



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 2019

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Date: 12 July 2019

Purpose of Report:

To update 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 2018.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 During the last 12 months, Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) has made further progress in moving forward the workstreams set out in the Service's Organisational Development and Inclusion Strategy. This paper seeks to provide Members with an update on progress and appraise them of future objectives. Key priorities during the last year have centred on leadership and development, diversity, employee engagement and collaboration.
- 2.2 The Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) has three key areas which they focus on in order to ensure that the organisation maintains high levels of commitment and prioritises work in the appropriate way, and which underpin strategic priorities. These three areas are:
- An engaged and motivated workforce;
 - High quality services;
 - Good governance and financial responsibility.

LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT

- 2.3 The second cohort of the Aspiring Leaders Programme started in February 2019 and is aimed at those who are considering their first management role. The 20 participants have access to e-learning, face to face workshops, a coach or mentor and guidance to prepare for future promotion opportunities.
- 2.4 A new ILM Level 3 Certificate has also been implemented for those recently promoted from Crew Manager to Watch Manager, as part of their development programme. This will be complemented by a supervisory manager programme for recently promoted Crew Managers and those in support roles, which will provide a suite of workshops and training courses to provide a comprehensive 18-month introduction to management. The programme is provided in-house and more courses are planned over the next 12 months.
- 2.5 Access to 360-degree feedback for middle and senior leaders continues to be rolled out, with another two cohorts taking place since the last report to Policy and Strategy Committee. This feedback enables managers to complete a self-assessment and 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 to support personal development.

- 2.6 Embedding a coaching culture remains a central part of the Service's approach to developing individuals, teams and the organisation as a whole. NFRS has undertaken formal coaching and mentoring training for operational firefighter station-based mentors for the first time and has also rolled out a new 'Off-Station Support' initiative for new firefighters. This initiative was borne out of a 'Little Acorn' staff suggestion and is a buddying scheme enabling new firefighters to contact someone outside of their team during their induction period for advice and support.
- 2.7 Since its inception, the 'Little Acorns' staff suggestion scheme has received over 300 suggestions. These have encompassed a wide range of themes, and have led to using NFRS vehicles more creatively to advertise services and key messages, ending the use of 'single-use' plastic cups, the off-station support buddying scheme, as well as a range of suggestions regarding operations, equipment and estates.

DIVERSE WORKFORCE

- 2.8 As previously reported to the Human Resources Committee in November last year, 2018's wholetime firefighter campaign was hugely successful in terms of the diversity of the successful applicants. The package of positive action measures used, and the recruitment process itself will be used as a model for recruitment processes in the future. Of the 37 new apprentice firefighters recruited, 13 are women and 8 are from BAME backgrounds. Two initial training programmes have now been completed with all the recruits successfully completing the course and being deployed to stations in operational roles. A further initial training course will commence in September 2019.

LGBT+ Equality - Stonewall

- 2.9 The Service was successful in re-entering the Stonewall Top 100 Employer status this year and continues to work hard to promote LGBT+ equality both internally and with partners. The Service is pausing its Stonewall membership for 12 months in order to concentrate its efforts on the broader equality, diversity and inclusion agenda, as well as developing closer links with the Prevention and Protection agenda at NFRS.

British Sign Language (BSL) Charter

- 2.10 In September 2018, the Service signed the Charter alongside Derbyshire and Leicestershire fire and rescue services. Since then the organisation has been working alongside the British Deaf Association and its regional partners to improve services for Deaf people and those with hearing difficulties. Members of the Prevention team, ambulance and fire crews recently participated in a road traffic collision exercise with Deaf service users to examine the challenges arising in such circumstances.

- 2.11 A new [webpage for people with Hearing Difficulties](#) has gone live which includes a video clip demonstrating the steps to follow when registering for the 999 SMS texting service.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Staff Survey 2018

- 2.12 Following the Service's Staff Survey in 2018, further staff engagement events took place to discuss the action plan to address key issues raised. This was finalised in December 2018 and work is ongoing to make the improvements highlighted by the survey and to respond to those issues raised by employees.

Spring Conferences

- 2.13 Another successful round of Spring Conferences took place during May. This year saw 247 people attend across the four conferences, and a change to the format which saw the afternoon session broken into three shorter workshops focusing on the Service's mental health and wellbeing provision, an insight into Fire Investigation and Business Safety and sessions from external speakers.
- 2.14 Feedback from the conference has been largely positive, with over 80% who filled out the post-conference survey saying that they felt more informed about the way in which the organisation is moving forward and 90% stating that they felt more informed about the health and wellbeing support available at NFRS.
- 2.15 The new format, which was developed following feedback from previous conferences, was also well received with many highlighting the afternoon workshops as a welcome addition to the programme this year. Participants also attended the 'Ask SLT' segment of the conference which generated a range of questions from the floor on a variety of topics. The digital employee engagement tool, Slido, was also used again this year enabling staff to ask questions or make comments anonymously if they wanted to.

Internal Communication

- 2.16 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. The Strategic Leadership Team has also visited fire stations to discuss the recently launched Strategic Plan and to communicate the Service priorities as well as listen to views from staff. Communication was highlighted by employees as an issue in the Staff Survey 2018 and so this will remain a key priority going forwards.

Collaboration

- 2.17 The Service continues to collaborate with partners across a range of workstreams. A significant programme of work is underway to develop a Joint

Fire and Police Headquarters (JHQ), with jointly managed projects initiated across a range of areas, including Estates, Technology, People, Prevention, Communications and Finance, overseen by a JHQ Joint Programme Board.

- 2.18 Subject to planning consent, this will result in the planned construction of an extension to the existing Sherwood Lodge site and Fire Service staff transferring to the new and existing buildings on this site in the autumn of 2021. The employee engagement element of this work started on 12 June 2019 with a 'Starting the Conversation' joint staff conference, which was well received by those attending and is the first of further joint engagement events.
- 2.19 A collaboration project to develop a Joint Control room with Derbyshire Fire and Rescue has been delivered, with the new joint control room going live on 1 July 2019. The two services have worked closely over the last year to ensure a smooth transition, dealing with complex service delivery, technical, people and legal issues to deliver an effective and efficient emergency call handling and mobilising provision for the residents of Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire.

NEXT STEPS

- 2.20 The Organisational Development and Inclusion Strategy is aligned to the Sustainability Strategy adopted in 2014, and "Shaping our Future to 2020" change programme, which are now in their final year of delivery. The implementation of the Strategic Plan 2019-22 and challenges arising from the recent HMICFRS report will now become the focus for organisational improvement, and work will be undertaken to refresh the Organisational Development and Inclusion Strategy to align it with these strategic objectives and support an implementation programme.

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

Some of the organisation's collaboration workstreams have been highlighted within the report.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 10.1 Note the progress made in the organisational development and inclusion agenda.
- 10.2 Continue to receive the 'organisational health' overview annually.

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

None.

John Buckley
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER