

27 January 2017

## **National Fire and Rescue People Strategy**

### **Purpose**

For discussion and direction.

### **Summary**

The Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) has produced a draft national people strategy for the fire and rescue service in response to the recommendations in the Thomas and Knight reports. CFOA is seeking members' views on the draft strategy and Ann Millington QFSM, Chief Executive of Kent Fire and Rescue Service, will be attending the meeting to give a presentation on the strategy.

### **Recommendations**

Fire Services Management Committee Members are asked to:

1. Note the draft National Fire and Rescue Service People Strategy and receive the presentation from Ann Millington.
2. Comment on and discuss the objectives of the Strategy, the goals and principles set out in it and the action plans that support delivery of the Strategy.

### **Action**

Officers to action as appropriate.

**Contact officer:** Mark Norris  
**Position:** Principal Policy Adviser  
**Phone no:** 020 7664 3241  
**Email:** [mark.norris@local.gov.uk](mailto:mark.norris@local.gov.uk)

## **National Fire and Rescue People Strategy**

### **Background**

1. Following publication of Adrian Thomas' independent review of the conditions of service for fire and rescue staff at the beginning of November 2016, the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) has produced a draft People Strategy for the fire and rescue service.
2. This offers not only a response to the recommendations in the Thomas Review but also to those in Sir Ken Knights' 'Facing the Future' report. It also offers a response to the main drivers for change in the service over the next five years arising from the significant changes that fire and rescue has seen over the last decade as the number of fires have decreased, and collaboration with a range of partners means the fire and rescue service now provides aspects of social care, education and wider community safety.
3. It is CFOA's intention that every fire and rescue service either amends the strategy to produce their own local strategy, or ensures the main themes and principles are echoed in their own strategy. A copy of the draft Strategy is attached at **Appendix A**.
4. CFOA is seeking views on the strategy from fire and rescue authorities across the UK, chief fire officers and chief executives, fire and rescue service staff, the Devolved Administrations, the Home Office, trade unions and academic experts, as well as from this Committee and Fire Commission. The consultation period on the Strategy started on 19 December and concludes on 27 January. A copy of the strategy was circulated to Fire Commission members on 22 December. Ann Millington QFSM, the Chief Executive of Kent Fire and Rescue Service, will be attending Fire Services Management Committee to seek members' views on the strategy.

### **The People Strategy**

5. The draft strategy identifies five key areas of work
  - 5.1. Strengthening leadership and line management to support organisational change and delivery for customers;
  - 5.2. Developing cultural values and behaviours which make the fire and rescue service a great place to work;
  - 5.3. Ways of working that respond to service model needs;
  - 5.4. Provide excellent training and education to ensure continuous improvement of services to the public; and
  - 5.5. Strengthen the fire and rescue service's ability to provide good service by diversifying its staff and creating a fair and equal place to work.

6. These five areas will help deliver the common goals and principles set out in the strategy. These include making the fire and rescue service an employer of choice, ensuring that firefighter safety and the safety of all the services' people are important, a focus on good communications, support for well-being and attacking the stigma about mental illness, a more open career path that allows talent to rise to the most senior roles, making the service open and accountable to the public it serves, and increasing the diversity of the workforce. Action plans are set out in the strategy for each of these five areas, with the intention that the action plans can be refreshed on a regular basis.
7. To **strengthen leadership and line management** CFOA is looking to develop a Leadership and Management Development Strategy. As part of this strategy there will be common development modules which will be common and relevant to all managers and development support available to all managers at a given level. The aim is to maximise the opportunities presented by information technology so that much of the programme is available by e-learning. Where possible joint modules will be developed with the police and ambulance service.
8. To develop **cultural values and behaviours that make the service a great place to work** CFOA will support individual services so they can use the levers available to them to become better places to work for all, people are encouraged to have a voice and offer constructive challenge, and trust is promoted by accepting mistakes can be made but people can still succeed.
9. To develop **ways of working that respond to the services' needs** CFOA will look to offer reward and recognition to attract the best, demonstrate leadership by providing clarity on pay, make the service more adaptable and flexible by moving from fixed duty systems to contract systems that help create a more flexible response so firefighter availability is linked to the planned work load while also providing response cover, continuous improvement of recruitment and selection, on-going support for the retained duty system, and work with the National Joint Council to ensure reforms are introduced effectively.
10. To **provide excellent training and education** CFOA will create a shared platform for learning, facilitate effective learning across the service, develop professional skills, facilitate the development of good IT and data skills, and support implementation of National Operational Guidance.
11. To **maximise the wellbeing of staff** CFOA will help services create well-being programmes that suit their needs, ensure firefighter safety underpins all the workforce work the fire and rescue service does, help individual services reduce reported stress and post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of work, provide training for managers on how to reduce the stress associated with change, and support family friendly processes and work patterns.
12. To **diversify the service's staff and create a fair and equal place to work** CFOA will encourage all individual services to put in place the policies and procedures to ensure that future recruitment is inclusive and fair, create better help and support for those at risk

of prejudice and discrimination, promote the fire and rescue service as a career and a good and fair place to work for all, improve data monitoring and collection across the service, encourage people to declare their disability and sexuality, and improve the use in the sector of impact assessments by sharing impact assessment tools and data.

### **Implications for Wales**

13. CFOA's intention is that the People Strategy is either adapted for or used to inform the development of local strategies by all fire and rescue services, and the Devolved Administrations so they will be working with the Welsh fire and rescue services on this agenda.

### **Financial Implications**

14. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report, but Fire Service Management Committee through the lead members will be working with CFOA and then the National Fire Chiefs Council around this agenda, and this will be supported from existing resources.

### **Next steps**

15. Members' views will be considered by CFOA as it amends the draft Strategy in the light of consultation responses. There are clear links between the work plans included in the Strategy and Fire Services Management Committee's own work streams around the fire reform agenda and in response to the recommendations from the Thomas Review. Members' comments about the draft Strategy will be used to inform the LGA's work on fire reform and work with CFOA going forward around workforce reform. Members are therefore asked to:
  - 15.1. Note the draft National Fire and Rescue Service People Strategy and received the presentation from Ann Millington.
  - 15.2. Comment on and discuss the objectives of the Strategy, the goals and principles set out in it and the action plans that support delivery of the Strategy.