



# DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

<b>REPORT REFERENCE NO.</b>	<b>HRMDC/12/6</b>
<b>MEETING</b>	<b>HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT &amp; DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>19 MARCH 2012</b>
<b>SUBJECT OF REPORT</b>	<b>DRAFT EQUALITY PLAN 2012-16 AND CONSULTATION REPORT</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	<b>Director of People and Organisational Development</b>
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<p><i>That the Committee:</i></p> <p><i>(a) notes the contents of the Consultation Report, and;</i></p> <p><i>(b) approves the Equality Plan 2012-16 and commends it to the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority for endorsement and adoption.</i></p>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<p>The Equality Act 2010 creates nine legally protected characteristics, namely:</p> <p>Age, Disability, Gender reassignment, Marriage and civil partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion and Belief, Sex and Sexual orientation.</p> <p>It also created a new Public Sector Equality Duty, from April 2011. This plays a key role in ensuring that public bodies incorporate fairness into all policies and working strategies to meet the needs of everyone.</p> <p>The duty states that, in relation to the protected characteristics above (with the exception of marriage and civil partnership in relation to 2 and 3) public authorities must give due regard to the need to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 <b>Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct</b></li> <li>2 <b>Advance equality of opportunity</b></li> <li>3 <b>Foster good relations between people by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.</b></li> </ol>

	<p>We are working hard to incorporate these duties into our work; making people safer, working with partners to tackle societal inequalities and ensuring our employees fulfil their potential.</p> <p>Our specific duties require us to publish equality objectives to help us meet the general duty by April 6<sup>th</sup> 2012. The equality plan, Safer Lives, brighter futures, is a strategy to meet this requirement and to assist the organisation to meet its Corporate Target, to attain the Excellent level of the Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework by 2014.</p>
<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>	<p>No new money requirements have been identified, with the exception of the assessment fee and expenses for the Excellent level of the Fire and Rescue service in 2014, approximately £6,300. Some actions are already planned and have been built into existing budget requirements or are changes to ways of working and continuous improvement to existing and planned processes. There is no financial (cash) impact on existing projects. Actions will be programmed into business plans over the next four years by the responsible managers.</p>
<b>EQUALITY RISK AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS</b>	<p>There are no risks of discrimination or disadvantage for a particular characteristic in this plan.</p> <p>There are positive benefits across all protected characteristics, described in the plan.</p>
<b>APPENDICES</b>	<p>Appendix A - Draft Equality Plan 2012-2016: Safer lives, brighter futures (page numbered and enclosed separately).</p> <p>Appendix B - Draft Equality Plan: Consultation report March 2012 (page numbered and enclosed separately).</p>
<b>LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>	<p>Equality Act 2010</p> <p>Equality Framework for Fire and Rescue Services</p>