



Meeting	Performance and Resources Board	Agenda Item No.	10
Meeting Date	27 January 2022		
Report Authors:	Hannah Wakeman On-Call Development Programme – Programme Manager		
Presented By	Moira Bruin, Deputy Chief Fire Officer		
Subject	On-Call Development Programme – Progress Report		
Type of Report:	Information		
Action Point No.		For Publication	Yes

RECOMMENDATIONS

None. This report is for information only.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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 has been undergoing a period of re-scope and re-structure, with exploration work following a Briefing Paper written by Dave Bill before his retirement. The intention was to take this to the October 2021 Programme Board for review and sign off. This work, however, was paused following a wider alignment activity to the transformation work being undertaken by the Innovation & Change (I&C) department and understanding how the On-Call change activity aligns to the wider strategic objectives of the Service and how the On-Call work sits as a change activity vs business as usual (BAU).

A provisional decision was therefore made by the Programme Board in December 2021 to begin the work to close the second tranche of the programme, with the intention of then starting the initiation work for tranche 3. This will allow us to keep the engagement we have with On-Call colleagues, whilst re-scoping the future state for the On-Call duty system. This decision is being made on 19 January 2022 at the Programme Board.

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.

OPTIONS & ANALYSIS

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

PROGRAMME PROGRESS

Considering the programme re-scope work that was being undertaken, and the more recent pause in that work whilst the I&C transformation work takes place, progress has been reported on against the original workstream structure.

1. Attraction & Employer of Choice Workstream

a. On-Boarding & Recruitment - Complete

- A refined on-boarding process was implemented in the earlier part of this year for On-Call reducing the time to hire from 9m + to 3m.
- We have established monthly on-boarding meetings to review all touch points in the process for On-Call colleagues. Attendees/dept representation continues to be reviewed frequently to ensure we have representation from all appropriate departments.

b. Flexibility & Ways of Working - Incomplete

- In May, the Programme Board made the decision to pause the flexible contracts work. This is due to the high level of risk and uncertainty associated with this, which could not be mitigated to an acceptable level. As well as the risk of unintentionally delivering something that is still too rigid by having the availability bandings, and through engagement work we felt this wasn't fit for purpose, so the decision was made to pause this work.
- In the meantime, the programme and the OCLOs have been working with O/C Managers in providing flexibility within the current contractual arrangements. This, however, is inconsistent in its application so requires further guidance and engagement work.

c. On-Call Development Pathways - Complete

- We have concluded our activity to substantiate those O/C colleagues in temporary positions for 24m or more.
- 44 colleagues were in this position and were either substantiated or a development plan put in place or are no longer temporary and have gone back to their substantive position.

2. Valuing On-Call Employees Workstream – Stopped

- This work was paused whilst we understood the wider programme re-definition work.

On-Call Liaison Officers (OCLO) Update

- Assessment Days – The team continue with the organising and assisting with the On-Call assessment days which continue to take place twice a month. The team have been helping arrange candidate medicals, DBS checks and pre-employment forms.
- Training - Working with the training dept to arrange the On-Call basic training courses.
- Converting Stations - Continuing to support the converting stations 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 the converting stations and other targeted O/C stations.
- Steering Groups – The team are planning the first set of Steering Groups for the new year, provisionally planned for February time.
- Programme - Continuing to work with and support the On-Call Programme team, attending meetings and progressing actions.

RISK AND MITIGATIONS

Benefits

The programme benefits have recently been reviewed as part of the tranche 2 closure process.

Original Programme Benefits	Jan-22 Progress Update	Realisation Status & Expectation Date
1. Improve On-Call staff engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Higher number of employees/stations are attending the steering groups. Only four O/C stations were unrepresented at the last round of steering groups. 	Realised
2. Ensure competence & safety of our people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ OCLO team are supporting additional training and taking recruits to training. ✓ The OCLO team are also improving competence/supporting completion of PDR Pro. 	Realised
3. Reduce On-Call vacancies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Started with a backlog of 300 people in Jul-19: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 200 engaged/100 rejected - 120 completing process. ✓ Recruited 98 new recruits in 2021 ✓ Jun-20 → Jun-21 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FTE 395.5 → 405.8 = 11.3 increase - Headcount 499 → 514 = 15 increase 	Realised

4. Increase employee retention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Attrition rate avg 66pa past 3 years – no significant change. ✓ Dec 2019 – Sep 2021: 122 unplanned leavers Unplanned turnover avg 24% Retention avg 76% x. OCLOs working with HR as current figure are inconclusive. 	Realisation expected 2-4 years +
5. Increase availability of OC appliances.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We have seen a general decline compared to last year's availability for O./C. ▪ There are several assumptions for this, the key one being impact of lockdown/ease of restrictions and returns to primary employment. 	Not realised
6. Improve workforce diversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 81 female applicants for O/C in 2021 ✓ 10 females have joined since August 2020 ✓ National avg 5% females, we had a 10% female recruitment % in 2021 A number are in process i.e., progressing fitness ✓ High number of female applicants for O/C → good engagement. 	On-going
7. Improve wider service delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Increase in O/C personnel improves other functions – more available to do other activities i.e., fire calls, technical fire safety inspections, community engagement etc. ✓ Offers improved resilience for Service. 	Realised
8. Reduce On-Call station / officer administration requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Deliverables raised i.e., Appraisals. ✓ Steering Groups provide a forum for raising issues for Service to take away and look at & feed into programme. 	Realised

The following is a report on the current programme risks which are up to date in JCAD as of 12 January 2022.

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	12/03/2022	12/01/2022	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	12/03/2022	12/01/2022	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	12/03/2022	12/01/2022	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	12/03/2022	12/01/2022	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	12/03/2022	12/01/2022	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	12/03/2022	12/01/2022	0

LINKS TO FIRE AND RESCUE PLAN

- Make best use of our resources
- prevention, protection, and response

Links with Annual Plan

- Streamline on-boarding process
- Reduce number of temporary positions
- Reduce hour contracts
- Complete the valuing On-Call project

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:

<i>Race</i>	No	<i>Religion or belief</i>	No
<i>Sex</i>	No	<i>Gender reassignment</i>	No
<i>Age</i>	No	<i>Pregnancy & maternity</i>	No
<i>Disability</i>	No	<i>Marriage and Civil Partnership</i>	No
<i>Sexual orientation</i>	No		

(If an impact on one group or more is anticipated, a full People Impact Assessment must be completed).

CONSULTATION AND 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 set of Steering Groups are provisioning planned for February 2022 and will be confirmed shortly by our OCLOs.

The immediate programme team meet between fortnightly and monthly, depending on diaries, and have these working days at O/C stations providing visibility and engagement with O/C colleagues. This has proved very effective in building a team and having open discussions and problem solving. We expect these to continue as part of the Conversion Project Team and OCLO team once tranche 2 of the programme closes.

We continue to run monthly on-boarding meetings with the following dept's/key stakeholders involved in the recruitment and on-boarding process for On-Call:

- Programme/project teams
- OCLO team
- Recruitment
- Technical Services
- Occupational Health
- Training
- Fitness
- Comms

This allows us to continually review the recruitment process for On-Call and ensure we engage with all the touchpoints, providing the opportunity to discuss any issues or anticipated constraints. These are already proving effective and when recently asked for feedback, they were described as very valuable and important so we will continue with these. These are expected to be handed over to HR/Recruitment to lead moving forward following the closure of tranche 2 of the programme.

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 linked to this report.

FUTURE PLANS

The plans of the programme will form the basis of any future reporting on converting stations, once a decision is made on the future state of the On-Call Duty System, which will be discussed at the On-Call Programme Board meeting on 19 January 2022.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AND APPENDICES

None.