

Status of Report: Public

Meeting: Combined Fire Authority

Date: 24th June 2024

Subject: Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service – Strategic Workforce Plan

Report by: Chief Fire & Rescue Officer

Author: ACFO Judi Beresford

For: Information

Purpose

1. The purpose of the report is to present the new Strategic Workforce Plan document, which supports the implementation of the Service's People Strategy and Corporate Risk Management Plan (CRMP).

Recommendation

2. It is recommended to note:
 - a. the positive progress in the Service's approach to workforce planning;
 - b. the areas of focus for the Service in relation to workforce planning, namely operational skills such as incident command, blue light driving and essential technical skills in support services.

Executive Summary

3. Workforce planning is becoming increasingly necessary as the Service works to understand its priorities for people and skills. This has become increasingly challenging as it is difficult to predict the retirement profile of the operational workforce due to changes in normal retirement age (NRA), the Fire Fighters Pension Scheme and fluctuations in the workforce demographics nationally.
4. Typically, profiling shows that employees are more transient and willing to make changes to move career direction.

Background

5. Integral to the implementation of the CRMP and its associated strategy documents is the need to have the people and skills to deliver against ambitions and to provide the very best service to local communities.

6. The workforce plan, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, has been developed in collaboration with several departments across the Service to establish key areas of skills and identify potential skills shortage. This approach will continue to be enhanced in forthcoming activities and is used in planning.
7. Officers are making better use of information gained from across the Service and captured in the new reporting tool (Power Bi) to give an even better understanding of the skills needed, in particular, across the range of operational skills, to ensure that recruitment and training activity can be planned effectively.
8. Anticipating the attrition levels across the Service has changed following changes to the Pension Schemes, making it more difficult to predict the number of staff leaving. This is exacerbated by changes in the national picture of a workforce whereby people are far more likely to make career choices and move jobs, rather than viewing the Fire Service as a long term career that has been the case in the past.
9. Other factors impact workforce planning and there is a need to further develop talent management and succession planning activities, although this will not take place until there is assurance that other associated factors are in place and embedded. It is likely that schemes such as these will form part of a third year plan and will not be undertaken in the first year of activity.

Report Implications/Impact

10. Legal (including crime and disorder)

There are no legal impacts arising directly from the report or the workforce plan document.

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

It is vital that the Service progresses the relationship of finances to the overall workforce planning of the organisation. Work will be done as systems and processes are improved to make greater awareness and alignment of people to the service budget and with that financial management training and development for managers at all levels.

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

None directly arising from the report.

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

None directly from the report

14. Environmental

None specific to the report

15. Impact upon “Our Plan” Objectives

The Workforce Plan contributes to the CRMP and to the implementation of the People Strategy.

16. Background Papers

Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service – Corporate Risk Management Plan and People Strategy.

Appendices

Strategic Workforce Plan

Officers to Contact

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