

## Staff Survey – Progress Update

### 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 progress following the last Standards and Human Resources Committee meeting on 18 October 2016.

### 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

### 3 Progress made

Three focus groups were held in October 2016, which considered IT, Communication and Recognition and Achievement, which were identified in the top 10 areas for development.

An overview of the feedback from employees at the focus groups is attached at the Appendix to the report.

Regular meetings have been held with the Trade Unions to update them on progress and agree ongoing actions to address the situation.

### 4 Key changes

In direct response to the issues raised at the focus groups, the following have been implemented:

#### IT

Tablets are being trialled at three fire stations in advance of a full rollout. ICT champions are available at almost all stations.

‘How to’ videos have been produced in response to requests and are available on the portal for staff to access

## **Communication**

Bulletins have been introduced following Senior Management Team meetings and are available on the portal and in the Pink

Bulletins have been introduced following Retained Watch Managers' meetings and are available on the portal and in the Pink

## **Recognition**

An electronic suggestion box is due to be launched in the coming weeks.

## **5 Future Actions**

Work will continue with the Trade Unions to address the issues identified. The working group has an action plan, agreed with the Trade Unions, which officers continue to work on. Actions within the plan include:

- Consideration of the use of social media to improve employee communication
- Adding the Health and Wellbeing feedback to the work of the Fitness Working Group
- Consideration of more mental health awareness and emotional resilience training
- Investigating the creation of a Chief's blog.

Regular communication with employees will continue, to keep them updated on progress.

## **6 Repeat of survey**

It has been agreed with the Trade Unions that the survey will be repeated in October 2017, 18 months after the initial one. The question set will remain largely the same in order that we have some meaningful benchmarking data.

## **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 Appendix**

Overview of feedback from Focus Groups

## **10 Background Papers**

There are no background papers associated with this report.

## **Overview of feedback from focus groups**

The focus groups considered the three main topics that emerged from the staff survey:

1. Focus Group 1 looked at IT
2. Focus Group 2 looked at Communication and Recognition
3. Focus Group 3 looked all three topics.

## **The main themes that emerged from across all 3 groups were:**

- The need for improved consistency and reliability of ICT
- A sense of “disconnect” between senior management and frontline staff.
- Frontline staff would like more communication from senior leaders
- Not feeling valued
- A lack of mechanisms that recognize good work and achievements

### **About ICT ‘You Said’:**

- Review structure of ICT
- Increase budget / salaries to recruit expertise and keep staff
- Review training available to all staff on service systems prior to roll-out, e.g. SharePoint, 365 etc.
- Appoint ICT Champions on each station / watch to cut workload to ICT i.e. reduce number of tickets
- Improve system speed and reliability
- TIP sheet – level of detail and improved layout
- RDS availability – everyone to use new system
- MDT risk critical information
- More computers on stations
- The Pink to include departmental updates e.g. projects that ICT is working on

### **About Communication ‘You Said’:**

- Better communication from the top to avoid mixed messages and rumor
- HR – Recruitment information and communication poor – should be more timely sometimes we hear through the grapevine who is joining the Watch / team
- New recruits turn up at RDS stations for interview out of the blue – HR don’t let stations know
- More contacts / visits from Exec Team to RDS stations.
- Concise, accurate, complete information directly communicated from the top
- Some senior managers lack discretion. Some leaders only want to give good news – don’t avoid the more difficult issues
- Fewer levels of communication – more direct especially from senior level
- Better communication from HQ to the stations – minutes from meetings to be provided?

## About Recognition 'You Said':

- Thanks for going over and above and for a job well done
- Introduce an incentive mechanism of some kind
- Take steps to make employees feel more valued.
- Review nomination process for achiever awards
- Recognition for being on call – out on shout all night and have to work all day
- Recognition for employers
- Recognition should start at Watch / Station level
- Achievements not just to be highlighted when they tick boxes – e.g. female recruits.