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Subject	People Strategy Action Plan Update – July 2024		
Type of Report	Information		
PFCC Action Point No.		For Publication	Yes

RECOMMENDATION(S)

This report is for information and provides a snapshot of progress against the delivery of the interim People Strategy Action plan ‘deliverables’ for Quarter 1 of 24/25 and looks ahead to the next period.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An update is provided on the progress of each pillar within our interim People Strategy. All pillars continue to be on track for completion within the established action plan schedule. While some minor delays have been encountered, they are all recoverable and do not affect the overall timeline or objectives.

BACKGROUND

This update follows on from the Assurance Review – People Strategy Action Plan (PSAP) 2020-24 presented to the Board on 20 March 2024. The actions presented to the board have been completed and are noted below.

Further, this report provides a full update on progress in delivering the interim PSAP. The update is provided on each pillar within the programme against quarter 1 2024/25 deliverables.

OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS

This section of the report is separated in to two areas:

1. An update on the actions agreed in March 2024 and
2. An update against quarter 1 PSAP 24/25 deliverables

An update on the actions agreed in March 2024

1. Action - Ensure that the interim PSAP is either output driven or has measurable objectives.
 - a. Update – agreed and in delivery.
2. Action - Head of Governance & Assurance to conduct a 'BAU Vs Change' Assessment against interim PSAP to determine what activity, if any, should have Portfolio Management Board (PMB) oversight and therefore adhere to PMB standard governance protocols.
 - a. Update - an assessment was completed, and the decision taken by Head of Governance & Assurance is that no projects will need to be created.
3. Action - Consider initiating the Closure of the current People Programme at the end of its reporting period, acknowledging that the Operational Training Project will continue as a stand-alone project.
 - a. Update - this has been completed through the Assurance Paper and Closure Project.
4. Action - Ensure new People Strategy and accompanying PSAP has a 'BAU Vs Change' Assessment to ensure that its governance and reporting is proportionate.
 - a. Update - in delivery, the People Strategy for 2025/29 will be developed to support the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).

An update against quarter 1 PSAP 24/25 deliverables.

Below details the key deliverables achieved in pillar and provides some narrative examples.

Fair Kind and Inclusive:

A total of 20 actions sit under 4 main goals to ensure we consistently demonstrate 'due regard' to equality and diversity and invest in a diverse workforce.

Examples of deliverables completed during Quarter 1 2024/25:

- The Positive Action Working Group meet monthly and review the Positive Action Plan in each meeting. Wholtime Firefighter recruitment is due to open on 16 July and the positive action plan has been followed.
- Global Accessibility Awareness Day Learning event was led by our Digital Accessibility Inclusion Group (DAIG) Co-Chairs in May. The event recorded and shared in internal comms and inclusion insights.
- Genius Within Coaching continues to be offered to neurodivergent colleagues, including those who would benefit from ND specialist coaching or those recently assessed as neurodivergent.
- 2 employees attended the Women in Fire Service Development weekend in June.

- Mandatory e-learning Inclusive Behaviours training was at 89.2% completion at the end of June.
- A new monthly Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) report has been developed this quarter which includes monitoring of all shared diversity data of all employees. We have set a target of 75% shared data for all categories by 31 December 2024, as an action from the Inclusive Employers Standard feedback.
- Disability Confident Level 2 has been renewed and self-assessment has been completed, with key actions identified.
- Disability Listen and Learn event is scheduled on 23rd July to engage employees with a disability or long-term health condition. Essex Police Disability Forum has been invited to discuss the benefits of a Disability Network and share learning.
- Inclusive Behaviours face to face training has commenced.
- Inclusion Insights internal monthly e-newsletter delivered to all employees in April, May and June.
- Guide Dogs guided sight training for Prevention team took place on 30 April.
- Sensory Champion training provided for Home Safety team and Inclusion & Diversity Business Partner (I&DBP) on 25 June.

Culture Involved and Valued:

A total of 12 actions sit under 6 main goals to ensure we build a culture of involvement with our colleagues, so they feel safe and valued.

Examples of deliverables completed during the period:

- There is work being done on the HMICFRS recommendation that ECFRS should consider the establishment of a professional standards function.
- 10-week Flash Survey series 'You Said, We Did' initiative is running from June to August to demonstrate our commitment to listening to employee feedback and acting upon it.
- Continued progress on the Culture Dashboard to ensure it provides an accurate indicator of the culture of the service.

Leadership and Development:

A total of 8 actions sit under our 3 main goals to grow our leadership capability, promote a people centred philosophy and protect our employees by providing mandatory training.

Examples of deliverables during the period:

- The plans for the delivery of GM development programme have been agreed and delivered. The completion has been moved to Q2 for completion for inclusion into the leadership programme and LRS development pathways. There have been several changes in personnel in the past 2 months, particularly with two new AMs, whom we will need to re-engage. Process improvement delivered with a coaching app and booking app ready to go live to support productivity and efficiency.

- Workforce Pro for Support staff to enable local management reporting (as per PDR pro) self-service has been launched and is up and running for Support staff in pilot appraisal scheme. New updates due from the LearnPro group will be available in Q2 and will roll out to the rest of the support staff in Q3.

Operational Training:

A total of 20 actions sit under 20 goals to ensure that we deliver our commitment to enhancing the skills and readiness of our colleagues, leading to more effective emergency responses and better public safety outcomes.

Examples of deliverables completed during the period:

- The 5 recommendations and 9 suggestions within Competency Management system-PDRPro are being progressed and tracked via a project plan. All elements are due to be delivered by 31 October 2025 and progress is now at 37% completion.

Updated Guidance has been consulted upon and published. Additional face-to-face training has been delivered to support line managers to use the reporting functionality and monitor progression, and more training is scheduled.

- The Management of Road Risk Policy (MORR) which incorporates Emergency Response Driving has been updated to align to national Fire Standards and published.
- As part of the alignment of the Apprentice End Point Assessment with the Phase 2 to 3 Assessment, a paper has been submitted to SLT for approval prior to implementation
- Pilot completed with 16 of the USAR team undertaking collaborative CPD Mod 4 training with Suffolk saving £10.5k. A total of 4 OTD items have been identified in the Productivity and Efficiency (P&E) Tracker.
- Harlow as a BA venue has been delayed due to the procurement process. A contractor is now appointed, and a prestart meeting was held on 9 July 2024. Works due to start within 4 weeks with a 12-week programme of works.
- The OCAT Upgrade project was rebaselined to extend until 31 December 2024 due to governance and procurement processes and the decision to carry out proof of concept testing requiring the appointment of an external subject matter expert.
- OTD dashboard and monthly report created and further developed to monitor utilisation, cancellation, pathway progress and capacity.
- As part of the On-Call Onboarding process, Phase 1 Pathways are now issued to all new On-Call Firefighters a month before initial

(practical) training to allow for earlier theoretical input and progress.

Resourcing and Talent

A total of 6 actions sit under 2 main goals to retain and attract the right skills, with the adoption of a digital first approach.

Examples of deliverables during the period:

- A review of Arctic Shores has been completed, and a report submitted to the SLT. Following the review, it has been agreed that Competent On-Call Firefighters will apply through an alternative route.

Apprenticeships

Under this new pillar, we have outlined 5 actions aligned with our 5 main goals to establish effective governance and develop a comprehensive strategic plan aimed at increasing the number of apprentices within the service.

- Roles re-titled to Apprenticeship & Succession Manager, and Apprenticeship & Succession Advisor, and re-evaluated and confirmed in establishment budget. Role of Apprentice Support Manager role profile pre-evaluated as Station Manager level.
- The Apprenticeship Strategy has been written and agreed by SLT.
- All Apprenticeship activity have been aligned to Skills for Justice & OFSTED requirements, and internal QA frameworks.
- The process design of the EPA and Phase 2 to 3 assessment has been completed. Rollout and comms plan will follow in Q2.

Wellbeing and Health

With the new AD of Culture Inclusion and Wellbeing joining the team in July, several recommendations have been submitted for SLT approval. The agreed plan will be shared in the next update.

Looking forward

The interim People Strategy Action Plan for 2024/25 is underway. We are contributing to the CRMP for 2025/2029 and are anticipating that the next iteration of our People Strategy will form part of the CRMP and will be designed to serve the needs of the CRMP. Further updates to this will follow.

RISKS AND MITIGATIONS

The People Strategy is a key control measure for our people risks. Risks have also been captured within PMB management and included in the HR risk register.

LINKS TO FIRE AND RESCUE PLAN

- Make the best use of our resources

- Develops and broadens the roles and range of activities undertaken by the Service
- Promotes a positive culture in the workplace

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No financial implications associated with this paper; any financial implications are within budget.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

No legal implications associated with this paper.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

The People Strategy Action Plan is fundamental to delivering our People Services effectively.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

The actions being taken will not have a disproportionate impact on individuals with protected characteristics (as defined within the Equality Act 2010), when compared to all other individuals and will not disadvantage people with protected characteristics.

Race	n	Religion or belief	n
Sex	n	Gender reassignment	n
Age	n	Pregnancy & maternity	n
Disability	n	Marriage and Civil Partnership	n
Sexual orientation	n		

The Core Code of Ethics Fire Standard has been fully considered and incorporated into the proposals outlined in this paper.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None identified.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Staff were engaged in the development of the People Strategy. The People Strategy Board scrutinises progress against the delivery of the strategy. PSAP updates will be made available and stakeholder groups informed.

FUTURE PLANS

A review of the Interim People Strategy will take place at the end of March 2025.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AND APPENDICES

None.