

Staff Survey – “Have your Say”

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

For further information about this report please contact Rod Hammerton, Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260201 or Donna Trowsdale, Development Officer on 01743 260187.

1 Purpose of Report

This report provides Members with an update on the outcome of the Staff Survey, together with an overview of actions taken, and those which are planned.

2 Recommendations

The Standards and Human Resources Committee is asked to:

- a) Note the progress made to date, and;
- b) Note the actions planned to address the identified issues arising from the results.

3 Background

The Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) encouraged all Fire and Rescue Services in England and Wales in 2006/2007 to undertake an audit as part of a national study into the culture of the Fire Service. This was particularly focussed on fairness and equality in the Service.

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service (SFRs) have undergone a number of changes since the Cultural Audit in 2007. It was important to conduct a full survey to understand how employees feel about working for the Service and identify any areas for development.

People Insight were commissioned to host the SFRS Staff Survey in April 2016. People Insight have an excellent reputation having worked with a number of other Fire and Rescue Services and were highly recommended by neighbouring Brigades.

The decision was taken to host this externally to reassure staff that responses were confidential and anonymous.

A number of meetings have been held with the Trade Unions to share the findings and agree appropriate actions.

4 Findings

The overall return rate achieved was 59%; a total of 321 responses, broken down as 135 from Retained and 186 from Whole Time and Support colleagues.

People Insight reported that this was the second highest return rate out of other Fire and Rescue Services they have worked with.

SFRS's overall engagement score is 84%, compared to a benchmark of other Fire and Rescue Services of 76%.

A summary of the top 10 areas and those areas that require development are attached at Appendix A.

Many of the areas that require attention, are already either being addressed through current work streams or will be picked up through these going forward.

There are a number of areas which require further exploration which will be achieved through focus groups. The themes to be considered are 'IT' and 'Communication and Recognition'.

An action plan identifying agreed actions is at Appendix B.

Copies of the Results Report and feedback presentation slides are available for Members to view at the meeting.

5 Progress made

Regular updates have been shared with staff since the survey regarding the percentage of returns and areas of strength and development and our proposed actions to address these.

A number of internal communication methods have been used including the portal, The Pink and attendance at Wholetime Watch Managers meetings.

Volunteers to attend the focus groups mentioned in section 4 above have been sought from across all areas of the Service – wholetime, retained and support staff.

6 Future Actions

Focus groups are scheduled to take place in October 2016, across the county, to include daytime and evening sessions to help ensure maximum attendance. These will be facilitated by an external consultant who has worked with SFRS in the past. The focus groups, and the actions arising from these, will be sponsored by the subject matter expert and a Trade Union representative.

Regular communication with employees will continue, to update them on progress made and reassure them that action is being taken as a result of the survey.

7 Initial Impact Assessment

This report contains merely statements of fact / historical data. An Initial Impact Assessment is not, therefore, required.

8 Equality Impact Assessment

There are no equality or diversity implications arising from this report. An Equality Impact Assessment is not, therefore, required.

9 Appendices

Appendix A

Summary of areas of strength and development

Appendix B

Action plan for areas of development

10 Background Papers

There are no background papers associated with this report.

Summary of areas of strength and areas for development

Areas of strength

- 95% care about the future of our Service
- 93% are clear about what they are expected to achieve in their job
- 93% understand how the work they do helps our Service achieve its aims
- 92% understand the aims and objectives of our Service
- 91% believe they have the knowledge and skills to do their job well
- 89% believe that health and safety is something that the Service takes very seriously
- 89% believe they have received the training and development they need to do their job well and safely
- 87% have a good understanding of our Service’s values
- 86% believe people in their team deliver what they say they will
- 86% believe that working here makes them want to do the best work they can

Areas of development

- 46% feel that the organisation’s IT infrastructure was inadequate for their needs
- 32% felt that poor performance isn’t addressed effectively across the Service
- 31% believe that no action will be taken as a result of the survey
- 29% feel that the Service is not supportive of their physical health
- 27% felt that service wide communication wasn’t good
- 26% said that they’d not received thanks or praise for doing good work in the last week
- 22% feel that the Service does not consider the impact on people when making decisions
22% feel they can’t communicate openly with each other due to position or level
- 22% feel that decision making by senior managers is not transparent
- 21% feel that mistakes are criticised and we don’t learn from them.

Action Plan

Area	Action	By Who	Deadline	Progress
The organisation's IT infrastructure is inadequate for our needs	Explore IT issues further through a focus group, facilitated by external provider.	Donna Trowsdale/external provider	Mid November 2016	Volunteers requested from across the Service to participate in the focus group. Subject matter experts identified to sponsor the focus group and ensure actions are identified and progressed appropriately.
Poor performance isn't addressed effectively across the Service	Communication piece with employees about work already ongoing to address this perception. Evaluation piece will be undertaken to assess the impact of this development	Donna Trowsdale	16 th September 2016 31 st December 2016	Complete. Update provided on the portal and in the Pink. None as training finished 29 th September. Need to allow time for this to embed.

No action will be taken as result of the survey	Regular communication with employees regarding return rate, areas of strength and areas for development	Donna Trowsdale	Ongoing – to start May 2016	<p>Daily updates during w/c 18th and 25th July and 12th and 19th September, on the portal regarding areas of strength and development.</p> <p>Weekly summaries in the Pink during the weeks identified above, reiterating this and identifying those actions we are taking to address the issues.</p>
The Service is not supportive of their physical health	To be taken forward by the Fitness Working Group.	Lisa Vickers	TBC	Fitness Working Group to consider the feedback and progress any agreed actions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service wide communication isn't good Not received thanks or praise for doing good work Can't communicate openly with each other due to position or level Decision making by senior managers isn't transparent 	Explore these issues through a focus group, facilitated by an external provider	Donna Trowsdale/external provider	Mid November 2016	<p>Volunteers requested from across the Service to participate in the focus group.</p> <p>Subject matter experts identified to sponsor the focus group and ensure actions are identified and progressed appropriately.</p>
The Service does not consider the impact on people when making decisions	Communication piece with employees about work already ongoing to address this perception.	Donna Trowsdale	30 th September 2016	Complete. Update provided on the portal and in the Pink w/c 12 th September 2016.

Mistakes are criticised and we don't learn from them	Communication piece with employees about work already ongoing to address this perception.	Donna Trowsdale	30 th September 2016	Complete. Update provided on the portal and in the Pink w/c 19 th September 2016.
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