ESSEX POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
Essex County Fire & Rescue Service

Meeting	Service Leadership Team	Agenda Item	4h
	Performance & Resources		10
Meeting Date	9 March 2021		
	31 March 2021		
Report Author:	Colette Black, ACEO People, Values and Culture		
Presented By	Colette Black, ACEO People, Values and Culture		
Subject	**People Strategy Action Plan and Maturity Models**		
Type of Report:	Decision		

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to agree the following recommendations:

1. People Strategy Action Plan - Review the plan for 2021-2022 to ensure that it continues to further the aims of the People Strategy in a changing landscape and enables our annual plan.

2. Peer Review - Incorporate the feedback from these in the People Strategy Action Plan 2021/22. Feedback shown in appendix 1.

3. Maturity Models – ECFRS become an early adopter of the maturity models, trialling use of the maturity model which most closely links to a significant risk for us, 'talent, succession management and high potential'. The outcomes of self-assessment against the model should feed into the People Strategy Action Plan. Example maturity model shown in appendix 2.

4. Staff Survey feedback - Incorporate actions that arise from staff survey feedback into the action plan.

BACKGROUND

Our People Strategy 2020-2024 has an associated action plan. Some elements of the People Strategy Action Plan actually began in 2019 ahead of the People Strategy being formally signed off. We have made significant progress on delivering the action plan which helps us to achieve our strategic intentions.

Our staff survey feedback indicates that, amongst other factors, the outputs of our strategy and actions are making a difference.

Now is a good time to reflect on the actions we have in the 21/22 action plan to ensure they are still fit for purpose. Factors included in the reflection are:

- We are well into the delivery of all the action plans in year 1 and 2 which underpin the People Strategy,
- Our 2021/22 annual plan is about to commence, and the people strategy action plan is a key enabler,
- We are entering into the recovery phase of the pandemic,
- Our 2020 staff survey feedback has given us some clear areas of feedback that we need to recognise,
- The NFCC are on the cusp of releasing Maturity Models which we might like to utilise.

OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS

It is proposed to consider 3 inputs when the action plan is reviewed.

1)   Peer review

Engagement was undertaken with three other Fire and Rescue Services (Oxfordshire, Staffordshire, and Lancashire) to learn from the good practice which HMICFRS identified in their Services.   Both Oxfordshire and Staffordshire were able to offer some capacity to provide feedback on our Action Plan. The brief provided to the representatives from Oxfordshire and Staffordshire was:

- What could we learn from what other services have accomplished on their cultural development journey?
- Are we missing anything – what should we do more/less of?
- Are we challenging ourselves enough/too much?
- Do we have any blind spots?

The feedback from these reviews will be incorporated in the People Strategy Action Plan 2021/22. The feedback is shown in appendix 1.

2)   Maturity Models

The NFCC are launching maturity models as a tool for Services to assess their people practices against a benchmark - you might also call them diagnostic tools.   It is up to each Service whether they wish to adopt, adapt, or decide not to use the maturity models. They are an enabler for continuous improvement, sharing great practice and understanding areas of improvement.

At a NFCC People Programme Board workshop on 3rd March 2021, HMICFRS shared their view of the proposed maturity models. The HMICFRS Assistant Portfolio Manager, Karen Lancaster, was present and said:

'maturity models could help services demonstrate and explain evidence across the people pillar and direction of travel, [they] will demonstrate how the FRS plans to deliver against its workforce strategy, if used effectively, they will support the evidence looked at during inspection'.

HMICFRS are also clear about what maturity models are not:

'...important to know some key differences: inspection judgements and maturity models cannot be directly aligned, maturity models are more specific whereas the people pillar is broad, inspection methodology is judgement based not activity based, if an FRS takes a different approach that will be considered in the same way across the judgement criteria'

The maturity models are still in consultation with Fire and Rescue Services. The consultation closes on 30th April 2021. In anticipation of these being approved, I propose that we trailblaze by adopting one of the models as a trial. We might use the tool to benchmark our maturity in an area that is most critical to improving outcomes - 'talent, succession management and high potential'. An example of a maturity model is included as appendix 2.

The maturity model should be used to self-assess our progress against good practice in this field. The outcomes of this self-assessment should feed into the People Strategy Action Plan.

BENEFITS AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

Our People Strategy Action Plan is a control measures for 3 risks:

- SRR 150020
  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.

- SRR 150019
  There is a risk that due to the absence of a positive and supportive culture the Service fails to provide a safe and inclusive culture which ensures the well-being of staff and contributes to attracting a diverse workforce

- PVC 003
  There is a risk that our people will not feel that our leaders and managers role model positive behaviours and have effective management and communication skills.

As with all risks and control measures, we should seek to continuously review and improve.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications, any potential changes to the action plan would need to be within existing budgets.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

Our People Strategy Action Plan is a key enabler for continuing to develop a workplace which is fair, kind, and inclusive. Many of the actions are intended to positively impact inclusion.

WORKFORCE ENGAGEMENT

Should the recommendations be accepted, a task and finish group will be set up to progress.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None specific to this report.

Appendix 1 – Peer Review - see PowerPoint attachment.
Appendix 2- Example of NFCC Maturity Model- see below

Appendix 2 – Example of NFCC Maturity Model

Talent Management including Succession Planning and High Potential Management

Level 4. Transparent Talent Systems

- Highly transparent succession planning systems, pool based and dynamic.
- Long term planning for critical positions.
- Long term workforce planning is in place reviewing turnover, retirement profiles, and long-term sickness patterns.
- High potential people are identified across the FRS and this is transparent to all and fully integrated into the succession planning process.
- Systems in place to avoid 'blue eyed person and favouritism in succession planning and internal selection decisions.
- Focus is on building everyone to high performance.
- High potential people are supported in transition to new roles, so their potential is realised.
- All staff are supported to manage and maintain the skills they need for long term career regardless of whether they want promotion. Helping people understand career management.
- Full disclosure to high potential people of status but with sensible expectations management.
- Managers excel at giving regular, targeted feedback
- Development planning can be sourced in different forms and not wholly reliant on line manager, e.g. coaching, mentor, 360 appraisal, development centres
- Appeals to succession plan are the exception, not the norm.
- Personal goals are set and adapted.
- Coaching is regularly used across the FRS not only to meet needs, but to support longer term learning.
- Critical vacancies are regularly reviewed and plans in place for internal and external sourcing. Key people who could fill role are identified.
- Vacancies are predicted and co-led by HR and recruiting manager to ensure effective sourcing of people.

Level 3 Integrated Succession Management

- Talent management is observed at a senior level with evidential support for decisions. Owned by senior leaders.
- Coaching is regularly used across the business.
- Vacancies are forecast against organisational data.
- High potential people have support in developing expected new skills before roles come up.
- Central and local support for joiners and leavers, with some follow up comms. Mainly manual process.
- Critical vacancies are regularly reviewed for flight risk and some plans in place to fill.
- Jobs are reviewed to ensure needs remain current and match skills required at vacancy stage.
- Goals are set for individuals and often reviewed.
- Coaching by managers is supported. Peer to peer or coaching up is starting to be encouraged.
- Difficult feedback is given in most cases.
- Process is guided by HR, with a framework in which to operate for managers.

- Critical vacancies are filled at the point they are vacated.
- Central support for joiners and leavers, but more local support or endorsement needed.

Level 2 Standardised Talent processes

- Limited executive engagement in planning for critical posts.
- Some support for coaching by managers but on a needs basis.
- Difficult performance feedback is not given.
- Development plans are in place and talent/succession review, but HR led and not fully owned by all managers.
- Some support for joiners or leavers, but limited uptake.
- Effective assessment of candidates against job requirements.
- Critical vacancies are left unoccupied for less than a month.
- Positions posted with some prior notice, but no flexibility as to alternative resourcing such as temporary vacancies, traineeships, apprenticeships etc.
- Recruitment routes only considered once basic recruitment route is unsuccessful.
- Some managers are carrying out analysis of high potential people.

Level 1 Fragmented replacement planning

- Performance review process is non-existent, or sporadically applied.
- Inconsistent decision making process with little to no standardisation.
- Low support for manager/peer coaching.
- Goals are not set for/with individuals.
- Little or no technology to support.
- No support for joiners or leaver/retirees.
- Individuals are not graded accurately or are graded to give the manager an easy time.
- Individual performance is spoken about the individual, but seldom to.
- Talent sourcing is reactive.
- Positions posted on an as needed basis with no follow up as to needs met.
- Critical vacancies are left unoccupied for inappropriate time.
- People are left in temporary posts for too long.
- Little standardisation of talent sourcing processes outside of HR.
- No alternative recruitment routes.
- No focus on identifying high potential people.