

**ESSEX POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**

Essex County Fire & Rescue Service

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| Meeting | **ECFRS Strategic Board** | Agenda Item | 10 |
| Meeting Date | 18 September 2018 | Report Number |  |
| Report Author: | Ben Pilkington, Assistant Director (Programme 2020) | | |
| Presented By | Ben Pilkington, Assistant Director (Programme 2020) | | |
| Subject | **Programme 2020 Update** | | |
| Type of Report: | Information | | |

# Recommendations

1. Members of the Board are asked to note the content of the report.

# BACKGROUND

1. Through Programme 2020 the Service developed and consulted upon a number of options for change, one of which was selected by the Fire Authority in June 2016. This report updates members of the Board on the progress of those planned changes.

# PROGRESS UPDATE

1. **Appliance removal and employee relocation project – COMPLETE**

*The project planned and delivered the removal of appliances from Corringham, Orsett, Rayleigh Weir and Loughton and the associated employee relocations.*

All planned removals have now taken place.

1. **On-call conversion project – IN PROGRESS**

*Conversions of Dovercourt, South Woodham Ferrers, Waltham Abbey and Great Baddow stations from day crew to On-Call and conversion of Clacton’s second appliance from wholetime to On-Call.*

Converting stations have not yet reached the anticipated headcount to be confident of stations being ready to convert as planned. The table below shows the number of On-Call firefighters currently at each of the Stations.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Budgeted FTE** | **Current FTE** | **Current Headcount** | **WMs** | **CMs** |
| **Clacton** | **18** | **14.25** | **16** | **0** | **1** |
| **Dovercourt** | **17** | **10** | **13** | **1** | **3** |
| **SWF** | **10** | **3.75** | **5** | **0** | **0** |
| **Waltham Abbey** | **10** | **6.75** | **9** | **0** | **0** |
| **Great Baddow** | **10** | **.75** | **1** | **0** | **0** |

A review of the project identified the following issues which have impacted upon progress to date:

* Wholetime Recruitment:
  + The wholetime recruitment marketing campaign took focus off OC recruitment, resulting in lower levels of interest being registered / less applications coming through during this time.
  + On-call to wholetime transfers resulted in increase in number of vacant posts at On-call stations.
* Dedicated recruitment resources reintegrated with HR Recruitment Team.
* Planned recruitment levels have not been reached.
  + On-call firefighters recruited post-June’18 will not be fully competent by 31/3/2020.
  + Internal/external perception is that conversions are failing.
  + Reduces the pool of new recruits from which to identify talent to progress to Crew/Watch Manager.
* Crew/Watch Manager positions will not be filled by 31/3/20.
  + Converting stations will not be fully crewed at manager level by conversion date.
  + Stations will be not be fully converted to on-call by 31/3/20.
  + Alternative approaches to filling these posts required.
* Core Hours project
  + Findings indicate required increase in training hours.
  + Potential to impact ability to recruit if requirements are too demanding / inflexible.
* New availability model and contracts not delivered.
  + Considered a significant barrier to recruitment.
  + Results in stations not achieving required recruitment levels.

A number of remedial actions have been identified and are in either in the process of being delivered or planned. The key activities are described below.

**In progress:**

* Day duty workers at non-station locations/roles work from converting stations – to support Officer cover and availability until fully transitioned/embedded.
* New On-call recruitment approach – to include new branding and innovative marketing approaches to raise profile and relaunch recruitment for converting stations.
* Re-established key stakeholder groups – to support engagement and collaboration;

**Short-term:**

* Business Engagement workshops for Station Managers / Watch Managers to ensure confidence and support a consistent and professional approach.
* Business Engagement Project scope to include employer reward & recognition programme – Approach to include letters of thanks from CFO and visits from Station Managers, certificates of recognition of support, invitation to annual recognition event, publicity at stations, social media/press articles.
* Wholetime recruitment campaigns factored in to On-call recruitment plans. Upcoming recruitment strategy will support this. Next WT recruitment expected April ’19.
* On-call new recruits join wholetime new recruits training programme – to accelerate On-call training, where possible and recruits able to do so.

**Longer-term:**

* New availability model and contracts – to help address some recruitment challenges. To better support the needs of the employees and provide the flexibility and reliability stations need to plan and manage availability.
* Embedded Officers (day work) at converting stations for the duration of the project and until the new response model is fully embedded.
* Consider an increase in the number of Crew Managers at converting on-call stations – for duration of the project and period of transitioning, to improve resilience and provide development opportunities for firefighters.
* Station Managers/Watch Managers take a proactive approach to local business engagement - for respective areas. Make use of the business engagement toolkit, work together with recruitment team and Corporate Communications to plan activity.
* Develop Fast Track Crew Manager Opportunities – for where talent is identified - develop a ‘fast track’ training programme to support transition to Crew Manager/Watch Manager.
* Offer relocation package to current Crew Managers / Firefighters in Crew Manager talent pool – to encourage moves to response distance of converting stations.
* Recruit Green Book employees to become on-call firefighters - to provide support where needed until converting stations fully transitioned. Green book employees undertake a ‘fast track’ training programme to phase 2 / phase 3. Can provide longer-term operational support and resilience.

1. **Special appliance relocation project – IN PROGRESS**

*Review of the Service specialist capability asset numbers and locations following the programme 2020 options for change and agreed operational model. Delivery of any agreed movements and changes.*

The initial review of locations has been completed and the project is now in the process of undertaking the relocations.

Completed relocations:

Incident command united relocated from Clacton to Frinton - January 2018

Water bowser relocated from Chelmsford to Corringham - November 2017

Aerial Ladder Platform (ALP) removed from Harlow - May 2018

Detection Identification Monitoring vehicle (DIM) relocated from Epping to Harlow May 2018

Training continues to enable the remaining conversions to take place as planned:

Swift water rescue relocating from Dovercourt to Colchester – November 2019

Animal rescue unit relocating from South Woodham Ferrers to Chelmsford – October 2018

1. **Off-road vehicle replacement – IN PROGRESS**

*Replacement of the existing Pinzgauers as they reach end of life with specific off-road capability vehicles. This includes specification development, procurement, training and roll out.*

Following development of a specification and a procurement exercise the order has been placed for 4 vehicles with a view to these being in use by the end of 2018.

1. **Firefighters delivering differently – IN PROGRESS**

*Roll out of new approach to delivering community safety activity using experience gained in the 2015 Delivering Differently in Neighbourhoods pilot. Rolling out across all On-Call and wholetime fire stations, Firefighters will be more involved in determining what community safety activity happens in their local area and local communities engaged.*

The project follows a structured engagement and training process with station based staff. So far the project has rolled out to 18 wholetime and 6 On-Call fire stations. Engagement with the remaining watches is programmed to run through until December 2019.

1. **Home safety model – COMPLETE**

*This project was to build capacity to enable delivery of Safe and Well visits (Level 1 & 2) which focus on a broader range of health issues, including issues relating to winter-related ill-health (including falls, social isolation, cold homes and flu) and home security.*

Project closed.

1. **Removal of the second appliance from Frinton - COMPLETE**

*The specific work to ensure timely removal of the second appliance from Frinton was treated separately form the other removals as the-time frames were different.*

The appliance was removed from operational service on 3rd January 2018.

# Benefits and Risk Implications

1. The risk around delivery of Programme 2020 is captured in Strategic Risk SRR150018 - The Service does not deliver changes set out in the 2020 programme which identified financial savings and thus cannot deliver against its medium term financial plan. The following control measures have been assigned:
   1. Reporting of Medium-term financial plan to be included in monthly finance to SLT.
   2. Monthly reports of progress of the Service's progress against the On-call conversion programme.
   3. Complete a review of all projects within the 2020 programme, and provide a status and lessons learnt report
   4. Produce a new implementation plan for 2020 programme for PFCC approval at P&R 24 September 2018.

# Financial Implications

1. The set of changes and strategy approved through Programme 2020 formed the efficiency plan accepted by government and providing a four-year funding settlement (2016/17 to 2019/20).
2. The Authority’s ability to reduce costs through the changes to the crewing system for

appliances from wholetime firefighter to On-Call firefighters is largely determined by the speed at which new staff can be recruited, trained and developed to become competent firefighters. The use of reserves to balance the budget during the development period for On-Call firefighters was set out in the efficiency plan.

1. The impact of the delays in the On-Call conversion project are factored into the 19/20 budget setting process and revision of the medium term financial plan.

# Equality and Diversity Implications

1. None arising from this report.

# Workforce Engagement

None directly from this report.

# Legal ImplicationS

1. None from the contents of this report.