

CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF: CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY
DATE: 27 APRIL 2022
REPORT OF: DIRECTOR OF TRANSFORMATION
AUTHOR: ANDREA HARVEY

SUBJECT: PEOPLE STRATEGY 2022-2025

Purpose of Report

1. This report is to present the People Strategy 2022-25 for approval.

Recommended: That Members

- [1] The People Strategy 2022-2025 be approved.

Background

2. People are our greatest asset and in times of ongoing uncertainty and changing demands, appreciating the value of staff is more important than it has ever been.
3. The Covid-19 Pandemic has put pressure on our Service in many ways, affecting the way we carry out our core duties and the way in which we look after the well-being of our people. Moving forward out of the Pandemic, we must continue to balance our operational responsibilities with the need to safeguard the wellbeing of our people, while remaining responsive to the diverse needs of our communities and embracing new, more modern and efficient ways of working.
4. To remain a high performing organisation and to attract the best people to work for us requires us to consistently provide an excellent experience for our staff and the communities they support. We need to maintain our clear focus on diversity and inclusion, ensure we continue to develop a strong learning culture, and ensure staff are able to enjoy their work in a welcoming and collaborative environment where they know their contributions are recognised and valued. These requirements have helped to frame the Strategy.
5. The Staffing Committee on 21st March 2022 considered the draft People Strategy 2022-2025 and recommended that it should be approved by the Fire Authority at it's meeting on 27th April 2022.

Information

6. The previous People Strategy was structured around the service's established "Steps Framework" and assigned priorities and objectives into three key stages of employment: Step In, Step Forward and Step Up. The new People Strategy 2022-25, which is attached to this report as Appendix 1, has maintained a similar approach but the Steps Framework has been updated and extended to include a fourth stage "Step Away" which recognises the challenges and ongoing work associated with an ageing workforce.
7. The Strategy has also been updated to reflect the new core values and references both the internal and external drivers that shape our people priorities.
8. A summary of the Steps Framework is outlined below:

Step In	<p>Recruitment and Training</p> <p>This element of the framework covers all aspects of attraction, recruitment and induction training. The aim is to ensure we have the right people with the right skills in the right jobs, at the same time as ensuring we uphold high standards of transparency, objectivity and fairness in the way we select staff. We will also ensure that we provide first class training to equip staff with the required skills, knowledge and experiences they need to perform well in their roles.</p>
Step Forward	<p>Performance and Development</p> <p>This element focuses on the need to have appropriate support and performance management in place to maintain our high performance culture and to ensure that staff are supported, rewarded, developed and well managed. This will require us to listen, understand and address issues affecting staff morale and in turn, performance, through meaningful engagement with the workforce.</p>
Step Up	<p>Progression and Leadership</p> <p>This element revolves around strengthening organisational leadership and ensuring staff have the appropriate experience, knowledge and practical skills to progress and fulfil both individual career aspirations and organisational needs. Focus will be put on both vertical and lateral progression, widening opportunities for non operational staff whilst ensuring that all of our promotion processes remain fair and transparent and enable the selection of the most appropriate people for leadership roles.</p>

Step Away

This new element focuses on the need to maximise workforce capacity and futureproof the organisation through strategic workforce and succession planning. It acknowledges the challenge of an ageing workforce and the current pensions landscape and covers how we will proactively manage a range of issues and risks relating to staff turnover and loss of skills and corporate memory.

9. The Strategy outlines governance arrangements and summarises the key priorities and how these will be monitored, e.g. at Staffing Committee. Responsibility for delivery of the Strategy, management of the priorities and reporting on progress will rest with the Head of People Services.

Financial Implications

10. There are no direct financial implications from approving the Strategy itself. However, there are likely to be costs associated with delivery of elements of it. It is expected that much of this will be covered using existing budgets.

Legal Implications

11. The Strategy refers to a range of elements that will help the Service to fulfil its legal obligations. Actions taken will accord with employment-related legislation and guidance.

Equality and Diversity Implications

12. Promotion of equality and diversity and “being inclusive” is a core value of the organisation and although there is particular emphasis and focus on equality and diversity within the “Step In” element, the commitment to equality, diversity, transparency and fairness prevails in all aspects of delivery of the Strategy.

Environmental Implications

13. None.

APPENDIX 1 – PEOPLE STRATEGY 2022-2025

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS: PEOPLE STRATEGY 2019-22 APPROVED BY THE
FIRE AUTHORITY ON 13TH FEBRUARY 2019**