

**HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**MEETING: 18 OCTOBER 2010**

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**SUBJECT: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FILM PROJECT**

**JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, THE CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY,  
THE FINANCE OFFICER AND PERSONNEL ADVISOR**

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**1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on progress of the Community Engagement Film Project.

**2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Members will be aware that in 2008, the Authority and Tyneside Cinema came together to discuss the idea of working with young people to produce a documentary film, which would engage young people, increase the exposure of the Authority with under-represented groups and raise the profile as an employer of choice within BME communities.
- 2.2 In late 2008 a group of 12 young people from a wide range of backgrounds were brought together and, working with Tyneside Cinema, they learnt how to operate cameras and sound equipment and also how to direct, produce and edit film.
- 2.3 Throughout 2009, the young film makers developed their idea to produce a documentary on the Service. They filmed and interviewed a wide variety of staff and recorded over 40 hours of footage, which they edited down to produce a 25 minute documentary covering all aspects of the Fire and Rescue Service.
- 2.4 The premier of the documentary entitled "1253 Life Savers!" was held at the Tyneside Cinema on 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2009 and since then the film has been shown at recruitment and community events across the Authority area.

**3 GOVERNMENT AGENDA**

- 3.1 The Fire and Rescue Service Equality and Diversity Strategy 2008 – 2018 aims to meet the challenge to bring real, radical, lasting change to the Fire and Rescue Service in England.
- 3.2 The Strategy sets out a Vision for the Fire and Rescue Service and the Goals which should be achieved by 2018 to realize this vision. It is designed to guide and support every Fire and Rescue Authority to deliver an effective service to everyone in the community and to treat all employees with fairness, dignity and respect. It also sets out our commitment, direction and goals, which include;

- The workforce better reflects the communities we serve.
- Talented people from all parts of the community are encouraged to join us.
- Recruitment of minority ethnic employees is at the same percentage or higher than the representation of the working age population.

3.3 The Strategy set out specific targets to achieve the change in the workforce profile, however, the Authority has agreed in principle to adopt stretch targets for the recruitment of BME and women. The stretch targets equate to 18% for women recruited into operational posts and 9.2% recruitment of BME candidates into all parts of the organisation.

## **4 EVALUATION**

- 4.1 Evaluation has been carried out amongst groups from various backgrounds to measure their opinions before and after viewing the documentary. The evaluation captures the views of both potential employees and of other partners and employers within the region.
- 4.2 As shown below the evaluation carried out to date has shown that the film has had a positive effect in changing the views of audiences.

### **Potential Employees**

Prior to watching the Community Engagement Film

- Only 42% had considered a career with the Authority
- Only 13% were aware of the various careers available within the Authority
- Only 47% were aware of the work carried out within the community by the Authority

After watching the Community Engagement Film

- 82% would consider a career with the Authority
- 100% were aware of the various careers available within the Authority
- 100% were aware of the work carried out within the community by the Authority

### **Business Leaders – Potential Employers**

Prior to watching the Community Engagement Film

- Only 20% had considered recommending a career with the Authority
- Only 10% were aware of the various careers available within the Authority
- Only 50% were aware of the work carried out within the community by the Authority

After watching the Community Engagement Film

- 100% would consider recommending a career with the Authority
- 100% were aware of the various careers available within the Authority

***Creating the Safest Community***

- 100% were aware of the work carried out within the community by the Authority

4.3 An edited version of the film will be continually used by the Authority's Prevention and Education teams, Recruitment and Selection Department and BME Community Advocates, who will show the film at all appropriate events. A copy of the film is available on request to the Chief Fire Officer.

## **5 RISK MANAGEMENT**

5.1 The risk to the authority was assessed as minimal utilising the standard risk matrix.

## **6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The financial implications of this project amounted to £31, 500. A funding grant from Gateshead council was secured which amounted to £12,800.

6.2 By utilising internal skills and equipment within the Authority, a further saving of £3,700 was achieved to offset against the total cost.

6.3 The financial contribution of the Authority amounted to £15,000 which was met from existing budgetary heads.

## **7 DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 The project is an innovative approach to supporting the Authority in the diversification of our workforce as detailed as a responsibility under the FRS Equality and Diversity Strategy and the National Framework.

7.2 This project directly supports the Authority's Equality and Diversity agenda, specifically in engaging positively with individuals from the BME community and seeks to improve the transparency of the Authority with BME communities and position us as an employer of choice.

7.3 By distribution through the extended networks of the BME communities, the Authority not only gains greater exposure as an employer, but can also include key information on Community Safety within the packages to reach our diverse communities.

7.4 Furthermore this will provide evidence of progress on equality and diversity to Communities and Local Government for publication, as required annually in the Fire and Rescue Service Equality and Diversity Report.

## **8 HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no health and safety implications in respect of this report.

## **9 RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 Members are requested to:

- (a) Note the contents of this report
- (b) Endorse and support the Community Engagement Film project;
- (c) Receive further reports as necessary

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## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The under mentioned background papers refer to the subject matter of the above report:

- Fire and Rescue Service Equality and Diversity Strategy 2008 – 2013
- National Framework 2008 - 2011