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

Meeting	Service Leadership Team	Agenda Item No.	5e
	Performance and Resources Board		17
Meeting Date	13 July 2021		
	28 July 2021		
Report Authors:	On-Call Development Programme – Project Manager		
Presented By	Moira Bruin, Director of Operations		
Subject	Quarterly Report - On-Call Development Programme		
Type of Report:	Information		

RECOMMENDATIONS

None. This report is for information.

OVERVIEW

Through the On-Call Development Programme we will design and deliver changes in the way we work with and support our On-Call employees, to develop a duty system that is rewarding, flexible and effective and meets the needs of our people, the Service, and the communities we serve.

The programme is currently undergoing an activity to re-define the scope and structure of the programme and what it wants to achieve for the next 6-12 months. This work is currently in draft, but the intention is to take this to the Programme Board on 21 July for discussion and approval. The programme is proposing two key projects underneath it, and the scope of these has been re-defined from what was the current "Attraction & Employer of Choice" and "Valuing On-Call Employees" workstreams.

A recent decision was made at the May Programme Board to pause the work on the flexible contracts, whilst we explore the flexibility that should exist currently and what support our managers need to manage. The outcome of this will define what the deliverables are for this piece of work.

BACKGROUND

On-Call Firefighters are a vital part of the UK's Fire and Rescue Service and provide an effective, efficient service that gives emergency cover to more than 90% of the UK. The dedication and commitment of On-Call Firefighters is incontestable.

Due to the changing landscape of our towns and villages, the reduction of local commerce and industry and increasingly transient populations, recruiting enough On-Call Firefighters to keep these stations operational, especially during daytime hours, has become increasingly difficult for Fire and Rescue Services nationally.

The Service wants to change the way it supports and operates On-Call, including introducing innovative solutions to the challenge of daytime availability at some On-Call stations and working approaches that are achievable, flexible and support a sustainable work/life balance.

The Service also wants to continue to work with our On-Call colleagues, listening to what effects them on a day-to-day basis and ensuring that the focus of the programme aligns to what will make a real impact to them.

PROGRAMME PROGRESS

Ahead of the programme re-scope work and for the purpose of this report, progress is being reported on according to the current programme structure.

1. Attraction & Employer of Choice Workstream

The current scope & progress of the workstream is as follows:

a. On-Boarding & Recruitment

- The refined on-boarding process has been implemented and continues to be reviewed for constraints.
- We have established monthly on-boarding meetings to review all touch points in the process for On-Call colleagues.
- We are planning to review the defined process and ensure it accurately represents where we are now we are a couple of months into implementing it.
- We are also planning on exploring the pre-assessment activity to better understand what takes place and see whether there is any further control we can establish to better understand and report on this.

b. Flexibility & Ways of Working

- In May, the Programme Board made the decision to pause the flexible contracts work for the time being. This is due to the high level of risk and uncertainty associated with this, which could not be mitigated to an acceptable level.
- The programme is instead focusing on exploring the flexibility that exists currently and supporting our managers in offering this.
- Our focus over recent weeks is around the communication with our On-Call colleagues and planning our communication with them at the next Steering groups on 1 and 7 July.

c. On-Call Development Pathways

- We have concluded our activity to substantiate those O/C colleagues in temporary positions for 24m or more.
- We hope to finalise the position of the remaining individuals and conclude and close this activity at the 21 July Programme Board.

2. **Valuing On-Call Employees Workstream**

  ▪ This work has been paused temporarily whilst our focus and priority remain with the programme re-definition work.

On-Call Liaison Officers (OCLO) Update

We felt it would be valuable to update on progress made this period by the OCLO team, the following summarises their recent activity:

  ▪ Assessment Days - Organising and assisting with the On-Call assessment days at Canvey station which are taking place twice a month. Working with Property Services to arrange for assessment equipment to be moved from Orsett to Canvey to enable this. The team have been helping arrange candidate medicals, DBS checks and pre-employment forms. The team have progressed 20 new recruits through to assessment, providing general advice on On-Call but also specific advice such as fitness.
  ▪ Training - Worked with the training dept to arrange the On-Call basic training courses for May, June & July.
  ▪ Canvey Island Station - Arranging a Canvey Island recruitment event and communicating with potential recruits to better understand the nature of On-Call.
  ▪ Dengie Stations - Identifying the needs for the Dengie stations and assisting with a recruitment strategy.
  ▪ Converting Stations - Continuing to support the converting stations, in particular, looking at ways the team can help with the conversion at Great Baddow and South Woodham Ferrers.
  ▪ Media – Working with the Corporate Comms team to organise media events at Canvey, Dengie, Great Baddow and South Woodham Ferrers.
  ▪ Steering Groups – Arranging and beginning to publicise the next Steering Groups which take place on 1 and 7 July.
  ▪ Programme - Continuing to work with and support the On-Call Programme team, attending meetings and progressing actions.

OPTIONS & ANALYSIS

No options are presented for consideration as part of this paper. This paper provides an update only.

BENEFITS AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

Benefits

The programme benefits will be reviewed after the current programme re-definition work, however, for the purpose of this report the benefits have been reported on as they currently stand.

Benefit	How will we measure benefits?	Where will we see the benefits?	When?
Improve OC staff engagement.	Employee survey OC engagement results.	• Higher number of employees/stations attend steering groups. • Higher number complete employee surveys.	FY 21/22 FY 21/22 FY 21/22

		• Increase in OC employee engagement indicator value.	
Ensure competence & safety of our people.	Completed TASK (others – tbc by with Ops Training)	• Increased number of employees have completed TASK books. • Increased number of employees attending weekly training nights. • Increase number of employees completing mandatory training within agreed times (e.g., BAV&D 24months).	FY 21/22 FY 21/22 FY 21/22
Reduce OC vacancies.	Total OC EE headcount at year-end.	• A reduction in the number of station vacancies overall.	FY 21/22
Increase employee retention.	Total number of OC leavers each year.	• A reduction in the numbers of On-Call leavers annually. • Average length of service increased.	FY 21/22 FY 21/22
Increase availability of OC appliances.	Availability data overall & per station.	• Increased levels of availability of On-Call appliances. • Reduced number of pre-arranged out duties (PAOD), dynamic out duties (DOD), additional shift work sessions (ASW) required at On-Call stations.	FY 21/22 FY 21/22
Improve OC response times.	Response data overall and per station.	• Response times increase for On-Call appliances.	FY 21/22
Improve workforce diversity.	Year-end diversity statistics.	• Increased diversity overall within the workforce. • Increased number of female On-Call employees.	FY 21/22 FY 21/22
Improve wider service delivery.	Number of OC stations providing cover in own area.	• Reduced number of PAOD/DOD/ASWs required at On-Call stations.	FY 21/22
Reduce OC station / officer administration requirements.	Time spent on administrative tasks.	• Reduction of time spend on administrative duties by On-Call managers.	FY 21/22

RISKS

The following is a report on the current programme risks which are up to date in JCAD.

JCAD

Risk Register (current-target) v4

Service Unit: Change

Risk Ref	Risk Event/Description	Category	Nature of Risk	Current Risk Rating	Controlled Risk Rating	Risk Owner	Risk Status	Review Date	Date Last Reviewd	Days Overdue
OCDP0008	There is a risk that there is insufficient and/or suitable resources to deliver the programme.	Unassigned	Unassigned	12	9	Hannah Wakeman	Tolerate	17/07/2021	17/05/2021	0
OCDP0007	There is a risk that the Services policies/procedures do not meet On-Call requirements leading to objectives not being met.	Unassigned	Unassigned	9	6	Colette Black	Tolerate	16/08/2021	16/06/2021	0
OCDP0009	There is a risk that key stakeholders do not engage with the programme leading to deliverables not being fit for purpose.	Unassigned	Unassigned	9	9	Hannah Wakeman	Tolerate	17/07/2021	17/05/2021	0
OCDP0011	There is a risk that factors outside of the Service's control lead to impact on programme delivery.	Unassigned	Unassigned	9	9	Hannah Wakeman	Tolerate	17/07/2021	17/05/2021	0
OCDP0006	There is a risk that the Programme is not managed effectively leading to the benefits not being realised.	Unassigned	Unassigned	9	6	Hannah Wakeman	Tolerate	17/07/2021	17/05/2021	0
OCDP0010	There is a risk that there is a lack of leadership and direction to support the programme being delivered.	Unassigned	Unassigned	6	6	Hannah Wakeman	Tolerate	21/06/2021	21/04/2021	0

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial updates for this reporting period.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no equality and diversity implications associated specifically with this paper, however in line with Service policy, action plans which impact on our people will be people impact assessed. All action taken following this paper will be in line with our Service policies and procedures around equality, diversity, and inclusion.

Is this decision anticipated to have an impact on any of the following protected groups as defined within the Equality Act 2010:

Race	No	*Religion or belief*	No
Sex	No	*Gender reassignment*	No
Age	No	*Pregnancy & maternity*	No
Disability	No	*Marriage and Civil Partnership*	No
Sexual orientation	No		

WORKFORCE ENGAGEMENT

The Programme seeks to find ways to continually improve and further strengthen and build on existing engagement.

The Steering Groups remain a very strong platform for communicating with our On-Call colleagues led by the OCLO team. The next ones are scheduled for 1 and 7 July, we are planning to use these forums in July to update colleagues on the work around the flexible contracts.

The programme team meetings take place at a monthly frequency, and we have recently expanded attendees to cover the key dept's delivering on this programme such as HR, Operational Training & Recruitment. We also meet with key stakeholders individually to discuss items in more detail where required.

We have recently established monthly on-boarding meetings with all stakeholders involved in the recruitment process for On-Call, allowing us to review the process and discuss any issues or anticipated constraints. These are already proving effective.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

ECFRS are ensuring that they work closely with the Procurement, Finance and HR (employment legislation) teams to ensure that all legislation is being adhered to.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None specific to this report.