have been identified and briefed to provide more support within the Districts, accommodation secured at Highfields Lane and Mansfield, resources identified and being procured.
6. Fast track development for individuals prior to the ADC is being evaluated.
7. Regular meetings with the other Training Managers in the region and sharing of business plans
8. Attendance at regional workforce development meetings
9. Appointed chair of 1 regional workstream related to ADC's
10. Capacity and relocation of the head of L and D created to commence working on a new strategy.
11. Completion of an Operational Assurance Assessment which identified any other weaknesses in the strategy.
12. Improved internal partnership working including the Training Board.
13. Discussing the content of a UK specific operational written assessment of operational knowledge and understanding with the IFE.
14. Before and during the SDC closedown, Managers and staff have been provided training in relation of the importance of business planning, budgeting, review processes and effective internal communication. Levels of responsibility and expectation have been defined, Line Manager clarity has been provided, L and D Manager and staff meetings have been planned. An expectations document is being developed.
16. The role and ownership of the Crew Manager has been determined.
17. All Land D related budgets have been organised under new headings, training has been provided.

18. The Bursary procedure has been revised, consultation has been completed and all applications are now considered by the Training Board.
19. A Staff Briefing note has been produced reminding Line Managers to provide feedback to L and D in relation to development events in order to inform the PDR, prospectus and Bursary process, the Training Board determines what the organisation will support. The feedback will also assist with the development of an IPDS based system of identifying development modules for non operational staff.
20. The CMB report template has been amended to include L and D considerations.
21. The structure of SDC has been reviewed, role clarity has been provided, JDs have been developed for those who didn't have one, Line Manager clarity has been established, all Trainers are now at Watch Manager level, some pay reviews have been completed. During the SDC closedown additional clarity was provided, with the introduction of the new working hours internal consultation is ongoing. The terminology of Lead Trainer and Trainer have been removed.
22. The majority of SDC staff have attended the cultural values workshops, additionally equalities training was provided during the SDC closedown.
23. An induction booklet is being developed, content determined by the staff and Managers, the extended induction process has been modified, the requirement to attend certain development courses has been relaxed.
24. An improved competency reporting system has been introduced for the Trainee course, non attendance and performance matters are being reported direct to the relevant Line Managers, support being offered.
25. Managers now consider the availability of other managers when they are deciding their leave and other commitments, an on duty Manager board has been introduced.
26. Staff development days have been planned, the SDC closedown was the start of the process.
27. The standard test system has been revised, the assessment of training events and venues has started, the BA related ones completed.
28. During the SDC closedown the house/course style was discussed with the staff and Managers, a future meeting of the Managers will finalise the detail
29. The competent pay method has been clarified the process is now aligned to the national role maps, the Trainer development linked to developing as a Trainer is not linked to competent pay.
30. The free meal provision has been removed as part of the catering best value review.
31. New working hours are being introduced.

32. Staff are developing as A1 Assessors as required.
33. An approved contractors list and signing in procedure has been introduced.
34. The resources at SDC have been agreed and implemented.
35. Ops Assurance now receive end of course feedback and determine customer satisfaction and provide feedback via the Training Board.
36. An external caterer has been recruited to cover weekend courses.
37. Initial meetings have taken place regarding the management database linked to training and the RCC attributes.
38. Staff have stopped working from home, the IT provision has improved.
39. Accumulated rota day clarity and expectations have been provided.
40. Regionally discussions are ongoing regarding regional training and third party training providers.
41. A course risk profile has been produced for each training/development event identifying whether it is legally required etc, the staff to course ratio is being evaluated in August 2009.
42. Regionally the Fire Service College courses are being discussed along with collective bargaining and regional development.
43. A Trainers course has been developed and is part of the 2009 prospectus.
44. IT training has been provided by the ULF.
45. An alternative method for providing evidence of competency at FF level has been introduced, the next stage is to determine the RDS FF level and then the supervisory level. A competency framework for uniformed staff is being developed for presentation to CMB.
46. The PDR and CPD process have been reviewed and amendments made.
47. Vector awareness sessions commencing with the RDS has commenced, Firesuite a software graphics package to enhance command training has been purchased.
48. As part of the Learnpro e-learning platform proposal all presentations will be available to all staff, work is ongoing re a paper for the recruitment of a "gate keeper".
49. Support for the SRT and a memo of understanding has been established.