



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE ASSESSMENT REPORT

West Midlands Fire Service

April 2012

Key Information

Assessment Type	Assessment
Assessor Names	Bob Morrison and Terry Jones
Visit Dates	18 th - 25 th April 2012
Assessment Reference Number	ENQ-82733-KWHVV2

Conclusion

In concluding that the Investors in People Standard has been met, the assessors recommend that **West Midlands Fire Service** should be recognised as Investors in People.

To maintain recognition, the next full review should take place before 25th April 2015

The assessors would like to express their congratulations on this recognition which has been achieved at a time of unprecedented change underlining the strong commitment to supporting and developing people. We would also like to record our gratitude for the very warm hospitality and co-operation extended by everyone in the organisation.

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Investors in People Specialists

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The organisation

The organisation provides emergency fire and rescue service within seven local authority areas across the West Midlands conurbation. These operations include fire prevention and education services as part of a community fire safety strategy. Employing over 2300 personnel, the service operates 38 Fire Stations that are supported by a purpose built Headquarters, Control Centre, Workshops and a dedicated Learning Academy. Alongside the Headquarter building, the service maintains a purpose built facility for education known as Safeside.

A specialist support unit is maintained to respond to needs for specialist equipment and as part of Government requirements to maintain a cohesive response to major incidents. The Service has regularly deployed specialist personnel and volunteers to assist in major international disasters. West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) provides training and maintenance services to other fire and rescue services as well as organisations within the private and public sector.

West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority is comprised of members nominated by the seven local authorities and provides scrutiny and governance of WMFS which is managed by the Chief Fire Officer and a Corporate Team of Directors

At the time of this assessment, the organisation was undertaking a significant programme of business improvement projects and restructuring in response to national drivers for economies within public sector expenditure whilst retaining frontline services.

Feedback against the agreed objectives

Business objective

Ability and capacity for handling organisational change

Clear vision and purpose

The vision for the service going forward within the current climate of uncertain funding is universally understood and most people can articulate the reasons for making changes including the need to find efficiencies. Whilst some have differing opinions about the priorities in balancing response services with prevention and education services, they reflect a well informed appreciation of the challenges and drivers outlined by the Chief Fire Officer and the Chair of the Authority.

Planning change

The majority of changes are being co-ordinated and project managed through the organisational change process: Building upon Success (BuS) based upon lean management techniques. A Management Board ensures that systematic reviews of processes and operations identify valid benefits and a clear business case for making changes. These BuS reviews are lead by a senior manager and make use of focus groups to consider both internal and external best practice before making recommendations to be sanctioned by the Corporate Team and the Authority.

There are indications that some of these reviews would have benefitted from more time to be effective in their analysis and execution. Overlapping projects and conflicting outcomes have resulted in some people experiencing several changes and confusion over their role and responsibilities for the future.

The transition from change project to business-as-usual processes is sometimes blurred with some managers unclear of when the changes should be effectively concluded and who is responsible.

Maintaining a focus on performance

Despite the potential for staff reductions and the impact of changes to long established processes, managers and their teams continue to maintain a strong focus on professional standards and maintaining performance. For most this is driven by a shared sense of pride in the service combined with a clear understanding of the performance indicators for their area of responsibility. There remain a few areas where the performance indicators are not reviewed and discussed as frequently as others or individuals are unsure of the current levels of performance.

Consultation

Consultation about proposed changes is clearly planned and included within the BuS reviews through the use of representatives from user groups. Senior managers also invite questions, concerns and suggestions during visits to stations. At higher levels of consultation, employee representatives confirm there are constructive relationships and they are involved with discussions about the BuS reviews and the long term strategy for change. However, the prevailing perception is that consultation is ineffective or does not take place at all. Those involved with consultation feel that they are being informed of decisions rather than consulted with some decisions already being executed by the time they are being discussed. Employees who are not closely involved with consultation activity on BuS reviews are mostly unaware of the existence or outcomes of consultation.

Communication of changes

The progress of BuS reviews and key decisions about changes are communicated on the Intranet and in the video-recorded management briefings. The Chair of the Authority also maintains a blog which is widely accessed. Most areas have some form of team briefing activity that includes discussion about the changes although there are some notable exceptions in support areas.

Most senior managers responsible for BuS projects carefully consider the timing and content of key messages, mindful of the impact of misinformation and the affect upon morale. However, these messages are frequently unread, lost in transmission or poorly translated by the time they reach those directly or indirectly affected. There are examples of critical changes not being communicated until a week before they were introduced.

People and some managers suggested that they would benefit from more frequent updates about the progress of reviews including delays.

Although senior managers frequently invite suggestions and questions during visits and briefings, a significant number of people do not feel that they were being listened to or were confident that their query would be addressed based upon their experiences. However, there were also several examples of best practice where senior managers had tracked a concern or suggestion and followed up to check that it had been addressed.

Leadership and management of change

The majority of people have strong faith in the Chief Fire Officer and the Chair of the Authority to lead and guide the service through the challenges of changing resources and priorities as difficult decisions are made. This confidence is less robust amongst support roles where there have been fewer opportunities to be directly addressed in briefings and discussions compared to fire fighters.

Most front line managers are effectively engaged with supporting teams and individuals through change, ensuring that concerns about uncertainty are addressed and new skills and knowledge have been acquired.

Whilst all managers have a clear understanding of their day-to-day role and responsibilities, the role of middle managers in managing change is less clearly defined with some perceived to be disengaged with the change processes or unaware of decisions affecting their area of operations. Consequently there is a perception that some middle and senior managers do not have confidence in the change process or that they are attempting to protect their specific service areas and teams from the adverse affects of change.

Developing flexibility

Operational staff have continued to develop their capacity to share expertise and quickly develop new skills and knowledge through tailored training activities delivered locally. Increasing the number of on-station personnel to train and assess others supported by the Academy specialists has enhanced the ability to quickly respond to changes in operational procedures and skills demands.

The recently revised job descriptions for support roles provide a good framework to develop a heightened awareness of transferable skills and knowledge which will improve the potential to become more agile and flexible as an organisation.

A significant number of people indicated that they would like to know more about the work of other teams and individuals across the service so that they were more adept at supporting colleagues and making decisions about career moves within the service. Opportunities to shadow teams such as the “Man-on-the moon” exchanges provide opportunities to learn more about other roles but these are relatively limited.

Talent management and succession planning

The IPDR process provides an opportunity to develop potential talents and discuss career aspirations. The knowledge, skills and behaviours required of current roles are clearly described within national frameworks for operational staff and also indicate potential career pathways and options for succession planning. In anticipation of the reduction in financial resources, recruitment activity has been suspended resulting in several managers “acting up” into vacant roles. This provides opportunities to develop talents and experience as the successive vacancies are backfilled.

The process is less defined for support staff with lower levels of participation in the IPDR process and few career pathways identified. Whilst there are a number of good examples of people progressing their careers within the service, there were also examples of talents and ambitions not being managed to support longer term needs.

Learning and development

Learning and development is managed through a blend of provision from the Academy, The National Fire College, internal teams and local in-house trainers. This provision encompasses a rich variety of methods including coaching, mentoring, e-learning and full-scale practical exercises such those included within “Arrive to Perform”.

Nearly all learning activity is regarded as high quality and relevant to needs. Learning solutions are increasingly being tailored by managers and specialists in response to emerging needs and are clearly focussed on outcomes with most people aware of the impact their learning should have on performance. The Amelio system for recording learning encourages individuals to reflect on their learning within the context of their performance and engages managers in the evaluation of learning activity.

The service has benefitted from a range of high quality leadership and management programmes over recent years, The Acua management development programme is providing a rich opportunity for managers from several disciplines to share experiences and explore models for managing change and organisational development before considering how these apply to the Service.

Planning to evaluate

Although the Building upon Success reviews define the potential benefits and outcomes of changes, it is less clear how these will be monitored and evaluated to confirm that benefits have been realised and lessons learned for the future. Some managers suggest that there is a tendency to replace processes and procedures rather than evolve them and subsequently planned evaluation is pointless. However, there are clear indications that lessons are learned and applied where there is a consistency of management.

Summary for this objective

Overall, the evidence from this assessment suggests that most of the policies, procedures and skills for managing organisational change exist within the Service but the capacity to utilise them effectively is hampered by inconsistent application and a lack of clarity about the roles and responsibilities of some managers in facilitating the change process. However, it should be recognised that the volume and depth of changes being introduced at this point in time are unprecedented and have a significant impact on managers themselves. Remarkably, core services and standards of performance have been maintained throughout this period, mostly due to the robust values and a strong sense of pride in the service that is found in every employee.

Ensuring that managers at all levels understand and actively apply their responsibilities for facilitating change and improving the way that ensuring feedback is managed would enhance the capacity for managing change in the future.

Evaluating the current change process would also ensure that best practice and lessons learned could be used to swiftly respond to the need for organisational change as it occurs.

Business objective

Enhancing levels of confidence in senior management decision making

Confidence in leadership and managers

Most people expressed that they had confidence in the leadership to take strategic decisions that were in the best interests of the Service particularly in these challenging times. They often accepted that these may lead to outcomes that would have a significant impact on their own role. Whilst the majority suggested that this confidence was centred on the Chief Fire Officer and Chair of the Fire Authority, those with an understanding of the senior management structures confirmed that this also extended across the senior management team.

Whilst nearly everyone displayed the utmost confidence in the decisions made during operations, the level of confidence waned as people reflected upon organisational decisions made by some senior and middle managers. This included some of the decisions made as a consequence of BuS reviews. Although a number of support staff felt uniformed managers are less likely to make effective decisions about technical or specialist skills outside of fire and rescue, there were several examples where uniformed managers were regarded as highly effective by facilitating and consulting the specialists in support roles.

At a more local level, most managers are regarded as effective in keeping their teams informed of their decisions and ensuring that any concerns are addressed either individually or in teams. There are a few areas within support functions where the lack of timely team meetings means there are less opportunities to check for understanding and this impacts on the level of confidence in a few front-line managers

Communicating decisions

The programme of corporate communications briefings undertaken by directors and senior managers visiting different locations has helped to improve the level of confidence amongst operational staff. Senior manager also benefit from gaining an appreciation of the concerns of front-line staff. However, a significant number of support staff based in Headquarters felt that they had less access to similar opportunities for briefings.

The corporate briefings combined with the videocasts of management briefings that are regularly published on the intranet and the Chair's blog are regarded as positive efforts to keep people informed about the reasons for change and decisions made. The videocasts are regarded as an improvement on the previous cascade of notes and presentations.

Senior managers are keen to maintain a high level of transparency about major decisions whilst remaining sensitive to the risk of releasing incomplete or inaccurate information that has a potential impact on jobs and resources. Whilst most people respect the need for senior managers to explore different scenarios in confidence and diligently reach a

considered decision, there have been occasions when conflicting messages have been given about decisions leading to some mistrust and derision.

Several people including managers felt that the reasons behind some critical decisions were not conveyed adequately or that they had not appeared to address the key issues that affected them personally or their own team.

Feedback and timely response

Senior managers could give examples of how they had responded to both specific and broader types of feedback. Generally, senior managers have an accurate understanding of the broad issues and concerns that are raised by teams and individuals regarding decisions that have been made. These are partly drawn from their own concerns and partly from the feedback gained in corporate briefings and discussions with teams. The recent employee survey also provided senior managers with an opportunity to gain feedback which has been considered in detail and used to explore improvements to the way people are managed and developed.

However, a significant number of people felt that their feedback was not heard and that they would not get a response to their concerns or suggestions before major decisions are made. There were examples of questions raised at briefings or through their managers that remained without a promised, timely response.

Authority and autonomy

There are defined lines of authority and accountability with most managers clear about their limits of responsibility for decisions. There remains some significant variance in the degree of autonomy for decisions made by managers in similar roles with a few feeling that they are unable to make a basic decision without checking with a higher authority. Because some station based managers were unclear of the role of other teams based centrally, they were unsure of whom they should contact for specialist knowledge to aid their decisions.

Aside from strategic and front-line operational decision making, a number of people (including managers) expressed frustration at the time it took for some critical decisions to be made in response to emerging needs. This particularly applied to decisions that have to be referred to other teams or higher levels of authority. Within this group, there is a perception that the decision process has to go through too many layers of management with some managers casting off their responsibility for conveying difficult messages or decisions. Whilst there may be valid reasons for delays and careful consideration, little appears to be done to keep everyone informed of progress.

Summary for this objective

Overall, the service has done a lot to enhance the levels of confidence in the decisions taken by senior leaders but the responses from this assessment suggest that the expectations of people have increased.

Despite the efforts of senior managers to be as open as possible in difficult circumstances, several people indicated that greater transparency around decision making was the single most important issue that the service could improve at this time.

It is clear that the Service has made a number of significant improvements to the way that decisions are conveyed and most people appreciate these developments. Overall, people are relatively well informed about decisions but less clear about the reasons and sometimes there are unexplained delays.

The volume of changes and the potential for decisions to have a significant impact on the whole service has understandably heightened the attention given to decisions and the demand for clarification. It would appear that managers are not responding adequately to this increased demand and it should be noted that they are often affected by the changes themselves.

Most of the concerns about transparency are based upon a lack of feedback or clarification rather than a failure of systems or policy. Developing an internal communications strategy that ensures greater rigour in responding to suggestions, and concerns as well as clarifying the role of managers at every level in conveying decisions and keeping people informed would improve perceptions of transparency and gain swifter engagement.

Enhancing the ability of all managers to actively listen to concerns and questions so they can respond or refer them in a timely and appropriate way would also improve levels of confidence in the decision making process.

Assessment objective

Effectiveness of internal communications

Internal systems

A variety of communication channels are used to keep people informed of key messages that impact on their role and provide access to information when required. These include written updates, personal briefings, team meetings, a dedicated intranet, the Chairs' Blog and email. Critical updates on operational policies and procedures are provided through controlled mechanisms to ensure that all staff receive and understand the content. Some internal newsletters have been withdrawn or consolidated to save resources and in response to the increased use of the intranet.

Nearly all areas have routine team meetings with opportunities to ask questions and clarify understanding. There were a few exceptions within support functions where staff felt that meetings would be appreciated or the frequency could be improved.

Communications meetings with senior managers talking directly to teams in their own locations are used to convey the vision and long term strategy.

The service provides high quality materials for both internal and external communications through the use of dedicated in-house specialists ensuring that core messages are consistently delivered and appropriate for the internal audience.

Most people suggested that routine internal communications had improved in recent years and that they were kept well informed about information required for their role and responsibilities. Support staff tend to suggest that internal communications are weaker than their operational colleagues.

Intranet and email

The intranet is increasingly used to provide information which has enabled a more consistent and widespread communication of most decisions which is accessible at anytime. Whilst everyone has access to the intranet, some have less opportunity with their time being restricted or having to share terminals with colleagues. There are a minority who lack the confidence in their IT user skills or lack the inclination to navigate through the intranet site.

Several people felt that the home page of the intranet could provide a better summary of quick links to key projects and decisions. There were signs that this issue was already being addressed. The recent enhancement to allow key users to submit and edit their own content may have improved the updating of content but may also have contributed to an overload of information at times and a lack of clarity about decisions.

With a few exceptions, most people felt that the level of email traffic and content was manageable and appropriate although there could be some improvement to the way that emails were composed and circulated.

Effectiveness of managers

Whilst there were a few notable exceptions, most line managers were regarded as approachable and responsive when their teams required further information or to clarify changes to instructions and procedures. However, where a query or a suggestion is regarded as outside their responsibility zone, there is a tendency for some managers to do nothing or pass it on without following up.

Several people indicated that their managers could be more effective at listening (or appearing to listen) to their concerns and suggestions. This included references to some of the senior managers' communications meetings.

Virtually all managers have received training in communication skills and the training provided by the equality and diversity specialists includes skills in the application of emotional intelligence in understanding the perceptions of others.

Only a few managers appeared to have discussed their effectiveness in communication skills as part of their IPDR although the revised competence framework for managers may address this in due course.

Knowledge sharing

Within teams, people routinely support each other in developing knowledge and sharing information. This is most notable where people have joined the organisation or started new roles where the level of support from colleagues is regarded as excellent.

Whilst teams and individuals readily share knowledge and information with other teams when invited, several people felt that they would benefit from knowing more about the work of other teams and how this related to their own role. As the organisation continues to change in terms of structure and responsibilities, they see a growing need to maintain and retain knowledge.

The Man-in-the-Moon initiative which provides opportunities to visit and experience other parts of the Service is regarded as an effective way of gaining an appreciation of other roles and responsibilities, but it has been difficult for some areas to release staff.

Evaluating Communications

The recent employee survey indicated that confidence in internal communications has fallen since the last survey. Whilst senior managers are clearly committed to addressing the issues raised in the employee survey, the frequency of these reviews makes it difficult to gain more effective and immediate feedback as changes occur.

Those responsible for the intranet and other key communications channels compensate for this by actively seeking informal feedback from users and occasional focus groups.

Evidence of how this feedback is utilised includes the changes to how the management briefings are circulated via videocasts and revisions to the intranet design and content.

Summary for this objective

Although the last employee survey suggested that internal communications had weakened, the evidence from this assessment indicates that most people feel that there has been a marked improvement in general communications in recent years. Most people draw a distinction between general communications and those related to the Building–upon–Success reviews where the perceived lack of transparency has adversely impacted on their overall view of communications.

Compared to many organisations, internal communications are robust and very effective at cascading critical operational information. There is long established legacy of communicating instructions and procedures which most people take for granted. Their expectations are therefore relatively high.

The increased use of the intranet as a source of information and a channel for communication key messages has reaped many benefits in terms of consistency, costs and access but it also relies upon users having the time and inclination to navigate to essential information. Encouraging greater levels of access amongst longer serving staff and continuing to improve the user interface would ensure that engagement is more consistent.

Some managers may benefit from utilising more of the knowledge and skills delivered during their training in terms of checking for understanding, reinforcing key messages and actively listening to concerns and suggestions. Ensuring that the reviews of management performance in IPDRs include checking that these communications skills were applied would help to improve management effectiveness in this area. Developing a clear internal communications strategy would also help to clarify the role of managers at different levels.

Building upon existing best practice and developing more opportunities to share knowledge and understand between teams and services would improve the ability to retain critical knowledge and quickly respond to issues without relying on vertical communication channels through layers of managers.

Establishing a more frequent and focussed way of evaluating internal communications would help to respond more rapidly to changes and highlight inconsistencies across teams and locations.

Strengths of the organisation

Commitment to learning and development and measures taken to ensure needs are identified and met

Nearly everyone regards WMFS as an exemplar learning organisation with a very strong commitment from the top to developing and maintaining world-class professional standards within the resources available. With very few exceptions, all learning needs are addressed in a timely and appropriate manner. The Melio system for operational staff combined with IPDR provides a solid basis for recording learning and development, identifying emerging needs and ensuring they are addressed and applied effectively to the role.

Quality and blend of learning and development

The rich blend of learning and development activities provided by the Academy, embedded specialists and the other services such as the Equality and Diversity team are regarded as consistently high in terms of quality, content and relevance. Managers are increasingly working with learning specialists to develop tailored solutions for emerging needs.

Commitment to communicate strategic messages

Although there are some weaknesses in the way that strategic messages are effectively received, there is a clear commitment from the Chief Fire Officer and the leadership team to communicate these messages and ensure the long term vision and service priorities are conveyed to everyone. Senior managers make an effort to spend time with front-line staff to communicate these messages and management briefings are recorded on video and shared with everyone on the intranet.

Understanding role and responsibilities

Nearly all staff have a very clear understanding of their current role and what is required of them to meet standards and expectations. Most can explain how they contribute to the success of the organisation and share a strong sense of pride in providing a professional service.

Work-life Balance and wellbeing

Although access to good occupational health facilities and medical support may be regarded as essential to this type of organisation, the pro-active approach of managers and colleagues combined with a high degree of support upon return to work and managing stress suggests this is a strength that also supports the values of the Service.

Man on the Moon

Providing opportunities for staff to visit other teams and locations to gain an insight to their roles and responsibilities has helped to develop a wider understanding of the changing services and engendered a higher appreciation of the work of colleagues.

Responding positively to feedback from the employee survey and other feedback

Senior managers pay close attention to the feedback provided in the employee survey and through focus group activity, spending time and resources to gain from best practice and ensure that appropriate responses are planned to address any issues raised.

Chair's Blog

The Chair of the Authority maintains a blog keeping people informed of his involvement with the service, the political and economic landscape, decisions made by the Authority and his response to questions and concerns. The blog is widely referenced by people from across the organisation and has helped to instil confidence in the commitment of the Authority to the service.

Potential areas for further development

Please note: These suggestions are based upon feedback from interviewees and do not require addressing in order to meet the Investors in People Standard. Suggested actions are included in the annexe to this report.

Improve levels of compliance with existing strategies for developing and managing people.

The Service has developed a comprehensive range of policies and procedures that were supplied to the assessors and are clearly available to managers and their teams yet there are several areas where these are not consistently applied including:

- IPDR – especially in some support staff areas
- Communications (meetings and briefings)
- Induction to new roles
- Coaching and mentoring
- Melio moderation

Developing more robust ways of monitoring the use of these strategies and dealing swiftly with non-compliance would improve the focus on performance in some areas and combat a growing perception of inequality being under-valued that exists in a few teams and individuals.

Improve the signposting of critical information and updates within the Intranet.

The intranet has become a rich source of information and a major channel for communications but there are indications that critical messages are being lost in the volume of content and frequency of changes. The levels of use and the range of user skills are varied despite assumptions that everyone can access the intranet and is therefore informed. Improving the way that key changes are highlighted and signposted within the intranet and ensuring that these are brought to the attention of infrequent users would address misconceptions that people are not being informed adequately about changes.

Improve the effectiveness of middle managers in supporting communications and managing change

The service is experiencing an unprecedented degree of change and recognises it will need to operate with leaner resources and more agile use of teams and individuals. The role of middle managers in facilitating these changes, supporting key messages and conveying feedback is unclear. There are also a significant number of managers “acting-up” into their role due to the current recruitment freeze. Clarifying the role of middle managers both in the current change process and the future structures and developing ways of monitoring effectiveness in these roles would have a significant impact on both employee engagement and confidence in management decision making.

Listening to and recognising contributions

Whilst people are frequently consulted and asked for their contributions, several feel that these invitations are not genuine or they contributions will be ignored. This includes some aspects of consultation on BuS reviews. Improving the way that managers at all levels are clear about the scope of consultation, listen more actively, ensure that concerns are addressed, suggestions are constructively considered and all contributions are acknowledged appropriately would improve employee engagement in consultation activities.

Plan to evaluate new or revised strategies.

Whilst it is clear that the Service evaluates key processes for managing and developing people there is a tendency to consider how to evaluate these after they have been revised or implemented. Including plans on how and when new strategies will be monitored and evaluated for their impact on performance as they are commissioned would ensure that they remain fit for purpose and achieve their intended outcomes.

The following suggestions for development address areas in the Investors in People extended framework which goes beyond the core standard that was assessed on this occasion.

Clarify the internal communications strategy and how it will be monitored

The effectiveness of communications will continue to change as people become accustomed to different media and the pace of change increases. Current methods for monitoring make it difficult to pinpoint communication issues. Clarifying the purpose of the various communications channels and the responsibilities of managers in their use will provide a basis for monitoring the impact and correct use. Developing a more frequent method for monitoring communications based on the strategy would help ensure communications remain effective.

Develop a cohesive organisational development strategy

There appears to be as lack of synergy between the HR functions, the Academy, learning and organisational development specialists and Senior Managers when it comes to the long term strategy for developing the organisation. This may be a reflection of the current state of change in the Service but a lack of clarity and failure to communicate the strategy risks confusing managers and their teams. Developing a more cohesive strategy for the future by involving all stakeholders and gaining shared ownership of the outcome will avoid conflicts and maximise the use of resources. It will also aid longer term workforce planning.

Identify appropriate career pathways and manage talent

Whilst career pathways for uniformed staff are broadly defined by national frameworks, the changes in the structure and the need to be more flexible may require some further refinement to manage expectations given the amount of officers that are currently acting-up. Career pathways and options for support staff are less well defined and in some cases they are limited. However there are latent talents that are not being identified and developed. The revised job-descriptions for support staff will aid the application of transferable skills to different roles. Reviewing and defining career pathways and options so that managers and individuals can explore them during IPDR discussions will help to manage aspirations and make best use of talents.

Selection and assessment of managers

The selection process for managers has been revised in recent years resulting in some potential candidates feeling that the process is unfair due to changes in eligibility criteria and a selection process that does not recognise their experience. Ensuring that the criteria and assessment processes are appropriate for the future and are clearly communicated so that potential talent can be developed and candidates regard the process as fair should improve their perceptions and encourage a stronger field of candidates.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

There is some confusion about how CPD activity is recorded, recognised and rewarded for operational staff. Additionally, some support staff roles would benefit from maintaining their competence and knowledge through more structured CPD processes. Ensuring that managers understand the requirements for CPD recognition would improve transparency over rewards. Developing CPD requirements for some support roles would help to maintain internal expertise more rigorously.

Appendix 1 – Continuous Improvement Plan

Business Issue - What	Suggested Actions - How	Potential Benefit - Why	Priority - When	Solutions/Support Available - Who
<p>Improve levels of compliance with existing strategies for developing and managing people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish or develop appropriate methods to monitor critical aspects of policies and procedures. (e.g. IPDR completion rates and sampling of quality. Frequency of team meetings) • Routine report to high level management teams. • Share best practice and address reasons for non-compliance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved focus on performance • Reduced perception of inequality across teams • Improve management effectiveness • More people feel valued 	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Internal resources and monitoring systems exist.</p>

Business Issue - What	Suggested Actions - How	Potential Benefit - Why	Priority - When	Solutions/Support Available - Who
<p>Improve the signposting of critical information and updates within the Intranet.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete current work on improving links and update alerts on homepage • Provide guidance on managing content and providing links • Control frequency and volume of updates to avoid overload of information • Encourage managers (or local intranet champions) to continue to highlight existence of updates and links to infrequent users of intranet • Provide further help to users who are less confident in navigating the intranet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved perception of transparency about decision making • More effective retrieval of critical information such as reasons behind decisions • Higher levels of access by all users 	<p>High</p>	<p>Internal resources exist</p>

Business Issue - What	Suggested Actions - How	Potential Benefit - Why	Priority - When	Solutions/Support Available - Who
<p>Improve the effectiveness of middle managers in supporting communications and managing change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map the roles and expectations of middle managers in managing change. (include role in explaining decisions and processing feedback) • Communicate expectations to all managers • Provide development and support where necessary • Monitor for effectiveness (include in IPDR) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved confidence in decision-making • Middle managers are valued more highly • Feedback and suggestions from teams are addressed • Changes are implemented more effectively 	<p>High</p>	<p>Revised management capabilities framework exists but may need interpretation in the context of managing change. Coaching and mentoring processes exist.</p>
<p>Clarify the internal communications strategy and how it will be monitored</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an Internal Communications Strategy that clearly identifies the different channels, their purpose and intended impact on users. • Identify measures of use and impact based on the strategy • Establish regular monitoring processes that compliment the less frequent employee survey • Produce routine reports to senior management teams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearer understanding of the purpose and importance of key communication channels • Earlier identification of communication issues as change affects people • Faster response to issues and need to adapt internal communications 	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Knowledge and experience exists within organisation.</p> <p>Consider looking at examples in other organisations through own networks or via Investors in People community.</p>

Business Issue - What	Suggested Actions - How	Potential Benefit - Why	Priority - When	Solutions/Support Available - Who
<p>Develop a cohesive organisational development strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review existing mix of strategies with key stakeholders. Consider the context of a changing Service and future needs. Include learning and development, management effectiveness, workforce planning, talent management and succession planning. • Align revised strategy to corporate vision and strategy • Communicate widely • Ensure that all proposals to change aspects of managing and developing people comply with the strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearer and shared understanding of organisational development • Less conflicts and gaps between component policies • Improved evolution of changes with careful consideration of impact on other policies. 	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Consult existing stakeholders. Consider examples from other organisations.</p>

Business Issue - What	Suggested Actions - How	Potential Benefit - Why	Priority - When	Solutions/Support Available - Who
Identify appropriate career pathways and manage talent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisit existing pathways for operational staff in the context of a revised structure and organisational strategy • Develop range of pathways and options for support staff where possible • Develop talent management and succession planning strategies • Communicate to all staff and managers • Include within IPDR discussions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage expectations where progression is limited • Identify and channel potential talent • Improve workforce capacity, agility and resilience to further change 	Medium	<p>Internal expertise exists. Extension of work done on job descriptions for support staff Develop existing succession planning processes</p>

Business Issue - What	Suggested Actions - How	Potential Benefit - Why	Priority - When	Solutions/Support Available - Who
Selection and assessment of managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisit existing selection and assessment process to ensure they are appropriate for future management knowledge, skills and behaviours • Involve a range of stakeholders in developing selection procedures. • Ensure all managers and potential managers are aware of selection criteria and use to inform management development • Consider seeking more detailed feedback from successful and unsuccessful candidates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved understanding of selection process • Selection process identifies both potential skills and existing experience • Improved field of candidates • Selection process is regarded as fair by everyone. 	Medium to low	Existing expertise exists.
Continuous Professional Development (CPD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify process for recognising and rewarding CPD for operational staff. Ensure all managers are aware of requirements and monitor their teams • Develop CPD expectations for support roles where appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity about how reward and recognition of CPD for operational staff is managed. • Maintain high levels of competence for critical specialist support roles 	Low	Internal resources exist Consider looking at professional bodies for specialist support roles. (CIPFA, CIPD, RICS etc.)

Appendix 2 – Assessment results summary

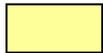
The Investors in People Framework

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
The Indicators	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓																						
	2	✓	✓	✓	✓																								
	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓																							
	4	✓	✓	✓																									
	5	✓	✓	✓	✓																		✓						
	6	✓	✓	✓																									
	7	✓	✓	✓																									
	8	✓	✓	✓																									
	9	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓																							
	10	✓	✓	✓																									

The number of evidence requirements met is **40**



The Core Investors in People Standard



Your Choice from the IIP Framework



Not part of the Investors in People Framework

Appendix 3 – Business priorities mapped to Investors in People Framework

<i>Business objectives</i>	<i>Key People issues</i>	<i>Main evidence requirements The Standard</i>	<i>Additional indicators from Extended framework</i>
Capacity for flexibility and handling organisational change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Clear purpose and vision for change with strategy for implementation</i> • <i>Flexible planning with clear measures and milestones</i> • <i>Change priorities are understood</i> • <i>Management effectiveness in inspiring others and supporting flexibility and change</i> • <i>Effective communications strategy and processes</i> • <i>People encouraged to make appropriate decisions</i> • <i>People encouraged to contribute ideas</i> • <i>Regular performance review encourages positive approach to change</i> • <i>Leadership & management defined to support change</i> • <i>Responsive actions are highlighted and celebrated</i> • <i>Learning and support is flexible and develops capacity for change</i> • <i>Effective evaluation strategies and processes</i> 	1.1 1.2 1.6 5.1, 5.3, 8.3 1.6, 7.1, 7.3 5.2, 5.4 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 6.1, 6.2 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 9.3, 10.1	7.5

Assessment objectives	Key People issues	Main evidence requirements The Standard	Additional indicators from Extended framework
Enhancing levels of confidence in senior management decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Leadership and Management capabilities defined and developed to encourage employee engagement</i> • <i>Leadership and management effectiveness is reviewed on a regular basis</i> • <i>Feedback from teams is encouraged and acted upon</i> • <i>Evaluation of confidence in decision making</i> 	2.1, 2.2,4.1, 4.2, 5.1 5.4, 10.2,10.3	4.10 5.20 5.21,5.22, 5.24
Effectiveness of internal communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Internal communications strategy and system defined</i> • <i>Effective management of communication through levels</i> • <i>People encouraged to make contributions and give feedback</i> • <i>Knowledge is shared openly</i> • <i>Communications are evaluated and improved</i> 	5.1,5.2,7.1 7.2 10.2,10.3	7.5