

CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF: STAFFING COMMITTEE
DATE: 25 AUGUST 2021
REPORT OF: CHIEF FIRE OFFICER & CHIEF EXECUTIVE
AUTHOR: ANDREA HARVEY

SUBJECT: SERVICE MANAGEMENT TEAM REVIEW
UPDATE AND ACTION PLAN

Purpose of Report

1. This report provides Members with an update on progress regarding the actions associated with the independent Service Management Team (SMT) review that was presented to and approved by the Fire Authority on 9 December 2020.

Recommended: That

- [1] Members review the progress made against the actions contained within the Action Plan.

Background

2. An independent review of the SMT structure was commissioned in July 2020 and was carried out by RealWorldHR Limited. The review team was charged with assessing a key question: is the Service Management Team structure fit for purpose and sustainable? The review took into account national benchmarking, a study of the Service's retirement profile, a review of the pensions landscape and a data gathering exercise that involved interviewing every member of the current SMT.
3. The review came to a number of conclusions and highlighted some risks with the potential impact of retirements due to the age profile of SMT, capacity pressures in some areas, and the need to further embed the Blue Light Collaboration arrangements.
4. Emphasis was also placed on the need to put focus around workforce reform and identified two posts within the current SMT structure that could be released over time and generate savings.

Information

5. The review presented a number of recommendations which revolved around the following:
 - Establishing the post of Deputy Chief Fire Officer and removing one of the Assistant Chief Fire Officer posts.

- Increasing the contractual hours of the Section 151 Officer post.
 - Redefining the role of the Director of Transformation to focus on short term workforce reform and value for money reviews.
 - Reassigning responsibilities associated with the Director of Transformation role to the joint HR team to realise the savings associated with the longer-term collaboration arrangements.
 - Generating savings through the release of the post of Head of Prevention in 2021 and the release of the post of Director of Transformation in 2023.
6. The recommendations have been incorporated into a high level action plan attached at Appendix A. This is accompanied by a more detailed plan in respect of the proposed phasing out of the Director of Transformation role at Appendix B. It is intended that these action plans will provide the audit trail for the implementation of the SMT review with an expected delivery date of July 2023.
7. To ensure the appropriate level of scrutiny is afforded to the progress and delivery of the SMT review, it has been agreed that progress reports will be provided to members of the Staffing Committee on a quarterly basis.

Financial Implications

8. As previously outlined the delivery of the SMT review will provide savings of approximately £160,000 by 2023/24.

Legal Implications

9. The legal implications associated with the delivery of the SMT review took into account the Localism Act and the National Framework. When initially presented to the Fire Authority in December the Exit Payment Cap was also a consideration in respect of the redundancy of the two identified posts. Following the collapse of the Exit Pay Cap in January 2021, until such a time as this is revisited by Parliament, the Exit Pay Cap is no longer relevant.

Equality and Diversity Implications

10. None

Environmental Implications

11. None

CONTACT: DONNA LINTON, CLEMONDS HEY, WINSFORD
TEL [01606] 868804
BACKGROUND PAPERS: NONE