



**Essex Fire Authority and Essex County Fire & Rescue Service**

# **Evolving our Culture – Building on Firm Foundations**

**July 2017**

## Evolving our Culture – Building on Firm Foundations

### INTRODUCTION

At its meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2015 Essex Fire Authority accepted, in full, the 35 recommendations made within the report of the Independent Cultural Review of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (ECFRS).

In the twenty-two months that have elapsed since the meeting of Essex Fire Authority (EFA) on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2015, Members of the EFA, the Acting Chief Fire Officer (A/CFO) and members of the Service Leadership Team (SLT) have continued to meet with and benefited from the support and guidance of members of the Expert Advisory Panel (EAP). This sustained interaction has contributed to a range of developments, initiatives and actions that have served to improve the culture within ECFRS.

The purpose of this report and supporting appendices is to summarise both quantitative and qualitative changes effected since the acceptance of all Cultural Review recommendations, conveying perspectives from SLT members and Heads of Department that link to the main themes set out by Irene Lucas CBE:

- General Recommendation – Expert Advisory Panel
- Vision, Values, Strategies and Plans of ECFRS
- Governance and Leadership: How well led is this Organisation?
- Relationships, Role and Responsibilities
- Valuing People and Challenging Poor Performance and Behaviour
- Learning, Development and Promotion
- Communication and Engagement

It is hoped that both objective results and subjective observations will enable the reader to note how the Service has responded to the Cultural Review. More importantly, a clear record of progress will illustrate how strong and sustainable foundations laid since October 2015 are empowering the Service, Departments and Individuals to implement positive change; subsequently encouraging dialogue and shared learning to support sustained growth.

This report is underpinned by the following documents:

- **Appendix A** - An insight into different departmental perspectives against the central themes listed in the Cultural Review.
- **Appendix B** - Service Leadership Team's Self-Assessment – 'Building Strong and Sustainable Foundations'.

Although the above sources are not exhaustive, they serve as an overview and reflect our journey as an Authority and Service, learning from lessons by listening to feedback and converting this into action; demonstrating our commitment to improving culture and creating an environment that truly represents our Values to ensure that Essex is a safer place to live, work and travel.

## **CULTURAL REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following illustrates Authority and Service actions and activity achieved against all specific 35 Cultural Review recommendations, made by Irene Lucas CBE and accepted in full by Essex Fire Authority.

### **GENERAL RECOMMENDATION – EXPERT ADVISORY PANEL**

**1 - An external Expert Advisory Panel with a range of skills and backgrounds, and accountable to the FRA, should be appointed as soon as possible to provide strategic advice to the organisation for the next 24 months. The Panel will comprise senior people, experienced in addressing challenging organisations who will provide strategic advice to the FRA and senior officers on the leadership and change now needed.**

### **What We've Done So Far**

- EFA accepted all 35 recommendations including the appointment of an EAP and establishing a budget to support this work.
- EAP appointed to provide strategic advice and assist EFA, SLT and Staff Representatives.
- EFA established a sub-group of the Principal Officers Human Resources (POHR) committee to both provide oversight to the work of cultural transformation and engage with the EAP.
- A Governance process was developed and agreed that established the relationship between the EAP and the Political Leadership (The Authority), Professional Leadership (The Service) and Staff Leadership (The Unions).
- The EAP were invited to provide oversight to the work of the Service and Authority as they developed plans for Programme 2020, the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP), Options for Change and a revised Strategy for the Service.
- The Authority and the Service supported a number of reviews to ensure that progress could be assessed and evaluated against all recommendations.

### **Future Steps**

- The EAP have clearly been influential in assisting to normalise the operating climate of the Service and there is evidence of a maturing of working relationships between Senior

Service managers and Staff Representatives. Whilst relationships are maturing, there remains fragility in the trust that is developing and that should not be overlooked.

- The Authority will explore the need to maintain an ongoing relationship with some members of the EAP to support the work that remains ahead of the Service in terms of cultural transformation. This will, of course need to be discussed with the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) should the proposed Governance change go ahead in October 2017 as planned.

## **VISION, VALUES, STRATEGIES AND PLANS OF ECFRS**

**2 - A cross section of staff should be involved and engaged in the development of the vision, values, strategies and plans to bring a whole organisation perspective to the processes and to engender a sense of ownership.**

### **What We've Done So Far**

- A new Service Leadership Team has been formed.
- A revised and defined Vision Statement.
- The new Service Values written by Staff.
- A new Service Strategy has been developed and communicated through workshops encompassing Staff Groups.
- Key Service priorities defined in the Service Strategy.
- Key delivery themes and defining purpose defined in the Service Strategy.
- Quarterly Corporate Planning days introduced to ensure SLT and Managers work together to agree Business Plans and Priorities. This helped develop a shared sense of ownership over the decisions made. Moving from a less directive, silo style of management to more collaborative approach.
- Feedback from the Staff Survey indicates a further improvement of understanding of the Strategy and the work of their team in support of the Service Strategy.

### **Future Steps**

- Continue to engage Staff and their Representatives in the process of ongoing change.
- Test and evaluate the reach and efficacy of communication channels in support of delivering organisational change.
- Planning will need to be undertaken early for the preparation of the Service Strategy for 2020 and beyond. Early communication of this plan to Staff and Stakeholders will offer the best opportunity for all to get involved.

<b>3 - Ensure that all staff understand their role in delivering the strategy by making the strategy simpler with a concise summary that can be prominently displayed.</b>
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#### **What We've Done So Far**

- New Service Strategy communicated via Manager Briefings, Emails, Acting Chief Fire Officer's (A/CFO) Week Ahead, Weekly eBrief and Intranet.
- Published a full 'Strategy' and a 'Strategy at a Glance' document.
- Electronic and paper copies of new Service Strategy issued in full and 'Strategy at a Glance'.
- New Fire Station Plans – Linking Service Strategy and Values to operational activities and actions.
- Staff Survey used to check understanding of Service Strategy.
- Largest improvement in the Employee Engagement Survey was for "I understand the Service Strategy and objectives of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (ECFRS)" which increased from 12% to 70%.
- All Business Plans presented to SLT for visibility and alignment to the Service Strategy.

#### **Future Steps**

- Continue to focus on the Service Strategy through delivery and report to EFA and/or PCC as appropriate.
- Be clear about the role of Managers at every level in the delivery of the Authority's Strategy for the Service. Linking this to our development plans for Managers and embedding this within the Appraisal Process.
- Manage the performance of Teams and Fire Stations through the Fire Station and Team Plan Process that has created the link between the Service Strategy and the outcomes expected from Teams at every level.

#### **GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP – HOW WELL LED IS THIS ORGANISATION?**

<b>4 - Ensure that the position in relation to the Chief Fire Officer is clarified as quickly as possible.</b>
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#### **What We've Done So Far**

- Outstanding position with the former Chief Fire Officer (CFO) was resolved in April 2017.

## **Future Steps**

- EFA and the PCC to take decisions about the future of the CFO position and recruitment of a permanent CFO.
- Undertake a ‘lessons learned’ review from the management of this case.

**5 - The role of the elected members on the FRA must be more widely understood and more visible to staff, stakeholders and the public through publication of summary updates on the intranet and in Parade News.**

## **What We’ve Done So Far**

- Agendas and papers of all EFA meetings communicated internally ahead of meetings and published on the Intranet.
- EFA meetings video-streamed live for all Staff over last eighteen months.
- Recent move away from video streaming to audio streaming in line with most other local Authorities.
- Updates published via A/CFO Week Ahead and On-Call 60 second briefings.

## **Future Steps**

- Consideration to be given to the visibility and understanding of the role of Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) following the proposed Governance change in October, should it go ahead.
- Assess how the outcomes of any future PFCC decision-making process will be communicated in an open and transparent way.

**6 - FRA meetings need to be focused on strategic solutions to ECFRS’ most pressing challenges.**

## **What We’ve Done So Far**

- Essex Fire Authority Members made key strategic decisions including:
  - Cultural Review, transformation and appointment of EAP.
  - Integrated Risk Management Plan.
  - Options for Change.
  - Revision of new Service Strategy.
  - Restructure of Principal Management and Service Leadership Team.
  - Proposed changes in Governance to PCC.

## **Future Steps**

- Maintain strategic political focus throughout the current work to define the revised Scrutiny and Governance arrangements under the PFCC.

**7 - Ensure that FRA reports address a wider range of cultural and industrial relations subjects and not just operational, financial and risk issues.**

## **What We've Done So Far**

- EFA established a sub group of the POHR Committee to both provide oversight to the work of cultural transformation and engage with the EAP.
- A Governance process was developed and agreed that established the relationship between the EAP and the Political Leadership (The Authority), Professional Leadership (The Service) and Staff Leadership (The Unions).
- Staff Survey results for the last 3 years presented to EFA.
- Dispute Resolution document approved by EFA.
- Programme 2020 Advisory Panel established and subsequently revised to meet future needs of the staff representatives, the Service and the Authority.
- EFA Members attended 'Your Voice' staff meetings.

## **Future Steps**

- Incorporate cultural and industrial relations section to all information and decision report templates so the Service can demonstrate the positive and negative implications of report content.

**8 - Ensure that there are planned meetings with representatives of the FRA to meet around key issues with representatives of the workforce and trades union colleagues.**

## **What We've Done So Far**

- 2020 Transformation Programme Advisory Panel established with EFA Members and Representative Bodies.
- Representative Bodies consulted on all projects and initiatives.
- Trade Dispute Resolution agreement reached through meetings and discussion with Representatives from the Fire Brigades Union (FBU).
- Joint Negotiation Consultation Committee (JNCC) meetings re-established.

## **Future Steps**

- Ensure JNCC arrangements are in place for all Representative Bodies.

**9 - More work should be done to ensure the accuracy of reports that are presented to the FRA with the Service's Performance Manager signing of all reports containing data to the FRA in future.**

## **What We've Done So Far**

- New Performance Framework agreed with EFA.
- Performance Manager has presented Performance Report to Audit, Governance and Review (AG&R) and EFA.

## **Future Steps**

- Consideration should be given to a quality assurance process for all reports. This would need to be incorporated into the report timetables and reports presented well ahead of the submission deadline to ensure quality checking can be done thoroughly. As a minimum, all Directors should be responsible for quality assuring all reports to SLT and the EFA that originate from members of their directorate.
- There is a need to determine the scrutiny and performance framework that will exist under the PFCC should the Governance change occur in October 2017 as planned.

**10 - A review of the framework of how the FRA operates should be commissioned to ensure effective governance and accountability of ECFRS.**

## **What We've Done So Far**

- Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) workshops have developed further Members and Senior Officers understanding of Governance, Roles and Responsibilities.

## **Future Steps**

- Work being undertaken to refine the Governance arrangements ahead of the PFCC Governance change.



**11 - An external organisational development expert on the Panel, with support from all trade unions and staff representatives, needs to lead a review of the organisation's hierarchical structure to remove management layers, redesignate roles away from rank and improve spans of control from the current 1.7 FTEs per manager.**

### **What We've Done So Far**

- EFA supported the appointment of Natasha Edmunds to the EAP.
- EFA Members and Service Managers advised by Natasha Edmunds, EAP.
- New Management Structure agreed for upper two tiers. 50% of Principal Officer roles removed. 50% of Area Manager roles removed. Second phase of Management Review underway.
- Early Exit Options offered and subsequently managed in two phases.
- People Structure Project, ongoing.
- Rank to Role in delivery. Principles agreed which reduce the number of management tiers on fire stations and also simplifies the grade structure by removing A grades at WM and SM.
- Review of Grey and Green Book roles.

### **Future Steps**

- Implement revised role and management structures.
- Ensure we invest in Managers at every level.
- Post Management Review II - The Service should evaluate new spans of control to ensure improvement has been delivered.
- Publish Organisation Structure Charts showing all posts and grades to aid openness and transparency and for use within Succession Planning.

**12 - Identify agents for change across the Service, trades unions and staff representatives and begin to jointly develop proposals relating to the Programme 2020 vision.**

### **What We've Done So Far**

- 30 trained coaches in place.
- SLT members providing 2020 face-to-face briefings to all Staff.
- Engagement has continued to increase throughout the duration of Programme 2020 (P2020). Following the first phase, which set the overall direction and objectives, engagement has continued to assist in refining the detail of change plans and the approaches taken to implement change. A very high level of engagement of Representative Bodies in the Options Development phase of P2020.
- Monthly Managers briefings now being held for Station managers and above.

- Dispute Resolution Agreement reached with FBU.

### **Future Steps**

- The default position in Programme 2020 is to include Representative Bodies from the earliest point. This approach is being rolled into changes occurring outside of P2020.
- Implement a process for regular Manager briefings for Watch and Crew managers.

## **RELATIONSHIPS, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**13 - The mixed crewing model that has now been implemented in Essex at Great Dunmow, with the station staffed by both whole time and retained – this needs to be adopted across the county, sensitively and with the involvement of all trade unions.**

### **What We've Done So Far**

- Dispute Resolution Agreement reached with FBU around Mixed Crewing (MC) and Additional Shift Working (ASW).

### **Future Steps**

- Positive start to crewing model changes at Clacton Fire Station where mixed crewing will be utilised.
- ASW advert published to recruit volunteers.
- ASW to go live in July 2017 which supports Mixed Crewing.

**14 - Make it clear at every level that everyone is personally responsible for removing barriers.**

### **What We've Done So Far**

- New Service Values written by Staff.
- JNCC re-established and dialogue created.
- New Dignity at Work policy agreed with Representative Bodies.
- New Inclusion and Diversity Lead employed by the Service.
- New Inclusion and Diversity Action Group set up.
- Inclusion and Diversity Lead meeting Wholetime Watches and On-Call Fire Stations.
- EAP member Jim Barbour, extremely helpful in resolving the industrial dispute.

## **Future Steps**

- The Inclusion and Diversity Action Group is supporting a review of recruitment activity to identify positive action initiatives and interventions. This will include revising website content as part of our commitment to attract, recruit and retain a more diverse workforce.
- Minutes, actions and supporting documents will be available on the new Inclusion & Diversity intranet pages once available.
- A draft Strategic Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan has been developed and due to be submitted to SLT in July for ratification.

**15 - Do more to recruit leaders from other sectors, bringing fresh perspectives and learning from the wider public sector and beyond.**

## **What We've Done So Far**

- Appointments made including the Director of Transformation, Deputy Directors of Human Resources, Performance, Programme 2020 and Head of Talent, Inclusion and Diversity Lead.

## **Future Steps**

- Internal/external advert for vacant Area Manager role.
- Future Talent Pool processes will include external adverts.

**16 - Reserve the wearing of rank markings for operational staff, fire control incidents, public events, partnership meetings and ceremonial events only. Either adopt civilian attire in head office or, learning from Staffordshire FRS, introduce a new 'team strip' that is worn by both firefighters and support staff.**

## **What We've Done So Far**

- Staff Pulse Survey conducted and consultation with other Fire Services.
- EAP and EFA paper written to evaluate effects of uniform and explore different perspectives.
- Uniform at Headquarters is now optional; Grey Book Staff attend meetings in both civilian attire and uniform.

## **Future Steps**

- Continuous review will be sought in line with the national Fire Rescue Service agenda.

**17 - The Expert Panel to invite a representative of the Essex Police to advise on the seriousness of any reported behaviours.**

- This was not deemed necessary.

**18 - Refer any intimidatory behaviour against individuals, equipment or property for immediate consideration by the Expert Panel who will consider criminal proceedings.**

- Since the Cultural Review, no serious behavioural breaches reported that required referral to the Police.

## **VALUING PEOPLE AND CHALLENGING POOR PERFORMANCE AND BEHAVIOUR**

**19 - To address the perceived inconsistency and unfairness, all disciplinary action should be overseen by a sub group of the expert panel (subject to statutory constraints) over the next 24 months. Any intimidatory behaviour against individuals, equipment or property needs to be considered by the Expert Panel taking advice from representatives of Essex Police. The sub-group will have a specific role in ensuring elected members are aware of matters without cutting across the existing process. This approach to take effect in respect of all new cases.**

### **What We've Done So Far**

- EAP advised on a range of Discipline and Grievance processes.
- EAP advised on seeking a resolution to historic cases linked to Operation Neaton.
- Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) undertook a review and subsequently provided a report to SLT on improving Discipline and Grievance, shared with the organisation in June 2017.

### **Future Steps**

- It is important that we develop our Managers to ensure that they understand what is required in the management of Discipline cases and, if required, in the role of Hearing Manager.
- It is also important that all cases are reviewed to ensure that the outcomes remain appropriate, proportionate and consistent across the Service.

<b>20 - Create a clearing house for dealing with the unnecessary number of vexatious and low grade grievances that are submitted.</b>
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#### **What We've Done So Far**

- EAP met to examine outstanding Discipline and Grievance cases providing direction, where appropriate.
- EAP advised on seeking a resolution to historic cases linked to Operation Neaton.

#### **Future Steps**

- It is important that we develop our Managers to ensure that they understand what is required in the management of Discipline cases and if required, in the role of Hearing Manager.
- It is also important that all cases are reviewed to ensure that the outcomes remain appropriate, proportionate and consistent across the Service.

<b>21 - Clarify and simplify arrangements for whistleblowing and the escalation of incidents of this nature directly to the independent Expert Panel.</b>
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- The Whistleblowing Process was clarified for Staff.
- The EAP made themselves available for Staff to contact directly and a number took the opportunity to do so.

<b>22 - Consider the use of a rapid mediation service as has been adopted by Staffordshire CFRS.</b>
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#### **What We've Done So Far**

- Linda Dickens EAP, advised and supported Service and Managers.
- ACAS has reviewed Discipline and Grievance procedures – Meetings with Representative Bodies conducted collectively and separately.
- External Mediation Services used to address Grievance behaviour.
- Dignity at Work policy developed and introduced.

#### **Future Steps**

- There will be an introduction of Dignity at Work Advisors to support the new policy and toolkit. Volunteer advisors will be trained to support colleagues across the Service to identify and address inappropriate behaviour, bullying, harassment or disadvantage.
- Where proportionate and appropriate, informal resolution will be supported.

- It is important that we develop our Managers to ensure that they understand what is required in the management of their teams and that they have the skills to resolve conflict at the lowest practicable level.

**23 - Create more opportunities to recognise outstanding performance and actively promote nominations for an annual awards ceremony.**

#### **What We've Done So Far**

- Reward and Recognition process developed as part of the People Structure Strategy.
- We have changed our approach to communications; CFO Weekly Blog continues to recognise excellent performance from across the Service.

#### **Future Steps**

- First annual Awards Ceremony planned for November 2017.

**24 - Consult with BAME, LGBT, female and disabled colleagues regarding the reforming of appropriate groups to look at the ways in which the service could proactively progress the issues raised and proactively use the different perspective that diversity can bring to the organisation.**

#### **What We've Done So Far**

- New Inclusion and Diversity Lead employed by the Service.
- New Inclusion and Diversity Action Group set-up to maximise a diverse workforce and promote inclusion.
- Diversity events advertised on Service intranet and attended by ECFRS Staff.

#### **Future Steps**

- The Inclusion and Diversity Action Group currently has a total of 22 active participants from a range of roles across the Service with growing interest. The group are currently supporting the Service response to the Inclusive Fire Service Group in relation to the improvement strategies that have been identified as a result of 'the behaviour and cultural survey' (NJC/6/16).
- The Inclusion and Diversity Action Group is supporting a review of recruitment activity to identify positive action initiatives and interventions.

## LEARNING, DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION

**25 - Revise future training programmes to ensure that they are focused, and are limited to those showing talent, potential and have a desire to progress. It should focus on a smaller number of future leaders.**

### What We've Done So Far

- New Head of Talent recruited.
- Assessment and Development Centre (ADC) process implemented for all Managerial levels, which includes the provision of a Talent Pool.
- Two new members of SLT put on Essex Leadership Programme.
- Group Manager and Station Manager assessments completed.
- Area Manager assessments in progress.
- Crew Manager assessments in progress.

### Future Steps

- The priority was to resolve the uniform recruitment and reduce the temporary environment in the uniform area of the Service. Work is planned in the future to shape opportunities for Green Book employees.

**26 - Promotion should only be open to those who have completed and successfully graduated from the programme.**

### What We've Done So Far

- Talent Pool Process implemented to develop and support successful candidates. We want, and indeed need, the people with the right skills to do their jobs and who also have the right attitudes.
- Talent Pool process for all levels being conducted during 2017.

### Future Steps

- Through the Talent Pool process it is intended that long-term Succession Planning will take place.
- It is important to note that this is and will remain a meritocratic process.
- Re-run the Talent Pool Process in 6 months.

**27 - Change the emphasis from operational to more inclusive leadership training, learning from Kent CFRS that has introduced Level 5 coaching qualifications, including back-office staff, to improve the management skills of middle managers.**

#### **What We've Done So Far**

- 30 trained coaches in place.
- Coaches will assist both successful and unsuccessful Talent Pool candidates.
- Joint Management Skills Workshops in place for Grey and Green Book Managers.
- Personal Qualities & Attributes (PQA) and Competency Framework introduced which sets the same behavioural standards for all Managers at a particular level.

#### **Future Steps**

- Three-stage Leadership Development Programme drafted covering developing potential. Supported by ILM Level 3 and 5, this will be introduced in Autumn 2017.

**28 - Make promotion to managerial positions more transparent and involve the Expert Panel in overseeing all appointments for the next 24 months.**

#### **What We've Done So Far**

- Director of Transformation appointment overseen by EAP.
- Director of Prevention, Protection and Response assessed and appointed to the role.
- ADC/Talent Pool process developed and subsequently reviewed by EAP.
- ADC process being independently evaluated.

**29 - Ensure that leadership and coaching skills and qualifications are considered as much as technical competencies in all appraisals.**

#### **What We've Done So Far**

- 30 trained coaches in place.
- Appraisals include review of PQAs/Competencies which encompass leadership skills.
- Talent Pool assessment and development centres to test both leadership and technical skills.

#### **Future Steps**

- People Strategy 2017 – 2020 in development and draft discussed at SLT.
- Implement the actions within the People Strategy to develop our Managers at every level.



**30 - Set clear and consistent expectations that annual appraisals need to be completed by all managers across the Service and introduce an audit to ensure that the quality of the appraisal meetings and paperwork is actually delivering a satisfying process which will take the service forward.**

#### **What We've Done So Far**

- Competency Framework and Appraisal Process reviewed and simplified for 2017.
- Completion rate of Appraisals reported to SLT.

#### **Future Steps**

- Keep Appraisal Process under review, monitoring completion rates but also quality of outputs.
- Look to test relevance of Appraisals for each Employee Work Group.

**31 - Review of existing management and delivery mechanisms to provide implementation ability with clear oversight of progress in implementing change and most importantly, embedding change.**

#### **What We've Done So Far**

- Management Review delivered in two stages. Management Review II providing new structure to deliver against IRMP and Service Strategy.
- Peoples Structure Project and Grey Book to Green Book review ongoing.
- Programme 2020 Project Management Process and Board (and previously Advisory Panel).
- New Performance Management Framework established and agreed with EFA.
- Rank to Role process undertaken and being implemented.
- Service Leadership Team established and Terms of Reference defined.
- ADC/Talent Pool process implemented for all Managerial levels.
- Service Change Board established (learning from the successful approach to managing change within Programme 2020).

#### **Future Steps**

- Change processes being reviewed with involvement from Change Experts, Service Programme and Project Managers.
- Continue to review the way in which our staff respond to change through our staff engagement surveys.

## COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT

**32 - Engage the Communications team at Essex County Council to improve the range and credibility of the information communicated to stakeholders, and establish a staff reference group to better understand what messages are important to the Service as a whole.**

### What We've Done So Far

- New Head of Corporate Communications and Marketing appointed, working closely with Essex County Council Communications Team.
- Significantly amended Service approach to Communications.
- Identified the new Communications Channels which are now being used regularly.
- Developed a new range of Communications metrics to test reach and effectiveness.
- Implemented Manager and Staff Forums.
- Restructured the Communications Team.
- Intranet articles including A/CFO weekly blog, e-Brief and 60 second brief.

### Future Steps

- Review our Communications activities to test effectiveness.

**33 - Ensure that the agendas and papers of every meeting of the FRA and SMB are posted on the internet so staff can see what is being discussed. A summary of decisions should be published after each meeting.**

### What We've Done So Far

- EFA agendas and papers published prior to and after meetings.
- EFA meetings video-streamed live for all staff over last eighteen months.
- Recent move to audio streaming of EFA meetings.

### Future Steps

- Assess implications of Governance change and how the decision making process can be shared with Staff.

**34 - Develop a style guide for corporate communications to ensure consistency and protocols for sign off by at least one member of SMB and bring in some measurement to evaluate positive and negative coverage of the Service.**

#### **What We've Done So Far**

- Style Guide reviewed and revised.
- Head of Corporate Communications having weekly meetings with A/CFO.
- Developed a new range of Communications metrics to test reach and effectiveness.

#### **Future Steps**

- Review our Communications activities to test effectiveness.

#### **FINAL RECOMMENDATION**

**35 - After six months carry out a short independent review on progress.**

#### **What We've Done So Far**

- EFA proactive in their support for a mid-term review.
- Sir Ken Knight visited ECFRS for mid-term review in 2016, subsequently making 19 further recommendations.

#### **Future Steps**

- Sir Ken Knight to undertake an exit review on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> August 2017.

#### **SIR KEN KNIGHT MID-TERM REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS**

Sir Ken Knight visited ECFRS to undertake a mid-term review to assess and evaluate Service progress against the Cultural Review. Subsequently, 19 further recommendations were made and accepted in full by the Essex Fire Authority. The following highlights actions against each specific recommendation.

**1 - A further visit should be made to the Service in Autumn 2016 in order to seek an update on the resolution of the outstanding historical employment issues.**

- Complete.

**2 - Consider how the lessons learned from the work that the Authority and the Service have undertaken to improve organisational culture, can be shared more widely with other Fire and Rescue Services.**

- Visited Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) Cheltenham to share learning.
- Visited Gloucestershire and Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) and discussed with Culture Review Commission in Victoria, Australia to share learning.
- A/CFO presented to Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) colleagues.

**3 - Dovetail the Lucas recommendations with those of the 2020 Programme implementation plan and develop the suite of performance indicators. However, the Lucas recommendations should continue to be reported as stand-alone recommendations to ensure oversight of their specific delivery.**

- Complete.

**4 - Continue to encourage engagement by Fire Authority Members, including the development of Members' roles, expertise and skill sets to improve their role in providing scrutiny and appropriate challenge and raise their profile with Staff.**

- SOLACE workshops continued in the second phase however this work was overtaken by the PCC work on the Governance change under the PCC.
- Work undertaken to revise current Governance arrangements.
- Work underway to prepare Governance arrangements for the PFCC.

**5 - Strengthen Members' assurance role in holding the Service to account to develop and embed a culture of effective scrutiny and ensure that Members are properly supported to undertake their assurance role.**

- Undertaken through SOLACE workshops. However, any progress made will have limited impact due to significant change of membership of the EFA.
- The Governance change, if it goes ahead will offer potential for improvement.
- Presentation to AG&R by Performance Manager to gauge how the EFA want performance data presented.

**6 - Establish a single point of contact for each of the recognised Trades Unions within the Service to improve consistency and to develop improved working relationships.**

- In hand.

**7 - Continue to engage with recognised Trades Unions via joint workshops to encourage an integrated workforce to ensure a joint approach to a positive organisational culture.**

- Where possible joint workshops are held within Programme 2020 and subordinate projects.

**8 - Seek to resume the Joint Negotiation Consultation Committee (JNCC) at the earliest opportunity.**

- Complete. These recommenced in January 2017.

**9 - Consider methods to improve networking for firefighters (both Wholetime and On-Call (Retained)) such as visits to/from other Fire and Rescue Services to improve exposure to notable practice.**

- Presentations by Steve McGuirk EAP, and Ann Millington Kent FRS, to Managers' Forum.
- Discussions with Staffordshire FRS to share learning about cultural change.
- Multi-Agency Leadership and Management Development Programme established.
- Visits made to Staffordshire FRS to explore their approach to change.

**10 - Continue to seek improved, internal, external and digital, communications on the workforce changes based on research and evaluation of the outcomes.**

- Under consideration.

**11 - Explore ways to increase the number of apprenticeships offered across the Service in different roles, with the potential to link this activity with its Fire Cadets, to create clear career paths.**

- This is taking place at Clacton Fire Station for new On-Call Firefighters where former Fire Cadets have now been selected as On-call firefighters and will be initiated at Great Baddow and Dovercourt Fire Stations to assist in On-Call recruitment.
- This will be considered as part of the Service's approach to wholetime firefighter recruitment.

**12 - Undertake a review of the recruitment, retention and training of On-Call (Retained) firefighters to encourage more applicants, lengthen the period of their retention and benefit from diversification of the workforce.**

- Improvements have been made to marketing and recruitment activity appearing to be have a positive impact. Recruitment of On-Call Firefighters at Clacton was successful and

we are positive about the potential for similar success in other areas. Some areas continue to be difficult to achieve the same success in recruitment and we continually evaluate our activity and look for new opportunities. We had early success through direct business engagement with Tesco and will revisit work looking at Police Community Support Officers becoming On-Call Firefighters.

- Inclusion and Diversity Action Group are setting up a Steering Group to look at all recruitment activity, improve equality monitoring at all stages including attraction to determine any trends or disproportionate outcomes so that future positive action activity is evidenced based and doesn't inadvertently risk being positive discrimination. Utilising learning from various Police campaigns over the past 3 years as well as the recent London Fire Brigade Research, all advertising, engagement and written documentation will be revised.

<b>13 - Continue to develop the potential for Fire Stations to become Community Hubs for a wider range of services to the Public.</b>
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- Our programme of Delivering Differently in Neighbourhoods (DDiN) has already opened Fire Stations to the Public. Firefighters are engaging with new Community Groups and assisting the voluntary sector in establishing Community Hubs. This has happened in Grays, Southend, Harlow and Basildon. We are about to launch DDiN2 identifying six additional Fire Stations including On-Call to continue our role out of this Department for Communities and Local Government originally funded project.
- We are currently discussing how 14 Fire Stations in Essex will become blood donor locations used by NHS Blood. This has been agreed in principle; Fire Station assessments and suitability reviews have taken place.
- Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG) are to start to use rural On-Call Fire Stations to be health drop in centres in the North East of the County. This has potential to be replicated and will be encouraged across the rest of the County.
- 4 Fire Stations in the South East of the County look set to be used by Voluntary Aid Services for elderly/vulnerable care sessions every two weeks with Public Health England. This will see Fire Stations used for the benefit of those that need instruction on healthier living, including cooking, health advice and signposting.
- Leigh Fire Station is working with Southend Borough Council and Leigh Town council as well as faith groups and Essex Police to provide a Safe and Well Hub to diverse and vulnerable communities in the Southend and Leigh areas. The hub aims to provide an environment where diverse groups and vulnerable people will be welcome to hold meetings and gain safe and well information in a safe space.

**14 - Implement the flexibility of mixed crewing of whole-time and On-Call (retained) Firefighters, together with a review of operational duty systems to produce flexibility in the workforce.**

- A clear statement on both Mixed Crewing and Additional Shift Working is contained in the Dispute Resolution. Agreement signed in March 2017.

**15 - Broaden and diversify Firefighters' roles to include community fire safety objectives as well as support within the Blue Light Community safety collaboration agenda.**

- This was a key element of the Dispute Resolution Agreement signed in March 2017.
- This is being explored through the DDiN and through the Emergency Services Collaboration Programme Board (ESCPB).
- On-Call Staff will soon be used to deliver Home Safety visits with Wholetime Staff to follow.

**16 - Review the routine practice that Staff remain at one Fire Station and on one Watch as the norm in order to enhance competencies and encourage common values and behaviours.**

- ADC/Talent Pools do not differentiate between shift patterns.
- Early Exit Options, followed up by ADC/Talent Pool process, will allow natural movements across the organisation.
- Simplified Appraisal Process will identify development needs.

**17 - Continue to develop appropriate performance assessments to create a 'golden thread' that links individual performance with the newly refreshed Service Strategy.**

- A revised approach to Fire Station plans implemented.
- SLT review of priorities – Making significant progress towards this at the Planning Days.
- Simplified Appraisal Process relaunched.
- Performance Management Framework approved by the EFA in April 2017.

**18 - Review the current fitness criteria in order to increase applications from a diverse range of applicants, particularly women.**

- This will be useful but we need to remember it is not a silver bullet. The bigger issue is generating both interest and applications in the first place.
- We have spoken to existing Firefighters that are women to better understand any perceived barriers they had prior to joining the Service. We have explored any actual barriers that the fitness tests presented on entry as well as any ongoing barriers. The

overwhelming view is that the fitness tests are achievable by women motivated to complete them. The tests are difficult for both men and women with high fall out rates for men also.

- Working with Inclusion and Diversity Officers within the Region and contributing to the Inclusive Fire Service Group's work in this area, we are keen to learn from the experience and views of those outside of Essex too.

<b>19 - Implement annual targets in respect of the number of home risk assessments and community safety engagements and report to the Authority on performance against targets.</b>
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- We are mid-term through a review of Home Safety Visits (HSVs), which includes inclusion of Safe and Well; targeting those most vulnerable and producing a three tier approach to home safety. This will include: Stage 1 - Fire Stations involved in standard HSVs. Stage 2 - Specialist Safe and Well visits by a Technician. Stage 3 - Multi-Agency response including slips, trips and falls/fall prevention called ERIS (Essex Risk Intervention Service). All of this work will be evaluated by Essex University with performance and operating standards set (including our call centre procedures for our call team at South Woodham Ferrers).