PREVENTING PROTECTING RESPONDING

TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE: 12 JULY 2010

SUBJECT: FIRE AND RESCUE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK 2008/11 – HR ISSUES

JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AND PERSONNEL ADVISOR TO THE AUTHORITY

1   INTRODUCTION

1.1   Members will be aware that the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework 2008/11 includes fire and rescue staff issues.

1.2   Within the document certain areas are designated as being within the remit of individual fire and rescue authorities, whilst others should be addressed via the Regional Management board. This report therefore provides an overview of the progress made and the future work programmes in respect of 'people' issues.

1.3   Within the 2008/11 National Framework Communities and Local Government (CLG) advised that, while the intention was that the Framework should remain in force for the three years of the Comprehensive Spending Review period, this would be reviewed at the 2-year point. This was to ensure the National Framework remained relevant, and continued to properly reflect the Government's performance expectations. CLG have now confirmed that there will be no mid-term review and that the 2008-11 Framework will run to 2011, with work likely to begin with stakeholders on the next National Framework in the Summer of 2010.

1.4   For reporting purposes the 'traffic light' system is used throughout this document based upon a risk approach. Green means that risk has been mitigated to the lowest possible level. Yellow means that risk has been mitigated to an acceptable level although further work is ongoing to further reduce these risks and red means that there are outstanding mitigation actions to be taken to reduce the risks.

2   OVERVIEW

2.1   In tabular form, relevant parts of Section 3 (Diversity and Workforce) of the National Framework state:

Fire and Rescue Authorities must:

Action	Comments	Status	Target Date
In order to engender the trust and confidence of all sections of the community in the integrity of Fire and Rescue Authority employees and to meet their statutory obligations	Core values endorsed by Fire and Rescue Authority and issues to all new starters as an inherent part of their	■	Complete

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Action	Comments	Status	Target Date
to promote equality, both in employment practices and service delivery, Fire and Rescue Authorities will need to ensure that: • all staff and those applying to join meet the standards of honesty and integrity which the public expects • all staff and those applying to join are aware that membership of or affiliation to organisations, groups or societies which espouse views, hold doctrines, have policies or undertake activities which are incompatible with the Core Values would make them unsuitable for employment within an organisation which serves the whole community. grievance and disciplinary processes, in particular to deal with bullying and harassment, are fair, open, transparent and timely.	conditions of employment. Core values available on the intranet, internet and at all Authority locations. Joint statement covering Membership of such bodies agreed by the Authority and Representative Bodies. Statement issued and is available on our internet site.		Complete
Improving workforce diversity through recruitment and retention is a key component of the Strategy. Previous targets for women in operational roles and ethnic minority staff have aimed to measure change in the composition of the workforce, which remains our goal. But to focus effort on factors which can be significantly changed in the short term the Strategy sets targets on recruitment, retention and progression to be met by 2013.	Stretch targets set and agreed by CLG for the recruitment of women and BME people to improve the diversity of the workforce year on year. Annual report to the Authority		Complete Annually
Implement the requirements of the Fire and Rescue Service Equality and Diversity Strategy	Full report included at the March meeting of the HR Committee.		Complete
Ensure that all plans, policies, practices and procedures are effectively equality impact assessed and appropriate action is taken to remove or mitigate any adverse impact	A comprehensive programme is continuing with regard to equality impact assessments.		31st March 2011
Produce and at least annually review an action plan for implementation of the Strategy, and report to elected members on progress	Full report to March meeting of HR Committee		Complete

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Action	Comments	Status	Target Date
Apply IPDS principles to the recruitment, development and progression of all staff. Use IPDS and the national processes based on it (National Firefighter Selection Tests, subject to final validation, and Assessment and Development Centres) for all Grey and Gold Book staff.	Recruitment of Grey Book staff is conducted using the National Firefighter Selection Tests whereas the principles of IPDS are applied to the recruitment and selection process for Green Book roles (i.e. use of appropriate assessment tools). The Workforce Development policy is all encompassing in its application to the development and progression of all staff. All staff are afforded the same opportunities of access to appropriate development via the Training Needs Analysis (TNA) / Personal Development Planning (PDP) process to ensure that they receive the appropriate development to undertake their role effectively and safely. All staff have access to the national Assessment and Development Centre (ADC) process for grey book roles whereas the principles of assessment and development are applied to the recruitment and selection process for green book roles.		Complete
Fire and Rescue Authorities should: carry out and record individual performance reviews annually which include an assessment of performance against: role map units, National Occupational Standards or job description duties as appropriate, and	The Authority has had in place for a number of years now a comprehensive performance development process for all employees. This is migrating to an electronic system which will enable better analysis and trends to be identified. In		Complete

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Action	Comments	Status	Target Date
agreed annual objectives, including the setting and assessing of equality and diversity objectives.	addition, annual objectives are set at departmental/Watch level and these now also include equality and diversity objectives.		
Ensure that they have in place role related training, development and assessment arrangements to develop and maintain the competence of staff. These should be linked to the IPDS framework and National Occupational Standards across the full range of operational activities	All role-related training, development and assessments are linked to the IPDS framework and Nation Occupational Standards. A Workforce Development Database has been constructed that contains all currently available role related development. This is added to on a regular basis to ensure that a variety of learning styles are catered for.		Complete
Have in place systematic arrangements to ensure incident and safety event outcomes inform the ongoing development of safe systems of work and training and development of staff. This should include the sharing of risk critical information on a regional/national basis when appropriate.	The current debriefing and reporting process feeds directly into Learning and Development from the Operational Assurance Team where details of any incident or safety event outcomes are recorded and actioned accordingly. This process is used to monitor the suitability of current development programmes and identify when individual, team or organizational development needs are identified enabling suitable development programmes to be implemented. Any risk critical information will be shared via the Regional Learning and Development Managers Group, up to the people Management Group and onwards to CFOA/CLG as necessary.		Complete
Fire and Rescue Authorities should appropriately quality assure their training and development programmes, and their use of the National Firefighter Selection process and Assessment and Development Centres.	All training and development programmes are quality assured in a variety of appropriate methods. Courses at Barmston Mere Training Centre are		Complete

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Action	Comments	Status	Target Date
	governed by the ISO 9001:2000 Quality Management System. All operational training is quality assured through the Training Validation process where crews are assessed over a wide range of practical and technical skills in an incident simulation and their equipment knowledge. All external training courses are evaluated and reviewed by the Workforce Development Group on a regular basis. The National Firefighter Selection process is Quality Assured internally and in conjunction with the National Assessment Unit, and Learning and Development. Assessment and Development Centres are constantly quality assured by centre co-ordinators.		
Make preparations to move their control service to the Regional Control Centre network, complete the tasks in the FiRe Control transition plan in line with the dates set out and to carry out any tasks specific to their Fire and Rescue Service necessary for the move to their control service	As Members will be aware preparations are well advanced with both regional and local delivery teams in place.		May 2011
Participate actively and constructively in existing regional arrangements for the transfer of the control service to the RCC	Officers from this Authority lead the regional team with the Deputy Chief Fire Officer installed as Regional Project Director, and an Area Manager leading the HR delivery aspects of the project. Other officers are actively engaged in delivering this		Ongoing to May 2011

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Action	Comments	Status	Target Date
	project at all levels throughout the Service	🟩	
Ensure that the local authority controlled company in their region is established by the FRA, working through their RMB, as soon as possible, and in good time to carry out formal requirements as a good employer and to take on the lease of the building as quickly after practical completion as possible	The Local Authority Controlled Company has been set up with two Members appointed as Directors. The lease of the building has been taken over and formal consultations are now taking place with regard to staff transfers	🟩	Ongoing to May 2011
Enter into agreements, at least six months before cut-over: with the RCC company in their region for the delivery of the control service on their behalf by the RCC with CLG and other FRA to provide national co-ordination of the RCC where necessary and to provide a flexible approach to the use of all FRS resources	The time to make the necessary agreements has not yet been reached although the preparation of initial contracts is now being undertaken on a national basis by CLG. Members are advised that the draft contracts will need to be available by July 2010 to meet the necessary deadlines	🟨	January 2011
Ensure that resources can be mobilised across Fire and Rescue Authority borders.	The team require visibility of the national system to progress this further however action plans are being prepared in advance of the release of the system.	🟨	May 2011
Co-operate fully with the FiReControl technology supplier, and any relevant sub-contractor	In place	🟩	Ongoing
Report progress regularly to Communities and Local Government using the tools provided for that purpose	In place	🟩	Ongoing
The FRA must support the rollout of Firelink by: • Co-operating with the suppliers by giving access to vehicles and existing control rooms, and by ensuring that training	Full radio installation onto all Tyne and Wear fire appliances, with the exception of the Fire boat, has been completed. We are now 'live' on the national Firelink network. The provision of	🟩	Complete up to the end of this phase.

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Action	Comments	Status	Target Date
programmes are completed to timetable, providing all reasonable support Assisting the Firelink programme with resting of the new system and migration of radio communications to the RCC	communications on the Fire Boat is in the hands of the national contractor, although a temporary measure has been implemented to ensure crew safety. The final stage which is the installation of Mobile Data terminals will be carried out on a 'just in time' principle and therefore is not due until late June 2010		

3   CONCLUSIONS

3.1   The Authority has made substantial progress on a range of issues within the National Framework, although there remains further work to be completed. In addition Officers of the Authority have taken a pro-active role in many aspects of the regional work not least of which are the FiReControl/Firelink projects. Many of the areas highlighted above are now complete although Officers are maintaining continuous improvements in all areas to ensure targets are achieved thereby improving service delivery for the communities served.

4   EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS IMPLICATIONS

4.1   Equality and fairness implications have been considered throughout the implementation of the National Framework.

5   HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

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

6   RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1   A risk assessment has been undertaken to ensure that the risk to the Authority has been minimised as far as practicable. The assessment has considered an appropriate balance between risk and control; the realisation of efficiencies; the most appropriate use of limited resources; and a comprehensive evaluation of the benefits. The risk to the authority has been assessed as low utilising the standard risk matrix based on control measures being in place. The complete risk assessment is available on request from the Chief Fire Officer.

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7   RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1   Members are is requested to:

   a)   Endorse the actions outlined in this report;

   b)   Receive further reports as appropriate.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The undermentioned Background Papers refer to the subject matter of the above report:

- Strategic Plan 2008-2013
- National Framework 2008/11

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