

# County Durham and Darlington **Fire and Rescue Authority**

County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service  
Adrian Thomas Review Gap Analysis and Action Plan



<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Comment</b>
0.1	4/11/16	Initial Draft prepared from Adrian Thomas Review for discussion with SLT
0.2	06/04/17	Reviewed by SLT
0.3	17/05/17	Reviewed by SLT

<b>Key</b>	
	Compliant
	Working/making progress towards compliance
	Not compliant
	Recommendation for Local Government Association (LGA), the National Joint Council (NJC) or the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC)

The Working Environment				
	Resp	Key	Notes/existing capability	Lead
<p>1. Culture and trust are at the centre of many of the changes required to create a high performing service aligned to the needs of the people it serves. A consistent employee engagement survey should be developed and deployed across the service (allowing inter authority comparisons) and 'hard wired' into management objectives.</p>	<p><b>FRS</b> <b>NJC</b></p>		<p>The Service have commissioned Professor Les Graham from Durham University Business School to undertake a cultural survey. The results were presented back to the Rep Bodies and SLT initially in January 2017 and subsequently communicated to all staff via the monthly communications brief, info bulletin and workshops. Appropriate interventions are being developed and are integral to the Workforce Development Strategy. The Service has also agreed a follow-up survey to be conducted to measure any change in culture.</p>	<p><b>AM Workforce Development</b></p>
<p>2. Early engagement with employee representatives at the earliest opportunity should be a feature of all change programmes.</p>	<p><b>FRS</b></p>		<p>The Service has strong industrial relations with all the recognised representative bodies and early engagement is a key part of the way the organisation develops strategies, policies and procedures. There are formal meetings between management and the representative bodies monthly, informal meetings between the FBU Secretary and the CFO monthly and ad-hoc meetings between the DCFO and the FBU as and when required.</p> <p>The elected members have good relationships with the representative bodies and this also forms part of the informal engagement process.</p> <p>Prior to policy/procedure review/introduction all rep bodies are consulted as part of the process. Representative bodies are engaged at all levels</p>	<p><b>DCFO</b></p>

			in the organisation as a permanent member of many of the Service meetings or groups, for example, health and safety, corporate wellbeing, RDS liaison, equality and diversity.	
3. Fire and rescue services should deploy training in effective change management, leadership and employee engagement in addition to Industrial Relations.	FRS		A significant amount of the areas highlighted are included in the various staff development programmes already in place. The Service has conducted a significant review of our aims and objectives, values and behaviours, once finalised training will be required for all staff. This training will include refreshed change management, leadership and industrial relations input but linked closely to our refreshed values and behaviours in addition to the areas identified by the results of the cultural survey.	<b>AM Workforce Development</b>
4. Increased importance should be placed by fire and rescue services on employee communication - appropriate management training and processes (direct to employee) should be implemented.	FRS		Over the last twelve months a significant amount of work has been undertaken to improve internal communication in the Service. These improvements include: station and section visits by SLT, job shadowing, the introduction of monthly comms forums and improvements to the weekly information bulletin. Whilst marked as compliant communications will be continually reviewed to ensure that improvements are made where necessary. There is evidence in the positive feedback from staff during the 2016 managers' seminars and follow up visits to stations during 2017 that this communication and engagement with employees has been effective.	<b>Communications and Governance Manager</b>
5. Fire and rescue services should instigate audits of the flow of management information reaching the workforce with the aim of improving the flow of information to the frontline firefighter.	FRS		The flow of information has been audited informally as part of the station visit programme. The new electronic newsletter will enable the	<b>Communications and Governance Manager</b>

			<p>flow of information to be audited more formally.</p> <p>The new Comms &amp; Governance Manager has been commissioned to undertake an audit of the effectiveness of the various mechanisms used to communicate internally both vertically and horizontally and, where appropriate, to identify quantifiable measures to monitor their effectiveness.</p>	
6. Management performance objectives should be hard wired to the results of an annual employee engagement and communication survey.	<b>FRS</b>		<p>The outcomes from station visits have been built in to management performance objectives. This will be further strengthened when the results of the Cultural Survey are published and appropriate interventions developed.</p>	<b>AM Workforce Development</b>
7. Unconscious bias training should be rolled out across the fire and rescue service.	<b>FRS</b>		<p>This will be delivered as part of the Workforce Development Strategy in 2017.</p> <p>SLT members will receive this training in October 2017. The plan for the wider workforce is currently being developed.</p>	<b>Workforce Development Manager</b>
8. The leadership of the Fire and Rescue Service (represented by the Local Government Association and Chief Fire Officers Association) and the employee representatives together with special interest groups representing woman and black and minority ethnic firefighters should publish a memorandum of understanding as to how people will be treated.	<b>LGA</b> <b>NFCC</b>		<p>The NJC have established the Inclusive Fire Service Working Group which includes representatives from the national employers, rep bodies, and CFOA.</p> <p>Internally we have a productive E&amp;D Steering Group. Our Service values have been reviewed and presented to the CFA and a communication plan is being developed for the organisation.</p>	
9. Research should be directed at how the cadet scheme could be utilised to widen the diversity of the service and how the interest in supporting the fire service can be maintained when the cadets	<b>NFCC</b> <b>FRS</b>		<p>The Service have already encouraged YFA/cadets to take up employment with the Service through the Apprenticeship Scheme; RDS and wholetime recruitment.</p>	<b>Workforce Development Manager</b>

<p>leave the scheme (impacting both equality and potentially the retained duty system).</p>			<p>The expansion of the YFA/Cadet model in the 2016/17 IRMP formed part of a wider recruitment strategy.</p> <p>One RDS firefighter who was previously a member of the YFA was successful in gaining a place on our apprenticeship programme.</p> <p>An objective in the WFD strategy is to create clear links to career paths within the Service across all areas and assist with providing employability skills to those in the YFA and cadet schemes.</p>	
<p><b>10.</b> Each fire and rescue service should maintain an active register of firefighters with second jobs. A refusal or failure to declare a second job should be treated as a serious disciplinary matter.</p>	<p><b>FRS</b></p>		<p>Secondary employment is covered in A/D 2/39 Secondary Employment Policy. Disciplinary action has been taken against employees who fail to declare secondary employment.</p>	<p><b>Workforce Development Manager</b></p>
<p><b>11.</b> Implement a single technological/equipment evaluation facility.</p>	<p><b>NFCC</b></p>		<p>CFOA are working towards establishing a R&amp;D Hub. The Hub will be owned by the UK FRS and all intellectual property generated will be held by CFOA on behalf of the UK FRS. CDDFRS have committed to support the R&amp;D Hub.</p>	

<b>Documented conditions of service</b>				
	<b>Resp</b>	<b>Key</b>	<b>Notes/existing capability</b>	<b>Lead</b>
<b>12.</b> The fire and rescue services in conjunction with the Government should create a national communication programme highlighting the range of activities and skills beyond fighting fires currently undertaken by firefighters. The aim of this would be to raise public awareness that creating a flexible fire and rescue service aligned to prevention is key to increasing safety in the local community.	<b>NFCC</b>  <b>Home Office</b>		CDDFRS welcome this recommendation and encourage the Home Office to work with the service to implement it.	
<b>13.</b> Slim down and modernise the Grey Book, removing duty systems and reference to role maps and national occupational standards and replace with contracts of employment.	<b>NJC</b>		CDDFRS have not experienced significant issues with the content of the Grey Book and do not view it as a barrier to change as we have already implemented a range of duty systems and changed the operational shift system to create extra capacity.	
<b>14.</b> Minimum night time shift hours should be removed from the Grey Book.	<b>NJC</b>		CDDFRS have not experienced significant issues with the content of the Grey Book and do not view it as a barrier to change.	
<b>15.</b> Disagreements regarding additional payments, collaborations or implementation of new technologies and working practices should be resolved locally without resort to the national advisory panels.	<b>NJC</b>		CDDFRS have not experienced significant issues with the content of the Grey Book and do not view it as a barrier to change.	
<b>16.</b> The national employers, government and employee representatives should, in support of establishing a changed culture (as detailed earlier), meet and agree a re-defined national joint protocol on industrial relations.	<b>NJC</b>  <b>Home Office</b>  <b>Rep Bodies</b>		CDDFRS have an agreed industrial relations protocol in place which worked well during the recent national industrial dispute.	

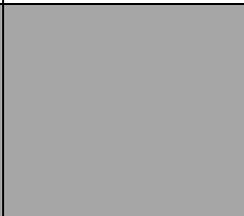
<p><b>17.</b> The ability to compulsorily move an individual from the flexible duty system should be introduced.</p>	<p><b>NJC</b></p>		<p>CDDFRS believe the current arrangements are suitable. The impact of removing a person from the flexible duty system on the member of staff's pension needs to be carefully considered and subject to a level of protection.</p>	
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<p><b>Industrial Relations</b></p>				
	<p><b>Resp</b></p>	<p><b>Key</b></p>	<p><b>Notes/existing capability</b></p>	<p><b>Lead</b></p>
<p><b>18.</b> The National Joint Council should be retained for the purposes of national pay bargaining for basic pay whilst reforming itself to represent employers and employees on a more local basis for all other conditions of service including incremental pay for acquiring competences beyond 'safe to ride'.</p>	<p><b>NJC</b></p>		<p>Careful consideration needs to be given to the additional burden that would be placed on each fire and rescue service should the role of the NJC be dramatically reduced.</p> <p>Increased local negotiation on contentious issues such as pay or leave could be detrimental to local industrial relations which are current very good in CDDFRS.</p>	
<p><b>19.</b> The National Joint Council should consider operating regionally to reflect the requirements of the different fire authorities whilst retaining a national umbrella with respect to basic pay.</p>	<p><b>NJC</b></p>		<p>Careful consideration needs to be given to the additional burden that would be placed on each fire and rescue service should the role of the NJC be dramatically reduced.</p>	
<p><b>20.</b> Remove Technical Advisory Panels and Resolution Advisory Panel and replace with a direct to ACAS approach. Fire and Rescue Authorities are undertaking a significant amount of local negotiation as they agree positions out with the Grey Book locally and this will not significantly increase workload or cost – in fact the Knight review suggested that local negotiations save money.</p>	<p><b>NJC</b></p>		<p>Although there may be scope to improve the TAP and RAP processes it is difficult to see how replacing them with the ACAS process will significantly reduce bureaucracy or improve flexibility.</p>	

<p><b>21.</b> The Government should recognise the increasing view that the current right to withdraw labour (take strike action) is incompatible with the expectations that the public has of an emergency service. As such Government should bring forward appropriate legislation to remove the protection afforded under the Act to unions when their collective strike action, or action short of strike, impedes the fire and rescue service from making an emergency response. The right to strike being retained for non-emergency activities.</p>	<p><b>Home Office</b></p>		<p>The Government have already stated they has no intention of removing the right to strike at this time.</p> <p>The Trade Union Act 2017 came into force on 1 March 2017 and made amendments to the rules applicable to strike action.</p>	
<p><b>22.</b> If the Government determines not to bring forward legislation to restrict the right to strike then Government should instigate consultation with a view to agreeing with employees impacted a no strike agreement in emergency situations. The right to strike being retained for non-emergency activities.</p>	<p><b>Home Office</b></p>		<p>Since 2008 all Fire Authorities have had a duty under the National Framework to plan for business continuity arrangements. The Framework document states:</p> <p>“Fire and rescue authorities must have effective business continuity arrangements in place to meet the full range of service delivery risks. Business continuity plans should not be developed on the basis of Armed Forces assistance being available.</p> <p>CDDFRS believe that this duty negates the need for a change in legislation relating to industrial action.</p> <p>CDDFRS have also demonstrated robust, effective resilience arrangements during recent periods of industrial action.</p> <p>A debrief of the resilience plan was undertaken in 2016 with revisions made to the plan to ensure it remains effective.</p>	

<p><b>23.</b> The chair of the National Joint Council should instigate an independent review of the structure and representative make-up of the National Joint Council to enable it to perform effectively at both a local and national level – noting that a number of contributors, from both the employers and the representatives, felt that they were excluded from the council.</p>	<p><b>NJC</b></p>		<p>This is an issue for the NJC. CDDFRS support a review of the membership in principle.</p>	
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<p><b>Retained Duty Systems</b></p>				
	<p><b>Resp</b></p>	<p><b>Key</b></p>	<p><b>Notes/existing capability</b></p>	<p><b>Lead</b></p>
<p><b>24.</b> Fire and Rescue Authorities should adopt duty systems and staffing which align fire fighter availability to the planned work load (e.g. community safety) whilst providing response cover appropriate to the Integrated Risk Management plan should be encouraged.</p>	<p><b>FRS</b></p>		<p>The Authority has implemented a range of duty systems and flexible and efficient working practices to deliver the requirements of the IRMP. The increase in delivery of HFSC/SWV and fire safety audits aligned with the reduction in accidental dwelling fires and fires in non-domestic properties, measured through our suite of performance indicators, demonstrates the increased capacity created through operational shift changes and effectiveness of delivery.</p> <p>A review of emergency response is to be carried out in 2017.</p>	<p><b>AM: Emergency Response</b></p>
<p><b>25.</b> Fire and rescue authorities should be required to provide an annual statement on the use of retained firefighters. Any decision not to use or to cease to use retained firefighters should be communicated in this statement and underpinned with operational evidence provided by the fire and rescue service.</p>	<p><b>FRS</b></p>		<p>An annual statement is being produced as part of the revised Response Strategy.</p>	<p><b>AM: Emergency Response</b></p>

<p><b>26.</b> As part of the annual statement fire and rescue services should be required to provide an annual commentary on the number and use of retained firefighters and in particular to report on the level of mixed crewing or co-working with wholetime personnel.</p>	<p><b>FRS</b></p>		<p>An annual statement is being produced as part of the revised Response Strategy.</p>	<p><b>AM: Emergency Response</b></p>
<p><b>27.</b> Legislation should be brought forward to provide employment protection to fire fighters employed on the Retained Duty System. This legislation is already in place for other groups (military reservists, magistrates and so on).</p>	<p><b>Home Office</b></p>		<p>CDDFRS welcome this recommendation and encourage the Home Office to work with the service to implement it.</p>	
<p><b>28.</b> A national awareness programme for retained duty system personnel should be produced.</p>	<p><b>Home Office</b></p>		<p>CDDFRS welcome this recommendation and encourage the Home Office to work with the service to implement it.</p>	
<p><b>29.</b> Trial and evaluate, in a limited number of fire and rescue services, the use of an annual bounty payment for employers of retained firefighters.</p>	<p><b>Home Office</b></p>		<p>CDDFRS welcome this recommendation and encourage the Home Office to work with the service to implement it.</p>	

<b>Management of the Fire and Rescue Service</b>				
	<b>Resp</b>	<b>Key</b>	<b>Notes/existing capability</b>	<b>Lead</b>
<b>30.</b> Fire authorities should keep the number and level of commitment of fire authority elected members under review. The right number may differ by authority but should be large enough to allow scrutiny without becoming burdensome on operational delivery.	<b>Authority</b>		<p>The Authority approved a formal review of the governance arrangements at the September 2016 Meeting. The review began in November 2016 and the outcome will be reported to the February 2017 meeting.</p> <p>The outcome was presented and discussed at the March 2017 Authority Meeting. Given the proximity to the local elections in Durham and the appointment of a new Chair a further discussion will take place at the Members Strategy Day in June about the number of members. This will also enable further advice to be taken from the Clerk in relation to political balance should the PCC become a voting member of the Authority.</p>	<b>CFO</b>
<b>31.</b> Recruitment and selection academic standards should be immediately raised.	<b>NJC</b>		<p>CDDFRS do not have a problem recruiting high quality staff under the current arrangements and believe recruitment decisions should be made locally not nationally.</p> <p>There is concern that strict, high academic standards introduced in the recruitment and selection criteria may have a detrimental impact on the recruitment of RDS staff from a limited catchment area.</p> <p>Over the next 12 months CDDFRS will utilise the assessments used for the recent wholetime recruitment campaign and assess any detrimental impacts on our ability to recruit RDS Firefighters.</p>	

<p><b>32.</b> Fire and rescue services should create critical mass by collaborating in recruitment including lateral recruitment into 'fast track' management programmes.</p>	<p><b>NFCC</b></p>		<p>CDDFRS support this recommendation in principle although a great deal more work would be required to fully understand its implications.</p>	
<p><b>33.</b> Fire and rescue services should explore a collaborative approach to the creation of succession plans and senior leader programmes with more cross authority developmental moves</p>	<p><b>NFCC</b></p>		<p>CDDFRS support this recommendation in principle although a great deal more work would be required to fully understand its implications.</p>	
<p><b>34.</b> Where collaboration could lead to more formal mergers, Government should find transformational funding to support the creation of larger fire and rescue services that offer critical mass in areas of technology introduction, recruitment, succession and development.</p>	<p><b>Home Office</b></p>		<p>CDDFRS welcome this recommendation and encourage the Home Office to work with the service to explore it in more detail. The removal of any fire specific transformational funding has the potential to stifle innovation and hinder collaboration. The Home Office appear too focussed on Fire-Police collaboration which may not always generate the greatest efficiency savings. The removal of capital grants from the service further exasperates this position.</p>	
<p><b>35.</b> Fire and rescue services should maintain an up-to-date strategic workforce plan.</p>	<p><b>FRS</b></p>		<p>A Workforce Development Strategy has been approved at SLT which now replaces the Organisational Development Strategy following the service restructure, an objective of the strategy is to develop a strategic workforce plan.</p>	<p><b>AM: Workforce Development</b></p>
<p><b>36.</b> Fire and rescue services that cannot offer promotional opportunities away from the original place of work/watch then preparatory management training should be available as part of a strategic workforce development plan.</p>	<p><b>FRS</b></p>		<p>The policies and procedures relating to promotion are being reviewed as part of the Workforce Development Strategy.</p>	<p><b>Workforce Development Manager</b></p>
<p><b>37.</b> The expectation that all fire fighters attain the same, maximum, level of competency should be removed. The wide and increasing range of roles and activities undertaken by fire fighters calls for a</p>	<p><b>NJC</b></p>		<p>CDDFRS believe this recommendation should be considered once the NJC Trials conclude in February 2017.</p>	

more sophisticated alignment of capability with the activity required in support of the local Integrated Risk Management Plan than can be provided by the view that 'a fire fighter is a fire fighter'.				
<b>38.</b> Training and pay should reflect a 'safe to ride' measure – basic core skills and core pay followed by competency based increments as required (which in the event of losing that competency means that the fire fighter retains their job albeit without that competency).	<b>NJC</b>		The role of firefighters is very different across different fire and rescue services and therefore any changes to national terms and conditions need to be considered carefully.	
<b>39.</b> To create and maintain (in the face of decreasing numbers) a cadre of managers capable of becoming future fire and rescue service leaders, a standardised industry wide approach to leadership development should be adopted.	<b>NFCC</b>		CDDFRS support a more standardised approach to leadership development based on nationally agreed competencies and professional standards.	
<b>40.</b> Fire and rescue services not using the Executive Leadership Programme should reconsider doing so.	<b>FRS</b>		The Service is currently exploring the ELP as a tool for developing strategic leaders.  Keith Lazzari is on the current ELP and will carry out a full evaluation of the programme on completion.	<b>CFO</b>
<b>41.</b> A lateral, industry wide, recruitment scheme should be created. This will fast track managers through the experiential requirements and into senior roles.	<b>NFCC</b>		CDDFRS support a more standardised approach to leadership development based on nationally agreed competencies and professional standards, however, we would want to see more detail about any national proposals to fast track staff into senior positions. Previous schemes in the Police have not always been viewed as successful.	
<b>42.</b> The Gold Book (conditions of service for principal officers) should be removed along with that for Brigade Managers. With pay and conditions of service agreed locally subject to the introduction of	<b>NJC</b>		CDDFRS have an agreed procedure for setting and reviewing Brigade Manager pay which includes an external job evaluation exercise.	

a more sophisticated job evaluation programme that better reflects job size, role complexity and other duties in a way which allows inter authority comparison.				
<b>43.</b> All fire and rescue services and fire authorities should review the accessibility of their pay policy statements.	<b>FRS</b>		The accessibility of the pay policy has been reviewed and is available at:  <a href="https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/pay-policy-statement">https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/pay-policy-statement</a>	<b>Treasurer</b>
<b>44.</b> The Chief Fire Officers Association should consider increasing the term of office for the role of president from 1 year to 2 or 3 years – to provide increased stability of leadership.	<b>NFCC</b>		The CFOA membership have approved this change as part of the CFOA reform programme.	
<b>45.</b> Finally all participants in the fire industry should adopt the principal of:  “Where change is <b>common sense</b> it should become <b>common practice</b> ”	<b>FRS</b>  <b>NFCC</b>  <b>NJC</b>		This is more of a statement than a recommendation.	