

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Report title: Essex County Fire and Rescue Service People Strategy Action Plan Update | |
| Report to: Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel – Ethics and Integrity Sub-Committee | |
| Report author: Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority | |
| Date: 20 September 2023 | For: Noting |
| Enquiries to: Colette Black (Director of People Services) 07917 556964 colette.black@essex-fire.gov.uk | |
| County Divisions affected: All Essex | |

1. Purpose of Report

This report is provided for information. It provides a snapshot of progress against the delivery of the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service's (ECFRS's) People Strategy Action Plan for Quarter 4 2022/23 and Quarter 1 2023/24 and looks ahead to the next period.

2. Recommendations

The Ethics and Integrity Sub-Committee is invited to note the contents of the report, identifying any areas that require further clarification or comment.

3. Context / Summary

Delivery of the People Strategy continues to be regularly reviewed by two governance boards; the Portfolio Management Board for 'change the business' activity and the People Strategy Board for 'run the business' activity. The PFCCFRA's Performance and Resources Board also reviews progress on a regular basis. In addition, delivery of some elements of the strategy is audited in line with our audit plan.

In this report, an update is provided on each of the six pillars as detailed below:



An update of activity provide against each pillar of the programme is detailed below. The activity update reflects progress in achieving the Quarter 4 2022/23 and Quarter 1 2023/24 deliverables. The task bars within the paper are extracted from a People Strategy Action Plan dashboard which is used to monitor the progress of the programme. The data is accurate as at 14 August 2023.

All pillars continue to be on track to complete within the programme schedule and we are proactively looking ahead to 2024-2028. Whilst some minor delays are noted, all are recoverable, except for completion of refurbished BA chambers which has some external dependencies.

In addition, as a learning organisation, we review relevant external reports as they arise in order to identify learning and best practice. To this end, during the period we reviewed “An inspection of vetting, misconduct and misogyny in the Police Service” (HMICFRS, 2 November 2022) and the “Independent Culture Review of London Fire Brigade” (Nazir Afzal, 28 November 2022). Learning from these reviews led to the creation of our ‘Safer Together’ approach. The six workstreams associated with ‘Safer Together’ were commissioned in December 2022. The progress of these is reflected in the ‘Culture and Values’ pillar below.

Further still, on 30 March 2023, HMICFRS published a report entitled ‘Values and Culture in Fire and Rescue Services’ (attached at Appendix 1). This report included 35 actions which have been adopted in full (where relevant to FRSs / CFOs). The service’s latest report on its progress in implementing these recommendations, submitted to HMICFRS in May 2023, is attached at Appendix 2.

Culture: Engaged and Valued

| Start | Finish | Progress | Task Count | Attention Required | Overdue | On Track | Completed |
|--------------|------------|----------|------------|--------------------|---------|----------|-----------|
| 01/04/2020 | 29/03/2024 | 81% | 45 | | | 9 | 36 |
| Total | | | 45 | | | 9 | 36 |

The task bar shows that, of 45 actions that were required to deliver the pillar, 36 are now complete and the remaining nine are on track to be complete by 31st March 2024. Examples of deliverables completed during the period include:

- New 'High Performing Teams' training was created and launched.
- Process improvements in HR Support were delivered, including process mapping and implementation of an electronic Movements and Promotions form to increase productivity and accuracy and deliver a better customer experience.
- Employee Survey feedback and action planning sessions were delivered.

Further to the planned activity, as a result of the reviews referred to above, an approach called 'Safer Together' was launched in December 2022. The six workstreams of this approach, and a brief note of our associated actions, are detailed below:

| | Recommendation | Action |
|---|--|---|
| 1 | Safer Recruitment – The police report includes numerous observations regarding recruitment and vetting. | Safer Recruitment audit complete. |
| 2 | DBS checks | We are continuing to implement DBS checks across the service. |
| 3 | Safe Share - Both reports include observations regarding the ability of colleagues to report concerns. | We have introduced 'Safe Share' to enhance colleagues' routes to share concerns, in line with the infographic below. |
| 4 | Cultural Maturity Model – Both reports include observations regarding the culture and behaviours of the organisations they refer to. | Alongside the existing Core Code of Ethics implementation, an early stage Culture dashboard has been launched as a means of monitoring values, behaviour and culture. |
| 5 | Mapping – There are 23 recommendations in the LFB report and 43 in the police report. | We have mapped our current practice against these to ensure that we have noticed any insight or learning. This mapping has been reviewed by independent consultants and verified. |

6 Managing Allegations – Both reports include recommendations about ensuring past cases and complaints have been managed well.

We have independently reviewed all grievance cases and allegations made in the last 12 months to ensure that they have been managed appropriately.

Sharing a concern

Supporting you to speak up 



1 → First Option

Your Line Manager

Your line manager will respond to concerns and offer support in most circumstances. With your agreement they may call in other support to help.

2 → Advice & Support

Further internal options

HR People Business Partner

Safeguarding Team
vulnerable.adults@essex-fire.gov.uk

Occupational Health
mailbox.oh@essex-fire.gov.uk
01376 576011

Dignity at Work Advocates

3 → Safe Share

Internal support - 24/7

Use this to discuss concerns relating to self and/or others.

safe.share@essex-fire.gov.uk
01376 576 487 (24/7)

This can be anonymous.

Safe Share is a central hub that offers support for you, or can gather information about concerns relating to others.

It puts the wishes and feelings of those seeking support and guidance first.

4 → Whistleblowing

Internally OPFCC

Pippa Brent-Isherwood
01245 291613
pippa.brent-Isherwood@essex.pnn.police.uk

Independent Charity Protect

0203 1172520
whistle@protect-advice.org.uk

Whistleblowing is a further opportunity to raise concerns.

This can be done through the Chief Executive of the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, or through an independent charity, Protect.

Our Whistleblowing Policy gives more information.

 **Helpful policies:** Code of Conduct inc. Code of Ethics, Dignity at Work, Grievance, Wellbeing Matters, Whistleblowing. All policies can be found on the Intranet - HR Policies and Guidance.

Fair, Kind and Inclusive Workplace

| Start | Finish | Progress | Task Count | Attention Required | Overdue | On Track | Completed |
|--------------|------------|----------|------------|--------------------|---------|-----------|-----------|
| 01/04/2020 | 29/03/2024 | 77% | 46 | | | 16 | 30 |
| Total | | | 46 | | | 16 | 30 |

The task bar shows that, of 46 actions that were required to deliver the pillar, 30 are now complete and the remaining 16 are on track to be complete by 31st March 2024. Examples of deliverables completed during the period include:

- Race equality and International Women’s Day events were created and delivered with emergency service colleagues.
- New mandatory training called ‘Inclusive Behaviours’ was developed and launched.

- A new intern from 'Change 100 Leonard Cheshire' commenced work.
- We are now collecting neurodiversity data for the workforce.
- A People Impact Assessment hub and guidance has been developed and launched.

Leadership and Development

| Start | Finish | Progress | Task Count | Attention Required | Overdue | On Track | Completed |
|--------------|------------|----------|------------|--------------------|---------|----------|-----------|
| 01/04/2020 | 29/03/2024 | 77% | 49 | | | | 49 |
| Total | | | 49 | | | | 49 |

The task bar shows that all 49 actions that were required to deliver the pillar have been delivered. Examples of deliverables completed during the period include:

- The next phase of leadership development training was launched.
- Process improvements were delivered, with a coaching app and booking app ready to go live to support productivity and efficiency.

Training

| Start | Finish | Progress | Task Count | Attention Required | Overdue | On Track | Completed |
|--------------|------------|----------|------------|--------------------|---------|-----------|-----------|
| 01/04/2020 | 29/03/2024 | 77% | 65 | | | 13 | 52 |
| Total | | | 65 | | | 13 | 52 |

The task bar shows that, of 65 actions that were required to deliver the pillar, 52 are now complete and the remaining 13 are on track to be complete by 31st March 2024. Examples of deliverables completed during the period include:

- An independent review of the learning system, pdrPro, commenced.
- New immersive training packages utilising Hydra technology were launched.

Resourcing and Talent Management


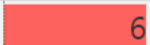


| Start | Finish | Progress | Task Count | Attention Required | Overdue | On Track | Completed |
|--------------|------------|----------|------------|--------------------|---------|-----------|-----------|
| 01/04/2020 | 29/03/2024 | 77% | 45 | | | 12 | 33 |
| Total | | | 45 | | | 12 | 33 |

The task bar shows that, of 45 actions that were required to deliver the pillar, 33 are now complete and the remaining 12 are on track to be complete by 31st March 2024. Examples of deliverables completed during the period include:

- A new transfer policy was agreed and published.
- An updated strategic workforce plan was published.

Delivery of a new applicant tracking system is progressing but the 'go live' date has been delayed to September 2023 due to parts of the team being in business continuity.

Wellbeing, Health and Safety

| Start | Finish | Progress | Task Count | Attention Required | Overdue | On Track | Completed |
|--------------|------------|---|------------|---|---------|---|--|
| 01/04/2020 | 29/03/2024 |  81% | 66 |  6 | |  4 |  56 |
| Total | | | 66 | 6 | | 4 | 56 |

The task bar shows that, of 66 actions that were required to deliver the pillar, 56 are now complete, four are on track to be complete by 31st March 2024 and six require attention to bring them back on track. These have been delayed due to a period of absence and a retirement. New postholders are now in place and these deliverables will be back on track from September 2023.

Looking Forward

A review of the People Strategy commenced in September 2023 with a view to a new strategy being in place in 2024. An initial planning session to consider the People Strategy and associated action plans for 2024-2028 has already been held. Full consultation will commence later in September 2023.

In the meantime, a recent review of our apprenticeship approach resulted in some recommendations which are being considered as 'change' activity. These may be included in the People Strategy action plan for 2023/24. If this is the case a change notice request will be submitted to the Portfolio Management Board.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Values and culture in fire and rescue services (HMICFRS, March 2023)

Appendix 2 - Values and culture in fire and rescue services – ECFRS Progress Report (May 2023)