PEOPLE & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

FUNCTIONAL PLAN
ACTION TRACKER 2025/26

Our Purpose:
HERE TO SERVE. HERE TO PROTECT.
HERE TO KEEP YOU SAFE.

Action Plan 2025/26							
KEY DELIVERABLES	ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE EXPECTED OUTCOMES	CONTRIBUTION TO PURPOSE/AIMS Responsible Officer	PROGRESS	Does this contribute to CRMP or HMICFRS actions (please state which)?	TARGET DATE	BOARD REPORT DATE	BRAG STATUS
6.1 Ensure the Service remains a career of choice for ALL staff by exploring options for improving reward packages and undertaking a review into our job evaluation process.	**Ensure the Service remains a career of choice for ALL staff by:** (a) Undertaking an external review of the Service's job evaluation process for senior roles. (b) Implement a process to undertake job evaluation on a rolling basis across all posts. (C) Introduce a rewards platform as part of an enhanced reward and recognition offer.	HR Services & Recruitment Manager HR Services & Recruitment Manager HR Adviser OH & Wellbeing	**Q1 Update** (a) The external review of senior job roles has been completed by external supplier. This showed that the internal software currently utilised for all internal graded roles (up to G19) continues to be effective. All senior green book roles graded above G19 have had a fully pay review undertaken and have been benchmarked against comparable roles. Any necessary changes have been implemented for 2025/26. The Pay Policy will be updated as part of its annual review to reflect roles above G19 will be pay reviewed using at regular intervals. (b) Data collation continues to support the move to a rolling job evaluation process across all roles graded 1-19. (c) SLT have agreed to implement a rewards platform on a trial basis. This	Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity. Promoting the right values and culture	March 2026		

			offers an employee benefits platform providing benefits such as discount schemes and Cycle to Work salary sacrifice schemes at no direct cost to the employer other than some input from officers in reviewing and approving requests. The Procurement team are currently finalising the contractual elements with a view to launching during Quarter 3. **Q2 Update** (a) The updated Pay Policy will be presented to Members for approval at the Policy & Resources committee on the 11th December 2025. (b) Work continues on data collation and analysis as part of this action. (c) The procurement departmental are continuing discussions with the supplier of the employee benefits platform, with a view to completing and launching the platform in Quarter 3.				
6.2 Put in place new measures and arrangements to enhance the employee induction	**Improve the employee induction process by:**	HR Adviser – HR Services & Recruitment	Q1 Update (a) A review of internal processes has been undertaken with some potential improvements identified in Qtr 1.	Getting the right people with the right skills.	March 2026		

process and improve the early employment experience so the Service can be confident of building positive relationships with new starters.	(a) Utilising best practice implement a revised employee induction process.		A review of sector wide best practice will be completed in Qt 2. Recent new starters will also be surveyed in Qtr 2 to ascertain their experience of induction across different depts. This feedback will be evaluated and considered when putting together revised proposals for induction. The revised proposals will be submitted to People Board for approval when complete. **Q2 Update** (a) A draft induction programme has been developed and trialled with new joiners. Feedback has been received and will be incorporated into the development of the wider induction process.	Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity. Managing performance and developing leaders.			
6.3 Maintain robust background checks for current and future employees in line with HMICFRS recommendations to safeguard staff and communities.	**Ensure that staff are protected from those who may present a safeguarding or other risk by:** (a) Requiring that all staff undertake security vetting at the level appropriate to their role in accordance with HMICFRS recommendations	HR Services & Recruitment Manager	**Q1 Update** (a) SI 0818 Security Vetting has been reviewed and updated to reflect necessary changes including amended requirements for completion of Non-Police Personnel Vetting (NPPV) check as part of working alongside police in the JCC	Getting the right people with the right skills. Promoting the right values and culture.	March 2026		

	(b) Implementing a process to undertake regular checks of existing staff (c) Deliver safer recruitment training for managers involved in recruitment.		All new joiners must complete the Baseline Personal Security Standard (BPSS) which includes a DBS check before starting employment. People and Organisational Development officers continue to work with existing staff and line manager to ensure the correct DBS check has been undertaken which is based on the activity being completed by the postholder. As part of this review any staff who have not been adding to the DBS update service (which allow regular checks) are now retaking check which will allow facilitate regular checks in line with safer recruitment guidance (which recommends re-checking at least every 3 years). (b) All POD staff involved in interview panels (all panels must have a POD representative) have undertaken safer recruitment training. **Q2 Update** (a) Progress continues to be made ensure all staff have undertaken security vetting at the correct level. (b) All staff who are required to undertake a DBS at standard				

			level or above sign up to the DBS update service which allows the Authority to undertake regular checks in line with safer recruitment guidance (which recommends re-checking at least every 3 years). (c) Refresher training will be arranged every 3 years for staff and ad hoc courses will be facilitated to ensure new members of staff joining POD receive the training. ACTION COMPLETE.			
6.4 Introduce inclusive recruitment and development pathways at all leadership levels for all roles improving knowledge and access to opportunities.	**Reduce the barriers to development and promotion opportunities in the Service faced by all including those from minority and disadvantaged groups and those facing socio-economic disadvantage by:** (a) Further development of the High Potential Programme. (b) An expansion of the Reverse Mentoring programme. (c) An expansion of coaching and mentoring capacity.	Workforce Planning & OD Manager Workforce Planning & OD Manager Workforce Planning & OD Manager Workforce Planning & OD Manager/ HR	Q1 Update (a) Following a review of the High Potential Programme pilot a revised approach has been agreed through SLT and policy approved by Authority. The new approach addresses feedback received on clarity of access to development and ensuring progress on the programme is effectively monitored and evaluated. HPP will be relaunched in Qtr 2 with clear all staff comms on nomination criteria. (b) The Service has developed guidance on reverse mentoring and made contact with all SLT members to	Managing performance and developing leaders. Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity.	March 2026	

	(d) Utilising diverse interview panels where appropriate. (e) Undertake further positive action involving underrepresented groups through coaching and mentoring, leadership development and skills development workshops.	Services & Recruitment Manager Workforce Planning & OD Manager	review current mentoring participation. All staff comms through the Hot News staff magazine in Qtr 2 will provide wider organisational awareness and seek expressions of interest for participants. (c) Coaching provision has been reviewed, with greater structure and contracting now in place. CPD sessions and training to ensure coaches maintain their skill set are scheduled through the year. (d) Selection processes at appropriate levels in Qtr 1 have included diverse and external make up. (e) With selection processes taking place through Qtr 1, communications and engagement with staff has focused on coaching and interview skills. Qtr 2 will see focussed engagement with staff networks as part of the relaunch of HPP and wider development communications. **Q2 Update**				

			(a) HPP has been relaunched, and progress of participants will continue to be monitored (b) Reverse mentoring has been expanded, and the results and feedback will be collated and considered as part of further development of the services coaching and mentoring offer (c) Coaching and Mentoring capacity has been expanded, supported by staff resources in People, Organisational Development (POD). The results and feedback will be collated and considered as part of further development of the Service's coaching and mentoring offer. (d) The utilisation of a diverse panel where appropriate forms part of the Authority's procedures for recruitment and selection processes. ACTION COMPLETE. (e) Engagement has taken place with Networks as part of the relaunch of HPP as part of wider positive action activity. Further work under the wider development support provisions will be prioritised in Quarters 3 and 4.				

6.5 Structure and develop a process for recording health data; to help with informing the Service about what health and wellbeing issues our people are facing. This will better inform our health and wellbeing promotions and identify any changes and/or new initiatives that the Service can embrace to improve staff health.	**Improve the effectiveness of health and wellbeing promotions and interventions by**: (a) Conducting an annual survey to collect staff health data to better understand the health and wellbeing issues faced by staff.	Occupational Health Manager	**Q1 Update** (a) A process to collate more detailed data from Occupational Health appointments is underway to expand our knowledge about usage of services to enable more targeted support. The Medical team have been allocated data collation sheets, to which they will record all health-related matters that arise in all medical appointments. These are being collated by the administration team weekly and will produce an end of year report for us to get a wider picture of the health-related issues coming through the medical team. **Q2 Update** (a) The collation of data continues to build a richer picture of the type of support being requested and the different services being used. This work will contribute to the ongoing work related to the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Health & Wellbeing Framework.	Promoting the right values and culture. Managing performance and developing leaders.	March 2026	

| 6.6 Update the capability process to ensure that employees fully understand their responsibilities, and the help and guidance available to support this. | **Reduce the impact of stress on staff in the capability process by:**

(a) Amending and updating the Capability process to improve its effectiveness.

(b) Delivering refresher training to capability hearing managers. | HR Adviser Occupational Health & Wellbeing | **Q1 Update**

(a) As part of the action plan to implement the HMI Misconduct Report recommendation the Service has engaged an external employment law firm to undertake an independent review of a number of policies including the Capability Policy to ensure continued alignment with best practice and legal requirement.

Alongside this an internal review is underway to consider procedural steps which could be streamlined. This will be further progressed in Qtr 2.

(b) Refresher training will be rolled out once the policy review is complete.

Q2 Update

(a) The Kings Counsel led review is ongoing with planned completion in quarter 3. The internal review work is complete and includes a streamlined capability process. A review of sickness absence and capability data has been completed to | Promoting the right values and culture

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			complement the business case for streamlined processes. Implementation remains planned for quarter 3 following formal consultation with rep bodies. (b) Refresher training will be rolled out once the policy review is complete.			
6.7 Put in place a rolling 3-year Strategic Workforce Plan to inform recruitment decisions and support other strategic planning processes.	**Ensure workplace planning arrangements are effective and sustainable by:** (a) Putting in place a rolling 3-year Strategic Workforce Plan to inform recruitment decisions and support other strategic planning processes. (b) Refining departmental succession planning to enhance the value of the data obtained to drive future decision making.	Workforce Planning & OD Manager	**Q1 Update** (a) The existing workforce plan is being reviewed and updated to become a rolling 3-year plan. This will be completed in Qtr 2. (b) The plan will take account of the data provided from the 2025 succession planning process which includes a refreshed template which gather further detail surrounding skills, qualifications alongside the leadership levels data introduced in 2024. **Q2 Update** (a) The Strategic Workforce Plan has been completed,	Managing performance and developing leaders.	March 2026	

			scrutinised by the Workforce Planning Group and approved the Strategic Leadership Team. The document is live and will regularly be updated. ACTION COMPLETE. (b) The Succession planning process has been reviewed and all documentation updated to reflect the changes. 2025 Succession planning data has been incorporated into the Strategic Workforce Plan. **ACTION COMPLETE**.				
6.8 Explore the options and scope for the utilization of artificial intelligence (AI) to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of HR and other organisational functions.	**Maximise the advantages from advances in information technology to improve the effectiveness and productivity of the POD function by:** (a) Exploring the options and scope for the utilization of artificial intelligence (AI) across POD functions including recruitment.	POD Application Support & Data Manager	**Q1 Update** (a) POD have engaged with a number of suppliers to explore the potential of utilising AI tools to support hiring manager during the recruitment process. The focus will initially be on large volume recruitment processes (such as Firefighter recruitment). Officer aim to make a recommendation to Strategic Leadership Team and complete the Application Gateway process in Qtr 2. **Q2 Update**	Getting the right people with the right skills. Managing performance and developing leaders.	March 2026		

			(a) Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) approved the pilot of an artificial intelligence application to support recruitment processes. The application was implemented following completion of the Authority's internal Application Gateway process. Firefighter recruitment launched on 17th September with the campaign running for 10 days. The service received over 1500 applications all of which have been utilised as part of a pilot of the shortlisting tool. All candidates were made aware of the pilot and manual shortlisting was completed as normal alongside the AI software. The final decision as to whether a candidate progressed was made by the Hiring Managers from within POD. The data will now be reviewed and fed back to SLT to consider the next steps for continued use of AI to improve effectiveness and improve efficiency.	

| 6.9 Undertake annual reviews of discipline and grievance cases across EDI measures and take action to address emerging issues or concerns. | **Put in place a process for sharing learning from misconduct cases that have been resolved whilst preserving confidentiality by:**

(a) Publishing annual reports on the outcome of grievance and discipline cases including an assessment of any disproportionality against protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act and detailing

Trends and learning outcomes to reduce the risk of repeat behaviours, improve transparency and trust.

(b) The annual report will be shared with the Authority, staff, and third parties including other FRS | Consultation Manager | **Q1 Update**

(a) As part of the action plan to implement the HMI Misconduct Report recommendation the Service has engaged an external employment law firm to undertake an independent review of a number of policies including the conduct and capability policy to ensure continued alignment with best practice and legal requirements.

Alongside this an internal review is underway to consider procedural steps which could be streamlined. This will be further progressed in Qtr 2.

(b) Once this work has been completed in Q2, the annual report on discipline and grievance will be published.

Q2 Update
(a) The King's Counsel review will be completed in quarter 3 after which the annual report will be produced.

(b) As above. | Managing performance and developing leaders.

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| 6.10 Implement as appropriate recommendations from the HMICFRS Thematic Review into Misconduct Handling | **Reduce instances of misconduct and provide enhanced support to those involved in the misconduct process by:**

(a) Adopting the recommendations (as appropriate) of the HMICFRS thematic review on the handling of misconduct. | Consultation Manager | (A) The HMICFRS recommendations regarding misconduct have been incorporated into the Culture Plan. Progress in relation to Q1 targets is reported to the Culture and Inclusion & People Board regularly.

Good progress has been made. Significant outstanding actions relate to:

• External legal review of misconduct policy and procedure.
• Publication of annual report of evaluation of discipline and grievance cases for disproportionate outcomes.
• Counselled review of disciplinary cases
• Production of video promoting the use of the Safecall confidential reporting line.

Q2 Update

(a) Work continues against the actions outlined in the HMICFRS thematic report. As of the end of Quarter 2, 12 of the 15 actions are complete | Promoting the right values and culture.

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			with the remaining 3 in progress.				
6.11 Encourage all staff to provide their EDI data so the Service can better analyse any adverse impacts based upon protected characteristics.	**Increase the effectiveness and relevance of EDI focused interventions by collecting the demographic profile of all staff by:** (a) Undertaking regular communications to enhance EDI data collection rates.	EDI Manager	**Q1 Update** (a) We have conducted a request for staff EDI data in Q1. There is still a reluctance amongst some staff to disclose their status in relation to some protected characteristics, although this reflects a national trend. (b) In Q2 consideration will be given to other potential avenues for collecting this data. **Q2 Update** (a) In September the Equality and Human Rights Commission published resources aimed at helping blue light services collect and analyse workplace equality data. The information published is being reviewed and service approaches will be adapted to reflect best practice. Further communications will take place following this.	Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity. Promoting the right values and culture.	March 2026		

Staff Survey 2024 Action Plan

Do you have any updates on the actions contained in the Staff Survey 2024 Action Plan, please report below:

Action Area	Activity	Q2 update	Action Owner	Outcomes
1. **Staff Survey outcomes**	• Disseminate results of 2024 survey to staff through SLT who then can take any appropriate action • Feedback to staff via Hot News and the portal • Conduct further research into areas of the staff survey with a negative score of 20% or more and feed the findings into the engagement strategy and communications plan • Learn from other departments and implement any necessary changes • Initial resulting actions: • Consider staff survey results/feedback in all planning and reviewing processes • Increase awareness and staff engagement with members of Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority in response to staff survey results/feedback • Use themed pulse surveys to explore specific areas • Increase the promotion of the survey in an attempt to increase the level of response in 2026 – consider launch event • Consider alternative methods of gathering feedback about staff engagement	POD Staff Survey action areas are contained in the People Plan and outcomes reported through Scrutiny committee and People Board.	All SLT All SLT via S&P All SLT All SLT All SLT All SLT with Legal and Dem Services as required All SLT via S&P S&P All SLT	Action will be taken to address areas for improvement and positives arising from the survey will be strengthened. Improved response rates in the 2026 survey. Improved results in 2026 for lower scoring areas in 2024.
2. **Staff Engagement and Communications**	• Functional leaders will discuss the findings of the survey with their staff through normal meeting and engagement channels, to gather more details about the areas of the survey that achieved the lowest scores (the "lowlights") and those that gained the highest results (the "highlights") to learn from good practice and implement change where required.		All SLT	It is expected that engaging in this way through normal channels, but about specific staff survey outcomes, will be a sustainable way of maintaining the staff survey conversation and improving outcomes as a result.
3. **Organisational learning and shared good practice**	• Where good examples of engagement (on an individual, team or Service level) are identified, ensure these are written up and communicated to all to ensure the spread of good practice. • A review of the governance of organisational learning is already contained within the 2025/26 Service Delivery Plan.		All SLT S&P with SLT	All staff will benefit from good practice as it is identified and shared within the Service.

4. **Recognition and Reward**	• Ongoing work within the People Plan will support recognition and rewards approaches that will have a positive impact on engagement.			POD with SLT	Existing planned work will have a benefit in relation to staff engagement.
5. **Learning and Development**	• Ongoing work within the People Plan will support learning and development approaches that will have a positive impact on engagement.			POD with SLT	Existing planned work will have a benefit in relation to staff engagement.

BRAG Descriptor				
Action completed	**Action is unlikely to be delivered within the current functional delivery plan**	**Action may not be delivered by the designated deadline within the functional plan**	**Action will be delivered by the designated deadline within the functional plan**	**Action not yet started**

STATUS SUMMARY – 30.09.25	
Total Number of Workstreams	**11 (100%)**
Action completed	**2 (10%)**
Action is unlikely to be delivered within the current functional delivery plan	**0 (0%)**
Action may not be delivered by the designated deadline within the functional plan	**0 (0%)**
Action will be delivered by the designated deadline within the functional plan	**9 (90%)**
Action not yet started	**0 (0%)**