



Safest People, Safest Places

Combined Fire Authority

25 June 2024

Member Buddy System and Affiliation with Fire Stations

Report of the Director of Corporate Resources

Purpose of Report

1. This report confirms the Service Leadership Team (SLT) contacts for the Member 'Buddy' arrangements and the fire station affiliation list.

SLT Member 'Buddy' System and Fire Station Affiliations

2. The Combined Fire Authority's (CFA) vision of Safest People, Safest Places can only be achieved through Members, staff and the public working in partnership. Part of the CFA commitment to partnership working is through the Buddy System where Members are affiliated with specific SLT members (referred to as 'Officers') and fire stations throughout County Durham and Darlington. The benefits of this system are:
 - Closer links between Members, local stations and staff;
 - Improved communications between Members, officers and staff;
 - Improved understanding of roles and responsibilities between Members and officers;
 - Improved opportunity for partnership working through Member involvement.
3. Station personnel will be made aware of their affiliated Member and Members are encouraged to visit their affiliated station (or any fire station within County Durham and Darlington area) but are requested to contact a member of the Divisional Management Team in the first instance to ensure that crews are planned to be on-station when a visit occurs. This will maximise the effectiveness and benefits of any visit for both staff and Members alike.

4. The Member/station affiliation programme provides an opportunity for CFA Members to enhance local accountability through maintaining regular contact with an operational fire station and facilitates a fuller understanding of their Emergency Response activity and wider workstreams such as Business Fire Safety and Community Safety and Arson Reduction.
5. 'Member Buddies' provide an alignment of CFA Members to members of the SLT, to provide information and support on a range of Service policy and organisational issues.
6. Designated SLT Buddies will make themselves available to Members for the purpose of developing their overall knowledge of the fire and rescue service. SLT Buddies will look to ensure support is provided in a way that suits the individual Member.

Recommendation

7. CFA Members are requested to:
 - a. **Approve** the Member Buddy and Station Affiliation list as set out in Appendices A and B.

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