

2019-2021 STAFF ENGAGEMENT FORUM ACTION PLAN

THEME	OBJECTIVE	SUGGESTION	ACTION	OWNER	STATUS
COMMS	Ensuring that staff know the right person to speak to regarding particular issues.	Redesign the intranet to make it more user friendly and ensure content is both relevant and easy to find.	A new Intranet will be developed within Microsoft 365. In the interim amendments have been made to the current site to improve user experience.	Peter Caldwell	IN PROGRESS
		Ensure that the contact details on the intranet telephone directory are up to date with current role, department and numbers/email addresses.	All Joint Corporate Services contact details have been updated and has a link on home page	Peter Caldwell	COMPLETE
		Include a photo and short biography of individuals on the intranet directory so people's roles are understood and people can talk to the right person they need. This should also include a directory of staff such as TRiM practitioners, Mental Health First Aiders, network champions etc.	This has been completed for Corporate Communications, TRim and Mental Health First Aiders. Current challenge is sourcing, resizing and manually uploading all staff details and keeping this information up to date and therefore currently this would require a considerable resource. Microsoft 365 will allow this process to be automated.	Peter Caldwell	IN PROGRESS
	Receiving communication material that is relevant and useful to the individual.	Consider introducing 'Communication Champions' within each department to assist in the flow of communication	Corporate Communications has assigned Champions/SPOCs to all business areas and fire stations.	Lynn Marsh	COMPLETE
		Review access to all user emails and review email groups to reduce the amount of email traffic received that may not be relevant to individuals.	Peter Hayes has undertaken an initial review of lists but further work and support will be required to determine the most effective way to cleanse the various lists on the directory.	Andrew Leadbetter / Peter Hayes	IN PROGRESS
		Revamp the Alert newsletter to develop a publication with more relevant content, such as organisational changes, updates on projects and social events.	The Forum has fed ideas and suggestions to Sarah Dornford-May regarding content and timing of publication. A new style of Alert has been published and it has moved to an electronic format on a monthly publication cycle.	Sarah Dornford-May	COMPLETE
	To develop good communications skills in staff across the Service.	Build a communications module into both the Step Up programme and recruits and apprentices courses to develop the communication skills of staff.	A meeting has been scheduled with Andrea Harvey and Lynne Roberts to consider how this idea could be developed into future Step Up Programmes (see updates below)	Andrea Harvey/Lynn Roberts	COMPLETE

		Look at ways of building in dedicated time (e.g. hr per week station/watch time) with teams for middle managers to increase visibility and engagement.	GM and SM visits to teams are to be incorporated into the SMT staff engagement visit matrix to record senior manager visits and progress against this will be reported on bi-annually to SMT.	Tracy Radcliffe/ Graeme Worrall	COMPLETE
		Consider utilising new technology such as apps or Facebook workplace to improve communication between different teams and locations.	The recommendation is to use Yammer and Teams within the Microsoft 365 package once that is rolled out. In the meantime existing Skype functionality provides staff with the opportunity of utilising chat and messaging functions, and the intranet has been used as a platform for sharing ideas through Covid with the use of Firebook.	Peter Caldwell	COMPLETE
		Increase understanding of the corporate communications team e.g. who does what, the services provided and contact details.	Posters have been placed on station that provide details of who to contact in the communications department. Comms SPOCs will be encouraged to undertake regular visits to teams once they are able to do so.	Lynn Marsh	COMPLETE
		Make use of vlogs to highlight developments and updates across the Service, but rotate staff featured in them to keep it fresh.	A programme of short clips - and presenters - will need to be agreed and then developed through corporate communications.	SMT / Corporate Comms	IN PROGRESS
	Raise awareness of the corporate rebranding.	Communicate the decision to rebrand the corporate imagery and refresh corporate templates to align to rebranded logo and imagery.	Designs for corporate rebranding have now been approved and communicated.	Lynn Marsh	COMPLETE
	Refine the STAR Awards to encourage increased participation	Consider whether nominees can attend award ceremonies as well as winners, to spread further a culture of recognition.	This suggestion was considered but it was felt that the current approach of inviting winning recipients allows for them to have a family member to share in their success, ensures that there are no disappointed staff on the night and is the most cost effective approach to holding the event.	Rebecca Fletcher	COMPLETE
		Provide clarity over whether nominations by individuals are required to be approved by their line manager.	Communications materials regarding the 2020 STAR Awards have emphasised that nominations do not require the approval of an individual's line manager.	Rebecca Fletcher	COMPLETE
		Ensure that the nomination forms are straightforward for staff to complete to encourage more nominations.	To assist the drafting of nominations, examples of previous winning citations have been made available online and the engagement team have offered to provide telephone support to nominators.	Rebecca Fletcher	COMPLETE
		Utilise more staff members in the judging process to emphasise peer-led recognition in the awards process.	Staff Engagement Forum members have been allocated places on the judging panel for the 2020 STAR Awards and future awards.	Rebecca Fletcher	COMPLETE
APPRAISALS	Ensuring an effective and meaningful appraisal system.	Refine the appraisal process and documentation to improve the effectiveness of the appraisal system.	A revised appraisal form was brought to the Forum for consideration at the October meeting. This feedback helped to develop the new form which was approved by SMT in January ahead of a launch for the next round of appraisals.	Lynne Roberts	COMPLETE

		Launch refreshed guidance and training for managers and staff regarding the new appraisal system	A series of virtual training workshops were advertised and held for managers and appraisees to accompany the launch of the new appraisal form.	Lynne Roberts	COMPLETE
		Consider expanding the use of 360 appraisals to a wider cohort of staff.	The 360 appraisal can be requested by an individual through the appraisal process. The bespoke nature of the process and the resources required to facilitate them means it is not feasible to roll out on a wide scale. 360 appraisals are utilised on the step up programme and will be introduced into the step in programme.	Andrea Harvey	COMPLETE
		Provide staff with feedback regarding eligibility for training courses that have been identified through the appraisal.	This will be addressed through the new appraisal system, with staff being notified if they are unable to be placed upon particular training courses.	Lynne Roberts	COMPLETE
REWARD AND RECOGNITION	Review the benefit and discount schemes available to staff.	Consider the introduction of a salary-sacrifice tech purchase scheme.	This has been researched however the purchase of technology would be treated as a benefit-in-kind for staff for tax purposes and also offers no financial incentives for the Service to introduce such a scheme.	Andrea Harvey	COMPLETE
		Investigate the feasibility of developing a salary-sacrifice scheme for car leasing	This idea is being progressed however the available schemes are complex to implement and require the input of several different departments to investigate the feasibility and application of the scheme. However, the existing cycle scheme is being updated and the Service adopting a new social enterprise provider which will provide staff with a greater funds to purchase a bike and a longer salary sacrifice repayment period to aid affordability.	Andrea Harvey	IN PROGRESS
		Undertake a communications exercise to communicate and raise awareness of benefit schemes and discounts already available to staff.	This was discussed further at the May 2021 meeting of the Mental Health Steering Group. An Alert article is being developed to promote the Blue Light Discount card and highlight the various benefits and discounts available to staff.	Graeme Worrall	IN PROGRESS
		Include a Blue Light discount card within induction packs for new starters.	This was discussed by SMT and it was considered that the low cost of the card would not prohibit staff from obtaining one on an individual basis should they wish to do so.	SMT	COMPLETE
	Developing effective and meaningful processes to recognise performance.	Develop an 'intermediary' level award process, more frequent but less formal than STAR Awards, to recognise staff performance.	This was considered in more detail by the Forum however it was not possible to agree on a consensus as to the most appropriate format of such a scheme and how it could be implemented.	Staff Engagement Forum	COMPLETE
		Review promotion of the STAR Awards to emphasise peer nomination and judging of nominations.	Further communications are due to be published on the extended nomination window of the STAR Awards due to Covid-19. Comms will emphasise the peer element of the	Andrea Harvey	COMPLETE

			scheme and managers have been asked to encourage their staff to make nominations to recognise colleagues.		
COVID-19	Communicating with staff and partners during Covid-19.	Review the frequency and length of the daily Coronavirus briefings	Briefings will be moved to a weekly schedule and further reviewed dependent on Covid-19 situation. A regular briefing will be maintained post-Covid as staff feedback indicates it has been beneficial.	SMT	COMPLETE
		Provide a virtual background for use on Skype/Zoom meetings with those external to the service.	A corporate background has been created and is now available.	Peter Caldwell	COMPLETE
		Survey staff to determine which formats they prefer to receive updates in.	Views on communications are asked as part of the Covid-19 survey which was live between June and July 2020.	Andrea Harvey	COMPLETE
	Maintaining community engagement during Covid-19 .	Produce more social media content to show the ways in which the Service has supported the Covid-19 response and conduct virtual tours of stations/ safety central. Run specialist virtual tours to run alongside campaign weeks.	Virtual open days have been held at several stations and teams from across the Service have produced online content to engage with the public and businesses within the community. Further work on this is being developed by individual teams as necessary.	HODs/SMs	COMPLETE
	Recognising staff for going above and beyond during Covid-19.	Consider how individuals can be recognised for work undertaken in support of the response to Covid-19	Ways to recognise individual staff and teams for efforts during Covid-19 continue to be considered by SMT. An additional two days leave for 2020/2021 was granted for all staff in recognition of work during covid-19, with a further day granted in December 2020.	SMT	IN PROGRESS
MORALE AND WELLBEING	Maintaining morale during the festive period	Developing a programme of activities over the festive period to raise morale	Ideas from the Forum have been considered in the planning of the festive fun campaign for December 2020 and are being incorporated into the themes for the campaign.	Andrea Harvey	COMPLETE
		Can a process be introduced whereby staff can arrange shift swaps for Christmas e.g. if an individual is due to work over Christmas but has a young family, they may be able to swap with someone happy to work Christmas.	Neil Griffiths is to discuss further with Alex Waller.	Neil Griffiths	IN PROGRESS
	Changing leave processes to help staff plan their free time	Can there be a set day in the year in which leave picks for those on optimum crewing are released, in order to help staff plan events such as holidays	It was recognised that the process in the previous year was impacted by the review of specialist resources in Cheshire West and Chester. This issue is being considered through the JCNP process and the action will be updated once this has been discussed formally.	Neil Griffiths	IN PROGRESS
		Could the 32 day rule regarding PH leave for optimum crewing staff be reviewed?	Further communications were issued w/c/17 May 2021 to advise of amendments to the rule which afforded a temporary extension to the 32 day timeframe.	Neil Griffiths	COMPLETE

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING	Expanding the use of our mental health support	Is there scope for members of the joint teams to access Lawrence's services and expertise?	Members of the joint services can access the online content provided on the intranet such as seminars, podcasts and other materials. Face to face services such as 1-2-1s or meetings would need to be resourced through the Constabulary's existing occupational health or mental health and wellbeing channels.	Andrea Harvey / Nicola Bailey	COMPLETE
	Considering the mental health impact of workspaces	Consider developing a mental health assessment for workplaces, which consider the physical environment such as layout, décor, recreation space	A Wellbeing Impact Assessment tool is being developed which also contains a section to assess the psychological impacts of the environment. This has now been considered by SMT.	Lawrence Howard	COMPLETE
	Helping on-call staff access mental health support	Is it feasible to develop a process for contacting the employers of on-call staff from a support perspective after a traumatic incident?	There is a risk that employers may be more reluctant to allow their staff time to fulfil their on-call role if they are aware that they could potentially lose them for more time, while some employers may not be as supportive as the Service with regards to post-traumatic support. Details on mental health and wellbeing support can be included within the on-call employers handbook.	Lawrence Howard	COMPLETE
	Supporting staff through stressful events	Is there a process for supporting the mental health of those involved in disciplinary investigations?	This is already part of the existing processes. Those the subject of an investigation are provided a single point of contact to provide support. There are various networks and individuals who can provide support, albeit outside of the investigation process.	Lawrence Howard	COMPLETE
RECRUITMENT	Encouraging employers to release staff to be on-call firefighters	Hold annual open evenings for local employers so they can find out more about their staff being on-call firefighters and the benefits this brings.	This could be beneficial and will be passed to the On-Call Programme Team to investigate further.	Tony O'Dwyer	IN PROGRESS
	Developing a migration process to enable fire staff to become operational staff	Could the Service develop an internal migration process for fire staff to become on-call firefighters?	Tam Blair is developing this concept in more detail and is seeking feedback from the Staff Engagement Forum. This could potentially form part of a work package for the next Forum should they wish to consider it in more detail.	Tam Blair / Staff Engagement Forum	IN PROGRESS
	Improve internal feedback processes	Can feedback processes for internal candidates be improved to ensure unsuccessful applicants receive feedback?	Feedback for internal candidates following an interview is mandatory but it needs to be requested by the candidate.	Carmine Rabhani	COMPLETE
LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT	Using the Step Up Programme to help develop knowledge of different parts of the Service	Provide a welcome pack as part of the Step Up Development Programme to include professional bios of delegates and LDA team.	A welcome pack including professional biographies has been implemented into Cohort 11 starting February 2021. This will be incorporated at the start of each cohort going forward.	Vicki Wrxton	COMPLETE
		Provide more information on how CFRS is structured and the roles of different departments.	A link to the virtual corporate induction presentations will be provided within the personal impact workbook. Presentations will provide delegates with information on the following:	Stella Dixon	COMPLETE

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political Context EDI Prevention Protection & Organisational Performance OPA inc operational and command training. <p>This will be optional and delegates can choose which presentations they wish to view based on which areas they would like to find more information about.</p>		
		Arrange a half day tour of Clemonds Hey as part of the Step Up Development Programme in module 3 to include two way feedback session with Heads of Departments	This will be incorporated from the current cohort – cohort 11. C19 restrictions permitting.	Sandy Graystone	COMPLETE
	Provide further opportunities for development and training	Delegates to have the opportunity to complete a training needs assessment and request additional training which is not included in the programme.	Additional training needs will be discussed with the LDA coach at the end of the Personal Impact Modules as part of the 360 feedback coaching session. It is now also covered in more detail in the Personal Development to maximise your impact course at the start of the Outstanding Leadership module.	Bridget Austin	COMPLETE
		More time and scenarios to be incorporated into role play with actor's sessions. Scenarios to go a step further e.g. issuing an IRD, small bump in a vehicle, working from home.	This has been incorporated from the current cohort, with actors/avatars role play sessions extended to two half days with additional scenarios. SEF members invited to attend actors days to observe.	Stella Dixon	COMPLETE
SPORTS AND WELFARE	Reinvigorate the sports and welfare association	Relaunch the sports and welfare association to encourage more take up amongst staff and consider rebranding the scheme to incorporate more non-sporting leisure activities so that more staff could benefit from membership.	An initial meeting has been scheduled for 30 June with Paul Binyon to discuss feedback from the Forum and potential improvements to the sports and welfare association.	Paul Binyon	IN PROGRESS
QUICK WINS		Seek confirmation that the refurbishment at Runcorn will include new cooker/dishwasher or re-use current.	Barry Rose has confirmed that the refurbishment at Runcorn Fire Station will include new cooker and dishwasher. This has now been fed back to the Forum.	Barry Rose	COMPLETE
		Improve network coverage in the Middlewich porta-cabin during the station refurbishment.	The station refurbishment at Middlewich is now completed.	Barry Rose	COMPLETE
		Create a dedicated CFRS Prevention Twitter account to communicate prevention activity across Cheshire.	This has now been established.	Peter Caldwell	COMPLETE

	Consider implementing a single-sided Station Management Framework sheet in place of existing SMF.	This has been incorporated into the SMF review and implemented.	Neil Griffiths	COMPLETE
	Publish contact details for Mental Health First Aiders and TRiM Practitioners to help people know who to contact should they need support, particularly due to Covid-19.	Further communications have been put in the Green and the intranet to provide details of Mental Health First Aiders and TRiM practitioners.	Lawrence Howard	COMPLETE
	Push the mental health support tab on the intranet to the main feature section so people are more aware of the support available	A mental health support feature has been provided on the homepage of the intranet.	Lawrence Howard	COMPLETE
	Consider the reintroduction of team sports on station and in departments and the possibility of leave to represent the Service at sporting events.	There is an existing process for enabling staff to represent their country at sporting events. The introduction of risk assessments for non-contact team sports is being considered.	Christina Williams	IN PROGRESS
	Snagging issues are being found across both newly refurbished stations and new premises	Snagging lists are developed for each location following building works. Snags and property issues arising from works should be highlighted to Barry Rose, who can resolve through the estates team.	Barry Rose	COMPLETE
	Determine a preferred dry food to be stored on appliances for use if required at incidents.	An update was provided to the Forum and as a result a short survey has been drafted to circulate amongst operational staff to gauge opinion on preferred food options.	Stuart Devereux	IN PROGRESS