



LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

LFC-24-025

People Strategy 2024 - 2027

Report to:

Date:

Commissioner's Board	3 June 2024
Deputy Mayor's Fire Board.....	3 July 2024
London Fire Commissioner	

Report by:

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Report classification:

For decision

For publication

PART ONE

Non-confidential facts and advice to the decision-maker

Executive Summary

This report seeks approval of the publication of the London Fire Brigade People Strategy 2024 - 2027, which is an enabling strategy for the Community Risk Management Plan.

Recommended decision

For the London Fire Commissioner

That the London Fire Commissioner approves for publication the People Strategy which is attached in appendix 1.

1 Introduction and background

- 1.1 The LFB Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 'Your London Fire Brigade' was published on 1 January 2023. To support the CRMP, a suite of strategies is being published, covering the six service strategies: Prevention, Protection and Preparedness, Response, Recovery, Engagement.
- 1.2 Underpinning the six service strategies are the enabling strategies: Communication and Engagement, Digital, Estates, People, Fleet and Net Zero. This report presents the enabling strategy for People.
- 1.3 The development of the *People Services department* strategy began during 2023, following the November 2022 publication of the Independent Review of Culture, two HMICFRS inspections which identified causes for concern relating to LFB culture, as well key areas for improvement across HR operations and people-related services.
- 1.4 The 2024 – 2027 People Strategy has expanded beyond the work of the People Services department, to include the people service functions of the Health and Safety department and the Learning and Professional Development department.

2 Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1 The overall objective of the People Strategy is to communicate the direction of travel for the improvement of the people-related service departments.
- 2.2 The document clearly sets out the people priorities within the context of the CRMP commitments and how it is intended to achieve those. It also explains the measures being put in place to ensure alignment with fire and rescue service sector and other relevant best practice.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1** The LFC and the Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and the Fire Service are required to have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) when taking decisions. This in broad terms involves understanding the potential impact of policy and decisions on different people, taking this into account and then evidencing how decisions were reached.
- 3.2** It is important to note that consideration of the Public Sector Equality Duty is not a one-off task. The duty must be fulfilled before taking a decision, at the time of taking a decision, and after the decision has been taken.
- 3.3** The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership (but only in respect of the requirements to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination), race (ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality), religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex, and sexual orientation.
- 3.4** The Public Sector Equality Duty requires decision-takers in the exercise of all their functions, to have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct.
 - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
 - foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 3.5** Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic where those disadvantages are connected to that characteristic.
 - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it.
 - encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- 3.6** The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.
- 3.7** Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
- tackle prejudice
 - promote understanding.
- 3.8** An equalities impact assessment (EIA) has been produced for the People Strategy and the current version is attached in appendix 2. Due to the subject matter of the strategy, it is important to note that assessing potential EDI impacts will be an ongoing piece of work. Therefore, the EIA will be updated based both on feedback from the Inclusion Team, and going forward, at least annually as the strategy is updated within the enabling strategy annual review process. Where people-related processes are identified as having negative impacts on any group, including those with protected characteristics, these will be addressed with the aim of removing the potential for those impacts to occur.
- 3.9** The strategy seeks to proactively improve employee (and prospective employee) experience across all groups, but with a specific focus on providing equity for all.

4 Other considerations

Workforce comments

- 4.1 A positive impact is anticipated by way of the CRMP's Commitment 5 which describes LFB's drive to 'enable our people to be the best they can be, to serve you better'. Commitment 5 includes improved employee experience, inclusion and improved staff wellbeing amongst its target areas.

Sustainability comments

- 4.2 No direct sustainability impacts are anticipated.

Procurement comments

- 4.3 The strategy itself does not have procurement impacts, however some of the work required to deliver against it are likely to require procurement processes. These will be carried out in accordance with the Scheme of Governance and in consultation with the Procurement Department.

Communications comments

- 4.4 The nature of the strategy demands that robust planning takes place, in order to ensure that staff are engaged and communicated with appropriately on matters relevant to them, whether proactively e.g. through messaging out to the organisation, or reactively e.g. through updating Hotwire content, policies and processes. It is also important to note that work to improve user experience will include consideration of communication methods, content and tone.
- 4.5 The departments responsible will ensure that a comprehensive understanding of communications needs is drawn up with guidance from the Head of Internal Communications and, if appropriate, the Head of External Communications.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1 This report recommends that the LFB People Strategy 2024-2027 is approved for publication. This report does not request approval for expenditure. Any recommendations to incur expenditure based on this strategy will be considered in line with LFB Governance requirements.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1 This report seeks the LFC's approval for publication of the LFB People Strategy ('Strategy') set out at Appendix 1. The Strategy is an enabling strategy for the Community Risk Management Plan.
- 6.2 Under section 9 of the Policing and Crime Act 2017, the London Fire Commissioner ("LFC") is established as a corporation sole with the Mayor appointing the occupant of that office.
- 6.3 Section 1 of the Fire and Rescue Services 2004 states that the LFC is the fire and rescue authority for Greater London
- 6.4 Under section 327D of the GLA Act 1999, as amended by the Policing and Crime Act 2017, the Mayor may issue to the LFC specific or general directions as to the manner in which the holder of that office is to exercise his or her functions.

- 6.5 By direction dated 1 April 2018, the Mayor set out those matters, for which the LFC would require the prior approval of either the Mayor or the Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and the Fire Service (the "Deputy Mayor").
- 6.6 Paragraph 3.1 of Part 3 of the said direction requires the LFC to consult with the Deputy Mayor as far as practicable in the circumstances before a decision is taken on (inter alia) any "[c] decision that can be reasonably considered to be novel, contentious or repercussive in nature, irrespective of the monetary value of the decision involved (which may be nil)".
- 6.7 The decisions recommended in this report are considered to be 'novel, contentious or repercussive' and therefore the Deputy Mayor must be consulted before a final decision is taken.
- 6.8 When carrying out his functions, the LFC is required to "have regard" to the Fire and Rescue National Framework prepared by the Secretary of State ("Framework") (Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004, section 21).
- 6.9 The production of an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) is a requirement of the Framework. In line with guidance from the National Fire Chiefs' Council, the LFC refers to the IRMP as a Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).
- 6.10 The Strategy attached to this report is identified and aligns with the CRMP and sets out the LFC's proposals for improvement of the people related service departments.

List of appendices

Appendix	Title	Open or confidential*
1	People Strategy 2024 – 2027	Open
2	People Strategy 2024 – 2027 Equality Impact Assessment	Open

Part two confidentiality

Only the facts or advice considered to be exempt from disclosure under the FOI Act should be in the separate Part Two form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a Part Two form: NO*