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|------------------------|---|---------------|--|
| <b>Meeting</b>         | <b>Strategic Board</b>                                | Agenda Item   |  |
| <b>Meeting Date</b>    | 5 June 2019   | Report Number |  |
| <b>Report Author:</b>  | Colette Black with Paul Chipperfield and Claire Couch |               |  |
| <b>Presented By</b>    | Colette Black   |               |  |
| <b>Subject</b>         | <b>Operational Training Update</b>                    |               |  |
| <b>Type of Report:</b> | Decision  |               |  |

## 1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Strategic Board is asked to:

- a) Approve the additional detail of the Operational Training Strategy and Core Principles
- b) Approve a virement from the 2018/19 budget into the 2019/20 budget to the value of £800,000 to fund the likely future requirement to invest further in:
  - o Assurance of competence
  - o Delivering the Operational Training Plan for 2019 – 2022
- c) Approve the proposed governance and project management arrangements.

1.2 In addition, the Strategy Board is asked to note:

- Actions completed since the approval of the Commissioner to invest £600,000 of reserves into operational training
- The forecasted use of the £600,000 investment for 2019/20

## 2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Service is facing considerable pressure on its training resources due to our retirement profile and anticipated attrition. We will require up to 176 new firefighters in 2019/20. We will also need to facilitate training for new operational managers who are created because of retirement and attrition. In addition, following an internal audit and peer review, we have reconsidered how operational training is delivered within Essex County Fire and Rescue Service. Mindful of the critical nature of this function, Operational Training is identified as a high-level risk on our strategic risk register. In mitigation, we are clear that we need to do more to drive forward locally delivered training that is accessible for all firefighters at all levels.

2.2 Operational training is now included in an addendum to our People Strategy stating that we offer:

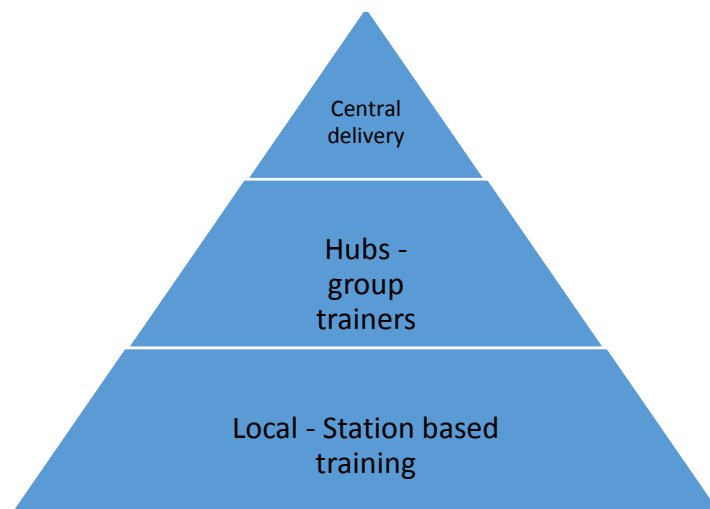
· *Provision of core business and in particular safety critical training (Breathing Apparatus, Command and Control, Driving) and specialist skill areas*

We are commencing a full review of our People Strategy in July 2019, operational training will be an integral part of the revised strategy.

2.3 Since the launch of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's Fire and Rescue Plan, we have expanded this further to describe our Core Principles:

- We have a clear training programme and we extend training opportunities so that all of our staff have the skills and training they need to remain safe in their work
- The training we offer is suitable for on-call and whole time duty systems
- We deliver the skills the Service needs now and in the future
- We have a system in place that offers regular assurance and proof of competence, by individual, at all levels of the Service
- We work towards greater levels of station-based training delivery and locally led development

2.4 The diagram below shows the fundamental elements of our redesign; the majority of training is maintained via local station-based training with core acquisition and specialist training being delivered centrally.



2.5. In support of the delivery of our People Strategy and revised training delivery model, the PFCC approved the investment of £600,000 of reserves. This investment supports the revised model and enhances casualty care training. A significant proportion of expenditure is on Group Trainers; a key part of our commitment to deliver more at station-based level. To date, we have achieved the following (Detailed breakdown of spend at **Appendix 1**):

- **Risk critical training** – Our risk critical Incident Command Verification, Breathing Apparatus and Emergency Response Driver are up to date and confirmed. As part of offering assurance, we report on this every month. Course feedback positive - 100% of attendees that responded to evaluation said they were satisfied/very satisfied.

- **Resources** – We have recruited, in line with our plan to deliver more locally, 3 x Group Trainers, 1 x Property Advisor, 1 x BA Instructor, 1 x Project Manager
- **Casualty Care training** – We have 440 firefighters trained since the revised programme began in December 2018. All firefighters will be trained by the end of 2019.
- **Firefighter Apprenticeship** – We are one of the first Fire and Rescue Services in the Country to deliver firefighters using the apprenticeship model and drawing down on the apprenticeship levy, the first cohort was in January 2019, with the second cohort in May 2019.
- **Supervisory Manager Development Evenings** – We are focussed on developing our Watch Managers. These evenings are being held quarterly.
- **Skills for Justice** – We have achieved further Skills for Justice accreditations:
  - Level 7 Award (post-graduate qualification in Strategic Incident Command)
  - Level 3 Award in Breathing Apparatus Instruction
  - Level 3 Award in Road Traffic Collision Instruction
- **Multi-disciplinary Teams** – We are multi skilled, every trainer now has more than one discipline; this enables flexible use of our resources and reduces the possibility of ‘SILO’ working
- **Support Trainers** – We have reached a collective agreement with our representative bodies that enables flexible use of our resources. We have recruited support trainers and they are being trained.
- **Delivery of audit recommendations** – We have delivered audit recommendations. There were seven recommendations from internal audit in 2016/17. A follow up audit in March 2018 concluded that five recommendations were implemented, one was in process and one was not implemented. Since March 2018, one further action has been completed and the last one is partially completed. There is a plan in place for the last one to be completed.
- **Watch Managers as Trainers** – We are investing in Watch Managers as Trainers - 33 Watch Managers trained, a further 28 booked in.
- **Station Managers as Assessors** – We are investing in our Station Managers as Assessors. Course design is in progress and we start training in September 2019.
- **Competency Recording** – We are investing in our competency recording system so that we can evidence competency as easily as possible. We have delivered our tactical solution (TASK functionality enhanced – data/reporting/bulk sign off) has been delivered. Our strategic solution is ‘on track’ for October 2019
- **Core Hours** – We have reviewed basic courses and adjusted TASK to reflect the ‘Core Hours’ approach to Phase 1-2 and Phase 2-3.
- **Fire Safety Visits and Technical Fire Safety** – In line with the Safer Community Strategy, we have a pilot in progress.
- **Collaboration with Partners** – We share training facilities and deliver JESIP together.

2.6 These changes are positive and are making a difference. Having delivered the initial set of priorities, we acknowledge that there is more to be done and, with these building blocks in place, we now need to pick up the pace.

### 3. FUTURE INVESTMENT

3.1 In order to continue and enhance the pace of our reform of training delivery, together with meeting our training requirements for 19/20, additional investment for 2019/20 in the following areas is required:

- **Assurance of competence**

In order to support our greater focus on locally based training, we have identified a requirement to provide a greater assurance of competency. We will address this by running a two-phase 'Core Skills Development – Refresh and Reinforce' programme.

We are assessing a variety of ways of delivering this programme. The quickest option is the most expensive at £400,000. Full assessment is being completed as a matter of urgency. Funding for this programme is sought from the virement as set out in recommendation 1b.

- **Delivering the operational training plan for 2019 – 2020**

The operational training described in **Appendix 1** covers all of our requirements (legal, best practice, national operational standards, and national operational guidance).

We are currently unable to resource 1300 Watch Manager training days. In the main, the deficit has occurred due to the number of new recruits needing to be trained and the inclusion of proactive assessment time, CPD and planning for known leave requirements.

We are assessing a variety of ways of addressing the deficit. Full assessment and recommendation to follow. The most expensive of these is £400,000. Full assessment is being completed as a matter of urgency. Funding for this programme is sought from the virement as set out in recommendation 1b.

To account for unforeseen/reactive training requirements and any recommendations that might still come from the Hackett report, we anticipate using our newly recruited Support Trainers.

### 4. GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 It is proposed that, for 2019/20, governance for delivery of the Operational Training Strategy sits within our Change Board. The Learning and Development Steering Group will report into the Change Board. The Change Board will view the activity, decision and issues logs of the Steering Group as part of assuring the SLT and the Authority that we are continuously improving our Operational Training service. Alongside the internal stakeholders, it is proposed that membership of the Steering Group is open to:

- a representative of the Office of the PFCC,
- a professional from outside of the Service who can offer some external challenge.

## **5. BENEFITS AND RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 This risk, recorded as SRR150020 in our risk register, is that, *'The Service does not provide the training to ensure that staff have the skills required to provide an effective operational response to the Essex public and ensure the safety of operational staff in line with the Health and Safety at Work Act. The Service does not provide training to ensure that all employees have the skills to carry out their roles.'*
- 5.2 A review of the L&D Quality Assurance Framework and Policy will ensure that the service offering is aligned to the PFCC Fire Plan and in turn the IRMP 2020 and beyond.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 We are utilising the £600,000 allocated from reserves to support approved project activity.
- 6.2 Additionally, the above suggests that, for the year 2019/20, we are seeking agreement for further investment to the level of £800,000 to be funded as a virement from the 2018/19 budget.
- 6.3 The existing investment is allowing us to scope out and advise on the investment needed to ensure that our training facilities are fit for purpose. Full recommendations and a likely request for capital expenditure will be profiled in our Medium Term Financial Planning.

## **7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no direct equality implications with this paper. Any items such as new policies, or courses, will attract a requirement for an equality impact assessment in the normal way.

## **8. WORKFORCE ENGAGEMENT**

- 8.1 Once agreed, a Communications Plan will be developed to raise awareness of our structure, governance arrangements, plans and offering. The above has been discussed with our representative body colleagues.
- 8.2 All L&D customers will continue to be surveyed for full course evaluation in line with our Quality Assurance Framework.

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The Fire Professional Framework (FPF) details nine core operational areas of competence, which are defined in the Fire Service National Operational Standards (NOS).
- 9.2 The competency areas are:

- Driving
- Command and Control
- Breathing Apparatus
- Hazardous Materials
- Working at Height
- Water Rescue
- Fire Service Pumps
- Extrication and Rescue
- Casualty Care

9.3 By ensuring and evidencing that our personnel are competent in each of these areas, we can deliver on our legal responsibilities as part of the Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004 and Civil Contingency Act 2004.

## **10. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 It is an employer's duty to protect the health, safety and welfare of their employees and other people who might be affected by their business. We must do whatever is reasonably practicable to achieve this; this includes training.

## Appendix 1 – Breakdown of spend

| Item   | Projected   | Comment   |
|--|---|---|
| Casualty Care  | £188,290 spent December 18-June 19<br>Will reach the allocated £300,000 by<br>December 2019 | This was a key risk area for us, we now have 440<br>firefighters trained. |
| 4 x Group Trainers   | £110,721  | Based on recruiting 3 starting 1 July for 9 months                        |
| 1 x Property Advisor   | £20,000   | Based on quote from contractor starting 27 <sup>th</sup> May              |
| 1 x BA Instructor  | £36,907   | Based on recruit starting 1 July for 9 months                             |
| 1 x Watch Manager<br>Development /Quality<br>Assurance   | £36,907   | Based on recruit starting 1 July for 9 months                             |
| 1 x Project Manager  | 0   | Started but funding coming from existing headcount                        |
| <b>Total commitment for 19/20 - £504,535 + £62,104 for q1 20/21 = £566,639</b>                       |   |   |
| NB -12 month contracts offered and so committed to additional £62,104 for the first quarter of 20/21 |   |   |