

People Strategy End of Year Report

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

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1 Purpose of Report

This report provides an update on the achievements that have been made to date against the People Strategy 2021 – 2025.

2 Recommendations

The Committee are asked to note the contents of the report

3 Background

The People Strategy 2021 – 2025 provides a framework to support the aims and objectives of the service as outlined in the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). The purpose of the Service's People Strategy is to support all that the Service does to attract, recruit, develop, retain, support and reward its employees and teams to meet its future goals and aspirations.

The Strategy details how the Service intends to achieve this by:

- a. Developing leadership capacity
- b. Organisational development and engagement
- c. Resourcing the service
- d. Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)
- e. Health, wellbeing and fitness
- f. Skills, training and education
- g. New ways of working

To demonstrate how the Service will achieve against these areas there are four plans that underpin this strategy:

- Workforce and Resourcing Plan
- Organisational Development Plan
- Health and Wellbeing Plan
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan

Each of the plans reflect the strategic objectives of the People Strategy and detail the work that is being carried out to meet these objectives. The critical success factors outlined in the plans will inform the organisation how well it is doing to achieve these objectives over the four-year period (see Appendix).

4 Progress against the existing plans

Developing Leadership Capacity

This part covers two specific areas i.e. Leadership Development and Coaching and Mentoring.

Achievements:

- a) New provider sourced for ILM Level 5, 7 managers participating. Reduced number of days away from workplace - reduced from 12 to 3. Cohort commenced early November 2022. Initial feedback very positive and all modules are mapped to the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Leadership Framework. This programme has been extended to include green book members of staff.
- b) Planned NFCC Middle Manager development Programme to launch in early 2024.
- c) Coaching, Mentoring and Buddying formally launched 18 February 2022.
- d) The Service has successfully used the services of West Midlands Employers to access external coaching for 3 individuals, 2 internal coaching relationships in place and 1 expression of interest via the NFCC Coaching and Mentoring Portal.
- e) On-call buddying scheme – 234 applications received and 125 have requested a buddy.
- f) Currently 19 supervisory managers on an ILM Level 3 programme.
- g) Next ILM Level 3 programme commences in April 2023, and this will be a mix of both operational and non-operational staff.
- h) A member development day was held on 13 July 2022 covering topics such as HMICFRS, On Call Sustainability Review, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), the Code of Ethics and practical demonstration – well received.
- i) Governance training delivered to Fire Authority members on 22 June 2022 – well received.

- j) Promotion processes for Crew Manager (CM), Watch Manager (WM), Station Manager (SM), Group Manager (GM), Area Manager (AM), Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) and Chief Fire Officer (CFO) were all delivered during 2022.

Organisational Development and engagement

This area covers three specific areas: Workforce Planning, Staff Engagement and Reward and Recognition

Achievements:

- a) Cycle To Work Scheme ran from 1 June to 13 July 2022 - 14 Orders received totalling £11,438, average Order was £817. Employee savings were £3,933 and NIC Savings £1578. A further Cycle to Work window is being planned for 2023.
- b) Brigade Managers pay review completed and outcomes implemented.
- c) ICT / Planning and Performance review remains ongoing. Contract in place with SFIA to review all ICT roles and benchmarking exercise completed with review of salaries set for early 2023.
- d) On Call Sustainability Project (OCSP) produced a number of options for the Service to consider subject to funding including changes to pay and contracts, Leading Firefighter, Internal Transfer Process, review of exit interviews, Fire Service Rota Administrator recruitment, Creation of an OSCP Officer post, engagement activities, review of local station metrics, more flexible training requirements, review of the Group Support Team (GST), further recruitment, retention and resignation research and finally a strategic recruitment plan and possible bonus scheme payments.
- e) Some staff have been awarded honorariums within the non-uniform section of the workforce to support service areas of development.
- f) The attendance management process has been reviewed to ensure that managers are proactively managing and taking responsibility for long and short absences, in a timely manner.
- g) Celebration of Success was held on 25 July 2022 – 26 On-call Recruits, 19 Development FFs and 7 Employer Awards were presented.
- h) Medals Ceremony was held on 3 October 2022 to recognise staff achievements and long service. 14 Operational Medals (20 years), 5 non-operational medals (20 years), 1 operational certificate and 48 Achievers Awards were presented.
- i) A new employee reward and benefits site Viv Up was launched on 31 October 2022 offering lifestyle savings, local discounts and the opportunity for staff to order through the Home and Electronics site spreading their payments through manageable monthly salary reductions.

- j) An addition to the Viv Up platform is the Highfive allowing staff to formally thank or praise a colleague within the organisation.
- k) Continued to maintain strong relationships and to engage effectively with the Trade Unions re. Shift systems and the collective agreement, CRMP, employee relations matters, new ways of working, positive action, recruitment and, more recently, possible Industrial Action.
- l) 46 compliments were received by the Service during 2022.

Resourcing the Service

This area covers three specific areas i.e. Recruitment and Attraction, Talent Management and Succession Planning and Widening Participation.

Achievements:

- a) Improved Gender Pay reporting of Mean 3% (down from 4% 2021) and median remaining at 0%, against an NOS average of 14.9%.
- b) 7 Talent Management sessions now delivered and over 45 managers have attended. Emphasis on Individual Performance and Development Reviews (IPDRs), talent management and their link to the CPG / promotion process given during the Talent Management briefing sessions.
- c) Full critical skills / roles analysis undertaken by HR.
- d) Recent On Call campaign more than doubled the applicants in the six weeks during and post campaign. New marketing strategies were utilised including petrol pump adverts, radio advertising, radio interviews, social media videos, press releases and targeting of banners at priority stations. This resulted in a 68,261 reach with 1,955 Facebook clicks and 40 applications into the service. We have received really positive feedback about the campaign and other Fire Services are now modelling their campaigns on ours.
- e) Work to simplify the On Call IPDR was identified during late 2022. Trial period is currently live on 19 stations to review the new format ahead of launching in April 2023.
- f) Targeted support has been provided to Wholetime stations to increase staff confidence and understanding of the IPDR process linked to career progression.
- g) The Service has utilised 8 of its On Call staff on Fixed term contracts to cover for fixed periods of absence and/or a specific piece of work.
- h) The Service has introduced the Internal Transfer Process allowing On Call staff to apply for Wholetime posts through an internal recruitment process.

- i) 21 support staff roles have been reviewed through the Job Evaluation Scheme. 15 additional roles have been reviewed against the SFIA Framework which are in the process of being benchmarked as part of the ICT and Performance and Planning Review.
- j) Successful recruitment of 4 Wholetime Firefighter apprentices in July 2022, an Admin apprentice and two pending applications for ICT apprentices.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

This part covers two specific areas, which is EDI and Culture and Values

Achievements:

- a) 46 members of staff have received the EDI Induction package during 2022 along with a number attending Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) training.
- b) A number of On Call Positive Action taster sessions have been held across the Service to include several virtual style tasters.
- c) EDI refresher training has been undertaken for operational employees and is near completion.
- d) Currently supporting 35 live Dyslexia cases and produced a really impactful dyslexia video within the Service.
- e) Voices Group work is now ongoing. Highlights of the groups are the attendance at LGBT+ events, Peri menopause yoga, meetings and advice. Additional Mental Health video created, and information sent out for Time to Talk day.
- f) Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) survey
- g) Women's Safety Survey linked to Sarah Everard case.
- h) White Ribbon accreditation to support women against domestic abuse / violence.
- i) 4 Officers attended the Asian Fire Services Association (AFSA) Winter Conference – EDI Officer received award for EDI Champion
- j) Service have signed up to the Mental Health at Work Commitment (MHAWC)
- k) Successful women's networking event held on 24 September 2022, which included advice and speaker about menopause, fitness, self-defence and life coaching.
- l) Nominated for the National Diversity Awards from a pool of 72,000 nominations where the Service was invited to attend as a finalist

- m) Neurodiversity Awards winner 2022
- n) Finalist in National Dyslexia Awards 2022 (Supportive Employer award)
- o) Recognised for innovative practice by HMICFRS and the Local Government Association (LGA) for developing the EDI Steering Group and an overarching Voices Group providing robust strategic governance and supporting collaborative working. Providing a wide range of training initiatives across multimedia affecting different protected characteristics i.e. mental health, neurodiversity and Black History Month and for introducing a programme of work to address gender related issues i.e. awareness of menopause, updating female uniforms, free sanitary welfare packs.

Health, Wellbeing and Fitness

Achievements:

- a) 56 members of staff have been trained by The Fire Fighters Charity in areas including Introduction to Mindfulness, Developing Resilience, Prevention of Musculoskeletal Injuries / injury management and rehab and Nutrition and Healthy Eating.
- b) Following the launch of the Serve and Protect Credit Union where staff can now save and borrow with repayment straight from their pay, there are 31 members now saving with scheme, £52,000 is on loan to members and over £15,000 has been saved by members.
- c) 42 people have attended the Suicide Prevention training. 16 people have attended Suicide Safety Training and 5 people have attended Suicide First Aid. In response to feedback from operational crews, Suicide First Aid Lite has been rolled out to all operational crews from January 2023 with 42 staff attendees. This provides them with the initial skills required when first on scene to a potential suicide incident.
- d) 62 people have attended a Mental Health First Aid course, with an additional 30 attending the Mental Health refresher training and 35 receiving the Mental Health e-learning awareness training.
- e) 27 trained Trauma Risk Management (TRIM) practitioners
- f) The Service supported Mental Health Awareness Day on 10 October 2022 with the aid of the CFO.
- g) Overall, 390 fitness tests were completed during 2022 with 92% green rating. The remaining 8% have all been supported with a supportive trainer journey, resulting feedback stating it has been informative and helpful in improving both fitness and mental wellbeing.
- h) Total numbers of accidents in the Service remain in line with the previous years and the numbers of reported Near Miss incidents have shown an increase.

- i) Numbers of menopause trained staff remains high – 128 have received the face-to-face training and 13 have completed the e-learning menopause awareness package.

Skills, Training and Education

This area covers two specific areas i.e. Statutory and Mandatory Training and Learning and Education

Achievements:

- a) Best practice sharing meeting to discuss coaching, mentoring, assessment and development was hosted by Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service on 2 August 2022 with representatives from Hereford & Worcester, Staffordshire, Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire, Warwickshire, Leicestershire and Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Services.
- b) JESIP - Regional JESIP Group met to plan a new program of Tactical Commanders training in 2023/24 onwards. A new JESIP Lead has been appointed (in Ops) and the Service is providing 5 JESIP trainers as part of the regional uplift and will assist in coordinating delivery of courses across multi-agency partners.
- c) L4 Strategic Incident Command course delivered in house by specialist Incident Command provider to 4 internal and 2 external candidates.
- d) Following a review of the Service's Clinical Governance, an audit was commissioned, and areas identified for improvement. This has resulted in a new contract that ensures the Service is meeting its statutory needs and delivering support for training instructors and operational crews.
- e) Gap analysis being undertaken by SM Development on the impending removal of NVQ assimilation into the Firefighter role map.
- f) All training packages have been reviewed and aligned where required (based on the SME analysis) to NOG. This is an ongoing review as new standards and techniques are introduced i.e. new road traffic collision extrication framework, Driving – new ERD Fire Standards.
- g) A Hazardous Materials review has identified a need to improve and enhance training for staff. This includes making it a statutory 2 day Hazardous Materials initial training for recruits and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for current staff
- h) Secondment opportunities continue within Fire Control department, with a team dedicated to completing Operational Guidance work, 2 secondments within the Fire Safety department to assist with the additional funded projects and a GM has also been seconded to work on the On Call Sustainability Project.

- i) Proposed On Call IPDR has been developed on LEO with the system automating as much information as is possible, resulting in positive feedback from crews.
- j) All non-operational courses are now offered via a virtual or face to face delivery method to meet individual preferences.

New Ways of Working

This area covers two specific areas i.e. Managing Change and Organisational Performance Metrics

Achievements

- a) An ICT and Performance Planning departmental review is in the final stages of completion to ensure these functions remain fit for the future.
- b) Establishment of the workforce (CPI 9a) and demographics (CPI 9b) continue to be monitored through the Performance and Risk Group.
- c) The 12-month pilot concluded in January 2023. The shift system now affords flexibility within the staffing model whereby staff self-roster an agreed number of duty shifts with the aim of maintaining optimum crewing levels (effectively no surplus staff are being accommodated). Robust pre-planning of crewing levels has helped to build resilience into the shift system. This resilience helps to reduce the number of overtime shifts required by the Service to maintain the desired wholetime operational response. Any resilience not required for this purpose can be used to support individual staff development and other departments with protection and prevention activities.
- d) Pay negotiations for support staff agreed and pay award granted.
- e) Work remains ongoing for Pensions Immediate Detriment cases. The Service has taken the decision to pause processing Immediate Detriment cases until a wider national position has been reached and the significant financial risks associated with making compensation payments are fully understood.
- f) Successful transition of Pension provider from Shropshire County Pension Fund to West Yorkshire Pension Fund.
- g) All HMICFRS data collections continue to be submitted in a timely efficient manner.
- h) HR continue to review the starters, movers, leavers process currently undertaken on MyView and potentially simplifying this process to ensure changes are made accurately and in a timely manner so as not to impact on overpayments / underpayments and the work of other departments.
- i) All support staff working in line with the new ways of working for enabling them to work in a more agile way.

- j) Digitalised our employee benefits and reward by signing up to Viv-Up and high five, online platforms / app for staff to access discounts and purchase items

5 Monitoring and Evaluation

The above plans are monitored and updated by the HR department on a quarterly basis and the achievements are then reported back through the Senior Management Team and the Strategy and Resources Committee via an end of year report.

6 Recommendations

Members are asked to note the achievements against the People Strategy for 2021 – 2025 and progress against the critical success factors.

7 Equality Impact Assessment

There is a direct relationship between the People Strategy and equality and diversity. EQIAs have been completed on the People Strategy and associated plans.

8 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

9 Legal Comment

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

10 Appendix

People Strategy Critical Success Factor RAG rating for 2022-23

11 Background Papers

- Workforce and Resourcing Plan
- Organisational Development Plan
- Health and Wellbeing Plan
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan

Appendix to report on
 People Strategy End of Year Report
 Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority
 Strategy and Resources Committee
 22 March 2023

People Strategy Critical Success Factors Analysis 2022-2023

5.1	Developing Leadership Capacity	Critical Success Factor	RAG Rating
		Increase participation rates in leadership development programmes and activities both internally and externally in line with the agreed framework.	Green
		Increased levels of operational competence for our leaders.	Green
		Managers and leaders demonstrate increased knowledge and understanding of people management activities as outlined in staff survey through being open, approachable and do what they say they are going to do.	Green
		Percentage increase in evidence of senior managers adhering to SFRS service's values as indicated in the staff survey.	Green
		Promotion processes are timely, fair and transparent	Green
		Increased levels of staff obtaining successful Career Progression Gateway passes.	Green
		Increased usage and training of coaches, mentors and buddies who are active across the organisation.	Green
		Increased use in access to external coaches.	Green

5.2	Organisational Development and Engagement	Critical Success Factor	RAG Rating
		Workforce shortages/gaps are minimal, and risks are managed.	Yellow
		Reduction in the percentage turnover rate of all staff groups.	Yellow
		Maintenance of high levels of organisational resilience.	Yellow
		Improved attendance levels across all absence categories.	Green
		Improved staff satisfaction, engagement score and number of responders from the staff survey.	Yellow
		Increased number of staff respondents to HMICFRS Surveys.	Green
		Increased number of staff suggestions and active participation in events.	Yellow
		More staff being recognised for their individual and team achievements.	Green
		Improved percentage of staff feeling valued and recognised for the work they do as outlined through the staff survey.	Red
		Improved numbers of compliments received by the service.	Yellow

5.3	Resourcing the Service	Critical Success Factor	RAG Rating
	Includes:	Improved use of modern methods of recruitment techniques and technology.	Green
	Recruitment and Attraction		
	Widening Participation	Increased number of applicants for roles from under-represented groups.	Yellow
	Talent Management and Succession Planning		
		Reduction in the use of agency staff.	Green
		Reduction in turnover rates across all groups.	Red
		Increase in the number of completed IPDRS.	Yellow
		Future talent and supporting succession plans in place, aligned to workforce needs.	Yellow
		Increase number of apprentices and opportunities for work experience.	Yellow
		Increase the number of flexible/agile working requests to include different contract types, shift patterns and working practices.	Green

5.4	<u>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</u>	<u>Critical Success Factors</u>	<u>RAG rating</u>
	Includes:	Members of staff understand and act in accordance with our values and standards of behaviour, this will be reflected in a variety of ways including the results of our staff survey, numbers, and types of disciplinary and grievances.	
	EDI		
	Culture and Values	Creation and engagement of the Voices group throughout the Service.	
		Increase workforce diversity at all levels.	
		Increased number of applicants for roles from under-represented groups.	
		Increased number and quality of Equality Impact Assessments.	
		The creation of positive action events targeted at specific groups based on demographic data. To see a reduction in the Gender Pay Gap.	

5.5	<u>Health and Wellbeing and Fitness</u>	<u>Critical Success Factors</u>	<u>RAG rating</u>
		Reduction in all absences	
		Reductions in the accident statistics and RIDDOR reported incidents.	
		Increase in the number of flexible working requests to manage work life balance.	
		Increased levels of firefighters achieving the new fitness target.	
		Percentage increase in staff believing SFRS do enough to support their mental and physical health at work as outlined in the staff survey.	
		Increased numbers of mental health (MH) First Aiders/MH Awareness Training/TRIM (min. 10% of the workforce).	
		A clear supportive fitness testing programme is in place.	
		An increased proportion of our people reporting they believe the organisation and its management take Health and Safety very seriously as outlined in the staff survey.	

5.6	<u>Skills, Training and Education</u>	<u>Critical Success Factors</u>	<u>RAG rating</u>
	Includes:	Increase the Service's rate of compliance with statutory and mandatory training requirements e.g. National Operational Guidance and Fire Standards.	
	Learning and Education	Improved efficiency of training and development administration.	
	Statutory and mandatory Training		
		Maintenance of high levels of competence across all areas.	
		Improved training facilities available to staff and instructors.	
		Closer alignment and improved collaboration with HWFRS, of training and development practices and procedures.	
		Increase in the number and frequency of multi- agency training events.	
		Further development of career pathways for grey and green book staff.	
		Increased compliance requirements through professionally accredited bodies.	

5.7	<u>New Ways Of Working</u>	<u>Critical Success Factors</u>	<u>RAG rating</u>
	Includes:	Provide HR policies that facilitate innovative workforce change.	
	Managing Change	Duty systems will be flexible to meet the needs of the Service.	
	Information Systems		
	Organisational Metrics	Increased usage of technology to provide useful workforce data to aid decision making.	
		Further development of computerised systems to reduce reliance on paper-based processes and improve efficiency.	
		Introduce a range of focussed and relevant HR performance metrics to further develop benchmarking of HR performance.	
		Adoption of a national set of professional standards.	
		Smooth transition from one pension scheme administration provision to another.	
		Percentage increase in the number of staff showing an understanding for change at SFRS given the challenges faced by the Service as outlined in the staff survey.	