

**Status of Report: Public**

**Meeting: Combined Fire Authority**

**Date: 21 June 2023**

**Subject: Health & Wellbeing Provision to Employees**

**Report by: The Chief Fire and Rescue Officer**

**Author: Judi Beresford, Assistant Chief Fire and Rescue Officer**

**For: Information**

### **Purpose**

1. The purpose of the report is to provide an update on the health and wellbeing activity provided to employees of Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service.

### **Recommendation**

2. It is recommended that the CFA notes the extensive health and wellbeing provision made for all employees of Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service.

### **Executive Summary**

3. In 2022, the Service introduced a new role which is responsible for supporting the Health and Wellbeing of its employees. As a member of the Occupational Health Unit (OHU), the Health and Wellbeing Officer has quickly and effectively enhanced the welfare support to staff.

### **Background**

#### Responsive Support

4. The Health and Wellbeing provision places emphasis on two distinct approaches, those being 'responsive' and 'preventative'. At all times the service provided is people centric and aims to support employees within the workplace. Elements of the wellbeing provision are undertaken by a third party, for example, the Employee Assistance Programme and the counselling service, provided by AMICA.
5. In addition to these external providers, the Service has a number of peer supporters who are trained to promote health and wellbeing and offer general advice, guidance and signposting. There is also support to retirees from the service, which is provided by retired firefighters and co-ordinated by LFRS.

6. Operational crews are often faced with very difficult circumstances. To support them, Incident and Trauma Support is offered through TRiM and LFRS currently has 13 active TRiM Practitioners, as well as two Co-ordinating Practitioners and a Lay Co-ordinator. The Service is currently looking at ways to improve access to TRiM for Control and for Catastrophic Incidents where a TRiM Co-ordinator should be on site.

#### Preventative Support

7. Regular station visits are undertaken for the provision of mental health support and to support the resilience of people following difficult incidents. Signposting to agencies specialising in Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder can be undertaken.
8. The Health and Safety Executive has Stress Management Standards which the Service has recently adopted to enhance its stress risk assessment process.
9. The Service has introduced a Suicide Prevention and Response package by way of a short, 20 minute video by the Zero Suicide Alliance. This is now mandatory viewing for all service staff, and there is some enhanced first responder training currently being researched for operational supervisory managers.
10. Health and Wellbeing Passports are currently being rolled out; these are designed for the individual to record their wellbeing challenges and support needs to assist their line manager, colleagues and support network to support them effectively, if they wish to share it. The passport provides space to document their learning and working styles, any agreed reasonable adjustments, mental or physical health concerns or neurodiversity which can be shared or simply used as a reflective tool for the individual.
11. The decontamination of operational employees following exposure to fire and smoke is a significant issue and one which is taken seriously. Actions have been, and will continue to be, taken to ensure that effective decontamination can take place, including additional washing of PPE, 'clean spaces' and showering/wash facilities.

#### **Report Implications/Impact**

12. Legal (including crime and disorder)

The service has a moral and legal duty for the care and wellbeing of its employees. It is a duty which is taken very seriously and will continue to progress as part of the People Strategy.

13. Financial (including value for money, benefits and efficiencies)

Apart from the decontamination project all the other provisions put in place by the service do not have a cost attached. Following the decontamination trial at Central station, the financial impact of a full rollout across the service is currently being estimated. The costs and funding for the decontamination project will be captured separately. (Manjora Bisla, Finance Manager).

14. Risk (including corporate and operational, health and safety and any impact on the continuity of service delivery)

The Service's reputation as an employer of choice will be at risk if it is not seen to have a positive healthy working environment.

15. Staff, Service Users and Stakeholders (including the Equality Impact Assessment)

Clearly this is a significant area of interest for all employees as they are key to the ongoing development as a Service. The Health and Safety Committee and the Health and Wellbeing Board will provide oversight of activities and ensure direction and performance management.

16. Environmental

None directly arising from this report

17. Impact upon "Our Plan" Objectives

The People Strategy is a key supporting document within 'Our Plan'.

### **Background Papers**

None.

### **Appendices**

None.

### **Officers to Contact**

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