



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

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

SHAPING OUR FUTURE – WINTER CONFERENCES AND VALUES UPDATE

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Date: 22 April 2016

Purpose of Report:

To provide Members with an overview of recent employee engagement activities and Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service's new set of values.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. Similar to many public sector organisations, Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) continues to find itself in a considerable period of change. As the organisation reduces in size and changes the way it works, the organisation needs to continue to draw on the skills and collective talents of its employees. In order to help do this, NFRS has developed a '*Shaping our Future*' - Organisational Development and Inclusion Strategy.
- 1.2. One of the key parts of this strategy is employee engagement. Along with a range of other engagement activities to ensure that the workforce is aware of, and engaged with, the changes facing the Service over the next few years, the Service held 3 'Winter Conferences' during January and February of this year. These conferences were open to all employees and were attended by nearly a quarter of the workforce.
- 1.3. The aim of the conference was to engage the workforce regarding the financial and political context the Service is working in, alongside any associated changes to the way in which the organisation delivers services.
- 1.4. This was also an opportunity to highlight to the workforce the Service's new set of values which were developed by NFRS employees during 2015.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 The three conferences took place in January and February of this year, and were led by the Assistant, Deputy and Chief Fire Officers. Over 200 employees attended in total.
- 2.2 During the sessions the Chief Fire Officer led a 'Hopes and Fears' session where employees raised their questions on a range of topics which were then discussed in detail. Topics included job security, budgets cuts, collaboration, vision – strategy, operations, communications and workplace/employment issues.
- 2.3 Attendees were able to ask questions in an open and honest environment and the principal officers were able to discuss and clarify points which were raised by the groups. This included questions relating to fleet, fire stations, crewing models and Service projects.
- 2.4 Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) Wayne Bowcock led a session on the Service's new values explaining that these had been developed by employees of the Service via a range of focus groups during 2015. The Service's new values are:
 - **We are professional in all that we do**
We act professionally by being the best that we can be, behaving with integrity and taking personal responsibility for our behaviour and decisions.

- **We value and respect others**

By treating our community and service users with respect and consideration, we become a more customer-focused and inclusive organisation.

- **We are open to change**

By understanding the need to improve, we open ourselves up to new ideas and become a more sustainable and stable organisation, ready for the future

- **We are One Team working together**

We act as One Team when we respect and value each other, and work together to create safer communities.

2.5 DCFO Bowcock explained that the values will be rolled out across the organisation in a range of ways during 2016 with facilitated sessions taking place at work locations from June.

2.6 Attendees were asked to complete an evaluation form at the event and this was used to improve each conference. The headlines from these evaluations are as follows:

- 91% (of 166 completed) agreed that they felt more up-to-date with the financial and political challenges facing the organisation.
- 92% agreed that the 'hopes and fears' of attendees were dealt with and discussed in a thorough and honest way
- 84% felt that they had a better understanding of the Service's new values and behaviours.
- If advertised, 97% would be interested in attending another event like this (covering different subjects).
- 85% would speak about the event positively to colleagues.

Below are a few of the comments received via the evaluation forms:

- Today actually went a long way in making me feel engaged.
- Continue with the cross-functional approach, to build on relationships within the organisation.
- Nothing (to add to improve). Feel well engaged and energised.
- Knowing and understanding the direction the organisation is going in, helps to feel part of it

2.7 As a result of these events, the Strategic Leadership Team will now be working to further improve communication within the Service and, in particular, the communication of future vision and strategy of the organisation. A further conference has been set for 23 April in order to attract different sections of the workforce to attend. Due to the success of this format, further events will be planned covering specific issues or themes.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

The human resources and learning and development implications relating to this work will be addressed by the Equality and Diversity Officer and Head of People and Development.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken because this is not a change to a function, policy or service. This work seeks to ensure that employee involvement and engagement is underpinned by a strong set of organisational values.

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

Although there are no direct risk implications arising from this report, it should be noted that workforce issues are covered in the Service's Corporate Risk Register – 'Potential for poor industrial relations, resulting in a loss of morale or workforce availability.' The 'Shaping our Future' – Organisational Development and Inclusion Strategy aims to ensure that the workforce is engaged in the change agenda the Service faces over the next few years, thus reducing the risk of poor industrial relations.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members note the content of this report.

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

None.

John Buckley
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER