



# DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

**M. Pearson  
CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY**

**To: The Chair and Members of the Human  
Resources Management &  
Development Committee**

**(see below)**

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## **HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE** **(Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority)**

**Wednesday, 3rd March, 2021**

A meeting of the Human Resources Management & Development Committee will be held on the above date, **commencing at 9.30 am via Video Conference on Webex** to consider the following matters.

M. Pearson  
Clerk to the Authority

***PLEASE NOTE:*** This meeting will be livestreamed on the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service YouTube channel. This can be accessed by following the link below and then clicking on the Videos and Livestream buttons:

<https://www.youtube.com/dsfireupdates>

## **AGENDA**

***PLEASE REFER TO THE NOTES AT THE END OF THE AGENDA LISTING SHEETS***

**1 Apologies**

**2 Minutes (Pages 1 - 2)**

of the previous meeting held on 14 December 2020 attached.

**3 Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

Items which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered at the meeting as matters of urgency.

## **PART 1 - OPEN COMMITTEE**

**4 Health, Safety and Wellbeing Progress Report (Pages 3 - 14)**

Report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Director of Governance & Digital Services (HRMDC/21/1) attached.

**5 People Strategy Update (Pages 15 - 20)**

Report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (HRMDC/21/2) attached.

**6 Applications for Retirement and Re-employment (Pages 21 - 24)**

Report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (HRMDC/21/3) attached.

### **MEMBERS ARE REQUESTED TO SIGN THE ATTENDANCE REGISTER**

**Membership:-**

Councillors Hannaford (Chair), Best, Clayton, Peart, Thomas, Wheeler and Vjeh (Vice-Chair)

## NOTES

### 1. **Access to Information**

Any person wishing to inspect any minutes, reports or lists of background papers relating to any item on this agenda should contact the person listed in the “Please ask for” section at the top of this agenda.

### 2. **Reporting of Meetings**

Any person attending a meeting may report (film, photograph or make an audio recording) on any part of the meeting which is open to the public – unless there is good reason not to do so, as directed by the Chair - and use any communication method, including the internet and social media (Facebook, Twitter etc.), to publish, post or otherwise share the report. The Authority accepts no liability for the content or accuracy of any such report, which should not be construed as representing the official, Authority record of the meeting. Similarly, any views expressed in such reports should not be interpreted as representing the views of the Authority.

Flash photography is not permitted and any filming must be done as unobtrusively as possible from a single fixed position without the use of any additional lighting; focusing only on those actively participating in the meeting and having regard also to the wishes of any member of the public present who may not wish to be filmed. As a matter of courtesy, anyone wishing to film proceedings is asked to advise the Chair or the Democratic Services Officer in attendance so that all those present may be made aware that is happening.

### 3. **Recording of Meetings**

Given the social distancing measures introduced in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, Authority meetings will be held virtually and livestreamed on the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service YouTube channel. The meetings may also be recorded for subsequent viewing on the YouTube Channel. Any such recording does not constitute the official, Authority record of the meeting.

### 4. **Declarations of Interests at meetings (Authority Members only)**

If you are present at a meeting and you are aware that you have either a disclosable pecuniary interest, personal interest or non-registerable interest in any matter being considered or to be considered at the meeting then, unless you have a current and relevant dispensation in relation to the matter, you must:

- (i) disclose at that meeting, by no later than commencement of consideration of the item in which you have the interest or, if later, the time at which the interest becomes apparent to you, the existence of and – for anything other than a “sensitive” interest – the nature of that interest; and then
- (ii) withdraw from the room or chamber during consideration of the item in which you have the relevant interest.

If the interest is sensitive (as agreed with the Monitoring Officer), you need not disclose the nature of the interest but merely that you have an interest of a sensitive nature. You must still follow (i) and (ii) above.

Where a dispensation has been granted to you either by the Authority or its Monitoring Officer in relation to any relevant interest, then you must act in accordance with any terms and conditions associated with that dispensation.

	<b>NOTES</b>
	Where you declare at a meeting a disclosable pecuniary or personal interest that you have not previously included in your Register of Interests then you must, within 28 days of the date of the meeting at which the declaration was made, ensure that your Register is updated to include details of the interest so declared.
<b>5.</b>	<b><u>Part 2 Reports</u></b> Members are reminded that any Part 2 reports as circulated with the agenda for this meeting contain exempt information and should therefore be treated accordingly. They should not be disclosed or passed on to any other person(s). Members are also reminded of the need to dispose of such reports carefully and are therefore invited to return them to the Committee Secretary at the conclusion of the meeting for disposal.
<b>6.</b>	<b><u>Substitute Members (Committee Meetings only)</u></b> Members are reminded that, in accordance with Standing Order 37, the Clerk (or his representative) must be advised of any substitution prior to the start of the meeting. Members are also reminded that substitutions are not permitted for full Authority meetings.
<b>7.</b>	<b><u>Other Attendance at Committees (Standing Order 38)</u></b> Any Authority Member wishing to attend a meeting of a Committee of which they are not a Member should contact the Democratic Services Officer (see “please ask for” on the front page of this agenda) in advance of the meeting to obtain details of the Webex meeting invitation.

## HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

(Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority)

14 December 2020

### Present:

Councillors Hannaford (Chair), Clayton, Peart, Thomas and Wheeler

### Apologies:

Councillors Best and Vijeh

\* **HRMDC/17**    **Minutes**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2020 be approved as a correct record.

\* **HRMDC/18**    **Gender Pay Gap 2020**

The Committee received for information a report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (HRMDC/20/5) that set out the latest iteration of the Service's Gender Pay Gap Report for 2020 which had to be published in accordance with the provisions in the Equalities Act 2010 by 31 March 2021.

It was noted that the gender pay gap showed the difference between the average (mean or median) earnings of men and women. This was expressed as a percentage of men's earnings. Used to its full potential, gender pay gap reporting was a valuable tool for assessing levels of equality in the workplace, female and male participation and how effectively talent was being maximised. The Service data for 2020 indicated a mean gender a gap in favour of male staff of 8.3% down from 11.6% in 2019 as compared with the position for the whole of the UK which was a 15.5% gender pay gap. The median pay gap also indicated that there was pay disparity in typical rates of pay between male workers and female workers of 9.9%, down from 11.8% in 2019. This continued the steady decrease in the gender pay gap which had been achieved since 2018.

Reference was made in particular to the action being taken by the Service to address the gender pay gap. This included:

- giving careful consideration to the make-up of moderating and interview panels for every recruitment and promotion process;
- the introduction of an anonymous application process for certain vacancies;
- the introduction of support networks for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) and disabled staff;
- a more flexible On Call duty system which will allow for more people to consider the role;
- continuing to challenge the national fitness testing requirements and researching the impact on different groups of staff;

- the implementation of unconscious bias training to raise awareness around bias affecting recruitment and progression decisions;
- the introduction of 'inclusive leadership' into role development; and
- Commencement of a sponsorship programme for aspiring middle management women.

The question was raised as to the Service's approach to reducing occupational segregation. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer replied that there was a lot of work being undertaken on this both nationally at the National Fire Chiefs Council with the promotion of women role models and also locally. In Devon and Somerset, the Service was striving to show women in its recruitment advertising campaigns and positive action, amongst other things.

Reference was made to the ethnicity pay gap, the reporting of which was voluntary. This was calculated as the difference between the mean and median hourly earnings of the reference group (White or White British) and other ethnic groups as a proportion of average hourly earnings of the reference group. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer drew attention to a slight amendment in the figures set out in the report circulated at paragraph 5.1. The Service's workforce consisted of 2.6% BAME i.e. non-white/ non-British staff. The Control staff group had the highest diversity in that respect with 5.2%, although 'Not stated' and 'prefer not to say' is highest at 9.6% in that group as well. Breaking the Non-White group down into specific ethnic backgrounds led to group sizes with less than 5 people. The Service decided that this would not be statistically relevant and it could identify individuals therefore it would not be in line with data protection legislation. Therefore, only White/Non White and White/Mixed figures have been quoted. For the Service, this showed a mean white/non-white pay gap of 11.3% and a median pay gap of 8%. The report also set out the pay gap figures for each category of staff – wholetime, Control, On Call and Support. The ethnicity pay gap is mainly impacted by:

- In the group with the most diversity, BAME employees were mainly occupying middle management roles (grades 4-9);
- In the group who most affects the pay gap, Wholetime and On Call, 76% of BAME staff were at Firefighter level; and
- Most of BAME staff in the uniformed group are in On Call, where Watch Manager was the highest role/pay level.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised the Committee that the Integrated Risk Management Plan was to be re-named the Community Risk Management Plan in future. The review of this document, which was due within the next 18 months, would result in a substantial amount of engagement with communities in Devon and Somerset which could only assist the Service in its future service delivery improvements.

**\*DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The Meeting started at 10.05 am and finished at 10.55 am

# Agenda Item 4

<b>REPORT REFERENCE NO.</b>	<b>HRMDC/21/1</b>
<b>MEETING</b>	<b>HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT &amp; DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>3 MARCH 2021</b>
<b>SUBJECT OF REPORT</b>	<b>HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING REPORT</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	<b>Deputy Chief Fire Officer; and Director of Governance &amp; Digital Services</b>
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<i>That the report be noted.</i>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<p>Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service (“the Service”) takes the health, safety and wellbeing of employees seriously and as such it provides a wide range of initiatives, interventions and policies to ensure that employees enjoy a safe and supportive working environment.</p> <p>The Health, Safety and Wellbeing report has been adjusted to include the Wellbeing report, this approach aligns with the Services People Strategy. The inclusion of this report to the Human Resources Management and Development Committee (“the Committee”) reflects the importance the Service views the Health, Safety and Wellbeing of its staff.</p> <p>The detail of the report will evolve to provide greater information regarding performance in this area.</p>
<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>	Staff and financial resources associated with the management of health, safety, welfare and wellbeing.
<b>EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS</b>	The Health and Safety policy and Absence Management policy have an equality impact assessment.
<b>APPENDICES</b>	None
<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>	None

## 1. **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) recognises and accepts ultimate responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of its employees and others who may be affected by its work activities. It is the Authority's aim to ensure that Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) will, so far as is reasonably practicable, comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and all statutory provisions associated with it and support employees in meeting their obligations under the Act.
- 1.2 At officer level, the ultimate responsibility for Health and Safety rests with the Chief Fire Officer. The principal officer with strategic responsibility for health and safety performance is the Director of Governance & Digital Services who must be supported with a high degree of commitment from managers and supervisors at every level for the effective management of health, safety and welfare. It is only by demonstrating this commitment that the Service can secure the well-being of its greatest asset, its employees, and reduce the rate of avoidable accidents, injuries and work related sickness to a tolerable level.
- 1.3 The management of Health, Safety and Welfare, and Wellbeing is supported through underpinning policies, procedures, training and monitoring activities. Monitoring activities are a key element of measuring performance and ensuring safe systems are functioning as intended. These can be achieved through Proactive or Reactive monitoring. Proactive measures help the Service to mitigate a safety event where as reactive measures allow us to learn from the safety event in order to prevent / reduce the likelihood of a recurrence.

## 2. **PROACTIVE MONITORING**

### **Safety Management System Audit.**

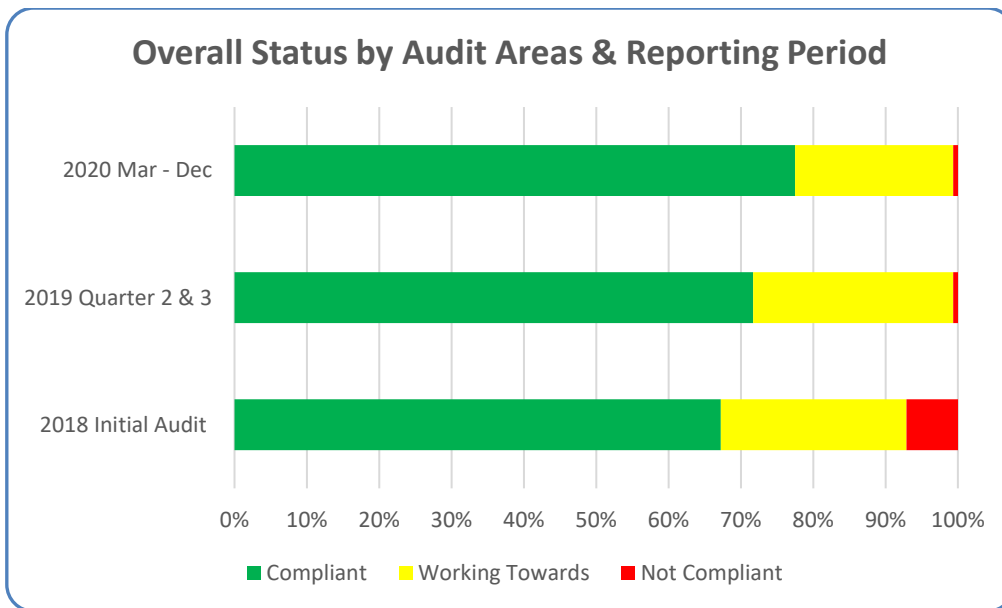
- 2.1 In 2018, an audit of the Service Safety Management System was completed using an audit model developed by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and endorsed by the Health and Safety Executive. It was anticipated the NFCC audit model, being new to the Service, would identify areas for improvement, however our performance was reasonable with 67% of areas reviewed identified as compliant and 26% as working towards.
- 2.2 There has been no movement with the remaining actions from the audit since the last committee meeting, COVID-19 response activities taking priority for both the Health & Safety Team and key stakeholders identified within the audit. The Health & Safety Manager is reviewing the remaining questions in order to appreciate the extent and resultant risk of the requirements of the remaining actions. Once this is known targeted action can be taken with the remaining actions. This work will also help deciding whether to undertake another NFCC audit before the actions are completed or to complete the actions first, there have been a number of organisational adjustments since the original audit which could lead to an improved response to the audit question.



### Audit Progress:

Audit Area	Not Compliant	Working Towards	Compliant
2018 Initial Audit	45	162	425
2019 Quarter 2 & 3	4	175	453
2020 March - December	4	140	496

**\*Note:** the total count of each row has an increase of 8 for the 2020 March – September figures, this is due to previously unanswered questions being reviewed & completed.



### Workplace (Health and Safety) Inspection & Assessment.

2.3

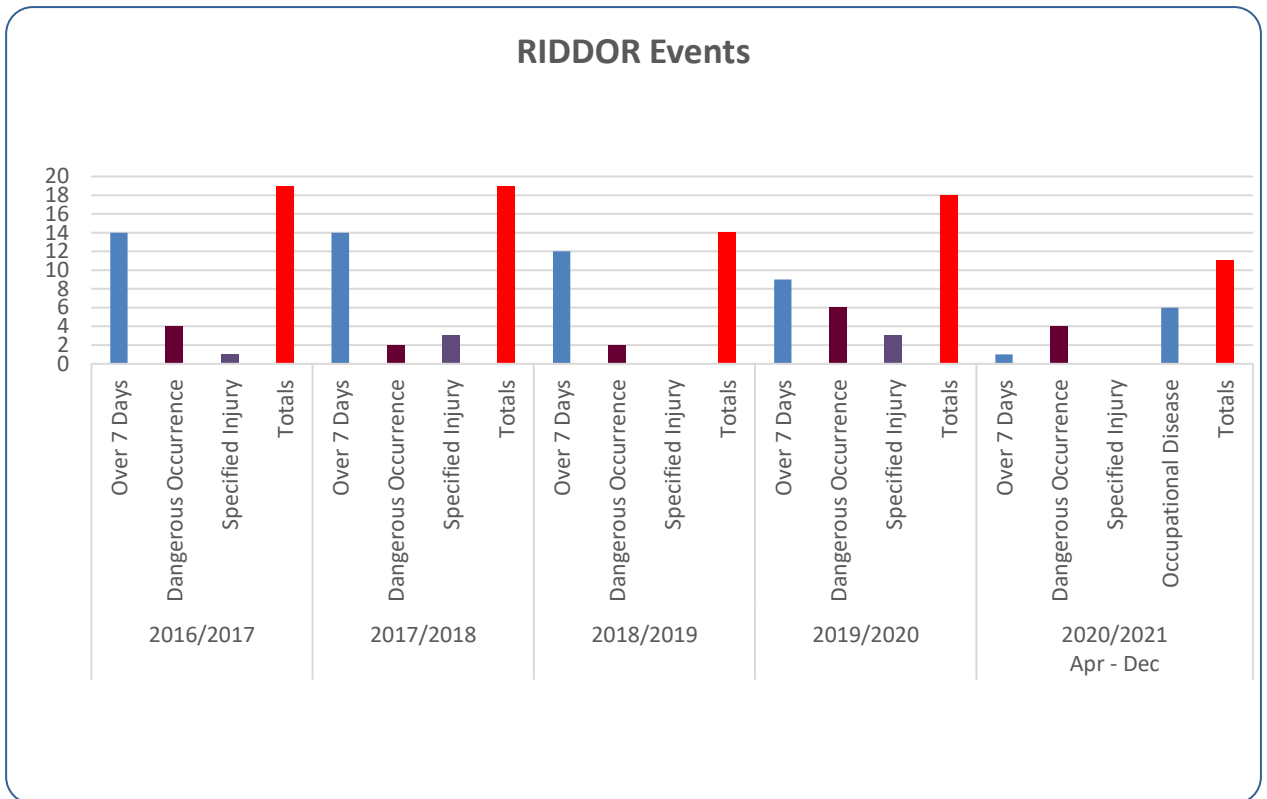
Annually stations within the Service conduct a workplace inspection and assessment, which is aimed at ensuring they conform to legal and policy requirements. There has been an improvement in the completion of these assessments over Quarter 3 2020/21, management drive and ensuring locations are COVID Secure helping to improve the completion of these inspections. The Health & Safety Manager is reviewing processes to aid the management of this area through increased visibility for those responsible for ensuring the assessments are completed. Additionally, the Health & Safety Team will be working in the Group Commands more frequently enabling them to raise awareness and improve this process.

Performance Indicator	Previous	Current	Overall Performance
	Q2 2020/21	Q3 2020/21	
<b>PI 2a: Percentage of completed annual Workplace Inspection &amp; Assessments</b> <b>Target: 100%</b>	55%	84%	<b>Positive</b>

### 3. **REACTIVE MONITORING**

#### **Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR).**

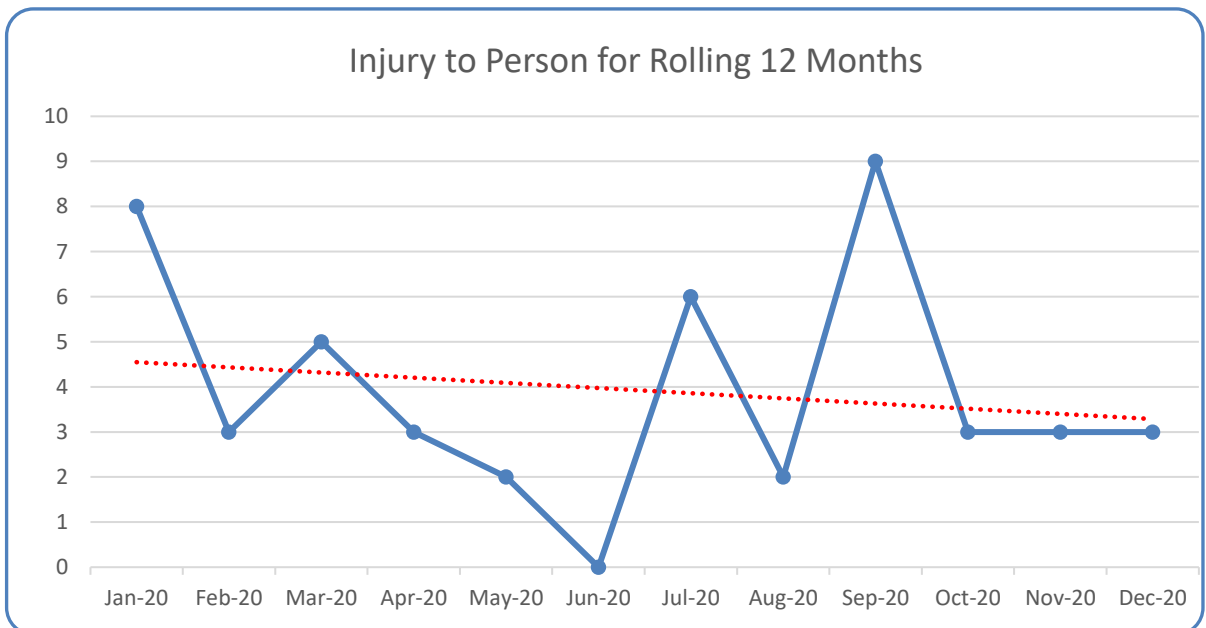
- 3.1 The Service is required to report certain types of work related safety event outcomes to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) as required under the RIDDOR. Types of RIDDOR reportable events include:
- (i) death to a worker and non-worker if they arise from a work related accident;
  - (ii) specified injuries to workers (for example includes fracture other than fingers and toes, amputation, permanent loss or reduction of sight and unconsciousness caused by head injury or asphyxia);
  - (iii) over seven day injuries to workers (where a worker is away from work or unable to perform their normal work duties for more than 7 consecutive days);
  - (iv) injuries to non-workers (work related accident involving a non-worker who is taken from the scene to hospital for treatment);
  - (v) reportable occupational disease (examples include, carpal tunnel syndrome, hand-arm vibration syndrome and occupational asthma);
  - (vi) dangerous occurrences; and
  - (vii) certain, specified near miss events.
- 3.2 There are 27 categories of dangerous occurrence, an example being the collapse, overturning or failure of load-bearing parts of lifts and lifting equipment and gas incidents (this relevant to distributors, fillers, importers or suppliers of flammable gas and also gas engineers registered with the Gas Safe Register).
- 3.3 The Health & Safety Team is responsible for filing these reports with the HSE. The graph overleaf compares RIDDOR reporting over the last 4+ years. The rates of RIDDORs have fluctuated little over this reporting period. There have been 6 RIDDOR reports during Quarter 3, all 'Occupational Disease' and linked to COVID-19 incidents. Each COVID-19 outbreak has been fully investigated and where there is a work related exposure that meets with the RIDDOR guidance the incidents are reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) as required. The HSE requested the investigation report to one of the incidents, this has been provided to them for their review. They are also in communication with the Service FBU H&S representative regarding the investigation and actions taken by the Service. Indications are the HSE is content with the Service response and investigation of the incidents, also with the action taken where required to enhance the in place control measures.

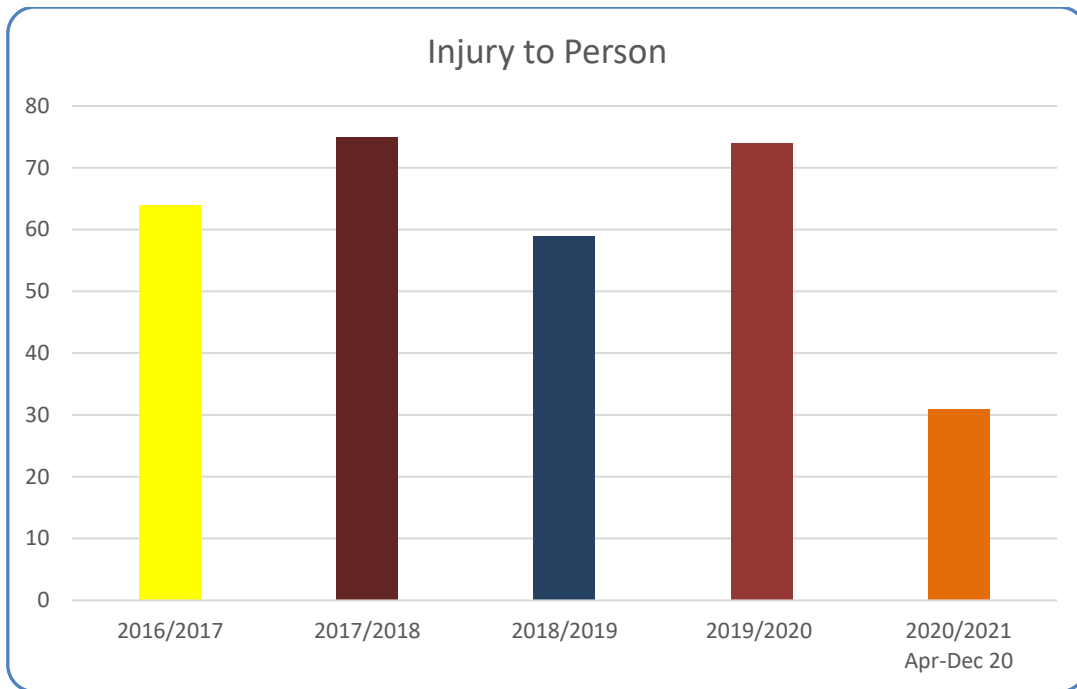


### Personal Injuries.

3.4

The charts below set out the Service's injury rates over the last 4+ years, which are continuing to reduce year on year. The Service takes the approach of reporting injuries as an investigable incident which has aided in learning from the incidents, thus reducing the occurrences. Sprains, strains and musculoskeletal injuries are the primary injuries received and is reflected within other fire and rescue services, the HSE identifying musculoskeletal injuries as a target area for improvements across UK businesses. The Service has established the Musculoskeletal Group - a sub group of the Strategic Safety Committee - to review ways to reduce incidents of musculoskeletal injuries.

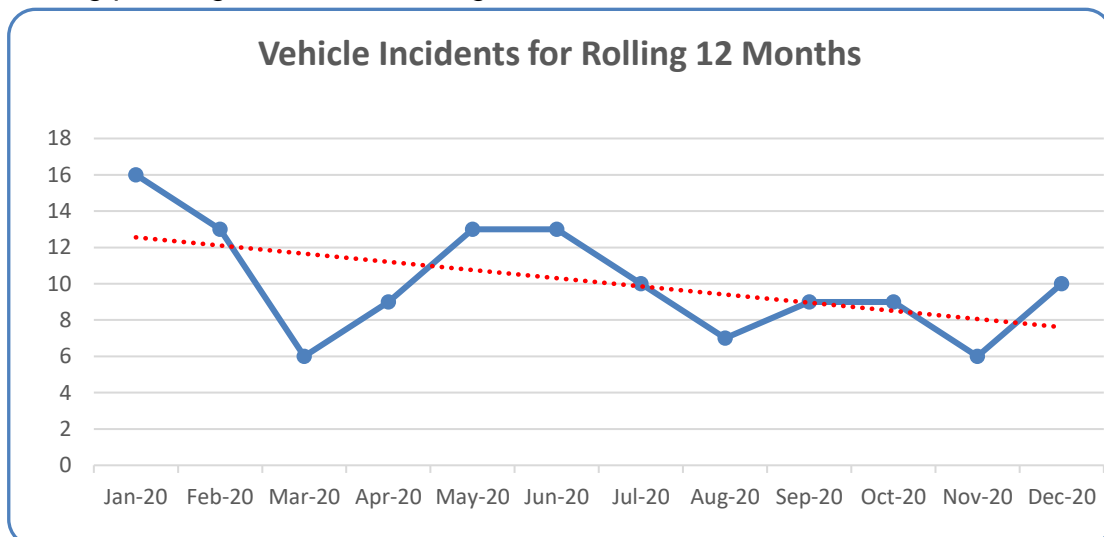


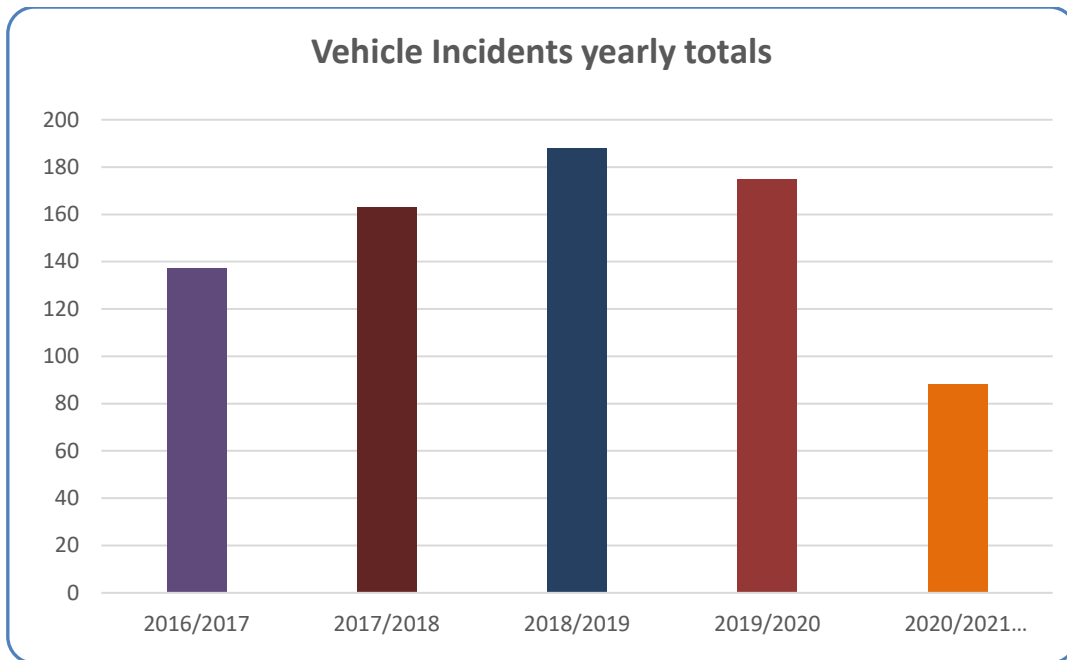


### Vehicle Incidents.

3.5

The charts below set out the Service’s vehicle related safety events over 4+ years, these incidents seeing a slight decrease in the 2019/2020 reporting period. This reduction is also reflected in the rolling 12 month report. Vehicle related incidents are primarily during non-blue light activity, of which the Fire Appliances (Red Fleet) & Cars / Vans (Light Fleet) have the majority. To help reduce the number of incidents & improve road risk, the Service has signed up to the Government’s Driving for Better Business initiative. An assessment has already been completed which helps organisations identify areas for improvement. The Service will now develop plans to address any areas identified. The Occupational Road Risk Group meets quarterly to review vehicle related issues, projects and safety events, additionally some of this group meet to review any drivers who are identified as higher risk. During that review, corrective measures / procedures are identified which the driver will be asked to complete, this could be a driver psychometrics test, 1 to 1 coaching from driver training to removal from response driving pending additional training.





4. **HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE ACTIONS**

4.1 The work with enhancing the Service’s Safety Event Management Tool is progressing well with a planned rollout mid-2021. Once complete, it will allow staff to report swiftly any safety events, allocate an investigator and assign actions in order to mitigate or reduce the risk of a recurrence.

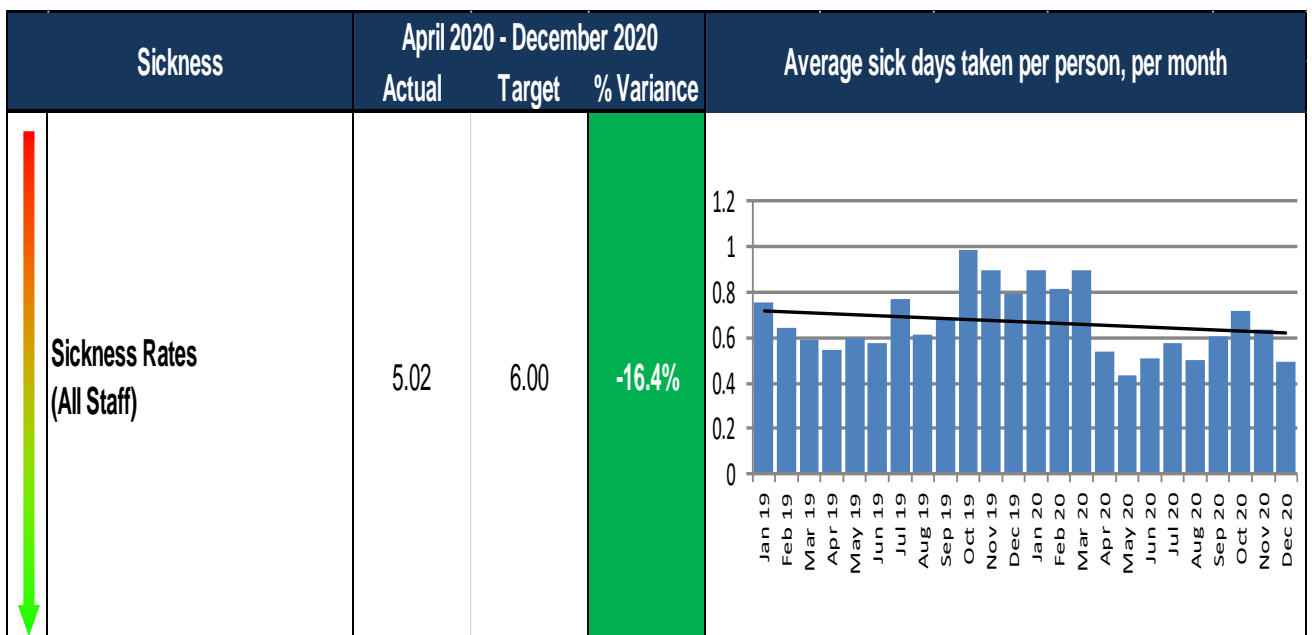
4.2 The Health and Safety Team continue to provide advice, guidance and support to the Service’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic; they have been directly attached to support cells formed in response to the pandemic and the Service’s needs. The Team was attached to the Medical Cell, Service Delivery Business Continuity Cell, Welfare Cell and Recovery Cell, though supported the other cells as necessary. COVID Secure audits have taken place across the Service’s fire stations which has enabled locations to adjust their controls where necessary. This provides reassurance that the required measure to control the risk are in place. The COVID Secure audits were facilitated through the Operational Assurance team and their processes.

4.3 There continues to be a high volume of work within the Health & Safety Team, COVID-19, business as usual and involvement within various new initiatives / projects and work processes. The Health & Safety Manager is reviewing the various work streams in order to identify where elements can be outsourced or additional support employed on a fixed term basis to ease and facilitate the completion of the various work streams.

5. **AUGUST – DECEMBER 2020/21 ABSENCE PERFORMANCE**

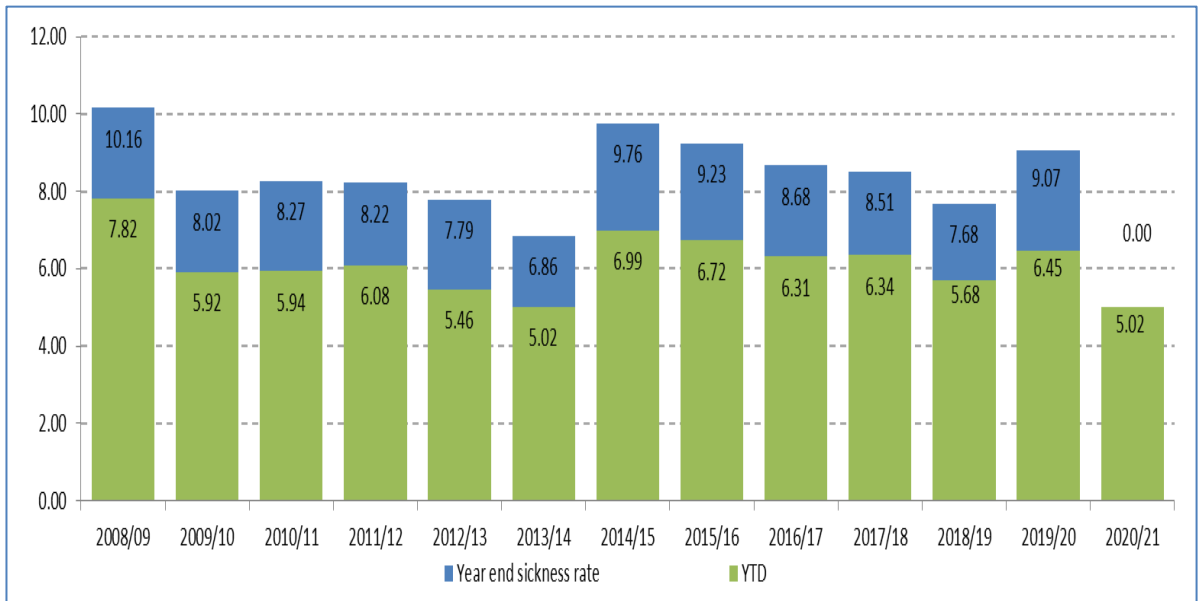
5.1 At the Human Resources Management & Development Committee meeting held on 5 November 2019 (Minute HRMDC/20/7 refers), it was agreed that future sickness rate charts would be Red, Amber, Green (RAG) rated against the current target for absence of 8 days/shifts lost and no longer against the previous year actuals (Minute HRMDC/7 refers). It was also felt that reporting by staff categories was not necessarily helpful and that reporting by exception would be more beneficial. For this financial year-to-date, the Service has been in the period of Covid-19 and during this period, sickness levels have reduced as indicated in paragraph 5.2 below.

**Sickness Direction of Travel**



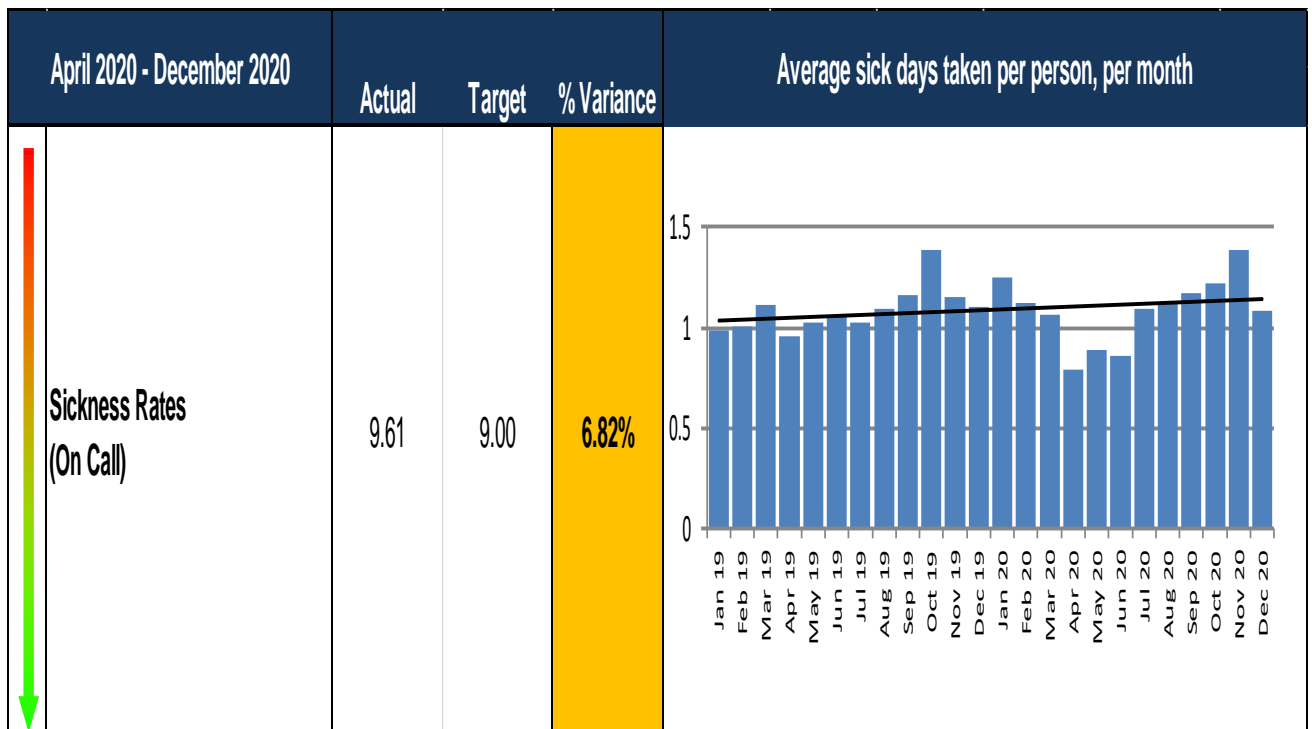
5.2 The chart above shows the current levels of sickness in comparison to the Service’s target of an average of 8 days sickness per person. It can be seen that since the last reporting period in August 2020, whilst within Covid-19, the Service has seen an excellent performance. While there has been a slight increase since the previous report, service performance is still below target by 16.4%. The chart below shows year-to-date compared with the total for the year.

### Sickness in Previous Years

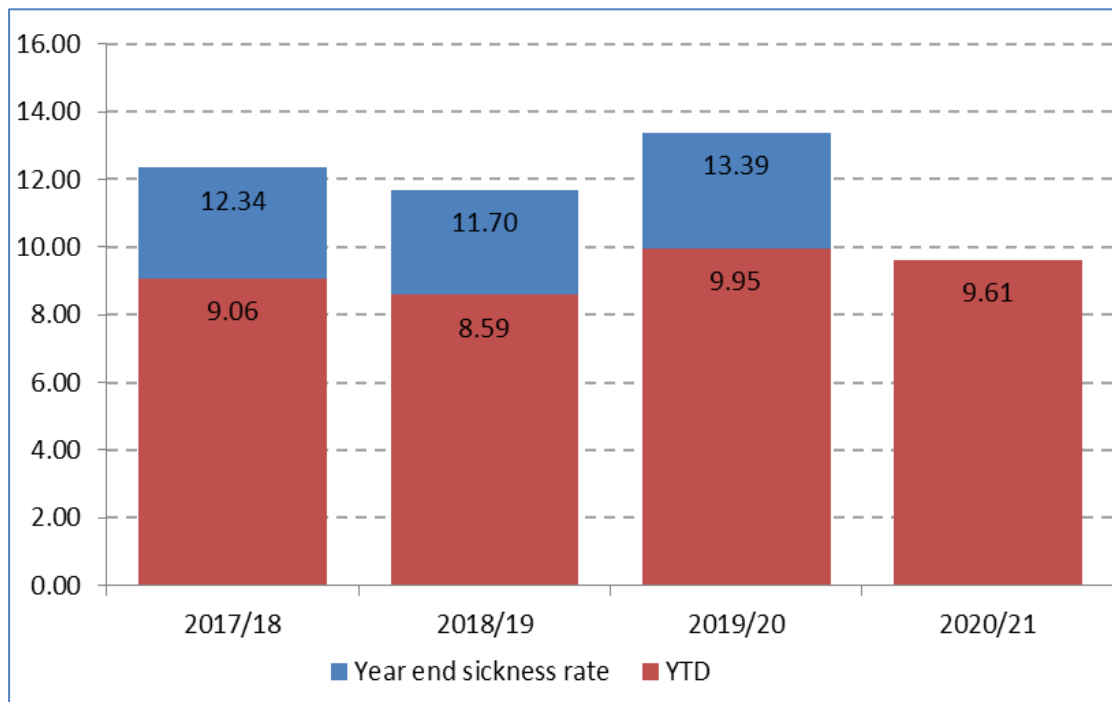


5.3

The On-call rates are also shown below. The level of sickness is higher than for other staff categories, however, for On-call Firefighters the Service records sickness over 7 days per week rather than lost shift or working days using the target rate of 12 days



5.4 On-call sickness over the last 3 years using the performance target of 12 days is as set out in the table below:



5.5 With Covid-19, Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue - as an emergency service - was able to access Antigen Testing from April 2020. The tests were, at a later stage, made available to the public through Test and Trace. In October 2020, 93 staff had been tested of which 12 had tested positive to Covid-19 and as of 20<sup>th</sup> February 2021 there have now been 260 staff tested of which 84 have tested positive.

5.6 Throughout the period of Covid-19, the Service has supported its staff with a range of mechanisms including:

- regular communications and information,
- flexible working arrangements,
- protected levels of pay; and
- well as wellbeing support.

## 6. **CONCLUSION**

6.1 This paper contains proactive and reactive measures together with absence performance measures. As the report to the Committee evolves, it is intended that there will be more detail provided within the measures. At the same time, it is anticipated that improvements in the Service’s recording mechanisms will have been implemented.



6.2 The present safety event recording system has restricted the ability to report detailed information regarding the reactive measures, this will be improved with the new system. The need to respond to COVID-19 has reduced the forwards momentum in some areas however staff and public safety has remained a priority throughout. The Health & Safety Team redirecting their focus and energy towards COVID-19 support works to ensure Health & Safety advice and guidance was available when and where needed; the intent now is to continue to support the recovery phase and reenergise business as usual.

**JOE HASSELL**  
**Deputy Chief Fire Officer**

**MIKE PEARSON**  
**Director of Governance and Digital Service**

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# Agenda Item 5

<b>REPORT REFERENCE NO.</b>	<b>HRMDC/21/2</b>
<b>MEETING</b>	<b>HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT &amp; DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>3 MARCH 2021</b>
<b>SUBJECT OF REPORT</b>	<b>PEOPLE STRATEGY UPDATE</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	<b>Deputy Chief Fire Officer</b>
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<i>That the report be noted.</i>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<p>The Devon &amp; Somerset Fire &amp; Rescue Service's People Strategy sets out its direction and the ideal workplace environment required to enable it to support human performance and therefore deliver effective and considered services to the community. There has been good progress in many areas, and some challenges and opportunities presented by the Covid-19 pandemic, which have been previously reported to the Committee. With the new Government Covid-19 roadmap now in place, plans will start to be revised to reflect this.</p> <p>For this report, a review has been carried out to identify the key actions that will make the difference between small improvements and transformative interventions in each of the themed areas, leading to better outcomes for people and improved performance. This is being called 'game changers', as they are what will give the Service the outcomes needed to meet the aspirations set out in the strategy. All of these key actions are interventions and activities currently underway, and on track to start making a measurable difference over the next few months.</p>
<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>	Existing resource
<b>EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS</b>	The People Strategy is designed to support equality, diversity and inclusion in the workforce and service provision.
<b>APPENDICES</b>	
<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>	<p>The People Strategy 2019-2022</p> <p>Devon &amp; Somerset Fire &amp; Rescue Service - Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Policing &amp; Fire &amp; Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Covid-19 Inspection Results</p>

## 1 **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service's People Strategy sets out its direction and the ideal workplace environment required to enable it to support human performance and therefore deliver effective and considered services to the community. There has been good progress in many areas, and some challenges and opportunities presented by the Covid 19 pandemic, previously reported. With the new Government Covid roadmap now in place plans will start to be revised to reflect this which can be reported at the next meeting of the Committee.

1.2 For this report, a review has been carried out to identify the key actions that will make the difference between improvement and transformation in each of the themed areas. This is being called 'game changers', as they are what will give the Service the people outcomes needed to meet the aspirations set out in the strategy. All of these key actions are interventions and activities currently underway, and on track to start making a measurable difference over the next few months.

## 2. **LEADERSHIP**

2.1. The Strategy statement: 'Our leaders communicate a clear vision, take decisions and empower people to make change and improvement happen. They are visible leaders with a diversity of backgrounds, skills and experiences who demonstrate open and honest listening and are united in living our values. Our leaders at all levels are developed and prepared to take us into the future'.

2.2. The 'game changers' underway are:

- A talent management system underpinned by strategic workforce planning, providing a new approach to people development through development and succession planning pools. This means less temporary roles and ensures leaders feel well prepared for their next step.
- A comprehensive, curated approach to how we develop leaders, underpinned by the NFCC leadership framework. This includes mixed cohorts (operational and support staff) and utilises new online approaches to self-directed learning, our internal expertise and apprenticeships. Our first mixed cohort is at the Area Managers and equivalent level.
- Working with leaders and managers to create a common message about the culture we are growing. This means we ensure that our leadership behaviours demonstrate the change we want to see and that our actions match our words.

### 3. **LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

- 3.1. The Strategy statement: 'We will create a learning culture which provides consistency and equality of opportunity so everyone can reach their full potential. We will be innovative and creative in offering opportunities and career pathways for people to develop and to ensure they have the right skills for the right role. Staff will benefit from regular performance conversations and development will be tailored, easy to access and available throughout our careers.'
- 3.2. The 'game changers' underway are:
- Ensuring people feel Safe To: 1) learn – share and learn from our experiences, successes and mistakes 2) contribute – sharing our ideas to make things better and 3) challenge – where things are not right with working practices or behaviours. The tools to embed this approach and therefore a learning culture are embedded in our leadership and management and team development. This is about showing people how to transform their leadership through consciously choosing inclusion to build psychological safety in teams;
  - Developing non-technical skills through curating learning content and allowing people to take ownership of their personal development in line with their role and their aspirations. This includes access to two new self-directed learning platforms, Coaching Culture and Mind Tools; and
  - Technical competency 1) Utilising our expertise as technical training partner provider to maximise efficiency of the apprenticeship levy and 2) Ensuring Safe Professional and High performing operational teams through a focus on competence, discipline and performance, underpinned by an engaged safety culture.

### 4. **INCLUSION**

- 4.1. The Strategy Statement 'We will only benefit from a workforce where everyone can be themselves and work together as one organisation regardless of role or workplace. We will recognise and utilise both diversity of thought and experience in the organisation for better decision making. We develop better solutions by engaging and involving employees in planning ideas generation and decision making. We will work ever closer with our trade unions for the benefit of staff.'
- 4.2. The game changers underway are:
- Our intervention programme Safe To: Learn, Contribute and Challenge gives us the tools to make inclusion a reality through deliberate behaviours. We are developing 1) a toolkit to promote Fairness and Respect 2); 2) a resolution approach to conflict so people don't feel they need to resort to a formal grievance; and 3) an investigation process and disciplinary approach that ensures that any intervention matches the intention to support fair and consistent outcomes. The Chief Fire Officer and Deputy Chief Fire Officer are currently in the process of introducing the 'Safe To' concept to Whole Time Operational staff, focusing on Health and Safety and Bullying and Harassment;

- To improve our workforce diversity we have; 1) a clear focus on positive action in Firefighter recruitment and development through paying attention to how communities view us as an employer, a new 'always open' approach to recruitment and accessible practical assessment facilities; and 2) Implemented the 'Our Time' sponsorship programme, which matches women who want to progress with internal sponsors to support their development;
- We continue to consider People by Design by; 1) planning and implementing involvement and engagement in change and improvement; 2) assessing impacts on people and working towards a 'value for people' approach to complement 'value for money' when identifying benefits; and 3) listening to and inviting challenge from staff from under-represented groups through new and refreshed staff networks.

## 5. **WAYS OF WORKING**

- 5.1. The Strategy Statement: 'Our employees will be empowered and trusted with performance measured on productivity and outcomes. We will offer a range of flexible options that will improve inclusion, attract and retain a diverse workforce, and enable us to match resources to risk. Our technology and communications will be better and barriers to improving ways of working will be removed, with things that need doing quickly getting done. We will work together, as one organisation, towards our vision and we will recognise and celebrate collaborative success.'
- 5.2. The 'game changers' underway are:
- Smarter Working – developing a people led approach to a more agile and flexible workplace, with collaborative virtual working, easier access to information, and an emphasis on collaborative workspace rather than desk space, and less commuting miles;
  - Work on our governance processes to support more visible planning and performance to give people more effective tools for greater collaboration and alignment; and
  - Transforming our people services to ensure the delivery of expertise and support in the most effective and efficient way.

## 6. **HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING**

- 6.1. The strategy statement: 'We have an holistic approach to health, safety and wellbeing which supports our staff so that they can remain fit, safe, healthy and fulfilled throughout their careers. We encourage and support employees by building a positive health, safety and wellbeing culture and create an environment which improves work/life balance and quality of working life. A clear and supportive fitness testing policy will help keep our staff safe and healthy and a greater integration of work, sports and social activities will help break down barriers and bring people together.'

6.2. The 'game changers' underway are:

- As part of the Safe To: learn, contribute and challenge intervention, we are developing an engaged safety culture based on best practice from military aviation and featuring 1) a 'Just Culture' policy and Framework, 2) a learning teams approach to incident debrief, 3) ensuring human factors are embedded in investigations and 4) a clear and visible reporting system for safety events and near misses;
- Working with partners we are developing a Wellbeing Strategy and Charter which will set out levels of new and existing proactive and reactive wellbeing interventions. We are currently carrying out the Blue Light wellbeing self-assessment to inform this approach; and
- Immediate support is provided through our Covid19 Welfare Cell, The Cell works both proactively and reactively to provide welfare solutions in a timely manner, prioritising work to support this Covid Response phase. The cell aims at this critical time to support a workforce that has the skills, information and resources to stay safe, well and resilient. To inform our work we refresh our people impact assessment regularly and we have recently carried out another Covid survey to see how our staff our feeling using nationally recognised Office of National Statistics? wellbeing questions.

## 7. **NEXT STEPS**

- 7.1. The Service will report the 'people' related survey results at the next meeting of the Committee, however, the recent Covid inspection undertaken by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Policing & Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) gave some encouragement that the interventions are having a positive effect.
- 7.2. The HMICFRS 2019 inspection indicated that the way that Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service looks after its people requires improvement. In particular it requires improvement at:
- promoting the right values and culture;
  - ensuring fairness and promoting diversity; and
  - managing performance and developing leaders.
- 7.3. All of these issues were already identified as areas for improvement in the People Strategy.
- 7.4. There were a number of behavioural issues identified from the confidential survey in 2019, primarily that some leaders and managers were not consistently displaying Service Values, they were not as visible as they could be and that a quarter of respondents felt they had been bullied or harassed and/or been discriminated against.

- 7.5. The HMICFRS carried out a Covid-19 specific survey in 2020 and the Service is pleased to have seen a huge improvement in all of these areas, with Senior leaders praised for utilising new technology to communicate with staff, a significant decrease in those feeling bullied, harassed or discriminated against and positive feedback that managers and leaders were consistently displaying service values.
- 7.6. The Service is pleased with these improvements, however, we still have some way to go. Inclusion means that everyone can experience a positive work environment and work continues in line with the areas outlined in this report to ensure our values are lived and that the behaviours and culture they represent is sustained.

**JOE HASSELL**  
**Deputy Chief Fire Officer**



# Agenda Item 6

<b>REPORT REFERENCE NO.</b>	HRMDC/21/3
<b>MEETING</b>	<b>HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT &amp; DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>3 MARCH 2021</b>
<b>SUBJECT OF REPORT</b>	<b>APPLICATIONS FOR RETIREMENT &amp; RE-EMPLOYMENT</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	<b>Deputy Chief Fire Officer</b>
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<i>That the applications for retirement &amp; re-employment as identified in paragraph 2.4 of this report be approved.</i>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	The Authority has an approved Pay Policy Statement for 2020/21 in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and which sets out the arrangements for consideration of any requests for re-employment of employees following retirement. This report sets out specific requests for approval from two operational members of staff.
<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>	None.
<b>EQUALITY RISK &amp; BENEFITS ASSESSMENT</b>	The Retirement & Re-Employment Policy has had an equalities impact assessment.
<b>APPENDICES</b>	Nil
<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>	DSFRA Pay Policy Statement for 2020/21

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Authority's Pay Policy Statement for 2020/21 sets out the arrangements for consideration of any requests for re-employment of employees following retirement. The re-employment of any employee (up to Area Manager or non-uniformed equivalent) who has retired will be subject to approval by of the Human Resources Management and Development Committee (the Committee).
- 1.2 The Pay Policy Statement sets out that the Authority will, in principle, allow the re-employment of employees who have retired, subject to a break in service of at least one month, because it is recognised that this often represents an effective way of retaining specialist knowledge and skills without any increase in cost to the Authority (and noting that costs to the Pension Scheme are no more than would be the case for normal retirement).
- 1.3 The Pay Policy Statement also notes that the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, published by the Home Office in May 2018, sets out that "fire and rescue authorities must not re-appoint principal fire officers after retirement to their previous, or a similar, post save for in exceptional circumstances when such a decision is necessary in the interests of public safety". In this context, Principal Officers refers to those officers at Area Manager and above, or those with comparable responsibilities to those roles. The Fire and Rescue National Framework also states that fire and rescue authorities will "have regard to this principle when appointing at any level".
- 1.4 For staff within the Local Government Pension Scheme, where an individual is re-employed on the same terms and conditions as previously, the same abatement rules as apply to those within the Fire Fighters Pension Scheme will be applied. However, the Authority's policy on Pension Discretions refers to flexible retirement and states that this "may be subject to abatement during such time as the individual remains employed by the Service". This allows the Authority to use flexible retirement opportunities where key employees may wish to continue working as they get older but step down in grade or reduce their working hours. This can be beneficial to the Authority in retaining key skills, knowledge and experience whilst also reducing costs.
- 1.5 The Service's Executive Board has considered the applications for retirement and re-employment set out within paragraphs 2.2 and 2.3 of this report and considers that the requests are beneficial in helping to retain key skills whilst seeking to bring in new staff through a planned succession process.

## **2. RETIREMENT AND RE-EMPLOYMENT**

- 2.1 The Service policy on retirement & re-employment is linked to workforce planning arrangements. Retirement and re-employment provides us with certainty for the leave date for these employees whilst at the same time providing a suitable rate of staff turnover. It also provides a transition for the employee from full employment into retirement.

2.2 An application has been received from a Station Manager at Yeovil for retirement and re-employment. Currently, Yeovil Response Group has 3 substantive Station Managers (Operational Readiness Managers) including the applicant. However, one of those is currently off sick (Long Covid) and is looking to be covered on a temporary basis with another Temporary Station Manager (Flexi Duty Officer) in the short term. One other Operational Readiness Manager is seconded currently to a Service Headquarters post for a period that is likely to be between 12-18 months and this is currently filled with a Temporary Station Manager (non Flexi Duty Officer). Therefore, in order to secure a more stable position knowing that the applicant could retire at any time giving a months' notice, the granting of this application for retirement and re-employment would offer better forecasting and subsequent succession planning for the Yeovil Response Group. The applicant has many years of both operational and managerial experience that, as and when newly promoted Station Managers are allocated to the Yeovil Group, this experience can be cascaded and used for sound development.

2.3 A further application has been received from a Watch Manager at the Academy for retirement and re-employment. The Quality Assurance role within the Academy is specialised which takes a long period to develop into and new staff time to aquire the necessary qualifications for the role. The development of new Internal Quality Verfier Awards (IQA's) takes time and re-employment of this individual will allow the current workloads to be supported as new staff are developed. This application will also allow the retention of capacity to support the establishment and subsequent management of the Learning and Development programme, including supporting the apprenticeship requirements which will be invaluable. It will allow time and capacity also for the establishment of the function within the Academy and for the development of a successor.

2.4 The requests for retirement and re-employment are as summarised in the table below:

<b>Role</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Station/Dept.</b>	<b>Decision</b>
Station Manager	Operational Readiness Manager	Yeovil	FTC for up to 1 year as per current contract as ORM from 1 <sup>st</sup> May 2021
Watch Manager	IQA Team & L&D Lead	Academy	FTC for up to 1 year (21 hours per week) from 1 August 2021

2.5 These applications give the Service certainty as to leaving dates, supports the natural turnover of staff and enables the Service to succession plan for the future.

**JOE HASSELL**  
**Deputy Chief Fire Officer**

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