

Initiatives Delivering Excellence And Safety Report I.D.E.A.S.

Executive Summary

This report details the requirements of a scheme to allow interested party's ideas on how we conduct aspects of our service to be evaluated, implemented and rewarded. The contribution to our vision will be made through the constant consideration of the efficiency and effectiveness with which we deliver our service. This will ensure constant value for money and a dynamic approach to the demands of the communities we serve.

Naming the Scheme

As perception & publicity are of vital importance to the scheme, the name **IDEAS** was chosen to establish a strong brand for the scheme.

Operation of the Scheme

The scheme is designed to provide a formal process to stimulate, capture, evaluate and implement ideas, which may be generated by our employees, volunteers, partners, suppliers or members. It will be administered by an Innovations Manager, who will be responsible for responding to suggestions, registering the ideas, maintaining the Ideas Register, conducting the initial evaluation of the idea and full evaluation where knowledge and experience allow. They will also present each idea to the Improvement Panel, who will then decide upon the recommendation of the Innovation Manager's opinion of the value of each idea and whether to implement the idea or not.

Rules of the Scheme

The definition of what can be included in the scheme should be clear. It should also link in directly to our vision and mission statement.

The following areas are to be eligible for suggestions;

- Improvement in services to the public.
- Reduction of risk within the community.
- Simplifying or streamlining procedures.
- Simplifying any administrative processes.
- Improvement in training operations.
- Improvement in safety at work.
- Reduction in costs, whilst maintaining performance.
- Achieving work/life balance and making work fun.

Suggestions will not be excluded from the scheme simply because they fall wholly or partly within normal duties. However, this will be taken into account when deciding if the idea qualifies for an award and the size of any award.

Eligibility of Applications

The scheme should be open to all employees, volunteers, contractors, Authority members and partner members.

Timescales

To reinforce confidence in the scheme a timetable for the processing of ideas will be established;

On receipt of an idea an acknowledgement should be sent within 7 days.

The decision of the initial investigation should be sent no later than 14 days after receipt.

If after initial investigation, the idea is eligible, then the full investigation should be made. Where possible this report & recommendation will be completed within 8 weeks from the submission date.

This will then be put before the next meeting of the Improvement Panel which will meet on a quarterly basis.

The originator of the idea will be notified of the decision of the panel within 7 days. Any award will be made within 28 days of the decision of the panel being made.

Award Criteria

The scheme will have a tiered approach to the level of award dependant on the evaluation of the effects of the idea. Altering how the different awards compare to each other is a way of giving strategic focus to a particular area of activity, for example focus could easily be weighted toward ideas which aim to reduce risk. The focus of the recommended scheme would be in quantifiable cost savings & improvements in service.

Quantifiable Savings

One-Off Savings

Award of 10% of the savings generated after any implementation costs have been deducted. Up to a maximum of £5000.

Year on Year Savings

In the first year, an award of 10% of the saving less implementation costs, with 5% awarded for the two subsequent years. Subject to an overriding maximum of £5000.

Unquantifiable Savings

Where the savings are made via increased efficiency or improvement in the quality of the service delivered then the evaluation report should recommend one of the following awards;

Minor Improvement – Up to £100. Defined as “Having a positive, if limited effect on activity.”

Significant Improvement – Up to £1000. Defined as “An important or noticeable effect on activity.”

Substantial Improvement – Up to £2500. Defined as “A considerable change in the extent or degree of activity.”

The level of the award will be dependant on;

- Life of the improvement.
- Cost and ease of implementation.
- Extent of application across the service.

Awards Where Implementation is Not Recommended.

All suggestions should receive a letter of thanks and encouragement from the Innovation Manager or Principal Officer.

Where it is deemed appropriate a personal visit should be made to the individual in the workplace by a senior member of the panel or the innovation manager to offer thanks and encouragement. Particularly, if the individual is a member of a group which is under represented within the workforce or from a group we wish to encourage to make further suggestions.

An encouragement award of £25 should be paid where an idea has merit; the case is well constructed and researched or we wish to encourage the individual or group to make further suggestions.

Retrospective Awards

An individual, who has previously made a suggestion to the scheme, may after an organisational change, make a submission to the panel, if they believe their suggestion can be linked to the change. The Innovation manager will then investigate the situation and make a report and recommendation to the next Improvement Panel. A retrospective award may be

paid using the scheme criteria, but weighted by the degree of linkage established between the original idea and the change.

Role of the Innovation Manager

An Ideas Register will be maintained, against which all new ideas should be compared. The first suggestion form received shall be deemed to be the original idea; no duplicate submissions will be evaluated by the scheme.

They will be responsible for carrying out the initial evaluation, which will include comparison against the Scheme rules and the Ideas Register. They will also provide the written response to the ideas originator.

They will conduct the full evaluation where knowledge and experience allow. A pool of evaluators will be available with specialised knowledge or experience applicable to different areas of the Service's operations. They will be called upon where the complexity or technical detail of the idea requires.

The Evaluation Report will include a summary of the effects of the idea and recommendations on; whether to implement or not and the level of any award to be made.

The Innovation Manger will complete and present the report to the Improvement Panel.

The post should be supported by administrative support to assist with the maintenance of records and production of letters and reports.

Capture Mechanism

A simple form should be designed to cover;

- The problem or opportunity.
- The suggested solution.

For group suggestions an apportionment of work, percentage based, on which, any award made will be divided between the group. Group suggestions will only be accepted in hard copy and signed by all contributors.

The preferred route for idea forms will be via electronic mail, however hard copies will be made available.

The forms could be placed on the Intranet & Internet site.

Implementing the Scheme

To ensure the initial success of the scheme it will be essential to provide the following;

- Principal Officer commitment.
- Intensive publicity campaign.
- Budgetary provision for implementation costs and awards.
- Additional provision of staff at the outset to deal with predicted high volume of contributions in the opening months of the scheme.

The workforce's opinion of the scheme will be formed in the first instances of its operation. Ultimately, this will define the success and longevity of the scheme.

Publicity

The launch campaign will need to be designed to give maximum exposure to the scheme. Key components will include visible principal officer support and the use of all available internal media.

The publicity campaign should continue after implementation to maintain the momentum of the scheme. This would include reporting individual successes and a summary of the schemes activity on a quarterly basis.

Any opportunities to enhance the credibility of the scheme should be taken and then publicised.

Costing the Scheme

With the provision of a part time Innovation Manager (Scale 6 - £20,895 to £22,293) and use of existing administrative support, the scheme is predicted to be self financing. This will be achieved through the cashable savings generated by the implementation of ideas stimulated by the scheme's existence.

Funding for the Scheme will initially come from the modernisation fund.

Reviewing the Scheme

A full review of the scheme should occur on an annual basis, covering all activities of the scheme. Cost/benefit analysis will measure feasibility, while employee feedback could be used to maintain the focus of the scheme.

Future Developments

There will be scope within the scheme to run specially targeted or seasonal campaigns to focus on areas where ideas are required to solve a particular problem.

These campaigns will hopefully provide results in the desired area, but they will also provide additional publicity and momentum to the core scheme. Special awards and prizes could be given outside the scope of the main scheme for these campaigns.

There is also the possibility of linking the scheme to personal files; this information could be used within the appraisal system or for CPD purposes.

Another development to help embed innovation within day to day routine would be to include an aspect of performance management in the reporting of the scheme. This could be used to highlight team performance in ideas generation and success of implementation, thus motivating managers to consider innovation.

It should not be inconceivable that some ideas may have national implications to the Fire & Rescue Service. These could be reported to other Services.

The Next Stage

- 1) Finalise the design of the scheme.
- 2) Appoint a Champion from principal management.
- 3) Appoint an Innovation Manager.
- 4) Allocate a budget.
- 5) Design a Launch Campaign.
- 6) Set a launch date – 14th March (Einstein's Birthday) & in National Ideas Week. (A new date will now be required. 8th June Tim Berners-Lee birthday. Inventor of WWW)
- 7) Appoint Improvements Panel
- 8) Identify specialist evaluators and train individuals.