



**Safest People, Safest Places**

## **Combined Fire Authority**

**17 September 2021**

### **Our People Project - Creating a Corporate Narrative**

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#### **Report of Communications Manager**

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##### **Purpose of Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide members with the rationale behind creating the “Our People” video.

##### **Background**

###### **What is a corporate narrative?**

- 2 It's simply a great story, told well and truthfully, about an organisation and the place it serves. An effective corporate narrative helps people understand what we stand for, why it's important. It should capture what we do, who we are, what's important to us and why? using simple, clear everyday language.
- 3 It's difficult to remember facts – however impressive they are – it's easy to remember good stories. The brief was to create a video and handbook which reflects our greatest asset – Our People, capturing what it is like to work for County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS).

##### **Study and Align**

- 4 Earlier this year the communications team completed a series of staff focus groups to assist with writing a script, creating a corporate narrative and more importantly so staff could hear their own voices in the video. Questions asked in the focus groups included why did you want to work for CDDFRS? What's

your favourite part of your day? If you could tell a member of the public something that would surprise them about the fire service, what would it be?

- 5 For the most part, the focus groups were very positive with some genuinely heart felt responses about how proud staff are to work for CDDFRS, comments included “best job in the world” “my chest swells with pride when I tell people where I work” “I never wanted to do anything else” “people call us when they don’t know who else to call” amongst many others.
- 6 The focus groups also acted as an informal ‘temperature check’ of when would be the best time to launch the video and how the organisation was ‘feeling’ in the midst of a pandemic.

### **Create**

- 7 The team created a story which centres around Our People, employed a local filmmaker to heighten the production value of the video and the filming began as the Covid-19 restrictions lifted in April 2021. Filming every aspect of the service and aligning it to the script was not easy, however the team and the wider organisation pulled together to ensure we had the best footage, showcasing all aspects of the service we provide to the communities of County Durham and Darlington.

### **Launch and Embed**

- 7 The video was launched at this year’s Being the Best Awards and sent out to the wider organisation a few days later. The handbook will embed the values and behaviours of the organisation further when it is launched in September and will include the recently launched Code of Ethics.
- 8 Once embedded the video will be launched to the public and will be used at service wide events, engagement activities and recruitment campaigns. The way in which the video was produced will allow the communications team to adjust and refresh the video accordingly.

### **Recommendation**

- 9 Members are recommended to **note** the report and video content.