

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	AUTHORITY		
DATE:	18 OCTOBER 2018	REPORT NO:	CFO/065/18
PRESENTING OFFICER	CHIEF FIRE OFFICER		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	DEB APPLETON	REPORT AUTHOR:	WENDY KENYON
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	SLT, FUNCTIONAL MANAGERS AND ALL REPRESENTATIVE BODIES		
TITLE OF REPORT:	SUMMARY OF THE 2018 STAFF ENGAGEMENT SURVEY RESULTS		
APPENDICES:	APPENDIX A:	PEOPLE INSIGHT PRESENTATION SUMMARISING SURVEY RESULTS	
	APPENDIX B:	QUESTIONS USED IN THE 2018 SURVEY	

Purpose of Report

1. To inform Members of the results of the MFRA staff engagement survey 2018.
(The full set of reports can be found at www.merseyfire.gov.uk from the 18th October 2018).

Recommendation

2. That Members discuss and note the content of the report

Introduction and Background

3. Understanding the levels of engagement amongst all employees and how those levels of engagement can be improved upon is a priority for the Authority.
4. Members will be aware that the third staff engagement survey took place during 11th June to 16th July 2018 to monitor engagement levels and gather information about staff experiences at MFRA.
5. Through the delivery of the third survey, we have been able to benchmark our staff engagement progress against the results from 2014 and 2016 and also against other clients (including fire and rescue services) of our facilitators, People Insight¹.

¹ Cheshire FRS, Derbyshire FRS, Essex FRS and Buckinghamshire FRS

6. The survey was delivered in a consistent manner as previously, with People Insight hosting the survey externally and managing the production and analysis of the results. This enables the Authority to maintain confidentiality and anonymity for those staff completing the survey.
7. The survey had the full support and approval of all representative bodies, the Strategic Leadership Team and the Authority.

Organisational Context

8. The Service is undergoing the most radical changes in its history, and whilst Officers understand that this can significantly influence the responses of some staff, it is vitally important that any organisation having to deliver such change doesn't avoid asking certain questions for fear of the answers. Officers are committed to continuing to engage with staff in order to continuously improve performance.
9. There is always the potential for some of the views expressed during the survey to be a direct reaction to some of the necessary changes that have taken place over the previous two years and whilst understandable that should be considered when reading the results of the survey.
10. In undertaking this survey the Authority sought to fully understand the impact that the changes have had on its employees and will use these findings to support the most effective delivery of organisational change.
11. The Authority recognises that engaged staff are the most productive employees.

Survey Methodology

12. The survey was open for a total of four weeks from 11th June to 16th July 2018, with regular targeted staff communications to encourage completion. These included the use of "message of the day" section on the Intranet Portal, Principal Officer staff briefings, internal department and team communications. Posters were also used to encourage staff to complete their surveys.
13. Every member of staff received a personal email with the staff survey link from People Insight and they were reminded every week to complete the survey. The Fire Brigades Union also promoted and encouraged completion of the survey through regular emails to their members.
14. The survey questions were designed to measure people's attitudes, experiences and satisfaction levels against nine key employee engagement areas:
 - Goal Clarity
 - My Job
 - Employee Involvement
 - Teamwork
 - Learning and Development
 - Recognition and Reward

- Management Effectiveness
- Culture and Values
- Change Management
- Health and Wellbeing (new for 2018)
- Overall /MFRS

Reporting the outcomes

15. People Insight have delivered high level presentations to three core groups, those being:

- a. Strategic Leadership Team on 18th September 2018** – SLT are cascading their functional results during October/November to engage with staff further and identify key areas for improvement.
- b. All Managers on 19th September 2018** – this enables managers to be able to cascade their results to teams and provide views and feedback on results.
- c. Representative Bodies on 19th September 2018** - The outcomes of that meeting were positive and an endorsement was provided by all representative bodies:

“FBU have been supporting the completion of the staff survey with its members to enable them to have their views heard at this difficult time of change both nationally and locally within the service. Whilst the completion rate may be a little disappointing it is good to know 328 operational staff have engaged and made their views heard. We have every confidence that MFRA, as in previous years, will endeavour to develop staff engagement further informed by the survey results. We are pleased with the level of transparency and openness with which the survey has been delivered.”

“The Fire Officers Association values the information that the staff survey provides. The latest survey results show that MFRS continues to be a great place to work and that our members care about the future of the organisation. We look forward to working constructively with management over the coming months to find ways to address the areas that could make the organisation even better.”

“UNITE the Union were and are very encouraged by the results of the 2018 staff engagement survey going forward. The final facts and figures show that the Service and staff and all representative bodies concerned, together are working and moving forward in a positive and constructive manner. “

16. The People Insight Survey Presentation is contained in Appendix A and is a useful document in providing a summary of all the Survey results.

17. The full set of staff survey reports will be released to staff and Authority Members on 18th October through the MFRS staff Portal and Merseyfire website from the 18th October 2018.

Response rates and findings

18. The survey reports that will be published on the website, include analysis of all 59 questions (see Appendix B) posed in the 2018 survey in relation to the five possible responses; strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree and strongly disagree. Results for each question have been presented as a percentage that is a combination of strongly agree and agree or strongly disagree and disagree. The reports use a colour code to enable easy prioritisation of each engagement question and section:



An identified area of strength



An area for development or further investigation



An area of weakness

19. Response rate

56% of MFRA staff completed the staff survey, an increase of 5 percentage points from 2016, and 24 percentage points lower than the national People Insight benchmark.

Of the 548 responses to the survey:

- 328 were Uniformed responses
- 199 were Non Uniformed responses
- 21 were Control responses

On discussing the response rate with representative bodies, it was acknowledged that during the time of survey being open there were significant spate conditions for operational staff which may have hindered their time to complete the survey.

In comparison to the last survey in 2016, Uniformed respondents were only down by 7 responses, Non-Uniformed have increased by 27 responses and Control responses remain the same.

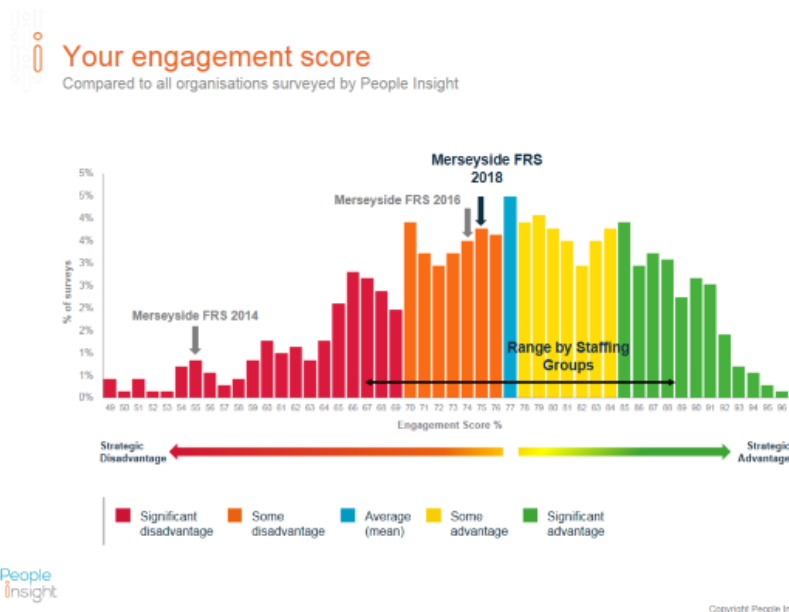
20. Overall Engagement score

Our overall engagement score for the 2018 staff survey is 75%, this has improved by 1 percentage point from 2016 and is seen as a strong position for MFRA despite the significant changes that have been taking place, most of which have had a direct impact on staff and their work at MFRA.

The table below shows the engagement score from 2014 and the significant increase from that in the 2016 and 2018 surveys. The chart also shows the engagement score for Uniformed and Control staff being 67% and Non Uniformed staff being 88% (see black arrow line). This chart is a helpful visual in showing the progress made overall since 2014 and against national benchmarks, but it also highlights the differences for the two staff groups of Uniformed and Non Uniformed, the latter being consistently more positive.

This report is focusing on providing an overview of the whole organisation's survey results at this stage. Further work will be carried out by SLT in their functions to investigate the differences in engagement scores for different staff groups.

When compared to other MFRS surveys conducted over the last 4 years MFRS are average in terms of response rates and engagement scores.

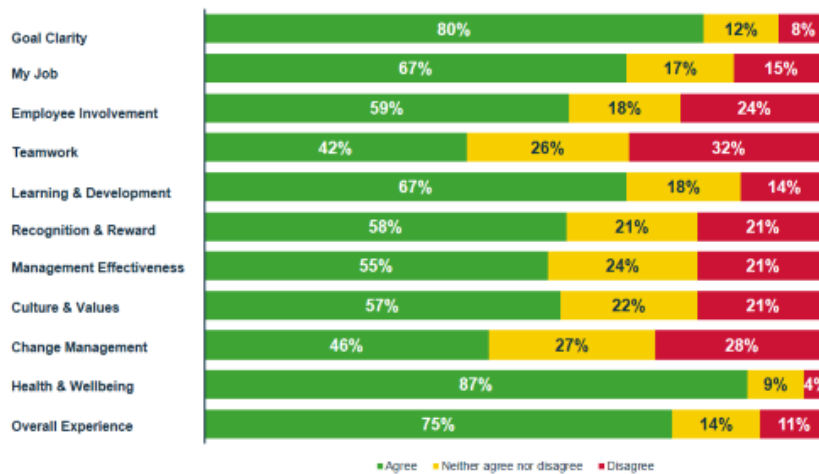


21. Average Scores

The scores below in the table show that Health and Wellbeing (87%) and Goal Clarity (80%) were the top scoring sections in the survey with Teamwork and (42%) and Change Management (46%) being the lowest scoring sections.

Average scores

For each survey section



People
Insight

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22. Engagement levels by staffing group

Uniformed staff have responded significantly less favourably in comparison to Non-uniformed staff and Control staff. This is consistent across all sections of the survey with the exception of Goal Clarity, Learning and Development and Health and Wellbeing

In contrast, Non-uniformed staff responses have increased by almost 10 percentage points across most areas of the survey. This has been acknowledged by People Insight as impressive and seen as a very strong improvement under current circumstances of austerity. There are still some low scores around Teamwork, Change Management and Management Effectiveness, which will be explored further through individual functional presentations by SLT members and their teams.

Control results are a mixture between Uniformed and Non-uniformed with their overall engagement score remaining the same as the last survey.

23. Engagement levels by length of service

The results show that staff with up to 10 years' service have increased their engagement scores since the last survey for the majority of sections in the survey, those staff with between 10 to 20 years' service have remained roughly the same as the last survey, however those with 20 years+ have shown a

reduction in engagement scores of between 5 and 10 percentage points since the last survey for most sections of the survey.

The areas of biggest concern are around Teamwork, Change Management and Culture and Values.

24. Highlight of engagement results by questions

The following section provides a summary the top and bottom 10 results by engagement scores for the whole organisation, showing theme, question, response rates and engagement scores. It also goes on to show a visual of the top 10 declining results and top 10 biggest improvements in results when compared to our 2016 survey.

Overall Top 10 results – most positive responses

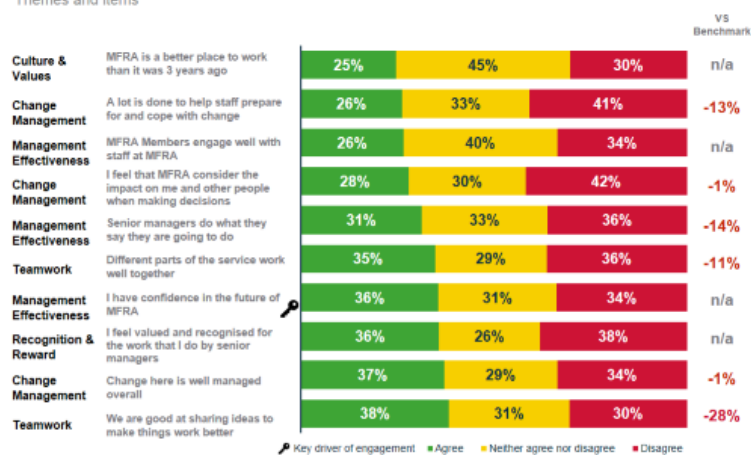


Overall Bottom 10 results –



Bottom 10 results

Themes and items



Greatest improvements:



Greatest improvements

Since 2016

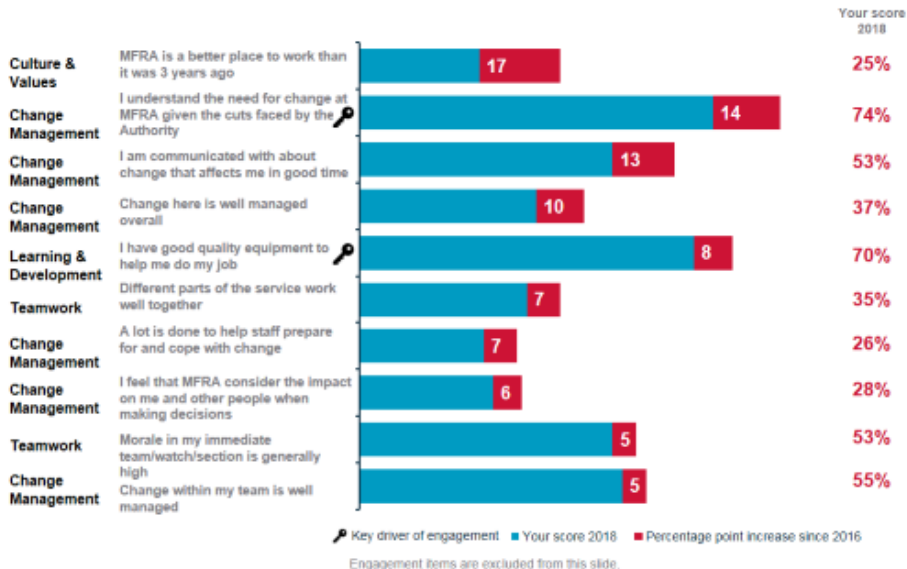


Greatest decline:



Greatest declines

Since 2016



People
Insight

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25. A free text question was asked "What is the **best** thing about working at MFRS". People Insight have provided a useful summary of those results :

- **People** – being part of a professional, enthusiastic, committed and supportive team, welcoming, camaraderie between firefighters.
- **Job security** – this is a repeated comment
- **Pride** - privilege working in a role which helps people who need you, recognised and valued as a service, helping the community
- **Facilities** – working conditions, occupational health department, gym facilities
- **The job** – variation of work, autonomy, interacting with the public, flexibility of role, able to interact with the public

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26. A further free text question was asked "If you had the chance to change one thing at MFRS, what would it be?" The common themes were profiled by People Insight as follows:

- **Work/home balance** – Reinstate 24 hour rostering (most common theme)

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- **L&D** – Introduce more development/learning courses for operational staff. Better training (breathing apparatus or rope access gear courses). More integration between more experienced members of staff and new firefighters, as opportunities for learning could be maximised.
- **Resources** – Additional pumps in key locations. Improve IT systems. Respond to repair noticed efficiently, a number of comments relating to appliances not being fixed following reporting of issues.
- **Senior management** – More communication between firefighters and senior management. Improve feedback systems for staff from management, and allow more suggestions from lower levels.
- **Collaboration** –better cross departmental collaboration, so that there is less of an “us – them mentality”. - number of comments relating to a distrust of non-union members, by union members for various reasons (e.g. promotion)
- **Wellbeing** - Occupational health department

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27. **Next Steps**

SLT will cascade the results to their own functions using the standard template provided by People Insight during October and November. There will be opportunity for staff to provide further feedback at those meetings which will help SLT to identify some key areas for improvements particularly around:

- **Change Management** – To enable staff to feel involved and prepared for change on a regular basis and build trust in and perception of the leadership team. The message of change to be owned by Managers and be consistent from WM to CFO.
- **Team Working** – To increase cross-functional working on common projects and themes that encourages teams to work collaboratively and groups of staff to work together to break down perceived silos
- **Uniformed Staff Engagement Scores** – Exploring what is within the sphere of influence for Authority to work on to improve engagement amongst this group of staff.

Following functional presentations and engagement, an SLT meeting will be held in the New Year to progress staff engagement organisation-wide.

If Members require any further information about the contents of this report, or have views on the content of the report please contact Wendy Kenyon Diversity and Consultation Manager at Wendykenyon@merseyfire.gov.uk. Anyone requiring assistance to access the People Insight reports please contact Vickycampbell@merseyfire.gov.uk

Equality and Diversity Implications

28. People Insight have provided equality reports for the survey results by gender, ethnicity, age etc. These reports will be analysed separately with a covering report provided to a Strategy and Performance Board.

Staff Implications

29. The staff survey and the subsequent actions taken next by management and the Authority will have implications for our staff. The organisation is keen to strengthen the Think People concept, introduced following a previous survey and this will continue to be the foundation of efforts to improve engagement in the future.

A number of staff will be involved in projects and work streams arising out of the survey and consideration will be given to any additional staff time and resources that will be needed undertake this work.

Legal Implications

30. The staff survey supports MFRA in complying with the Equality Act 2010 - Public Sector Equality Duties. Being aware of the engagement levels and satisfaction levels of staff groups will help MFRA to target any changes and improvement required.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

The Survey has cost MFRA £13,700. This has been met from existing budgets. This represents approximately 0.02% of the overall staffing budget cost.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

31. The staff survey measures engagement levels which have been proven to positively impact on organisational results and performance across all sectors. In particular, a high level of employee engagement/satisfaction has shown to lead to improved productivity, quality, and reducing accidents.

Contribution to Our Mission: *Safer Stronger Communities – Safe Effective Firefighters*

32. The survey allows organisations to measure engagement around areas of community engagement and service delivery to help enhance our services to the public in the future.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

CFO/111/11 If this report follows on from another, list the previous report(s)

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

CLGA	Communities and Local Government Association
FBU	Fire Brigades Union
FOA	Fire Officers Association
MFRA	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority
MFRS	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service
POD	People and Organisational Development
SLT	Strategic Leadership Team