

Open Report on behalf of Nick Borrill, Chief Fire Officer

Report to:	Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee
Date:	12 June 2018
Subject:	Fire and Rescue – Wellbeing and Inclusion

Summary:

The importance that Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue places on staff wellbeing has long been recognised and can be clearly linked to a positive Service culture and improved community outcomes. Over the last 12 months there has been increased national interest within the sector on the wellbeing and inclusivity of staff. This has resulted in a number of initiatives to help improve staff wellbeing including promotion of the MIND Blue Light programme¹ and the development of the NJC Inclusive Fire Service Group (IFSG) work².

Acknowledging that Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue already has a number of mechanisms in place to support our staff, it is important we maintain a coherent approach to delivering these initiatives to improve wellbeing and inclusion within the workforce.

Our vision for wellbeing and inclusion is '*a healthy, happy and resilient workforce*'. Our recently agreed Wellbeing and Inclusion Framework, which forms part of our People Strategy, sets out roles and responsibilities and provides a clear structure to support achievement of that vision. The aim of this paper is to highlight the key elements of the Framework.

Actions Required:

Members of the Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee are invited to consider and comment on the contents of the submission and highlight any points for further consideration.

1. Introduction

In 2016, the Home Office outlined an ambitious programme of reform for the fire and rescue sector with workforce reform being a key part of that programme. The recently published Fire and Rescue Services National Framework Document³ places a duty on all Fire and Rescue Services to have in place a People Strategy.

¹ MIND is a mental health charity offering information and advice to people with mental health problems. It also works to raise public awareness and understanding of issues relating to mental health.

² A comprehensive piece of work engaging with fire and rescue services and their employees to consider equality, diversity, cultural and behavioural issues with the purpose of developing improvement strategies which could be supported across the board and used at local level to deliver improvement.

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-and-rescue-national-framework-for-england--2>

It requires the strategy to address key priorities including:

- Improving the diversity of the workforce
- Ensuring that it represents the community it serves
- Equality
- Cultural values and behaviours
- Health, wellbeing and support

Within Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue these priorities are being addressed under our Wellbeing and Inclusion Framework which forms part of our People Strategy.

2. Wellbeing and Inclusion Framework

2.1 Aim

Our aim is to create a supportive and inclusive environment promoting and encouraging the '*health, happiness and resilience*' of our staff. We will do this by:

- Creating an accessible toolkit which unifies the policies, resources and advice which exists to support the wellbeing of staff
- Raising awareness of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion issues and initiatives
- Raising awareness that we all have a responsibility for improving our health and wellbeing
- Equipping managers with the necessary knowledge and skills to support improvements in workforce health and wellbeing
- Adopting an inclusive approach to developing wellbeing related activities, seeking ideas and commitment from all staff
- Overcoming barriers to inclusivity and wellbeing, including breaking down cultural barriers that prevent people accessing support or services
- Seeking feedback from our workforce to inform and shape future strategy, policies and procedures
- Linking in to regional, national and local collaborative wellbeing activities and resources and sharing best practice
- Regularly reviewing our strategy, policies and procedures to ensure they remain relevant and conducive to a wellbeing culture



2.2 Key Pillars

Our Wellbeing and Inclusion Framework comprises a number of key pillars including:

- Culture
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Family and Social
- Mental Health
- Fitness, Health and Nutrition
- Occupational Health and Rehabilitation

Taking into account the views of our staff⁴, we have established a Wellbeing and Inclusion action plan around these pillars to support delivery of our vision. Our broad approach, supporting both short and long term improvement, includes:

- Delivering against the Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Wellbeing and Inclusion action plan (including our IFSG Improvement Plan)
- Implementing the Blue Light Workplace Wellbeing Charter Framework⁵
- Developing a network of Wellbeing and Inclusion champions across the Service

⁴ Initially from the 2017 staff cultural survey and E&D focus groups involving representatives from across the Service.

⁵ The Blue Light Workplace Wellbeing Charter Framework has been developed to support the health and wellbeing of police officers and is supported with resources at www.oscarkilo.org.uk

- Promoting wellbeing activities and resources available to staff
- Seeking feedback through online surveys and focus groups
- Engagement with staff to resolve issues
- Delivering a programme of events throughout the year
- An annual wellbeing communication strategy
- Including wellbeing and inclusion into our management development programme
- Building links with partners, utilising their expertise and best practice wherever possible

2.3 Delivery of the Framework

To ensure effective implementation of our Framework we have identified the following roles and responsibilities:

- *Wellbeing and Inclusion Board* - The Board will oversee the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Wellbeing and Inclusion framework. Demonstrating leadership from the highest level, it is chaired by the Chief Fire Officer and consists of representatives from all groups across the Service.
- *Managers* - Managers at all levels will ensure that policies and work programmes are effectively implemented and monitored and that staff are kept informed of any services provided.
- *Wellbeing and Inclusion Champions* - We have recruited champions for each of the 6 key pillars of the Framework. Our champions will help develop and deliver specific actions within those areas.
- *All Staff* - It is important that all staff are engaged in improving their feeling of wellbeing. All staff are encouraged to help shape the ongoing development and implementation of our Framework.
- *Representative Bodies* - Being members of the Wellbeing and Inclusion Board, we recognise the part that representative bodies can play in cascading information to staff throughout the organisation and feeding back any concerns.

2.4 Supporting Structures and Processes

We have put a number of structures in place which seek to deliver our commitment to maintaining and developing the health, wellbeing and inclusion of our staff. The following are key to success:

- Supportive leadership and management at all levels, fully committed to delivery of the framework
- An open and inclusive culture where everyone feels welcome, comfortable, engaged and involved
- Encouraging our staff to identify their own specific needs and develop suitable plans to address them
- Provision of a comprehensive coordinated range of policies, programmes and services focusing on health promotion, protection and prevention

- Creating workplace environments that are safe, healthy and pleasant, supporting staff to enjoy their work and deliver a strong performance.

2.5 Measuring our Success

We want to see the feeling of wellbeing and inclusion within our workforce improve and whilst recognising that this can be difficult to quantify, we will use the following to measure our success:

- Future staff surveys
- Number of staff visiting our wellbeing intranet pages
- Attendance at wellbeing activities
- Improvements in fitness assessment results
- Absence levels, reasons and trends
- Use of employee support initiatives
- The Bluelight Wellbeing Framework self-assessment
- Progress against the Inclusive Fire Service Group improvement strategies and national benchmarking exercises

3. **Wellbeing Champions**

Wellbeing champions have been appointed to represent the 6 key pillars of the Framework, their role being the 'voice of the Service'. They will also bring innovative suggestions to address identified issues and champion their subject area throughout the workforce. Champions will coordinate groups of volunteers, gathering information, leading on initiatives and delivering activities aimed at improving staff wellbeing. An example might be the Health and Fitness Champion arranging a '10,000 steps per day' challenge across departments, promoting and administering the event with peer support, collating results and providing an evaluation to the board on the impact of the initiative.

4. **The Project Team**

The project is being managed by existing staff from our Health and Safety and People Support areas. They will provide the link between Service policy and guidance and the initiatives or activities delivered by our Champions. Progress will be reported monthly to our Service Delivery Board⁶.

5. **Our Action Plan**

We have established an action plan and progress will be reviewed against it by our Wellbeing and Inclusion board. The plan comprises actions set by the board or project team, recommendations from the Equality and Diversity Audit and themes from the Staff Cultural Survey. The plan provides structure and supports prioritisation of activities in line with our strategy.

⁶ A key group of middle managers responsible for implementing Service plans, policy and procedures across all areas of the Service including effective communication.

6. Toolkit

Information will only be of use to people if readily available to those who need it at the time when it is required. A key piece of work for the project team is to create a toolkit where all relevant information is presented at the touch of a button in one accessible place. We are working to deliver this through a dashboard linking policy and guidance with initiatives for the 6 key areas. Our vision for how this could be presented is at Appendix 1.

7. Conclusion

Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue's vision for the wellbeing and inclusion of its people is '*a healthy, happy and resilient workforce*'. The Framework described in this paper is designed to support delivery of that vision. It is an integral part of the Service's People Strategy.

8. Consultation

a) Policy Proofing Actions Required

n/a

9. Appendices

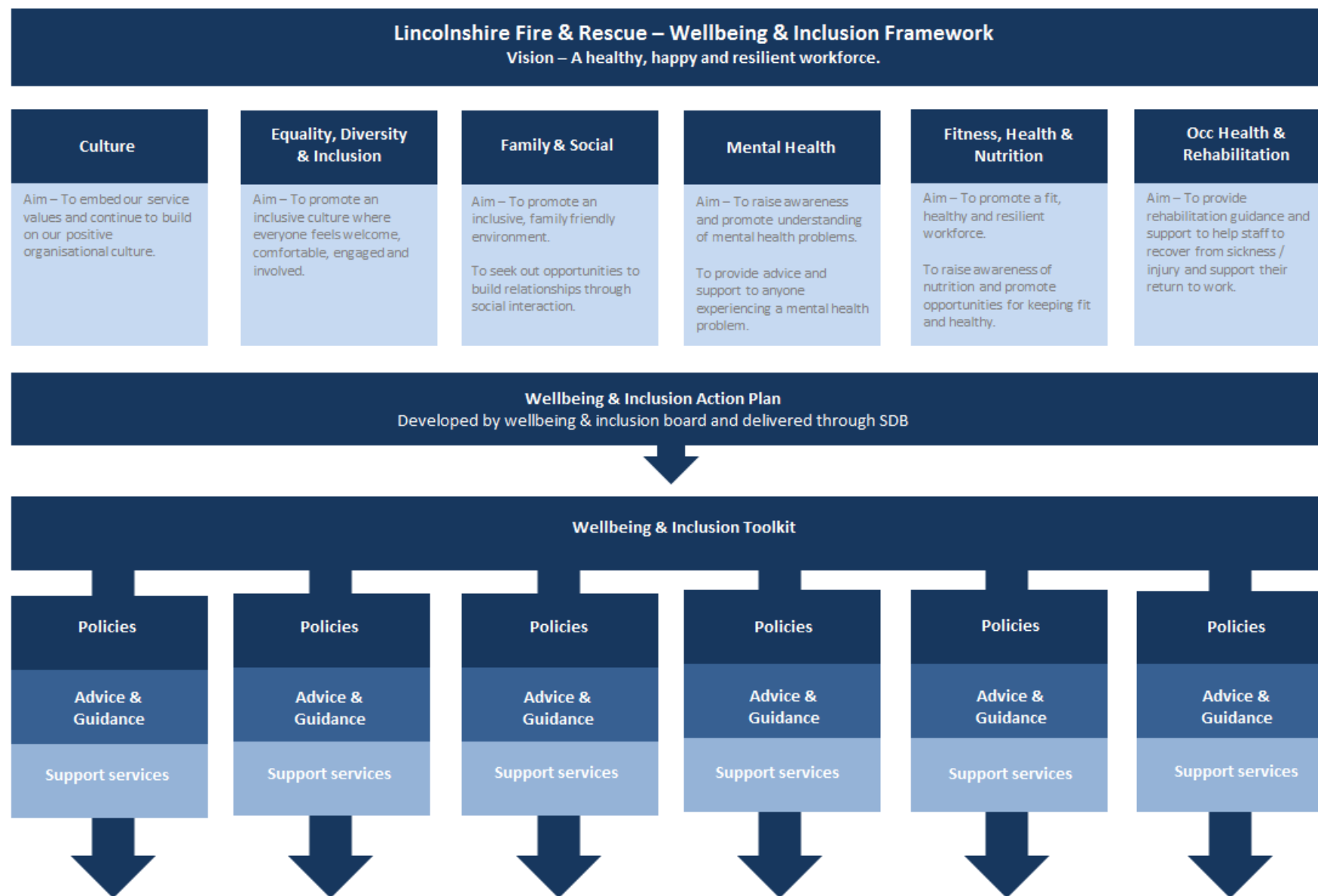
These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	LFR Wellbeing and Inclusion Framework

10. Background Papers

The following background papers as defined in the Local Government Act 1972 were relied upon in the writing of this report.

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
Fire and Rescue National Framework for England	https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/705060/National_Framework_-_final_for_web.pdf

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