

## MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

|                      |   |                |              |
|----------------------|---|----------------|--------------|
| MEETING OF THE:      | FULL AUTHORITY                            |                |              |
| DATE:                | 2 OCTOBER 2014                            | REPORT NO:     | CFO/104/14   |
| PRESENTING OFFICER   | DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER                 |                |              |
| RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: | DEB APPLETON                              | REPORT AUTHOR: | WENDY KENYON |
| OFFICERS CONSULTED:  | STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT GROUP                |                |              |
| TITLE OF REPORT:     | RESULTS OF THE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SURVEY |                |              |

|             |             |   |
|-------------|-------------|---|
| APPENDICES: | APPENDIX A: | PEOPLE INSIGHT PRESENTATION TO MFRA SMG "EMPLOYEE SURVEY FEEDBACK AND PLANNING" |
|-------------|-------------|---|

### Purpose of Report

1. To inform Members of the results of the MFRA staff engagement survey.

### Recommendation

2. That Members;
  - a. Note the content of the report and give their support to the development of an action plan which will be generated in response to the priority actions contained within the report
  - b. Approve the release of the People Insight reports on to the MFRA website on the 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2014 from 10am.

### Introduction and Background

3. Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (MFRA) commissioned an external company, People Insight Ltd, to undertake its staff engagement survey. The decision to use an external organisation was compelled by the need to ensure staff confidentiality in order to encourage all staff to express their views fully and openly.
4. The survey was developed using best practice examples from other Fire and Rescue Services, through consultation and feedback from a variety of MFRA staff groups and had full support and approval from all representative bodies, the Strategic Management Group and the Authority.

#### Survey Methodology

5. The survey was open for a total of six weeks from 16<sup>th</sup> June to 28<sup>th</sup> July 2014 and regular communications were targeted at all staff groups to encourage

completion. These included using the Message of the Day on the Intranet Portal, Principal Officer staff briefings, the Hot News staff magazine and local department and team communications. Additional support was provided to staff who needed help to access computers and email accounts to enable them to complete their survey online.

6. The survey questions were designed to measure people's attitudes, beliefs and satisfaction levels concerning nine key employee engagement issues:
  - Goal Clarity
  - My Job
  - Employee Involvement
  - Teamwork
  - Learning and Development
  - Recognition and Reward
  - Management Effectiveness
  - Culture and Values
  - Change Management
  - Overall /MFRS

#### Organisational Context

7. The Survey was set against a background of in excess of 12 months of national industrial action over pension reform and four years of Government cuts to the Service. These cuts have led to significant reductions in the number of staff working for the Authority, and are expected to continue until 2020.
8. The Service is going through 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. Therefore there is 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 last 12 months, notably the equalisation of shifts to 12 hours duration to reduce the period of rest on nights in order to increase productivity.
10. Despite some of the views expressed it should be noted that the Service continues to improve when considering the outcomes achieved for Merseyside. The Service is faster to incidents, undertakes more training, consistently delivers more HFSC's than most if not all other FRS's and as a result has significantly reduced the number of fires and other incidents attended.

#### Employee Engagement

11. In undertaking this survey the Authority has sought to fully understand the impact that the changes have had on its employees (people insights) and will use these

findings to support the most effective delivery of organisational change. The Authority recognises that engaged staff are the most productive employees.

12. One of the most positive aspects of the survey is that 68% of staff took time to respond (only 32% responded to the previous survey – most of whom were non-uniformed staff). There are also many examples in the survey results of different groups of staff who feel very engaged with the organisation, care about its future and understand why the continued delivery of change is needed.
13. However, it is also very evident that large sections of our uniformed workforce based on fire stations have a very low level of engagement with the organisation describing a lack of clarity regarding their role and uncertainty as to the need for change as the reason for their disengagement.
14. This low level of engagement is felt most by uniformed staff working the 12 hour shift whole-time duty system. It is clear from the survey that the most engaged group are uniformed staff working 24 hour shifts on a self-managed duty system which allows for greater flexibility and time sovereignty. They have a very clear view of their role, of the organisation's goals in relation to serving our communities and how and why we are managing change.
15. This contrast exists despite 24 hour shifts having been offered to but rejected twice by the FBU prior to the Resolution Advisory Panel outcome which resulted in the implementation of 12 hour shifts.
16. Uniformed staff working a flexible duty system and non-uniformed staff who work flexitime also score highly on overall engagement, have a strong sense of their role in delivering safer stronger communities and a good understanding of why change is necessary for the organisation to survive.
17. The positive response from non-uniformed staff is particularly pleasing given they are the group who have been most affected by Government cuts, where many jobs have already been lost and more are likely to go in the future.
18. The fact that uniformed staff whose employment has been protected through the use of reserves are producing very low scores in most areas of engagement is of concern. This includes their role in delivering safer stronger communities and their understanding of the culture and values of the organisation. One of the most deeply concerning responses is that only 55% of uniformed staff feel their work contributes to safer, stronger communities, compared to 80% of non-uniformed staff.
19. In addition a high proportion of uniformed staff reported that they felt they have been bullied or harassed in work. Whilst there is no obvious evidence to support this view, this perception clearly needs further investigation.
20. However it is pleasing to note, that uniformed staff had higher levels of satisfaction in relation to their training and equipment and in relation to their confidence in their line manager.

21. The length of time staff have worked for the organisation also makes a significant difference to their engagement.
22. Staff who have been with the Service for less than two years have an overall engagement score of 88% while those with more than 20 years' service have the lowest level of engagement at 49%. This again will require further investigation but may reflect the changing role of the firefighter over that period and suggests recent recruitment has better reflected the requirements of the role.
23. Staff engagement with the Authority records the lowest score of all in the survey with only 7% feeling the MFRA Elected Members engage well with staff. This is particularly surprising given the proactive engagement approach adopted by the Authority more recently however it will be examined further as we consider our response to the survey.
24. The survey is a comprehensive examination of the views of our staff at this time and its messages will be considered in detail and in context before any firm actions are progressed.
25. However the outcomes, whilst concerning in some areas and reassuring in others, are not unexpected.
26. Our staff can be reassured that the survey will form the basis of a detailed action plan and as such it will be responded to in full as the Authority recognises that it cannot face even more extreme challenges in the future with any element of the workforce who are disengaged and do not know how they contribute to the safety of the public.
27. The Authority stated from the outset that irrespective of what was said, by whom and with what intent the outcomes, unaltered and unfettered would be shared. As such the full survey results will be available on the Authority's website (from 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2014) to allow all personnel the opportunity to reflect on the results.
28. The Authority's Performance and Scrutiny Committee will monitor our action plans and the resulting outcomes. The reports the Committee consider will also be available on the website [www.merseyfire.gov.uk](http://www.merseyfire.gov.uk).

#### In Conclusion

29. The report contains details of the areas for action and investigation, and will form the focus of work over the coming months.
30. One outcome is however, that the Authority will need to consider how to extend the levels of engagement displayed by the most engaged staff to those with the least, as to not do so will seriously challenge the viability of the Authority as a sustainable entity in the future.

#### Response Rates and Findings

31. People Insight Ltd have analysed the survey results and produced a number of reports which can be accessed on the MFRA website in the About Us section from 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2014. The reports include analysis of all questions in the 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

32. The survey was completed in June and July 2014 and achieved an overall response rate of 68%. 1147 staff were invited to take part in the staff survey and 776 responses were received. This is an excellent response rate and gives a good degree of confidence in the results. Table 1 below shows that uniformed staff were the largest group of staff to respond with 76% of that staff group completing the survey.

Table 1

| Response Rate by Staff Grouping                           | MFRA (Full Survey) | Uniformed Staff | Non Uniformed Staff | Control Staff |
|---|--------------------|-----------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Respondents   | 776                | 565             | 189                 | 22            |
| Response Rate (as a % of total staffing group population) | 68%                | 76%             | 59%                 | 63%           |

33. Table 2 shows the response rates by function. Strategy and Performance had the highest response rate with 79% of the staff in the department completing the survey. Operational Response had the highest number of responses in total with 460 staff completing a survey. Where there are less than 10 responses in any one department or report, for confidentiality purposes, no reports have been provided by People Insight. This has impacted on Legal, Procurement and Democratic Services specifically, as less than 10 responses were received.

Table 2

| Response Rate by Function | Responses | % |
|---------------------------|-----------|---|
|---------------------------|-----------|---|

|                          |            |     |
|--------------------------|------------|-----|
| Strategy & Performance   | 26         | 79% |
| IT/Assets/Finance        | 24         | 38% |
| Operational Response     | 460        | 65% |
| Operational Preparedness | 105        | 75% |
| Human Resources *(63%)   | 19         | 46% |
| Prevention & Protection  | 76         | 64% |
| Legal Services           | 8          | 53% |
| No Function Declared     | 58         | -   |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b>776</b> |     |

Table 1 and 2 show that all areas of the organisation engaged with survey, with good levels of response rates across the board.

### Engagement Score

34. The staff survey has been designed to measure the extent to which staff at MFRA are engaged with the organisation. People Insight have compared our engagement scores to other organisations and we have a benchmark **engagement score of 55%**. This score is 23 percentage points lower than the average benchmark score of 78% for other (private and public) organisations who have used similar survey questions.
35. The survey measured a wide range of engagement drivers and these have been grouped into themes in **Table 3** below. Results have been calculated as the average score for all engagement driver questions within each theme and benchmarked with other organisation's average engagement scores. The results show that top Engagement themes are:
- **Goal clarity** - with 65% average engagement score
  - **Learning and Development** -with 58% average engagement score (only 6 percentage below the external benchmark)
  - **Management effectiveness** - with 56% average engagement score (only 5 percentage points below the external benchmark)

Table 3: Results by engagement theme – benchmarked

| Engagement Theme | Your Score | Variance Actual (% points) | Benchmark Score |
|------------------|------------|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Goal Clarity     | 64%        | -13%                       | 77%             |

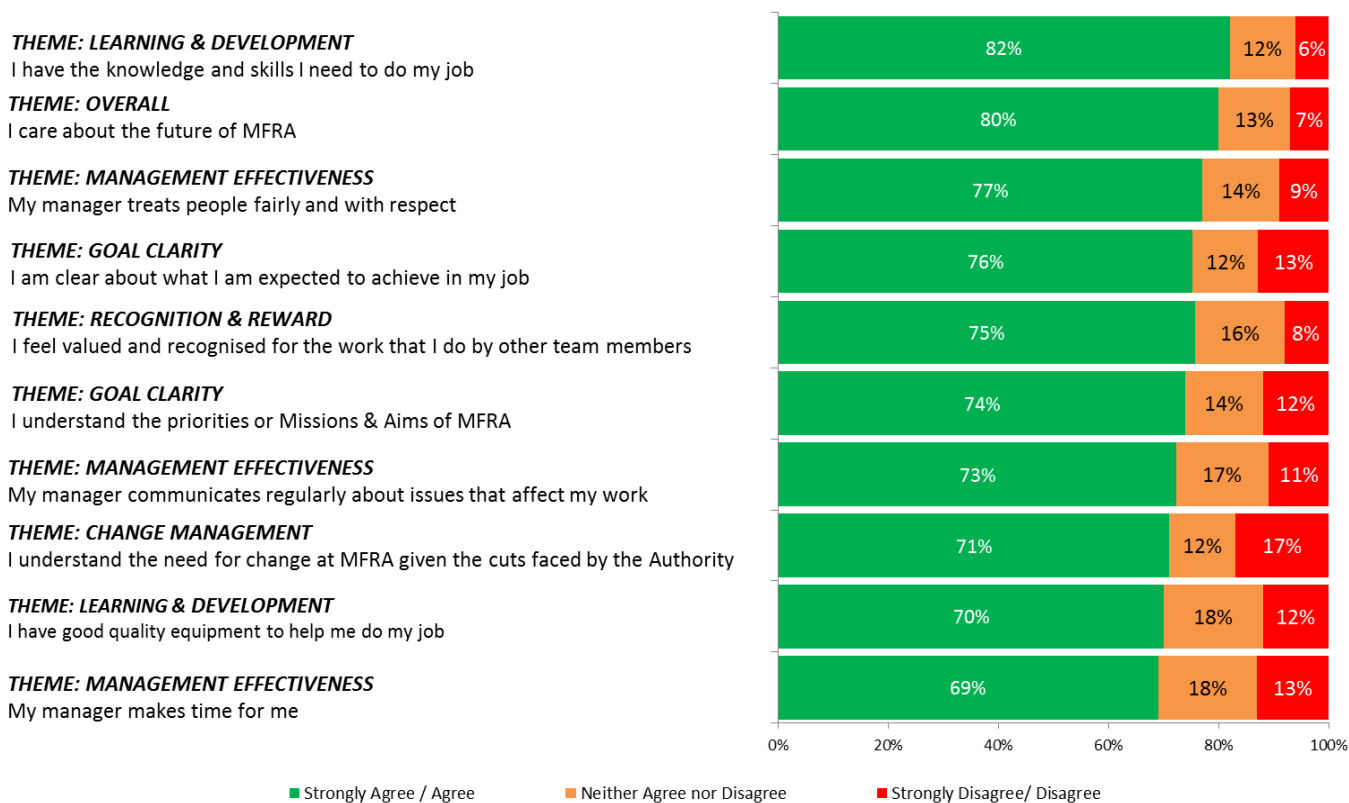
|                          |     |      |     |
|--------------------------|-----|------|-----|
| My Job                   | 49% | -22% | 71% |
| Employee Involvement     | 37% | -27% | 64% |
| Teamwork                 | 36% | -21% | 57% |
| Learning & Development   | 58% | -6%  | 64% |
| Recognition & Reward     | 39% | -16% | 55% |
| Management Effectiveness | 56% | -5%  | 61% |
| Culture & Values         | 47% | -29% | 76% |
| Change Management        | 33% | -11% | 44% |
| Overall                  | 49% | -25% | 74% |

### High and Low scores

36. This section highlights the ten questions that received the most positive responses from staff (Chart 4) and the ten questions that received the most negative responses (Chart 5). It is particularly encouraging to see that the results shown in chart 4 highlight that staff feel they have all the knowledge and skills to enable them to do their job, that staff care about the future of MFRA and that they also feel their manager treats them with respect. It's also encouraging to know that staff have a good understanding of why the organisation needs to make cuts, given the current financial situation faced by the Authority.

Chart 4

## Top 10 results - Themes & Items

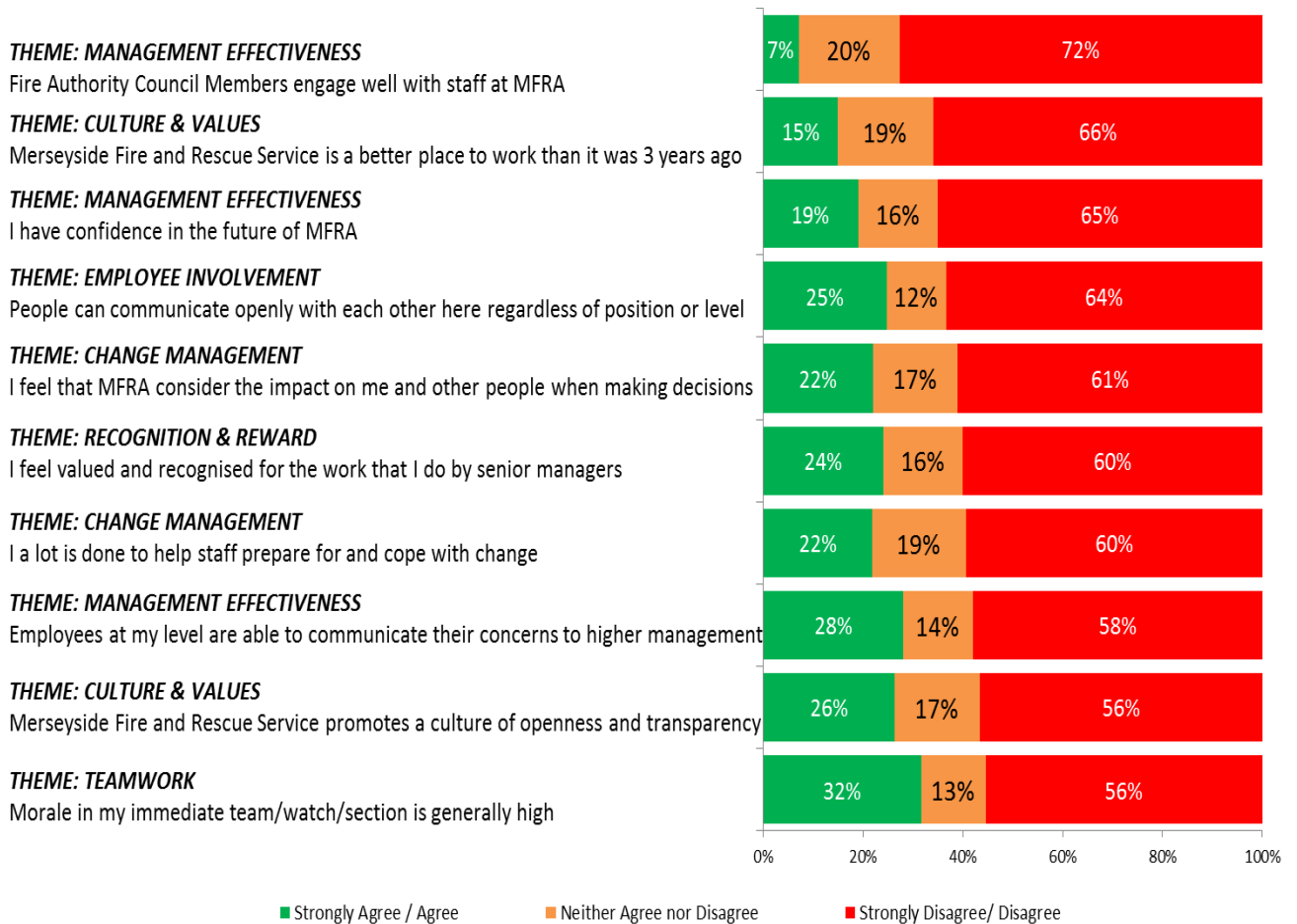


37. In contrast, Chart 5 shows the questions with the most negative responses when looking at the overall response rates across the organisation. It is particularly disappointing to see that staff feel Authority Members don't fully engage with staff across the Service. Whilst it is disappointing that staff do not feel MFRA is a better place to work than 3 years ago it is not unsurprising given the extent of the change undergone by all staff.

Chart 5



## Bottom 10 results - Themes & Items

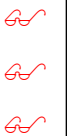


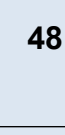
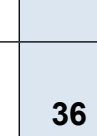


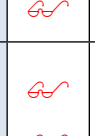

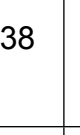


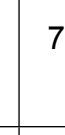


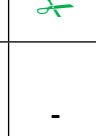
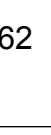


















38. To see more organisational results for each question of the survey, see the report **Results of the Employee Engagement Survey**. MFRA Senior Managers will be using this information contained in the reports to investigate further areas for review and to plan any actions to address low engagement areas/themes. Emerging priorities have been identified later in this report.

## Results by Staff Groupings – Variations

39. The reports have shown a number of variations when comparing results from different staff groups. It's clear from the Table 6 that Non Uniformed staff are much more engaged and more positive about working at MFRA, when compared to staff from the uniformed group. Control staff are somewhere in the middle with their engagement levels, when compared between the two groups.
40. When looking at those differences between staffing groups, there are a number of areas where there are significant differences in responses to the survey. Most surprising results were when comparing uniformed staff with non-uniformed staff results.
41. Table 6 details the most significant differences, including differences in staff perceptions in relation to their contribution to safer stronger communities: 88% non-uniformed staff responding in the survey felt they did contribute to safer stronger communities, compared to only 55% of uniformed staff.
42. Other results that were disappointing were in relation to whether working for MFRA makes staff want to do their best work they can. Non uniformed responses were twice as positive as those from uniformed staff. More work needs to be done to establish why there are significant differences between the two groups given that the non-uniformed staff have faced redundancy and will do so in the future. Therefore, it would be reasonable to have assumed their satisfaction levels would have been lower.
43. Perceptions of bullying and harassment are of concern. The results show only 35% (209) members of uniformed staff feel they have **not** been bullied and harassed in the last 12 months when compared to 84% (158) of non-uniformed staff feeling the same. Results showing support for staff from their managers would point towards a conclusion that that line managers are not contributing to this perception of bullying, so further research into this area will be a priority for MFRA, given also that there was a very low number (2) of bullying and harassment cases formally reported in the 12 months leading up to the end of July 2014.

Table 6

| Summary results for Merseyside Fire and Rescue by Staff Grouping | MFRA (Full Survey) | Uniformed Staff   | Non Uniformed Staff  | Control Staff  |
|--|--------------------|---|--|--|
| Respondents  | 776                | 565   | 189  | 22   |
| Overall Engagement Score   | 55                 |  45    |  84   |  58   |
| Goal Clarity   | 64                 |  56   |  87   |  73   |
| My Job   | 48                 |  38   |  77   |  62   |
| Employee Involvement   | 37                 |  25   |  74   |  48   |
| Teamwork   | 36                 |  27   |  63   | - 38   |
| Learning & Development   | 58                 |  53 |  72 | - 59   |
| Recognition & Reward   | 48                 |  43 |  64 |  44 |
| Management Effectiveness   | 44                 |  39 |  58 |  39 |

|                   |           |   |    |   |    |   |    |
|-------------------|-----------|---|----|---|----|---|----|
|                   | <b>37</b> |  | 27 |  | 67 |  | 33 |
| Culture & Values  |           |  |    |  |    |   |    |
|                   | <b>40</b> |  | 32 |  | 63 |  | 33 |
| Change Management |           |  |    |  |    |  |    |


**KEY :**

Arrows are used to indicate the relative performance in each section against the average for MFRA



 at least 10% better




 at least 5% and less than 10% better

 at least 3% and less than 5% better

- less than 3% better and less than 3% worse

 at least 3% and less than 5% worse



 at least 5% and less than 10% worse

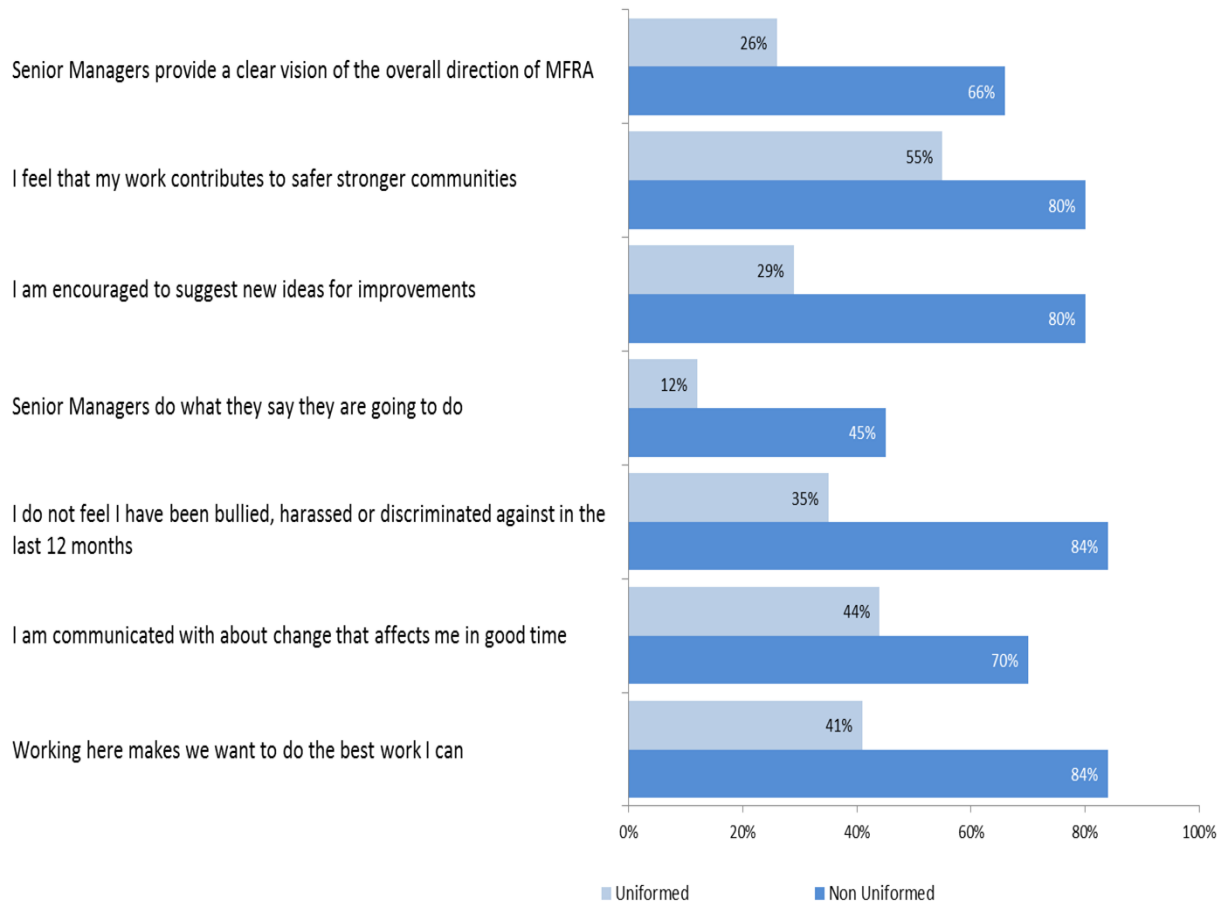


 at least 10% worse

Chart 7

## Uniformed and Non Uniformed Comparison

Questions with differences in positive responses

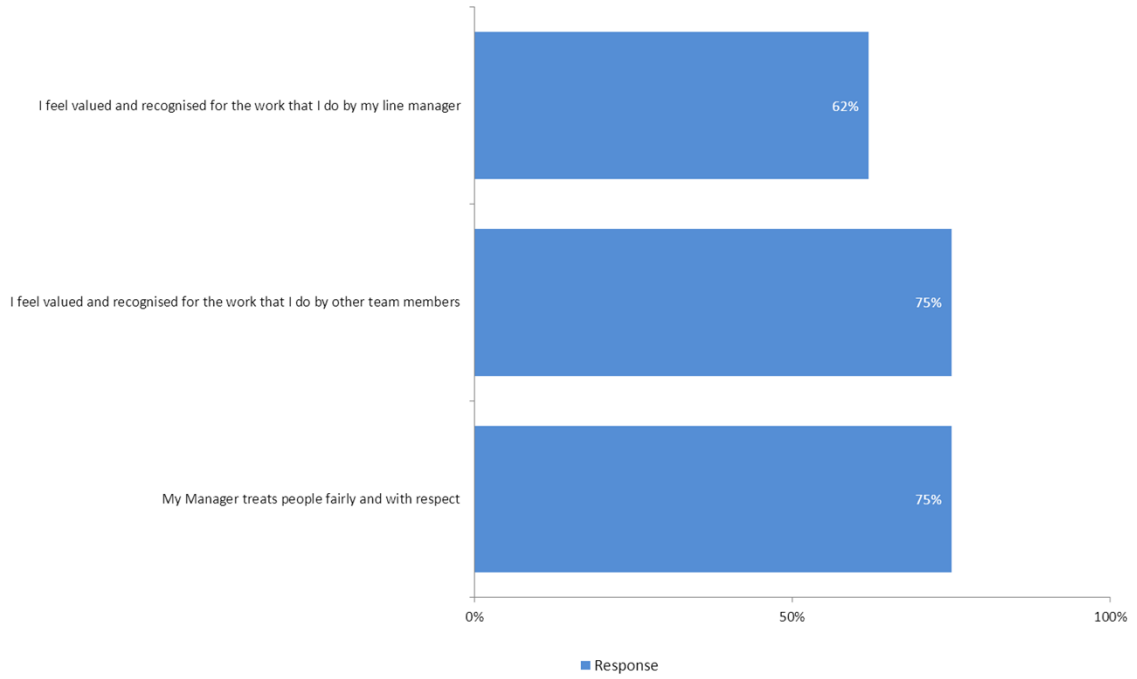


44. Further analysis of the results in relation to variations between staff groups show that uniformed staff are most satisfied in three key areas:
- 75% of uniformed staff responding felt valued and recognised for the work that they do by other team members
  - 75% of uniformed staff responding felt their Manager treats people fairly Feeling valued and recognised for the work that they do by their line managers -
  - 62% Feel valued and recognised for the work that they do by their Line Manger

Chart 8

## Uniformed Staff - Positive Responses

Selected Questions with positive responses



## Results by Functions

45. Table 9 shows the average response rates for each of the engagement themes in the survey for each Function, Department or combination of Departments. Strategy and Performance staff were the most engaged with the most positive response rates. The area with the lowest engagement scores overall is from staff identifying themselves as being in the Operational Response function, although the majority of those staff are uniformed staff on stations, not the members of the headquarters Function.
46. MFRA Senior Managers and Function Heads will be sharing the results of the staff survey with their teams over the coming month and identifying key areas to celebrate and areas for further action.

Table 9

| Summary results for Merseyside Fire and Rescue by Function / Dept | MFRA (Full Survey) | Assets/ICT/Finance |    | Operational Preparedness |    | People & Organisational Development |    | Operational Response |    | Strategy & Performance |    | Prevention & Protection |    | Other (Function) |    |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|----|--------------------------|----|-------------------------------------|----|----------------------|----|------------------------|----|-------------------------|----|------------------|----|
| Respondents   | 776                | 24                 |    | 105                      |    | 19                                  |    | 460                  |    | 26                     |    | 76                      |    | 58               |    |
| Overall Engagement Score  | 55                 |                    | 86 |                          | 67 |                                     | 89 |                      | 43 |                        | 93 |                         | 77 |                  | 60 |
| Goal Clarity  | 64                 |                    | 86 |                          | 72 |                                     | 87 |                      | 53 |                        | 94 |                         | 84 |                  | 71 |
| My Job  | 48                 |                    | 65 |                          | 63 |                                     | 73 |                      | 35 |                        | 92 |                         | 79 | -                | 50 |
| Employee Involvement  | 37                 |                    | 72 |                          | 56 |                                     | 72 |                      | 21 |                        | 85 |                         | 64 |                  | 43 |
| Teamwork  | 36                 |                    | 62 |                          | 49 |                                     | 58 |                      | 25 |                        | 77 |                         | 56 | -                | 35 |

|                          |    |  |    |  |    |  |    |  |    |  |    |  |    |   |    |
|--------------------------|----|--|----|--|----|--|----|--|----|--|----|--|----|---|----|
| Learning & Development   | 58 |  | 69 |  | 65 |  | 82 |  | 51 |  | 88 |  | 64 | - | 60 |
| Recognition & Reward     | 48 |  | 43 |  | 58 |  | 68 |  | 41 |  | 88 |  | 61 |   | 45 |
| Management Effectiveness | 44 |  | 53 |  | 51 |  | 55 |  | 38 |  | 79 |  | 51 | - | 43 |
| Culture & Values         | 37 |  | 67 |  | 49 |  | 74 |  | 24 |  | 77 |  | 60 | - | 38 |
| Change Management        | 40 |  | 61 |  | 48 |  | 73 |  | 30 |  | 74 |  | 59 | - | 41 |

### Results by Length of Service

47. Table 10 shows the average engagement theme results by length of service categories. The table shows that people who have been working at MFRA in excess of 10 years have the lowest engagement score across all themes with an overall engagement score of 53% (10yrs + service) and 49% (20yrs +service). Those staff with less than 5 years' service have a much higher engagement score across all themes, but this group only represents 19% of the total staff responding to the survey.

Table 10

| Summary results for Merseyside Fire and Rescue by Length of Service | MFRA (Full Survey) % | Less than 2 years |    | 2 to less than 5 years |    | 5 to less than 10 years |    | 10 to less than 20 years |    | 20+ years |    |
|---|----------------------|-------------------|----|------------------------|----|-------------------------|----|--------------------------|----|-----------|----|
| Respondents   | 776                  | 25                |    | 32                     |    | 89                      |    | 229                      |    | 401       |    |
| Overall Engagement Score  | 55                   |                   | 88 |                        | 85 |                         | 70 | -                        | 53 |           | 49 |



|                          |    |  |    |  |    |  |    |   |    |  |    |
|--------------------------|----|--|----|--|----|--|----|---|----|--|----|
| Goal Clarity             | 64 |  | 83 |  | 80 |  | 77 |   | 60 |  | 60 |
| My Job                   | 48 |  | 77 |  | 63 |  | 67 |   | 45 |  | 43 |
| Employee Involvement     | 37 |  | 73 |  | 60 |  | 59 |   | 32 |  | 32 |
| Teamwork                 | 36 |  | 71 |  | 57 |  | 53 |   | 33 |  | 31 |
| Learning & Development   | 58 |  | 76 |  | 66 |  | 69 | - | 57 |  | 54 |
| Recognition & Reward     | 48 |  | 70 |  | 56 |  | 61 | - | 46 |  | 45 |
| Management Effectiveness | 44 |  | 68 |  | 53 |  | 53 | - | 43 |  | 40 |
| Culture & Values         | 37 |  | 71 |  | 68 |  | 55 |   | 33 |  | 31 |
| Change Management        | 40 |  | 53 |  | 62 |  | 55 |   | 36 |  | 36 |

48. Full data tables for each question by length of service category can be accessed on the MFRA Staff survey webpage.
















#### Results by working pattern

49. Table 10 provides a summary breakdown of the overall engagement scores for each theme by different working patterns. The table shows that those staff who work the Self Rostering (or self-managed team) system are most satisfied, with

a high engagement score of 92, followed closely by staff working the Flexible Duty System (all uniformed) and Flexi Time (mainly non uniformed). The least satisfied of all the respondents are those uniformed staff working Wholetime (twelve hour shifts). This group has an engagement score of 38, significantly lower than the average engagement score of 55 for MFRA as a whole. This is surprising given that the FBU twice rejected the offer of self rostering on 24 hour shifts prior to the implementation of 12 hour shifts remaining on the Grey Book shift system.

Table 10

| Summary results for Merseyside Fire and Rescue by Working Pattern | MFRA (Full Survey) % | Flexible Duty System |    | Flexi Time |    | Self Rostering |    | LLAR |    | Wholetime (12/12) |    | Not Applicable (Working Pattern) |    |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----|------------|----|----------------|----|------|----|-------------------|----|----------------------------------|----|
| Respondents   | 776                  | 41                   |    | 165        |    | 23             |    | 30   |    | 443               |    | 44                               |    |
| Overall Engagement Score  | 55                   |                      | 86 |            | 83 |                | 92 |      | 51 |                   | 38 |                                  | 74 |
| Goal Clarity  | 64                   |                      | 90 |            | 86 |                | 90 |      | 58 |                   | 50 |                                  | 76 |
| My Job  | 48                   |                      | 83 |            | 78 |                | 82 |      | 37 |                   | 30 |                                  | 71 |
| Employee Involvement  | 37                   |                      | 80 |            | 73 |                | 73 |      | 29 |                   | 15 |                                  | 63 |
| Teamwork  | 36                   |                      | 69 |            | 62 |                | 71 |      | 27 |                   | 20 |                                  | 51 |
| Learning & Development  | 58                   |                      | 82 |            | 72 |                | 84 | -    | 60 |                   | 48 |                                  | 63 |
| Recognition & Reward  | 48                   |                      | 82 |            | 64 |                | 57 |      | 35 |                   | 38 |                                  | 58 |
| Management Effectiveness  | 44                   |                      | 70 |            | 58 |                | 55 |      | 32 |                   | 35 |                                  | 49 |
| Culture & Values  | 37                   |                      | 73 |            | 66 |                | 68 | -    | 37 |                   | 19 |                                  | 55 |

|                   |    |   |    |   |    |   |   |   |    |   |    |   |    |
|-------------------|----|---|----|---|----|---|---|---|----|---|----|---|----|
| Change Management |    |  |    |  |    |  | 7 |   |    |  |    |  |    |
|                   |    |  | 79 |  | 62 |  | 4 | - | 38 |  | 24 |  | 54 |
|                   | 40 |  |    |  |    |  |   |   |    |  |    |  |    |

50. Full data tables for each question by working pattern category can be accessed on the MFRA staff survey webpage

### Free Text Responses

51. Staff were invited to provide answers to two free text questions. The responses were summarised by People Insight into some key themes/popular answers as follows:

***First Free text question: What is the best thing about working for MFRA?***

- Being able to help people and make a difference in the community
- Pride in the badge & mission
- The variety of operational work – gives good job satisfaction
- Nothing/Negative (this was used in the context of “there is nothing good about MFRA”)
- The flexibility and work/life balance available through shift work
- Teams, watches & colleagues – great and supportive people to work with
- Good provision of equipment & facilities, e.g. gym
- The range of benefits provided
- Learning & Development opportunities

52. **2<sup>nd</sup> Free text Question: If you could change one thing about MFRA, what would that be?**

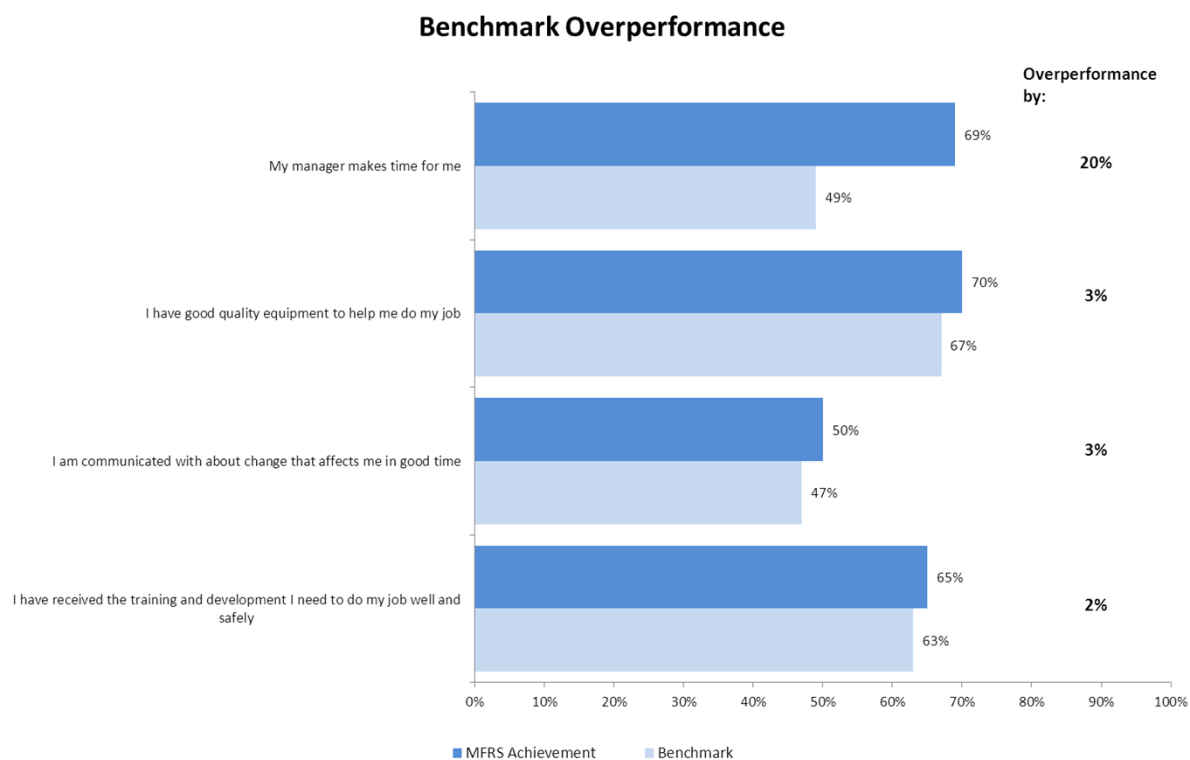
- Improve the relationship between different parts of the service, particularly between senior management and operational staff, and between senior management and the FBU (Fire Brigades Union)
- Fairer and more transparent progression opportunities – a perception that FBU members are kept closed off from promotion
- Fairer treatment of all staff by management - staff feel over-scrutinised, micro-managed and in some cases bullied
- New shift patterns not as family friendly as they could be – improved options for shift work would be appreciated
- Improve management training, to help improve current processes and also to support new managers
- Better change processes that are as consultative as possible

For details of the free text responses please see MFRA website – staff survey page

## External Benchmarking

53. Benchmarking helps to put our staff survey results into context, by showing how our results compare with that of other organisations that have run staff surveys using the same questions. This comparison helps us to identify relative strengths and areas to improve.
54. Chart 11, shows where MFRA has performed better than the average scores for external organisations (public and private). We have done particularly well in terms of managers making time for staff where the benchmark externally was 49% and MFRA average score is 69%

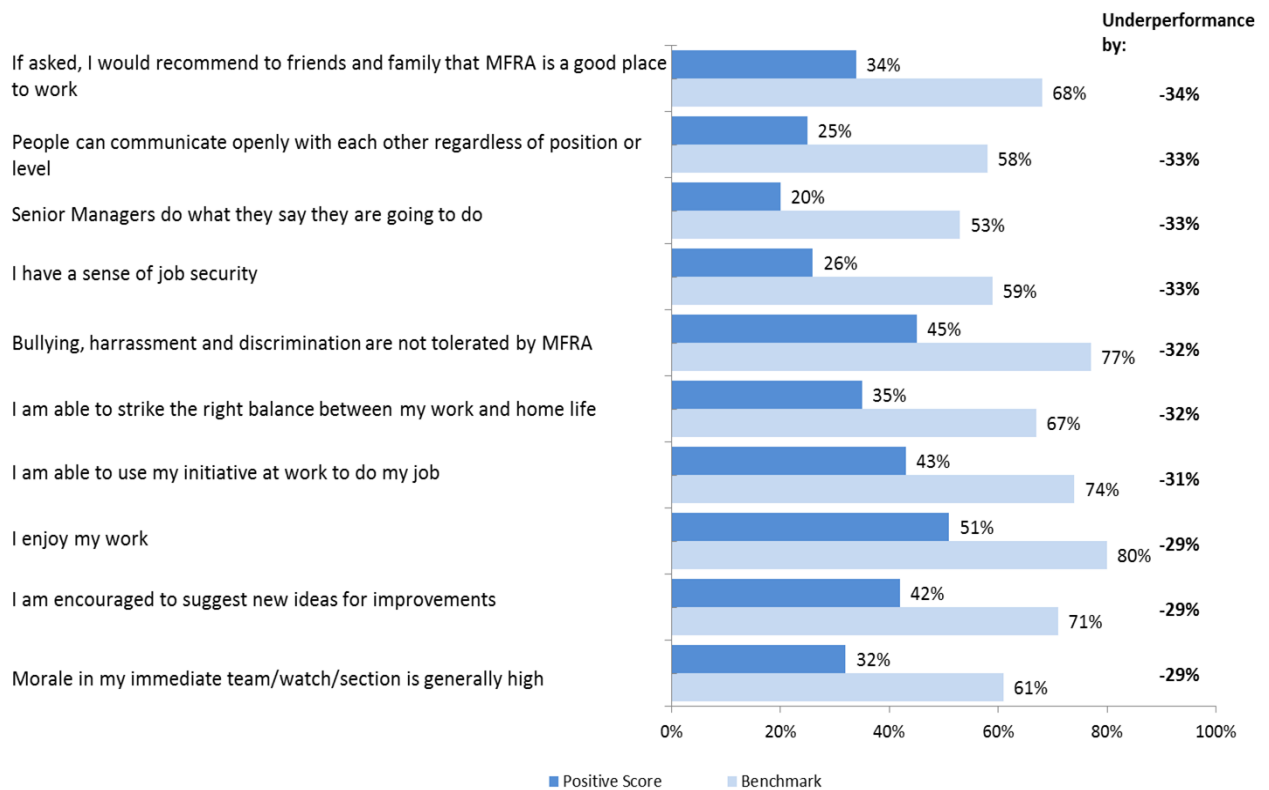
**Chart 11**



55. Chart 12 shows where MFRA has underperformed when compared to the external benchmarks. For example, staff were asked if they would recommend MFRA to friends and family as a good place to work and our survey results show that we are 34% behind the average benchmark scores held by People Insight for this question

Chart 12

### Benchmark Underperformance



### Main Actions

56. MFRA want to build on the areas staff felt positively about and take action to investigate and respond to those areas where engagement was lower, or where concerns were expressed by staff. As a result, we have identified some priority areas. The main actions are separated in the diagram 1 below as those areas that MFRA should Celebrate and Maintain (green), areas where there is a need for action (Red) and areas that need further research and investigation to gather more information to help direct further improvement.

| Area                               | Theme                  | Emerging actions   |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|--|
| Celebrate & Maintain               | Learning & Development | Staff feel training and development equips them to do the job  |
| Celebrate & Maintain & Investigate | Public Service ethos   | Staff in many areas of the service are motivated by feeling they make a contribution to the safety of the community of Merseyside but investigate some of the uniformed responses  |
| Celebrate & Maintain               | Team Working           | Staff value camaraderie within their teams and watches. Needs to be extended across teams, departments and grades  |
| Investigate                        | Shift Patterns         | There seem to be polarized views on the shift patterns ranging from loathing to loving. Why is it they work for some and not others? Are there any detrimental impacts on performance? Are start and finish times optimized?   |
| Investigate                        | Bullying & Harassment  | Very different perceptions between Uniformed and Non Uniformed around bullying and harassment. Investigate further the differences in responses in relation to these themes between different staff groups given the clear procedures in place and very low numbers of people (2) reporting bullying and harassment. |
| Investigate                        | Authority Engagement   | Consider the nature and extent of Authority Members' engagement with staff   |
| Prioritise                         | Valuing people         | Feeling valued is a key driver of Engagement for MF&RS. Need to bridge the apparent gap between senior management and operational staff.   |
| Prioritise                         | Management Culture     | Carry out a review to clarify why there are different perceptions of the culture of the organisation.  |
| Prioritise                         | Relationship with FBU  | Examine the perception amongst uniformed operational staff that membership is a bar to progression within the service  |



## Next Steps

57. Communication of the results with, staff and Representative Bodies will take place during October 2014 and Senior Managers will be reviewing their own functions/departmental results with their staff where they will be encouraged to consider any additional actions worthy of inclusion in any action plan.
58. Authority Members, Staff and Representative Bodies will be encouraged to support the development of the Authority's response to the survey through the creation of the engagement action plan.
59. Progress on the engagement action plan will be communicated and scrutinised through the Performance and Scrutiny Committee starting in December 2014 and then frequently throughout 2015 to ensure progress is made with dealing with issues arising from the survey.
60. Staff will also get periodic communications on the progress through a variety of methods including, Hot News, all staff emails and Principal Officer briefings.
61. Further reports will be produced with Equality and Diversity analysis to capture any differences in satisfaction levels in relation to different staff groups. That report will be presented to Service's Strategic Equality Group for review and will be communicated to the Diversity Action Group to help set any further actions for improvement before communicating to staff in due course.
62. If you need any further information about the contents of this report, have views on the content of the report or require assistance in accessing the People Insight reports on the MFRA website please contact Wendy Kenyon Diversity and Consultation Manager at [Wendykenyon@merseyfire.gov.uk](mailto:Wendykenyon@merseyfire.gov.uk)

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## **Equality and Diversity Implications**

63. 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 Strategic Equality Group for review at the next meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2014. The reports will be then tabled for further scrutiny at the Performance and Scrutiny Committee meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> December 2014.

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## **Staff Implications**

64. Staff Implications will mainly be around projects and work streams arising out of the Survey action plans and the additional staff time and resources that will be needed to take the project in to implementation phase. Further research and investigation work that may be needed will also impact on staff time in areas such as People and Organisational Development and Strategy and Performance teams.

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## **Legal Implications**

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65. The staff survey supports work that is underway to prepare for the CGLA Equality Framework. The framework supports MFRA in its achievement to meet and exceed 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.

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### **Financial Implications & Value for Money**

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66. The cost of actions is unknown at this stage of the project. The Survey has cost MFRA £10,500. This has been met from existing budgets. This represents approximately 0.02% of the overall staffing budget cost.

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### **Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications**

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67. The staff survey measures engagement levels which has 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.

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

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68. The staff survey measures engagement levels which has been proven to positively impact organisation results across all sectors. In particular, a high level of employee engagement/satisfaction has shown to lead to improved customer satisfaction through improved service delivery and productivity. The survey allows organisations to measure engagement around areas of community engagement and service delivery and where this is lower than expected, further work can be done to make improvements.
69. The Authority will need to extend the levels of engagement displayed by the most engaged staff to those least engaged as not doing so will seriously impact on the performance of the Authority in the future.

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### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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### **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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**CGLA**                      Communities Local Government Association  
**E AND D**                Equality and Diversity