DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

M. Pearson
CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY

To: The Chair and Members of the People Committee

(see below)

**SERVICE HEADQUARTERS
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PEOPLE COMMITTEE
(Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority)

Friday, 23rd July, 2021

A meeting of the People Committee will be held on the above date, **commencing at 10.00 am in the Committee Rooms, Somerset House, Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters, Exeter** to consider the following matters.

M. Pearson
Clerk to the Authority

A G E N D A

PLEASE REFER TO THE NOTES AT THE END OF THE AGENDA LISTING SHEETS

1   Apologies

2   Minutes (Pages 1 - 6)

The Minutes of the meeting of the Human Resources Management & Development Committee held on 3 March 2021 are attached for approval (noting that this Committee has now been replaced by the People Committee).

3   Items Requiring Urgent Attention

Items which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered at the meeting as matters of urgency.

PART 1 - OPEN COMMITTEE

4   **Appointments to the Internal Disputes Resolution Panel (Pages 7 - 8)**

   Report of the Director of Governance & Digital Services (PC/21/1) attached.

5   **People Committee Future Scrutiny Arrangements (Pages 9 - 16)**

   Report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (PC/21/2) attached.

6   **People Strategy: Progress Report (Pages 17 - 30)**

   Report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (PC/21/3) attached.

7   **Annual Fitness Testing: Update (Pages 31 - 40)**

   Report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (PC/21/4) attached.

8   **Annual Diversity and Recruitment Report 2020 (Pages 41 - 64)**

   Report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (PC/21/5) attached.

MEMBERS ARE REQUESTED TO SIGN THE ATTENDANCE REGISTER

Membership:-

Councillors Bown (Chair), Best, Brazil, Clayton (Vice-Chair), Hannaford, Peart and Thomas

	NOTES
1.	**Access to Information**
	Any person wishing to inspect any minutes, reports or lists of background papers relating to any item on this agenda should contact the person listed in the "Please ask for" section at the top of this agenda.
2.	**Reporting of Meetings**
	Any person attending a meeting may report (film, photograph or make an audio recording) on any part of the meeting which is open to the public – unless there is good reason not to do so, as directed by the Chair - and use any communication method, including the internet and social media (Facebook, Twitter etc.), to publish, post or otherwise share the report. The Authority accepts no liability for the content or accuracy of any such report, which should not be construed as representing the official, Authority record of the meeting. Similarly, any views expressed in such reports should not be interpreted as representing the views of the Authority.
	Flash photography is not permitted and any filming must be done as unobtrusively as possible from a single fixed position without the use of any additional lighting; focusing only on those actively participating in the meeting and having regard also to the wishes of any member of the public present who may not wish to be filmed. As a matter of courtesy, anyone wishing to film proceedings is asked to advise the Chair or the Democratic Services Officer in attendance so that all those present may be made aware that is happening.
3.	**Declarations of Interests at meetings (Authority Members only)**
	If you are present at a meeting and you are aware that you have either a disclosable pecuniary interest, personal interest or non-registerable interest in any matter being considered or to be considered at the meeting then, unless you have a current and relevant dispensation in relation to the matter, you must:
	(i) disclose at that meeting, by no later than commencement of consideration of the item in which you have the interest or, if later, the time at which the interest becomes apparent to you, the existence of and – for anything other than a "sensitive" interest – the nature of that interest; and then
	(ii) withdraw from the room or chamber during consideration of the item in which you have the relevant interest.
	If the interest is sensitive (as agreed with the Monitoring Officer), you need not disclose the nature of the interest but merely that you have an interest of a sensitive nature. You must still follow (i) and (ii) above.
	Where a dispensation has been granted to you either by the Authority or its Monitoring Officer in relation to any relevant interest, then you must act in accordance with any terms and conditions associated with that dispensation.
	Where you declare at a meeting a disclosable pecuniary or personal interest that you have not previously included in your Register of Interests then you must, within 28 days of the date of the meeting at which the declaration was made, ensure that your Register is updated to include details of the interest so declared.

	NOTES (Continued)
4.	**Part 2 Reports**
	Members are reminded that any Part 2 reports as circulated with the agenda for this meeting contain exempt information and should therefore be treated accordingly. They should not be disclosed or passed on to any other person(s). Members are also reminded of the need to dispose of such reports carefully and are therefore invited to return them to the Committee Secretary at the conclusion of the meeting for disposal.
5.	**Substitute Members (Committee Meetings only)**
	Members are reminded that, in accordance with Standing Orders, the Clerk (or his representative) must be advised of any substitution prior to the start of the meeting. Members are also reminded that substitutions are not permitted for full Authority meetings.
6.	**Other Attendance at Committees)**
	Any Authority Member wishing to attend, in accordance with Standing Orders, a meeting of a Committee of which they are not a Member should contact the Democratic Services Officer (see "please ask for" on the front page of this agenda) in advance of the meeting.

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
(Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority)

3 March 2021

Present:

Councillors Hannaford (Chair), Best, Peart, Thomas, Wheeler and Vijeh (Vice-Chair).

Apologies:

Councillor Clayton.

* HRMDC/19   Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2020 were approved as a correct record.

* HRMDC/20   Health, Safety and Wellbeing Progress Report

The Committee received for information a report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Director of Governance & Digital Services (HRMDC/21/1) that set out the progress made in respect of monitoring the health, safety and wellbeing of staff during 2020-21.

The following key points were highlighted:

Proactive monitoring:

- there had not been any progress made since the previous meeting in October 2020 on moving forward the actions in the Service Safety Management Systems audit due to the spike in Covid-19 in January 2021. 67% of areas reviewed had been identified as compliant with the Service was working towards the 26% outstanding and this remained the position to date in 2020-21. The Service would be looking at the risks associated with the remaining actions and then work through the high risk areas;

- Workplace (Health and Safety) Inspection & Assessments – this was now 84% completed in quarter 3 of 2020-21 as compared with 55% in quarter 2 which was very positive. The chart now showed the target as 100% as requested by the Committee at its meeting in October 2020;

Reactive monitoring:

- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) – there had been an increase in reporting of RIDDOR events in quarter 3 of 2020-21 with 6 Occupational Disease reports submitted to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). This was due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the increased risk at incidents. Each incident had been investigated carefully and the HSE was content with the outcomes and the Service's response to the pandemic;

- Personal injuries – the trend line showed this area had decreased over the past four years as the approach taken was to report and investigate all injuries to seek learning points so this was a very positive position. Sprains, strains and musculoskeletal were the primary injuries received which was reflected with other fire & rescue services;

- Vehicle incidents showed a reduction in 2020-21 to quarter 3 with 32 reported as compared with 75 in 2019-20. The Occupational Road Risk Group met quarterly to review vehicle related incidents and take action as appropriate which could include corrective measures such as driver training;

- The Health & Safety team continued to provide advice, guidance and support to the Service's response to the Covid-19 pandemic and thus high volumes of work continued. As a result, the Service was looking to outsource some elements of this work to assist workloads such as on vibration assessments.

The interim Head of Human Resources advised the Committee that sickness absence continued to be below the target of 8 days per person/shifts lost in quarter 3 of 2020-21 at 6.0 days, a reduction of 16.4%. On Call sickness absence was higher than other staff categories, however, at 9.61 days although this was measured over a 7 day period rather than shifts lost or working days. She added that the overall trend for absence had continued to decrease due to Covid-19 largely but the Service could not rely on this to be the rationale so would be looking in detail at the figures and how this was managed. There had been an increase in areas such as mental health, however, due to Covid-19 and the isolation factor associated with working at home. The Service would be reviewing the absence figures in depth with a view to providing additional information in future reports.

The Committee drew attention to the following points in particular:

- how previous Authority decisions had improved the Health & Safety of staff. A briefing paper was requested to cover the way in which previous Authority decisions such as approval of capital budget for vehicles and equipment had resulted in a safer working environment. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that new Breathing Apparatus had been rolled out to all stations funded by capital reserves and that new, smaller vehicles such as Rapid Intervention Vehicles (RIVs) and Light Rescue Pumps (LRPs) carried lighter, modern equipment that should result in decreased muscoskeletal injuries. The Service was also funding new escape hoods as a result of the Grenfell recommendations and these were going on all frontline appliances.

- vehicle incidents – more detailed information was requested on what the different types of incidents were. The Health & Safety Manager advised that a new system was being developed which would do this. He added that lot of vehicle collisions were due to narrow streets, scraping appliance bays or hedges and low level slow speed manoeuvring incidents. The nature of the incident dictated the level of investigation. This information could be captured in future reports to the Committee;

- whether the Service could sustain some of the benefits gained during the lockdowns in the Covid-19 pandemic. The Health & Safety Manager advised that he would like to see the more safety conscious environment and mind set continuing in future years but this required cultural change as well to achieve a positive safety culture. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that Covid marshalls had been introduced on all stations. It was hoped this would translate into Health and Safety representatives on all stations in future to keep up the positive work undertaken.

* HRMDC/21   <u>People Strategy Update</u>

The Committee received for information a report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (HRMDC/21/2) that set out the progress made to date with implementation of the Service's People Strategy.

It was noted that there had been good progress made with implementation of many areas of the Strategy. A review had been carried out to determine key actions that would make the difference between improvement and transformation in order to achieve the outcomes set out within the Strategy which were being called "game changers". The report, together with a presentation made at the meeting, set out the key actions taken, including:

Leadership:

- A talent management system had been introduced;

- A comprehensive, curated approach to how the Service developed its future leaders underpinned by the National Fire Chief Councils (NFCCs) Leadership Framework;

- Working with leaders and managers to create a common message about the Service's culture.

Learning & Development:

- Ensuring people feel safe through the "Safe To" initiative, including learning from our experiences, successes and mistakes and sharing ideas to make things better;

- Developing non-technical skills through curating learning content and allowing people to take ownership of their personal development in line with their role and their aspirations; and

- Technical competency through utilising expertise as a technical training partner provider to maximise efficiency of the apprenticeship levy together with ensuring Safe Professional and High performing operational teams through a focus on competence, discipline and performance, underpinned by an engaged safety culture.

Inclusion:

- The intervention programme "Safe To" provided the tools to make inclusion a reality through deliberate behaviours including the development of a toolkit to promote Fairness and Respect;

- To improve workforce diversity the Service had instigated a clear focus on positive action in Firefighter recruitment and development through paying attention to how communities view us as an employer, a new 'always open' approach to recruitment and accessible practical assessment facilities; and implemented the 'Our Time' sponsorship programme;

- The Service continued to consider "People by Design" through planning and implementing involvement and engagement in change and improvement, assessing impacts on people and working towards a 'value for people' approach to complement 'value for money'

Ways of Working:

- Smarter Working – developing a people led approach to a more agile and flexible workplace, with collaborative virtual working, easier access to information, and an emphasis on collaborative workspace rather than desk space, and less commuting miles;

- Work on governance processes to support more visible planning and performance to give people more effective tools for greater collaboration and alignment; and

- Transforming people services to ensure the delivery of expertise and support in the most effective and efficient way.

Health, Safety & Wellbeing:

- As part of the "Safe To" initiative to learn, contribute and challenge intervention, developing an engaged safety culture based on best practice from military aviation and a learning teams approach to incident debrief;

- Working with partners, developing a Wellbeing Strategy and Charter which will set out levels of new and existing proactive and reactive wellbeing interventions; and

- Immediate support provided through the Covid19 Welfare Cell.

The Committee made reference to bullying in the Service and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) report which had mentioned this matter. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that a lot of work had been undertaken on this and the Service including the "Safe To" approach referenced above. In Covid-19, an audit had been undertaken by the HMICFRS which had demonstrated a noticeable reduction in the level of staff who felt they had been bullied. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer indicated that he would bring a report to the next meeting to update on specifically on the 'Safe To' intervention.

Reference was also made to the Service's position on fitness testing. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that a meeting was scheduled with HMICFRS on 3 March 2021 to close the cause for concern hopefully that the Service received in 2019. Fitness testing had improved by 13% in 2020-21 so this was very positive. The Covid-19 pandemic had impacted as a range of fitness tests had been offered previously but this had to be limited to 2 in Covid. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer undertook to report the result of the HMICFRS cause for concern at the next meeting of the Committee and to the Fire & Rescue Authority.

*   **HRMDC/22** **Applications for Retirement and Re-employment**

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (HRMDC/21/3) that set out two applications for retirement and re-employment made in accordance with the Authority's Pay Policy Statement for 2020-21.

RESOLVED that the applications for retirement and re-employment as identified in paragraph 2.4 of report HRMDC/21/3 be approved.

*DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT

The Meeting started at 9.30 am and finished at 11.21 am

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REPORT REFERENCE NO.	PC/21/1
MEETING	**PEOPLE COMMITTEE**
DATE OF MEETING	**23 JULY 2021**
SUBJECT OF REPORT	**APPOINTMENTS TO THE INTERNAL DISPUTES RESOLUTION PANEL**
LEAD OFFICER	**Director of Governance & Digital Services**
RECOMMENDATIONS	*The Committee is asked to determine appointments to the IDRP Panel to run until the first meeting of the Committee after the Authority's Annual General Meeting in June 2022.*
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	The Firefighters' Pension Scheme Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP) enables complaints related to a pension to be considered by the Service and Authority under a two stage process as follows: • *Stage One*: the matters should be considered by the Chief Fire Officer, or a senior manager specified by him, who will give a decision in the matters; and • *Stage Two*: the decision should be confirmed or replaced by the decision of elected Members of the Fire and Rescue Authority which may in turn delegate this function to a smaller grouping. The Service procedures for grievances, discipline or dismissals now align with ACAS practice and guidance (which replaced the statutory discipline regulations) and do not provide for any ultimate recourse to the Authority. The Service has no intention to change this arrangement but, given the revised Internal Disputes Resolution Procedure are linked to statutory pensions schemes, it is necessary in the case of pensions complaints to provide an ultimate recourse to the Authority. This matter has been delegated by the Authority to this Committee for determination.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	An initial assessment has revealed no equality issues in this matter sufficient to warrant a full equality impact assessment.
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS (ERBA)	Nil.
APPENDICES	None.
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS	Firefighters' Pensions Scheme Circular 1/2009 – Firefighters' Pension Scheme: Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP).

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REPORT REFERENCE NO.	PC/21/2
MEETING	PEOPLE COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	23 JULY 2021
SUBJECT OF REPORT	PEOPLE COMMITTEE FUTURE SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS
LEAD OFFICER	DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER
RECOMMENDATIONS	*That the Committee approves:* *(a).* *subject to any amendments as may be indicated at the meeting, those performance measures identified in Section 2 of this report for monitoring progress against Strategic Priority 3 and its associated policy objectives; and* *(b).* *the proposal at paragraph 2.2 of this report for presenting this information to future meetings.*
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	At its ordinary meeting on 29 June 2021, the Authority approved four Strategic Priorities with associated policy objectives. Strategic Priority 3 is 'The Service is recognised as a great place to work. Our staff feel valued, supported, safe and well trained to deliver a high performing fire and rescue service'. Each of the Strategic Priorities and associated policy objectives were developed in consultation with the Authority at a series of bespoke workshops and Members' Forum discussions. The approved policy objectives to support Strategic priority 3 are: 3(a). Ensure that the workforce is highly trained and has the capability and capacity to deliver services professionally, safely and effectively; 3(b). Increase the diversity of the workforce to better reflect the communities we serve, promoting inclusion and developing strong and effective leaders who ensure that we have a fair place to work where our organisational values are a lived experience; and 3(c). Recognise and maximise the value of all employees, particularly the commitment of on-call firefighters, improving recruitment and retention The Authority annual meeting on 29 June 2021 established this Committee to replace the former Human Resources and Management Development Committee and to have the main objective of: 'To scrutinise and monitor the effectiveness of Service performance against the Authority approved People Strategic Policy Objectives.'

	This paper makes suggestions of some of the performance measures that the People Committee could scrutinise and monitor against Strategic Priority 3.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	Existing resource
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	N/A
APPENDICES	A. HMICFRS People Pillar Inspection Questions B. People Committee Draft Forward Plan
BACKGROUND PAPERS	Report DSFRA/21/15 (Strategic Policy Objectives 2021-22) to the ordinary meeting of the Authority held on 29 June 2021 (and the Minutes of that meeting.

1. BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

1.1.   In 2020, the Authority, supported by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny, undertook an extensive review of its governance structure. Stemming from this, it was felt there would be considerable benefit to the Authority in approving set of clear Strategic Priority Objectives for each year against which the Authority could, using its Committee structure, scrutinise Service performance.

1.2.   Proposed Strategic Priority Objectives for 2021-22 were presented to and approved by the Authority at its ordinary meeting on 29 June 2021. These were developed with input from Authority Members at recent Members' Forum meetings and three Member workshops. The four Strategic Policy Objectives approved by the Authority for 2021-22 are:

Strategic Priority 1
Our targeted prevention and protection activities will reduce the risks in our communities, Improving Health, Safety and wellbeing, supporting the local economy.

Strategic Priority 2
Our Operational resources will provide an effective emergency response to meet the local and national risks identified in our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).

Strategic Priority 3
The Service is recognised as a great place to work. Our staff feel valued, supported, safe and well trained to deliver a high performing fire and rescue service.

Strategic Priority 4
We are open and accountable, using our resources efficiently to deliver a high performing, sustainable service that demonstrates improving public value.

1.3.   In relation to Strategic Priority 3, the Authority also approved the following policy objectives:

3(a). Ensure that the workforce is highly trained and has the capability and capacity to deliver services professionally, safely and effectively;

3(b). Increase the diversity of the workforce to better reflect the communities we serve, promoting inclusion and developing strong and effective leaders who ensure that we have a fair place to work where our organisational values are a lived experience; and

3(c). Recognise and maximise the value of all employees, particularly the commitment of on-call firefighters, improving recruitment and retention

1.4.   These policy objectives align to the current Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) assessment criteria under the People Pillar (see Appendix A of this report).

1.5.   At its annual meeting on 29 June 2021 the Authority also agreed to establish this Committee (to replace the former Human Resources Management & Development Committee) with the following main objective: 'To scrutinise and monitor the effectiveness of Service performance against the Authority approved People Strategic Policy Objectives.'

2.   PROPOSED PERFORMANCE MONITORING BY THIS COMMITTEE

2.1.   To assist the Committee in adhering to its main objective, the following are proposed as performance measures to be scrutinised and monitored at Committee meetings:

Strategic Policy Objective3(a).   Ensure that the workforce is highly trained and has the capability and capacity to deliver services professionally, safely and effectively.

Suggested performance reporting:

Theme	Measure	Frequency	HMICFRS Criteria
Operational Core Competence Skills: Does the Service has adequate, trained resources to crew fire appliances.	Monitor at 95%	Quarterly	3:2:1
Workforce Planning: Does the Service have adequate plans in place to ensure vacancies are filled with the right candidates.	Time to fill vacancies: uniformed and non-uniform. Service to set target against industry standard	6 monthly	3:2:1 3:2:2
Health & Safety reporting: Accidents and type	Monitor against set levels (if increase of 25% triggers full report similar to HMICFRS measure)	Quarterly	3:1:4
Sickness and Absence: Absence figures for short & long term sickness	Service to set target against industry standard. Benchmark against other FRS national statistics.	Quarterly	3:1:3
Fitness testing: % of Operational staff who have passed the annual fitness test and three yearly medical	Service to set target against industry standard. Benchmark against other FRS national statistics.	Annual	3:1:3 3:1:4 3:3:3

Strategic Policy Objective3(b). Increase the diversity of the workforce to better reflect the communities we serve, promoting inclusion and developing strong and effective leaders who ensure that we have a fair place to work where our organisational values are a lived experience.

Suggested performance reporting:

Theme	Measure	Frequency	HMICFRS Criteria
Diversity Statistics: Protected characteristics (gender, race, sexual orientation, disability) for recruitment, promotion and retention	Benchmark against % of diversity in community	Quarterly	3:3:3 3:3:4
Inclusion: Staff Survey results (Internal & HMICFRS)	Improvement in participation and results from previous year	Annual/Ad hoc	3:3:3 3:3:4
Leadership Development: Staff survey results (Internal & HMICFRS)	Improvement in results from previous year	Annual/Ad hoc	3:2:3 3:4:1 3:4:2 3:4:3
Staff and Leaders demonstrating Service Values: Staff Survey results (Internal & HMICFRS)	Improvement in results from previous year	Annual/Ad hoc	3:1:1 3:1:2

Strategic Policy Objective3(c). Recognise and maximise the value of all employees, particularly the commitment of on-call firefighters, improving recruitment and retention.

Suggested performance reporting:

Theme	Measure	Frequency	HMICFRS Criteria
Recruitment & Retention (specific to On-call and the benefits of Pay for Availability)	Data previously reported (P4A stations only)	Quarterly	3:2:1 3:2:2

Employee Engagement: Staff Survey results (Internal & HMICFRS)	Improvement in results from previous year	Annual/Ad hoc	3:2:3

Other Reporting:

Theme	Measure	Frequency	HMICFRS Criteria
Progress against the People Strategy	% of work completed over set time period	Quarterly	All
Progress against any identified HMICFRS improvements in the People Pillar	% of work completed over set time period	Quarterly	All

2.2.   It should be noted that the performance areas agreed by the committee would be an initial position that may change and adapt as the committee matures and develops.

2.3.   A forward plan will be developed with the committee for agreement at the next meeting. Please see a suggested forward plan as attached at Appendix B of this report.

JOE HASSELL
Deputy Chief Fire Officer

HMICFRS People Pillar Assessment Questions

3.1 How well does the FRS promote its values and culture?
3.1.1 To what extent are service values and behaviours demonstrated throughout the organisation?
3.1.2 How well do leaders model and maintain the values that the FRS expects of them?
3.1.3 How well does the FRS understand the wellbeing needs of its workforce and act to improve workforce wellbeing?
3.1.4 To what extent is a culture of promoting health and safety evident at all levels of the FRS?

3.2 How well trained and skilled are FRS staff?

3.2.1 How well does the FRS understand the skills and capabilities of its workforce?
3.2.2 How well does the FRS ensure it has the right workforce mix of skills and capabilities?
3.2.3 To what extent has the FRS established a culture of learning and improvement?

3.3 How well does the FRS ensure fairness and diversity?

3.3.1 How well do leaders seek feedback and challenge from all parts of the workforce?
3.3.2 How well does the FRS identify and resolve workforce concerns?
3.3.3 How well does the FRS identify and address potential disproportionality in recruitment, retention and progression?
3.3.4 How well does the FRS promote equality, diversity and inclusion to ensure fair and open opportunities for all?

3.4 How well does the FRS develop leadership and capability?
3.4.1 How well does the FRS manage and develop the individual performance of its staff?
3.4.2 To what extent are the career pathways of all staff effectively managed?
3.4.3 How fairly does the FRS identify high potential members of the workforce to become senior leaders?
3.4.4 How fairly does the FRS select staff for leadership roles at all levels?

SUGGESTED PEOPLE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN

Q3 2021 Oct/Dec 2021	Q4 2021 Jan/Mar 2022	Q1 2022 April/June 2022	Q2 2022 July/Sept 2022	Q3 2022 Oct/Dec 2022	Q4 2022 Jan/Mar 2023
Consider initial findings of HMICFRS Inspection including Fitness Cause for concern	Briefing of People Pillar findings from HMICFRS inspection	Agree Action plan against HMICFRS Findings under People Pillar	Monitor HMICFRS People Action Plan	Monitor HMICFRS People Action Plan	Monitor HMICFRS People Action Plan
Monitor performance against policy objectives	Briefing on initial draft of new People Strategy 2022-2025	Monitor Progress of People Strategy 2022-2025	Monitor Progress of People Strategy 2022-2025	Monitor Progress of People Strategy 2022-2025	Monitor Progress of People Strategy 2022-2025
Monitor progress of People Strategy 2019-2022	Monitor performance against policy objectives	Monitor performance against policy objectives	Monitor performance against policy objectives	Monitor performance against policy objectives	Monitor performance against policy objectives
Consider any requests for retirement and/or re-employment?	Agree Performance Measures based against revised strategic People policy objectives for 2022/23		Agree membership of the Independent Disputes Resolution Panel (IDRP)		Agree Performance measures based against revised strategic People policy objectives for 2022/23

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	PC/21/3
MEETING	**PEOPLE COMMITTEE**
DATE OF MEETING	**23 JULY 2021**
SUBJECT OF REPORT	**PEOPLE STRATEGY PROGRESS REPORT**
LEAD OFFICER	**DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**
RECOMMENDATIONS	*That the report and progress made be noted.*
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	The People Strategy was published in 2019, following extensive evidence collection and engagement with staff. Staff described the workplace they wanted, through themed statements that form the aspirational objectives. Underpinning these objectives are identified 'areas of focus' which are then developed into service plan actions, and a People Development Project in the Safer Together Programme. This update gives an overview of the progress on work against the areas of focus under each theme.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	None additional
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	Not applicable
APPENDICES	A. People Strategy Progress Update – 27 May 2021
BACKGROUND PAPERS	People Strategy 2019-2022

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People Strategy Progress Report

This report gives an overview of progress against every area of focus outlined in the People Strategy at May 2021.

Michelle Sobey

Devon & Somerset
Fire & Rescue Service

27/05/2021

1   About this report

1.1   The People Strategy was published in 2019, following extensive evidence collection and engagement with staff. Staff described the workplace they wanted, through themed statements that form the aspirational objectives. Underpinning these objectives are identified 'areas of focus' which were then developed into service plan actions, and a People Development Project in the Safer Together Programme.

1.2   The update gives an overview of the progress on work against these areas of focus under each theme. Only three of the areas of focus have not progressed, these are reported on as to why. Approximately 80% of the work to address the areas of focus – new policies, procedures and interventions are operating, however few are able to be fully evaluated as yet. Many interventions will take time to demonstrate the difference they are making.

1.3   The People Strategy is due to be implemented by 2022, and to align with the planning framework the 2022 – 2026 Strategy will begin to be developed later this year based on the CRMP, further evidence collection, engagement and evaluation of progress to date.

1.4   The theme aims are written here as statements of 'here and now', to shift thinking from aspirations to Service commitments in terms of a workplace environment and culture. It leads us to say 'we are' rather than 'we will'. This enables us to hold ourselves to account on what we should be doing right now, to gain traction and expectation and make change quickly.

1.5   Many of the areas of focus will require long term attention and will be subject to continuous improvement to make a measurable difference. Much of this work does not end, it only evolves and improves based on measured performance and outcomes.

1

2   **Leadership**

2.1   Going forward together

Our leaders communicate a clear vision, take decisions and empower people to make change and improvement happen.

They are visible leaders with a diversity of backgrounds, skills and experiences who demonstrate open and honest listening and communication, and are united in living our values.

Our leaders at all levels are developed and prepared to take us into the future.

2.2   The work necessary to meet the People Strategy outcomes around leadership and non-technical learning and development were addressed through the People Development Project.

2.3   Leadership behavioural competencies have been set out in an NFCC national framework which we contributed to the development of in 2019. Building on our strengths, we have developed an 'Inspiring Leadership' document which incorporates this framework and sets out the required DSFRS leadership styles and behaviours.

2.4   The NFCC national framework was also used to map the DSFRS leadership and management skills matrix, supported by with a comprehensive leadership development programme for each level in the organisation. The programme utilises a range of new learning opportunities, including qualifications, apprenticeships, internal expert interactive seminars and self-directed learning platforms for development and self-awareness.

2.5   We committed to developing our leaders and to ensuring they are ready for the next step in progression. A new progression policy is operating, which will in time reduce the number of temporary management posts.

2.6   Each people process for recruitment, development and progression tests and promotes our values, actively looking for evidence of how those values are being demonstrated. The FRS Core Code of Ethics will now be integrated into this and other processes. Additional evaluation is being developed to measure customer experience of these processes.

2.7   To support leadership accountability, a new approach to Performance Management with our values and inclusion at its core has been developed and communicated. This includes a suite of supporting policies and toolkits for Performance conversations, capability and a new approach to investigation and discipline underpinned by the FAIR model, where interventions match intentions to promote a learning culture.

2.8   In addition, a new Performance Framework for the operation of the entire Service has been designed which will provide greater clarity and accountability, and enable our work to be outcome focussed and measured through to individual contributions.

2.9   In addition to embedding a Just Culture throughout performance and investigation frameworks, a decision making model underpinned by our values has been developed, this has been adopted by EB, and the Silver Command Response to Covid, and integrated into Leadership Development.

2.10   To develop greater clarity needed to support effective leadership, a one pager approach to strategy and operations was adapted and adopted as a complementary planning tool.

2.11   Positive leadership experiences resulting from this new approach to development and selection is a longer term measure that will be captured through staff survey, staff engagement, feedback from our staff networks and unions and a positive trend in other People measures in relation to performance and wellbeing. Staff survey questions have been refined to measure the desired outcomes directly and include:

3   Inclusion

Feeling valued and involved with a true sense of belonging

3.1   We benefit from a workforce that is representative of our communities at every level when everyone can be themselves and work together as one organisation, regardless of role or workplace.

We recognise and utilise both diversity of thought and experience in the organisation or better decision making.

We develop better solutions by engaging and involving employees in planning, idea generation and decision making.

We work ever closer with our trade unions and staff networks for the benefit of our staff

3.2   We committed to enable people to share information and connect more easily to promote collaborative working and inclusion. Due to the recent working restrictions our virtual connections have necessarily improved to support remote working, as has our use of internal social media for staff to share experiences, campaigns, news and information. Apps have been added to the workbench to improve accessibility of information relating to skills competency, sickness absence, availability and safety event reporting. A new DSFRS website has been developed.

3.3   Early in 2020 we worked to identify the cultural conditions we need in the organisation to support our workplace environment aspirations. We extended our knowledge around psychological safety and inclusion. It was identified as the key social condition required for high performance in every area, and the foundation for the success of the People Strategy under every theme.

3.4   This is now the key to a range of interventions underway in leadership learning, supporting the Fairness and Respect policy developed in 2019 and underpinning an engaged safety culture. (More on this is in the Health, Safety and Wellbeing section). This also includes new supported approaches to performance management and capability.

3.5   A new Fairness and Respect policy has been in operation since 2019. In addition, a new toolkit to support anyone experiencing, witnessing or managing hostile behaviour, bullying and harassment is about to be launched.

3.6   To extend a resolution approach, a Resolution policy to support early intervention and resolution of conflict and grievance is in development and will be live by August 2021.

3.7   To support inclusive change and improvement, the People by Design planning tool (also known as People Impact Assessment) is fully embedded in the project development process, and has led to more considered outcomes in developing new ways of working. It is also used in the development of new policy. This process supports mandatory learning for managers in understanding and acting on equality and diversity considerations.

3.8   An engagement framework has been developed which sets out how we will engage with our staff, partners and communities. The framework sits under the Communication and Engagement Strategy and aims to bring all the engagement activity happening across the Service together under a set of principles and practices so that we can get the most out of our interactions with various stakeholder groups. As part of the framework, the first 'Leading Conversations' engagement event for managers is planned for the end of July.

3.9   To support women in progression, the Service worked with Devon and Cornwall and Dorset Police to introduce the 'Our Time' sponsorship scheme to support women to progress to middle and senior management positions. This programme of development and mentoring began in September 2020 and will continue for 12 months and will be evaluated.

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3.10   Our Wholetime recruitment approach has changed to an 'always open' system to allow for better workforce planning and for consistent positive action to support workforce diversity. Work around supporting women in recruitment and retention, such as positive action evenings, continues albeit affected greatly during the Pandemic in recruitment, however existing staff continued to be supported through virtual means.

3.11   Due to the level of work needed to develop the leadership and management development offering and processes, direct entry in DSFRS has not yet been addressed.

3.12   Key findings are identified in the latest diversity report and reported separately to the People Committee.

4   Ways of Working

Meeting modern expectations

4.1   Our employees are empowered and trusted, with performance measured on productivity and outcomes.

We will offer a range of flexile options that will improve inclusion, attract and retain a diverse workforce and enable us to match our resources to risk.

Our technology and communications is better and barriers to improving ways of working removed, with things that need doing quickly getting done.

We work together, as one organisation towards our vision and we recognise and celebrate collective successes.

4.2   Flexible on-call contracts have been introduced following extensive involvement and engagement with staff, beginning with asking them how they would like to work. The Pay for Availability (P4A) scheme was developed, and is operating on a voluntary basis in some on-call stations. The Service is engaged in an NFCC project developing national best practice in evaluating shift patterns in terms of their performance in elation to effectiveness, efficiency and people.

4.3   Work has not progressed on Flexible Wholetime shift patterns.

4.4   A new, robust strategic workforce planning approach is being developed by HROD with socialisation beginning July 2021. The focus for the next 12 months is operational recruitment and succession planning. When mature, this approach will ensure people capability and capacity is an integral part of business planning.

4.5   During the pandemic enforced home working for some of our staff has escalated our ambition for a more flexible and smarter blended working approach. Through engagement with staff we have developed a vision for smarter working in relation to people, estates and technology that underpins a 'New ways of working' Project.

4.6   A new flexible working policy, developed with staff before the Pandemic, is operating temporarily and currently being evaluated for long term application.

4.7   Through utilising the People by Design (People Impact Assessment) planning tool, preparations are being made for staff to now begin to spend more time in the workplace. This includes essential Health and Wellbeing conversations to support the transition.

4.8   A new Performance Management framework has been developed and is currently informing directorate statements. This begins the cascade of objectives through to individuals, and underpins a move to a focus on performance and outcomes. This is supported by new policies and guidance around managing personal performance and capability. Our Change Framework has been developed further into a Portfolio approach which improves accountability and helps to manage capacity.

5   **Learning and Development**

Getting better everyday

5.1   Our learning culture provides consistency and opportunity to allow everyone to achieve their full potential.

We are innovative and creative in offering various opportunities and career pathways for people to develop and to ensure they have the right skills for their role and for a rewarding and fulfilling career.

People benefit from regular performance conversations and development is easy to access and available throughout our careers.

5.2   The Resilience Department is building on the principles of Training for Competence and national best practice to deliver quality assured, risk based training to ensure we have a professional, safe and high performing workforce aligned to National Occupational Guidance. Our Framework aims to align our operational Policies, Procedures and Guidance against response capability requirements to ensure our Learning and Development and Training Academy products are quality assured and continually improved.

5.3   A range of new creative learning interventions have been curated and are operating currently for the development cohorts. This includes new platforms which support self-awareness, identification of development needs and develop capability in business tools and techniques. Other learning is being offered through bespoke internal sessions being delivered on, for example; inclusion, leading for performance and managing people, finance, continuous improvement and strategic awareness.

5.4   An external coaching network has been integrated, and an online self-directed coaching platform, Coaching Culture. Our internal coaches were given resilience coaching training during the first wave of the Pandemic to support managers. A new approach to mentoring is underway through the 'Our Time' sponsorship programme.

5.5   A provider has been agreed for Leadership and Management Apprenticeships and this is now being offered as an option, with expression of interest closing this month (May). A wider Apprenticeship strategy has been developed, and this will support a cohesive and sustainable approach to utilising levy spend and using apprenticeships to develop both new starters and existing staff.

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5.6 With the exception of secondments to HMI, and Covid related collaboration with SWAST we have not been able to progress with a defined programme of external secondments to support experiential learning. Maturity in the current development delivery programme needs to be attained before this can be built into the system.

5.7 Our commitment to capturing and sharing lessons learned in all aspects of our work is being facilitated through the 'Safe To: Learn, Contribute and Challenge' programme of interventions.

6 Health, Safety and Wellbeing

Healthy, happy and safe at work

6.1 We take a holistic approach to health, safety and wellbeing which supports our staff to remain fit, safe and healthy throughout their careers.

We encourage and support employees by building a positive health, safety and wellbeing culture and an environment that supports work life balance and quality of working life.

A clear and supportive fitness policy helps keep staff safe and healthy and a greater integration of work, sports and social activities bring people together.

6.2 The intervention to develop psychological safety, 'Safe to: Learn, Contribute and Challenge', underpins the work being undertaken to develop an engaged safety culture. OD are supporting the service in developing all aspects required to improve health and safety culture. This is complex intervention which involves both hardwiring change into processes and systems, leadership and engagement to develop the required behavioural changes.

6.3 To ensure we always consider health, safety and wellbeing in new projects, policies and procedures, the People by Design process (sometimes referred to as the People Impact Assessment) is embedded in project management and is being adapted for all service improvements and new policy development through the portfolio office.

6.4   Oscar Kilo is the home of the National Police Wellbeing Service. It has been designed to be used by emergency services across the whole of the UK. It provides a framework of clear statements to ensure all aspects of wellbeing are fully developed. The Framework is used to ensure DSFRS has a robust and proactive wellbeing provision for its employees. A range of new actions has been captured and form part of the Health and Wellbeing strategy.

6.5   A new Wellness policy to support this work has been developed and is in consultation, and Managing Stress and Wellbeing are now mandatory e-learning courses for all managers. A Welfare Cell was set up to provide specific support for staff as part of the Covid Response phase. This team, which includes members of HROD, Health and Safety and Communications and Engagement teams has developed into a proactive Wellness strategy group and is driving change at pace in this area.

6.6   DSFRS will achieve the objective of having a fit, healthy and physically capable work force by ensuring compliance with nationally set fitness standards and fitness testing frequency. In order to achieve these two objectives, DSFRS will utilise both annual on station fitness assessments and a more holistic and detailed three yearly medical and fitness assessment.

6.7   In order to not only monitor the success of the DSFRS fitness strategy but also to ensure on going learning, staff engagement and targeted support to groups most in need, DSFRS will closely monitor key performance indicators (KPI's) on a monthly basis.

6.8   For the first time the ONS national survey questions around personal wellbeing were asked of staff in the March 2021 Covid Survey. The ONS recorded a drop in wellbeing overall this year, with much of this being attributed to the effects of the Pandemic such as isolation, uncertainty and hopelessness. The DSFRS evaluation in March reflected this. The work being planned and operating now with regard to positive wellbeing support, along with a blended working approach will help to support staff wellbeing at this time. The essential health and wellbeing conversation and new Wellbeing procedural guide also support this.

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REPORT REFERENCE NO.	PC/21/4
MEETING	PEOPLE COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	23 JULY 2021
SUBJECT OF REPORT	ANNUAL FITNESS TESTING UPDATE
LEAD OFFICER	DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER
RECOMMENDATIONS	*The Committee is asked to note the improvement in performance on Firefighter Fitness Testing as set out within this report together with the action being taken to address the HMICFRS cause for concern as identified in paragraph 1.5.*
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	Her Majesties Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) visited the Service in 2019 and subsequently wrote to the Service with a formal Cause for Concern that the Service could not assure itself that all members of operational staff could meet the minimum fitness levels required to perform the role of a firefighter.
	The Service implemented a new fitness test and has now completed two cycles of annual testing for operational staff in both 2019 and in 2020. In 2020, the testing also included senior officers within the organisation.
	HMICFRS revisited the Service to check progress against the Cause for Concern in the first week of March 2021. They then wrote to the Service in May 2021 commented that, although good progress had been made and a positive trend of fitness pass rates was evident, there were some improvements identified regarding data recording and storage and the and Service hadn't yet been able to fully test the new Fitness policy due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
	Fitness testing is underway for 2021 with improved data collection and storage. The Service welcomes the HMICFRS inspection in autumn 2021 and hopes that the Cause for Concern for Fitness testing is lifted though it should be noted that due to COVID-19 restrictions not all Fitness tests will be available for 2021.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	Existing resource
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	A People Impact Assessment was undertaken in the development of the Physical Fitness Policy and an ERBA has been completed.
APPENDICES	A. Fitness Testing Timeline
	B. HMICFRS Cause for Concern revisit letter

BACKGROUND PAPERS	None

1. **BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION**

1.1.　　HMICFRS undertook their first annual assessment of fire and rescue services in 2018/19. The assessment examined services' effectiveness, efficiency and how well they look after their people. During the visit HMICFRS highlighted that the service had not conducted annual fitness tests for some operational staff and were concerned that the Service could not assure itself that all members of operational staff could meet the minimum fitness levels required to perform the role of a firefighter. At that time, the Service had stopped undertaking fitness tests whilst a trial of the Drill Ground Test was undertaken (as described in Appendix A). HMICFRS identified Fitness testing as a Cause for Concern and wrote to the Service in December 2019 (Appendix B).

1.2.　　The Service responded by undertaking an annual fitness assessments, introducing a new Physical Fitness Policy and adding an additional post to the Fitness team.

1.3.　　The Service was anticipating that a full range of annual fitness assessments would be in place in 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, however, the Service has had to restrict the type of tests available. Despite these restrictions, the Service has been successful in operating interim Fitness Assessments through 2020 including testing for officers. The Service has seen a significant improvement from a pass rate (Green & Amber categories) of 73.82% in 2019 to an 87.60% pass rate in 2020, an improvement of 13.78%. The full test results are included within this report at section 2.

1.4.　　HMICFRS Inspectors revisited the Service in March 2021 to review progress against the cause for concern. They then wrote to the Service in May 2020 (Appendix C) commenting that, although good progress had been made and a positive trend of fitness pass rates was evident, the Service hadn't yet been able to fully test the new Fitness policy due to the COVD-19 pandemic to ensure there are sufficient resources. They also found that out of 51 records sampled, one was not in line with policy and six were either recorded inconsistently or had missing data. Inspectors also commented that a further improvement could be for the Service to collect equality data for the annual assessments in line with 3 yearly medicals.

1.5.　　The Service has responded to these findings and now has a central repository for all Fitness data that also includes equality data. Data cleansing has been carried out to bring test records in line with policy. The Fitness team has moved department from Human Resources into Service Delivery where there is additional administration resource available and capability to ensure the policy has adequate resources to carry out testing. A fitness assurance review has been carried out by the Service assurance team to ensure that HMICFRS feedback has been fully implemented with the results due to be reported to the Executive Board in July 2021.

1.6.   The Service will be unable to fully implement the full range of Fitness Testing in 2021 due to continued COVID-19 restrictions, however, this will be reviewed at regular intervals in line with Government guidance. Annual testing is underway with the results due before April 2022.

2.   **ANNUAL FITNESS ASSESSMENT TEST RESULTS**

2.1.   The current figures on operational staff fitness testing are shown below with also a comparison with the annual fitness testing from 2019:

Operational staff (Firefighter to Watch Manager)	2020	2019
Green	1,007 (72.13%)	1044 (67.31%)
Amber	216 (15.47%)	101 (6.51%)
Red (removed from duty)	173 (12.39%)	406 (26.18%)
Total	**1396**	**1551**

2.2.   1,223 of 1,396 operational staff (Firefighter to Watch Manager) achieved a Green or Amber rating from this year's annual tests = 87.60%. The comparative pass rate from 2019 was 73.82%. This is an improvement over a year of 13.78%.

2.3.   In addition, operational officers (Station Manager to Chief Fire Officer) were tested in 2020 as set out in the table below:

Operational Staff - Officers (Station Manager to Chief Fire Officer)	2020
Green	20 = 86.95%
Amber	3 = 13.04%
Red (removed from duty)	0
Total	**23**

2.4.   The monitoring of performance against fitness testing (% of Operational staff who have passed the annual fitness test and three yearly medical) is one of the measures considered elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting.

2.5.   The Committee is asked to note the improvement in performance on Firefighter Fitness Testing as set out within this report together with the action being taken to address the HMICFRS cause for concern as identified in paragraph 1.5.

JOE HASSELL
Deputy Chief Fire Officer

FITNESS TESTING TIMELINE

2016: Three yearly fitness tests in conjunction with occupational health medicals placed on hold in order for a 12 month trial of the new nationally proposed Drill Ground Fitness Test (DGT). DSFRS also contributed 30 data sets for the national Fire Fit / Bath University research project.

2017: Drill ground test research project conducted within DSFRS and results presented to EB and also at national Fire Fit conference (November 2017). This research projected focused on the impact of adopting the DGT as the sole fitness test within the organisation.

2018: Fitness testing paused to determine results of project. Draft Fitness Policy and ERBA completed.

2019: Inspection by HMICFRS who highlighted cause for concern as the service could not ensure whether its workforce were fit for duty. Fitness testing added to Corporate Risk Register. Immediate measures (bleep test) implemented for all station based staff in September and October. Fitness Policy approved by EB and put into operation.

The resumption of fitness tests in conjunction with three yearly medicals re-introduced. A third full time fitness advisor employed in order to help comply.

2020: Policy updated with Officer Fitness testing and additional annual fitness tests to allow for greater choice regarding diversity. These include Bleep Test, Treadmill Walk Test, 1.5 Mile run Test and DGT, there is also the option for a gas analyser test. However due to the Covid 19 pandemic the policy was not able to be fully implemented, which resulted in a second year of Bleep tests only.

2021 (present): Policy updated to reflect amendments to amber group and the addition of officer testing. HMICFRS revisit with resulting recommendations which have been implemented.

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UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL 10.00 ON WEDNESDAY 12 MAY 2021

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Wendy Williams
HM Inspector of Fire and Rescue Services

Lee Howell
Chief Fire Officer
Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service

Councillor Sara Randall-
JohnsonChair
Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority

12 May 2021

Dear Mr Howell and Councillor Randall-Johnson,

DEVON AND SOMERSET FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE CAUSE OF CONCERN REVISIT

Background

We first inspected Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) in the week of 24 June 2019. During the inspection, we identified a cause of concern about how the service maintains thefitness requirements of its operational staff. This was that:

> "Devon & Somerset FRS cannot assure itself that operational members of staff meet theminimum fitness requirements to perform their role."

2.   We revisited the service between 1 and 5 March 2021 to review progress against this cause of concern. The revisit took place remotely because of COVID-19 restrictions. This lettergives an update on our findings.

3.   During the revisit, we interviewed staff from across the service, including the deputy chieffire officer, head of human resources, equality and inclusion manager, and members of the service's fitness team. We also reviewed a range of documents and data that the service submitted.

4.   In line with the requirements in the Fire and Rescue National Framework, the service produced an action plan for resolving the problem. To address the cause of concern, the serviceassessed the fitness of all station-based operational staff in September and October 2019.
The service considered the cause of concern to be fully addressed by these assessments.

Governance

5.   The governance arrangements that the service first put in place to monitor the cause ofconcern were appropriate. Between July and December 2019, the service's Executive Board regularly oversaw fitness testing.

6.   But, in January 2020, the service considered the cause of concern was complete and removed it from its corporate risk register. It passed responsibility for fitness testing to the service'shuman resources team. Since then, the Executive Board didn't get enough information to monitor and scrutinise fitness arrangements. By the time of our revisit in March 2021, the service had recognised this gap. It is putting in place processes for closer oversight.

Progress against the cause of concern

7.   While the service took early steps to resolve the problem, it didn't go far enough. By October 2019, it had assessed the fitness of all operational staff in stations. But this didn't include all operational staff across the service – notably, those not on direct response duties. The service rectified this. Between September and December 2020, the assessments were extended to all operational staff, including senior officers. But, disappointingly, this didn't happenuntil about a year after the service judged the cause of concern to be complete.

8.   In September 2020, the service introduced a new physical fitness testing policy. Because ofthe COVID-19 pandemic, it has yet to test whether it has the resources for the full range of assessments needed. This has hampered the policy's implementation. The service must review whether it has enough resources for everything in the policy.

9.   During the revisit, we sampled 51 fitness assessment records at random. Most fitness assessments were recorded in line with the service policy. Six, however, were either recordedinconsistently or had no data.

10.   The service has a policy for failing the annual fitness assessment. Most sampled recordswere in line with the policy. One file wasn't: it used a special measures risk assessment to see whether the individual could do a different role. The service should assure itself that it treats consistently staff who fail the annual fitness assessment.

2

11.   The service's fitness advisers work closely with staff who need extra support. Each persongets a detailed improvement programme tailored to their needs. This has resulted in fitness

levels improving. The service makes reasonable adjustments when needed – for example, staffcan be offered an alternative to the bleep test.

12.   The service collects equality data for its three-yearly fitness tests. It doesn't routinely do sofor its annual fitness assessments but plans to. It will use this data to consider whether the fitness assessments adversely affect staff because of their age or gender.

13.   Data provided by the service shows that 88 percent of operational staff who were assessedpassed their fitness assessment in 2020 (1,223 of 1,396). This compares with 74 percent in 2019 (1,145 of 1,551).

Conclusion

14.   This is the first time we have assessed progress against this cause of concern. We werepleased to see that the service has made some progress, but more work is needed. The service must have better governance arrangements and assurance processes in place.

15.   From the data supplied by the service, it is encouraging to see that 88 percent of operational staff have now passed their fitness assessment. The fitness team has extra temporarycapacity and a new fitness testing policy has been introduced. But the resourcing model and the full capabilities of the policy remain to be tested.

16.   We will continue to monitor progress through updates from the service and data returns.We will revisit Devon and Somerset FRS in autumn 2021 to make sure that it has made satisfactory progress.

17.   This letter will be published on our website.

Yours sincerely,

Wendy Williams CBE
HM Inspector of Fire and Rescue Services

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REPORT REFERENCE NO.	PC/21/5
MEETING	PEOPLE COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	23 JULY 2021
SUBJECT OF REPORT	ANNUAL DIVERSITY AND RECRUITMENT REPORT
LEAD OFFICER	DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER
RECOMMENDATIONS	*That the report be noted and used as a baseline for following performance reporting at this Committee*
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 provides for the general public sector equality duty. The duty requires Public bodies to publish equality information pertaining to the makeup of its workforce on an annual basis and covers all the protected characteristics including gender, disability, ethnic group, religion and sexual orientation.
	This year many of the efforts in relation to diversifying the workforce and attracting applicants with a diverse background have suffered to some extent from the pandemic, stagnating to some extent an previous increase in diversity in both our workforce and applicants.
	Despite the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, there are positive results in many areas such as applications from women and minority groups. Some areas will need continued monitoring and efforts to further increase diversity need to continue to ensure the momentum is maintained.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	None
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	N/A
APPENDICES	A. Recruitment & Workforce Diversity Annual Report 2020
BACKGROUND PAPERS	Recruitment & Workforce Diversity Annual Report 2020

1.   **INTRODUCTION**

1.1.   Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 provides for the general public sector equality duty. This requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;

- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;

- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

1.2.   The duty requires Public bodies to publish equality information pertaining to the makeup of its workforce on an annual basis and covers all the protected characteristics including gender, disability, ethnic group, religion and sexual orientation.

2.   **KEY RESULTS**

2.1.   The key findings identified in this set of data are:

- The COVID-19 pandemic has effected the recruitment of external people into operational roles as recruitment events and assessments were unable to take place or had significantly reduced capacity. On Call had 89 new starters, compared to 170 in 2019 and 138 in 2018.

- In line with the previous point, there was a reduction in female On Call new starters, which with 14 was 7 less than the previous year. Together with 2 new female Wholetime staff starting in the same period the Service reached the highest ever female representation in operational roles with 106 roles occupied by women.

- The On Call vacancies female application percentage is 16.6%, which is 2.5% higher than 2019.

- The numbers of applicants with a minority ethnic background is higher than our community (5-6%) with Support 9.7%, On Call 7.7% and Wholetime 6.5%.

- Operational female representation has remained broadly the same, with 14 women joining as On Call Firefighters and 5 taking on a Wholetime position, and 13 women left On Call positions.

- For On Call, the female turnover is twice (18.1%) the level of male turnover (9.5%). This may indicate retention issues specific to this period during the pandemic.

- In comparison to female representation, the amount of women gaining promotion in the operational roles is disproportionately low and no women gained a permanent promotion. This may indicate the existence of some barriers to progression.

- The attraction rate from female applicants for Support vacancies near enough reflects the community.

- No applicants from ethnic minority groups were offered a Support role despite a 5.2% applications rate.

- The representation form ethnic minority groups in the service (0.8%) is 2-4 times less that in the community.

- Application rates from LGBT for Support (4.9%), On Call (3.8%) and Wholetime (10.1%) are all higher than the community (2.2%).

- The identification as LGBT (anything else than Heterosexual), with 2.2% identifying within this category, closely reflects the community average of 2.2%. In addition, the non-disclosure rate has reduced.

- Female representation in the Extended Leadership Team dropped from 28.5% to 21%.

Actions and plan

2.2.   In line with the DSFRS Plan, a People Strategy has been implemented and is continuously monitored. Various initiatives are under way and planned to increase the diversity of the workforce in line with the DSFRS plan. Good practice within recruitment, including positive action, will be shared and implemented across the Service. Inclusion of ethnic minority staff has become more visible through setting up a support network and this drives initiatives and accountability in view of the events in society in relation to racism. The Service continues to monitor the impact of initiatives, including possible racism, through Equality and People Impact assessments.

2.3.   New recruitment processes for operational staff were launched with a particular emphasis on eliminating bias including the introduction of anonymous recruitment. Current progression processes and development pathways, including promotion, are under constant review with new eligibility requirements being considered to create a more level playing field between staff groups and be more inclusive to Support Staff.

2.4.   Monitoring of adverse impact around protected characteristics continuously throughout the Wholetime recruitment process stages will be introduced in 2021.

2.5.   Positive action initiatives in relation to development in the form of Action Learning Sets and a Sponsoring programme have started, but outcomes may not be visible for a while due to the length of the programme.

2.6.   Any positive action work is and will continue to be supported through working closely with the Asian Fire Service Association and the Employer Network of Equality and Inclusion. The Service achieved the Silver Standard in the Talent, Inclusion & Diversity Evaluation of the latter.

Additional actions agreed by the Service to improve diversity

2.7.   The following additional actions have been agreed:

- Once COVID-19 guidelines are relaxed, implement 'Connecting the Community' project in line with watch efficiency work to increase visibility as 'Employer of Choice' for underrepresented groups

- The Executive Board to instigate 'Critical friend' group from senior community leaders from under-represented groups to assist EB in decision making and strategy development

- Inclusion & Diversity objectives to be set for all Extended Leadership Team (ELT) members

- Providing long term mentoring for all new recruits to support development and progression

- Improving uptake of exit interviews and ensure accurate recording of reasons for leaving to enable better monitoring of 'leaving' trends

- Monitor Pay for Availability implementation to ensure greater work/life balance is one of the benefits

- Remove all bias from employee application material. Increase outreach to communities to attract diverse talent.

- Analyse data and evidence regarding fitness standards and policy to determine if there is a disproportionate impact on women regarding retirement age.

- Fully integrate Psychological Safety and Inclusive management to ensure that all generations in the workplace get a supportive environment, enhancing retention.

JOE HASSELL
Deputy Chief Fire Officer

Recruitment & Workforce Diversity Annual Report

January – December 2020

Diversity & Inclusion Team

Devon & Somerset
Fire & Rescue Service

May 2021

Recruitment & Workforce Diversity Annual Report

Contents

Document Control

Amendment History

Version	Date	Author:	Remarks/Reason to Change
0.1	4/3/20	A Gilding-de Kort	

Sign-Off List

Name	Position
DCFO Hassell	Deputy Chief Fire Officer
M Sobey	Head of Transformational Change

Distribution List

Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Steering Group
Intranet/internet

Ownership

Has it been agreed that this is a publicly owned document? ~~Yes~~ / No

1. Introduction

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 provides for the general public sector equality duty. This requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The duty requires Public bodies to publish equality information pertaining to the makeup of its workforce on an annual basis and covers all the protected characteristics including gender, disability, ethnic group, religion and sexual orientation.

The analysis within this report covers Gender, Disability, Ethnicity, Sexual Orientation and Religion for the following:
- Current staff composition, new starters, promotions, unpaid leave and leavers
- Applicants for jobs (uniformed, non-uniformed, Support, Control) advertised in the data period

For guidance on the Equality Act 2010 please see www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010-guidance and www.equalityhumanrights.com.

DSFRS procurement guidance sets out expectations to our potential providers and publishes this report to adhere to these requirements and provide an example.

	LEVEL 1 – MINIMUM STANDARDS Firms of 5 or more employees		LEVEL 2 – MINIMUM STANDARDS Firms of 50 or more employees		LEVEL 3 – MINIMUM STANDARDS Firms of 150 or more employees
1	Provide a written equality policy which covers at least: recruitment, selection, training, promotion, discipline & dismissal, **and** (a) victimisation, discrimination & harassment, making it clear that these are disciplinary offences within the firm; (b) identification of the senior position with responsibility for the policy and its effective implementation: (c) communication of the policy to staff.	5	Written instructions to managers and supervisors on equality in recruitment selection, training, promotion, discipline & dismissal of staff and other relevant HR policies such as Pregnancy & maternity, work-life balance policies etc. These can be instructions for general opportunities in employment.	9	Regular consultation on equality issues within the workforce
2	Where a contractor is carrying out the functions of DSFRS the contractor must meet the same standards as DSFRS, including the undertaking the Specific Duties, regardless of the size of the contractor.	6	Training in equality, diversity and inclusion for managers and staff.	10	Regular diversity monitoring of selection transfer, training, promotion, discipline and dismissal – and bullying and harassment
3	Effective implementation of the policy in the firm's recruitment practice, to include open recruitment methods such as the use of job centres, careers service or press advertisements Regular monitoring of the number of job applicants from different groups (covering the protected characteristics)	7	Monitoring of: - • The numbers of job applicants for employment from different groups. • The numbers of employees from different groups, by grade and section.	11	Mention in the firms recruitment advertisements and publicity literature of its arrangements for offering equal opportunities. Publish Equality monitoring information
4	Regular Reviews of the policy and commitment to meet the appropriate level of the standard following any recruitment which increases the size of the organisation.	8	If monitoring reveals under-representation of particular groups, action to check that criteria 1-3, & 6-7 are bring used effectively in the organisation and to have an action plan in place.	12	If monitoring (as in criteria 7 and 10) indicates under-representation of any group take action to check the criteria 1-3, 5, 6, 9 and 11 are being used effectively within the firm and if not, take appropriate advice. Take appropriate action (including positive action as a result of that advice)

2. Methodology

Diversity data for applicants is captured in the 'Talentlink' Recruitment system and data for new starters, promotions/transfers and leavers is recorded in the 'Workforce' personnel system. Data is extracted for the purposes of regular monitoring and scrutiny. Reports can only be created by certain members of the HR team who are cleared for access to this confidential data. Written reports are always in anonymous format and where it is possible to identify an individual, data will be generalised to a format where this is no longer possible.

Diversity monitoring in order to monitor progress of under-represented groups through the various stages is undertaken for On Call recruitment in relation to female applicants and On Call to Wholetime recruitment for several characteristics. Monitoring this data is not mandatory. No other recruitment workflows currently are actively monitored in relation to protected characteristics for the stages in between application and starting employment. This report has the purpose to identify any potential issues with vacancies.

Gathering Diversity information from staff is done at the start of employment by extracting data from the 'Talentlink' Recruitment system and recording those details on the 'Workforce' system. Throughout employment with the Service, staff can change or add data by using an "app," which allows all employees to check and amend their details very easily, with reminders sent every 6 months to update.

Benchmark figures for 2019/20 are taken from the data used to support the Communities and Local Government Associations returns which were last updated October 2020. https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fire-statistics-data-tables#workforce-and-workforce-diversity

Note: Where information has been benchmarked, references are recorded as appropriate.

Data is correct as of 14/1/2021. Only valid data has been analysed. A small data gap is apparent where Talentlink was not used to submit and process applications. No other gaps have been identified. Some vacancies were still open for applications at the time of data extraction.

In places the word 'Retained' has been used within the data tables. This is our group of 'On Call' staff who respond to a station when incidents occur. They are usually self-employed or have a primary employer who releases them for the time it takes to resolve the incident. 'Minority ethnic group' means all ethnic groups other than UK white, including Irish, European, Australian etc. People of Colour means Black, Asian, mixed and 'other'.

The recruitment system uses 4 classifications for vacancies;
1   On Call
2   Wholetime
3   Promotion/Transfer
4   Support, which includes Control

3. Summary of key observations

The key findings identified in this set of data are:

- Pandemic has influenced recruitment of external people into operational roles as recruitment events and assessments were unable to take place or had significantly reduced capacity. On Call had 89 new starters, compared to 170 in 2019 and 138 in 2018.
- In line with the previous point, there was a reduction in female On Call new starters, which with 14 was 7 less than the previous year. Together with 2 new female Wholetime staff starting in the same period we reached the highest ever female representation in operational roles with 106 roles occupied by women.
- The On Call vacancies female application percentage is 16.6%, which is 2.5% higher than 2019.
- The numbers of applicants with a minority ethnic background is higher than our community (5-6%) with Support 9.7%, On Call 7.7% and Wholetime (despite being only internal candidates) 6.5%.
- Operational female representation has hardly changed as, despite 14 women joining as On Call Firefighters and 5 taking on a Wholetime position, 14 women left On Call positions for various reasons.
- In comparison to female representation, the amount of women gaining promotion in the operational roles is disproportionately low and no women gained a permanent promotion. This may indicate the existence of some barriers to progression.
- The attraction rate from female applicants for Support vacancies near enough reflects the community.
- No people of colour were offered a Support role despite a 5.2% applications rate.
- The representation of people of colour in the service (0.8%) is 2-4 times less that in the community.
- Application rates from LGBT for Support (4.9%), On Call (3.8%) and Wholetime (10.1%) are all higher than the community (2.2%).
- The identification as LGBT (anything else than Heterosexual), with 2.2% identifying within this category, closely reflects the community average of 2.2%. In addition, the non-disclosure rate has reduced.
- Female representation in the Extended Leadership Team dropped from 28.5% to 21%.
- In On Call, the female turnover is twice (18.1%) the level of male turnover (9.5%). This may indicate retention issues specific to this period.

Actions and plan

In line with the DSFRS Plan, a People Strategy has been implemented and is continuously monitored. Various initiatives are under way and planned to increase the diversity of the workforce in line with the DSFRS plan. Good practice within recruitment, including positive action, will be shared and implemented across the Service. Inclusion of ethnic minority staff has become more visible through setting up a support network and this drives initiatives and accountability in view of the events in society in relation to racism. The Service continues to monitor the impact of

initiatives, including possible racism, through Equality and People Impact assessments.

New recruitment processes for operational staff were launched with a particular emphasis on eliminating bias including the introduction of anonymous recruitment. Current progression processes and development pathways, including promotion, are under constant review with new eligibility requirements being considered to create a more level playing field between staff groups and be more inclusive to Support Staff.

Monitoring of adverse impact around protected characteristics continuously throughout the Wholetime recruitment process stages will be introduced in 2021.

Positive action initiatives in relation to development in the form of Action Learning Sets and a Sponsoring programme have started, but outcomes may not be visible for a while due to the length of the programme.

Any positive action work is and will continue to be supported through working closely with the Asian Fire Service Association and the Employer Network of Equality and Inclusion. The Service achieved the Silver Standard in the Talent, Inclusion & Diversity Evaluation of the latter.

4. Recruitment

4.1 general recruitment

In 2020 a total of 1021 (416 On Call + 18 Control + 547 Support + 40 development) individuals applied through the recruitment system for 125 externally advertised vacancies (71 On Call FF, 2 Control roles and 52 Support roles). The Promotion/transfer process saw another 161 internal individuals apply and 277 On Call Firefighters applied to become Wholetime.

The graph below shows the vacancy type against applicant gender and the gender percentages for the workforce and the Community.
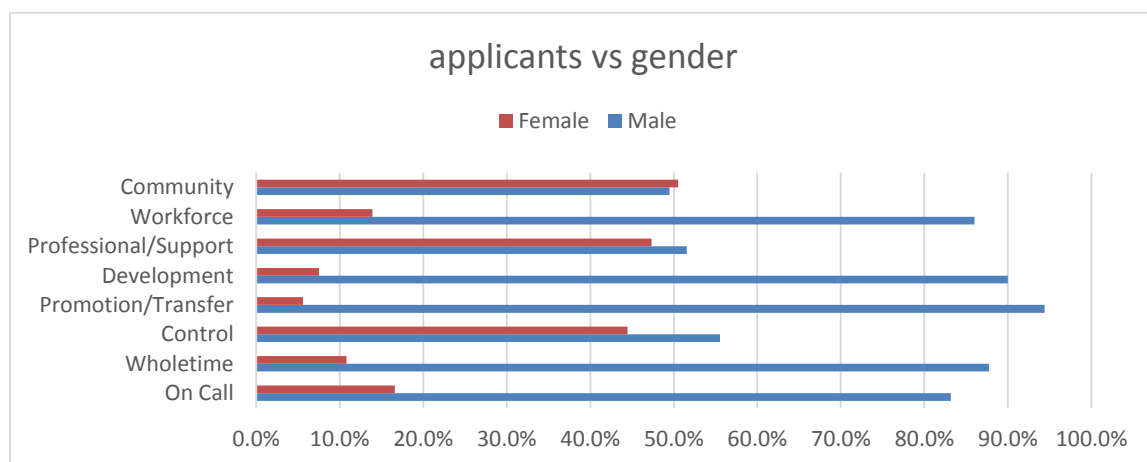
The graph highlights that the Support and Control application gender balance is very near the gender balance in the working age community. Although it also shows a continuing underrepresentation in female applicants in Wholetime and On Call groups. However, the application percentages (10.8% and 16.6%) are higher than that in the representation in the workforce (6%).

Since 2018, both the percentages of female applicants and female new starters in the On Call group have increased significantly, 7.4% to 16.6% and 8.7% to 15.6% respectively. In the Wholetime group, female applicant percentages have remained fairly steady around 11%. New starter percentages are very dependant on whether Wholetime recruitment is taking place, not just promotion processes.

The next graph shows the vacancy type against applicant ethnicity and the ethnicity percentages for the workforce and the Community.
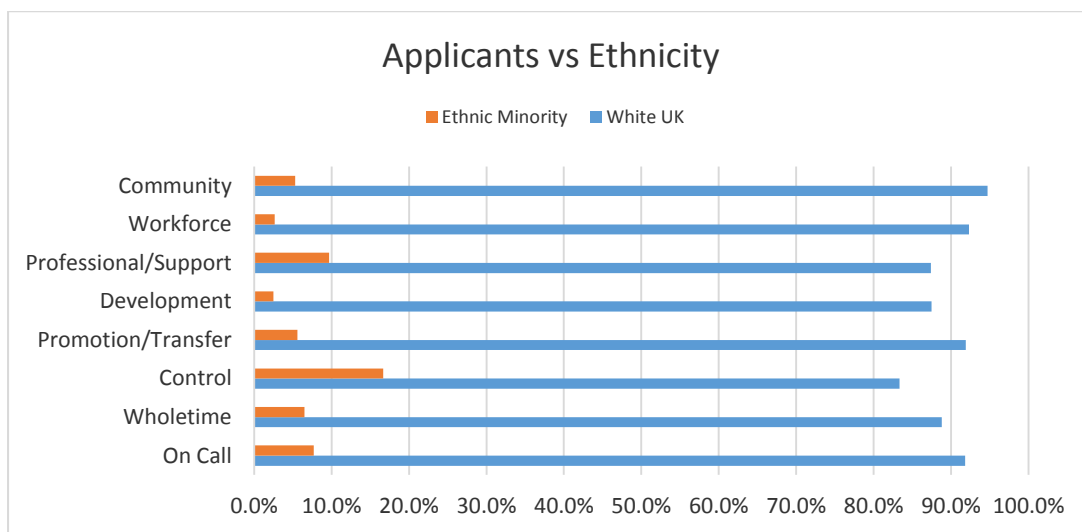
The graph shows that for 5 of our 6 vacancy categories, the minority ethnic group applications are above the representation in the Devon & Somerset community (on average 5-6%) i.e. Control 16.7%, Support 9.6%, On Call 7.7% and Wholetime (despite being internal candidates) 6.5%. The percentage of ethnic minority applicants for Support vacancies is more reflective of representation in urban areas (Exeter 10-11%, Plymouth 7-8%) where most of those vacancies are based. Ethnic minority representation in the Southwest was 8.2% in 2011.

https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/uk-population-by-ethnicity/national-and-regional-populations/regional-ethnic-diversity/latest

In the Promotion/transfer group, which involves only internal applicants, the percentage of ethnic minority applicants (5.6%) is on a par with the community and well above the representation in the workforce as a whole (2.7%).

The next graph shows the vacancy type against applicant sexual orientation and the sexual orientation percentages for the workforce and the Community.

applicants vs sexuality
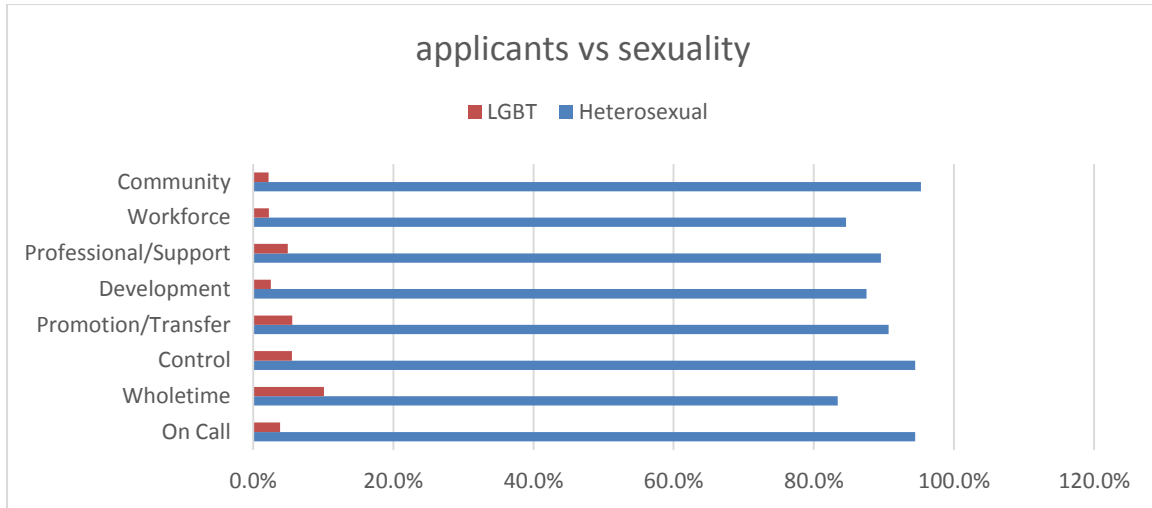
From the graph it is apparent that the application rates from LGBT individuals in all vacancy groups are higher than the community (2.2%) i.e. Support (4.9%), On Call (3.8%) and Wholetime (10.1%). Even the Workforce percentage is similar to that of the community. This is despite the 'non-disclosure' rates in the various groups.

The next two graphs show the vacancy type against applicant disability and the vacancy type against religion.

Applicant vs Disability

applicants vs religion
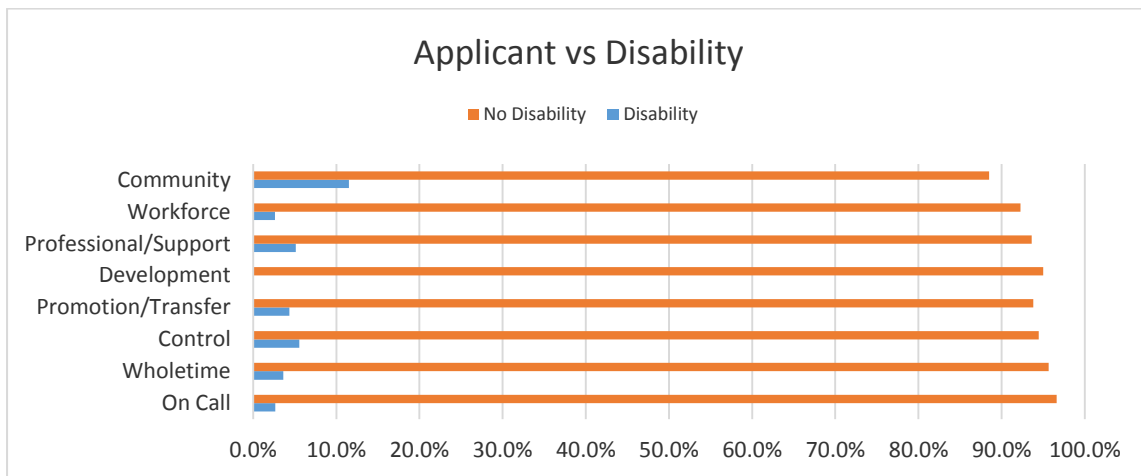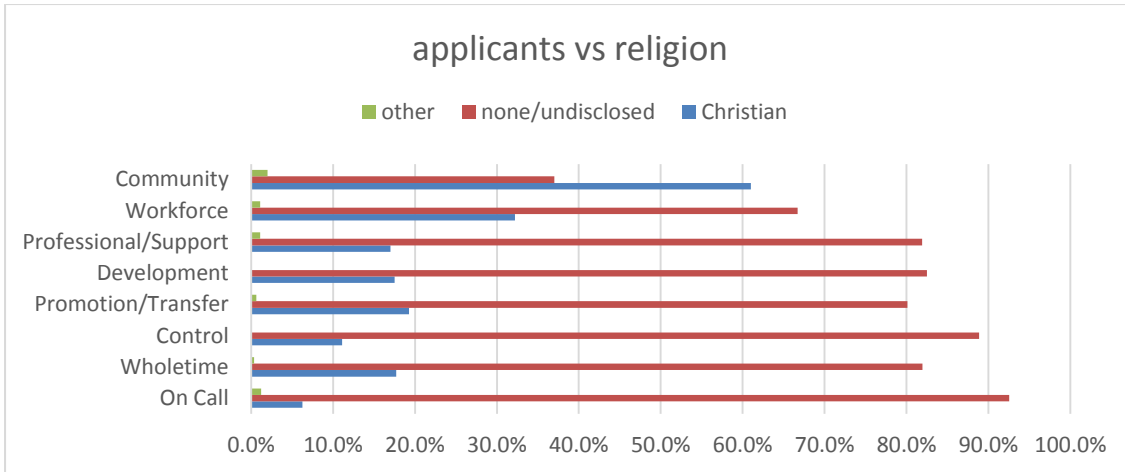
According to the ONS Labour market status A08, in the community 11.5% of people of *working age* live with some sort of disability. There are more disabled women than men in the UK. People from white ethnic groups are almost twice as likely as those from non-white ethnic groups to have a limiting long-standing illness or disability. Disabled people are less likely to be in employment. In June 2020, the UK employment rate among working age disabled people was 53.6%, compared to 81.7% of non-disabled people.

Considering the workforce consists of 2.6% people with recorded disabilities, the percentage in Promotion/Transfer applicants, which are all internal, was 3.3%. This may indicate that those with a disability may be slightly more inclined to seek promotion.

The main observation in relation to the religion figures is how many applicants (80-92%) and staff (67%) indicate they have no religion or don't disclose it. This makes it difficult to say anything around equal opportunity in access to or taking up of employment on the basis of religion.

The highest percentages in relation to applicants with an 'other' religion i.e. 1.1% for Support roles and 1.2% for On Call roles is still only half of the Community percentage of 2%.

Non-disclosure rates	applicants	new starters
Disability	1%	4%
Ethnicity	2-5%	3%
Sexual orientation	2-7%	8%
Religion	n/a	5%

It is clear from the table above that the non-disclosure rates are low. This is a good indication that people are equally comfortable disclosing their characteristics, including sexuality.

4.2 Wholetime recruitment

Wholetime Firefighter recruitment took place only from our On Call staff. No Firefighter roles were advertised for external candidates to apply for. Most operational management positions which were advertised, were also open to external competent Fire & Rescue personnel.

Opportunities for On Call staff members to take up a Wholetime position were also provided through the promotion process.

Of the On Call staff who applied for a Wholetime Firefighter position, 30 were female, i.e. 10.8%. This percentage is nearly twice as high as the female representation in either the Wholetime or On Call staff group.

Thirty eight people started a Wholetime contract. Of these starters 13.2% were female.

One of the new starters (2.6%) in this group identified as belonging to a minority ethnic group, despite 6.5% of the applicants recording as a member of a minority ethnic group. The same trend can be seen in relation to disability with 3.6% of applicants indicating they consider themselves as having a disability, but none of the new starters record as such, and sexuality with 10.1% of the applicants in this category identifying as LGBT and 2.6% of new starters doing so.

4.3 On Call recruitment

Sixty nine women applied for positions on one of the On Call stations which were recruiting. The total applicants in 2020 was 416. This makes the female representation 16.6%, which is 2.5% higher than in 2019 (14.1%). For 1 applicant there was no gender data recorded. 15.6% of new starters were female and all On Call recruits start at Firefighter level.

3.8% of applicants recorded as LGBT, 7.7% as being a member of a minority ethnic group and 2.6% indicated they considered themselves to have a disability. For the new starters the percentages were respectively 3.3%, 5.6% and 0%. These figures, and those for gender as well, indicate that the recruitment process is based on merit and is not likely to be biased.

The numbers of undisclosed diversity data in applicants (0.2-1.7%) and in new starters (5.5-7.7%) is relatively low and there is hardly any difference between recording rates of the different characteristics.

4.4   Support Staff recruitment

In 2020 547 people applied for 52 advertised positions. Five jobs were advertised as internal (development) opportunities and 20 as temporary. The rest were due to be filled on a permanent basis.

The attraction rate for Support vacancies from female applicants (47%) is slightly below the percentage of women of working age in employment (50.5%), but better

than 2019 (45%). This may be as a result of the amount and type of Support Staff vacancies advertised in 2020. On the other hand, only 31% of the new starters were female.

The graph below shows the amount of jobs advertised per grade.
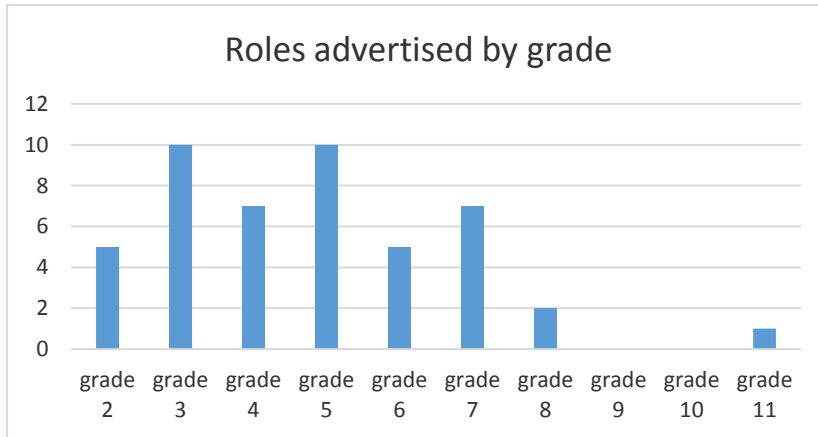
Grades 2-3 are either apprenticeships or of an administrative nature, with grades 4-9 being more subject specific and requiring specific knowledge and/or experience. Grade 10 and above are of strategic level.
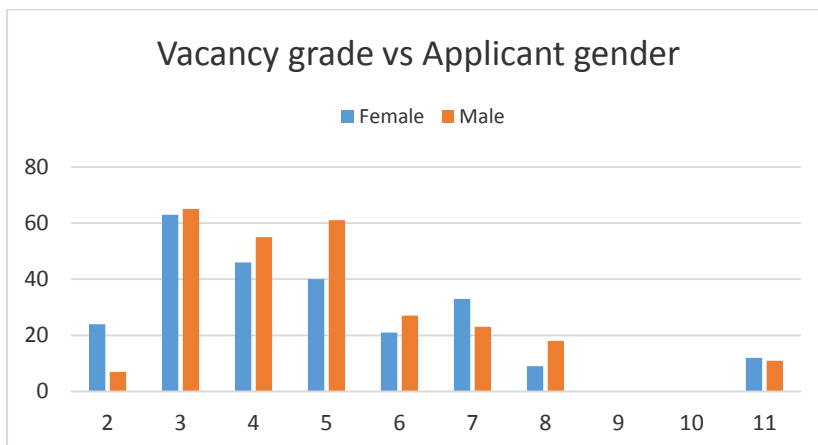
Grade 3 and 11 jobs attracted similar amounts of male and female applicants, grade 2 and 7 had more female applicants than male and grade 4, 5, 6 and 8 had more male applicants.

Of the 32 jobs advertised within grades 2-5, 13 had mainly or only female applicants and 9 had mainly or only male applicants.

It is worth noting that the amount of LGBT applicants in this category (4.9%) is less than 2019, but still more than twice the representation in the workforce and the community. Of the applicants, 9.7% identified as belonging to minority ethnic group, which is reflective of communities like Exeter and Plymouth and well above the Southwest region (8.2%) and Devon & Somerset (5-6%). 5.1% indicated they considered themselves to have a disability.

Out of 50 applicants who identify as a member of a minority ethnic group (including 27 people of colour) only 1 person got hired and this person identified as 'White other'. This means that no people of colour received an offer of employment in this group in 2020.

4.8% of new starters identify within the LGBT category and 2.4% as having a disability.

In relation to religion, 82% of applicants and 76% of new starters recorded no religion, this is only second highest to On Call with 93% and 78% respectively.

4.5   Control recruitment

In 2020 one permanent and one temporary Control room positions were advertised and there were 18 applicants. 44% of those were female, 5.6% identified as LGBT and 16.7% as a member of a minority ethnic group.

Two of the three new starters were female. Other diversity details will not be published due to personal data protection considerations.

5   Workforce diversity profile

Overall in DSFRS the female representation is 13.9% of the workforce at the end of the period, up from 13.6% at the start. Within the operational categories this proportion was 6.1% for the On Call group and an increase from 5.6% to 6.2% for the Wholetime staff. Nationally, these percentages are 6.2% (On Call) and 7.4% (Wholetime).
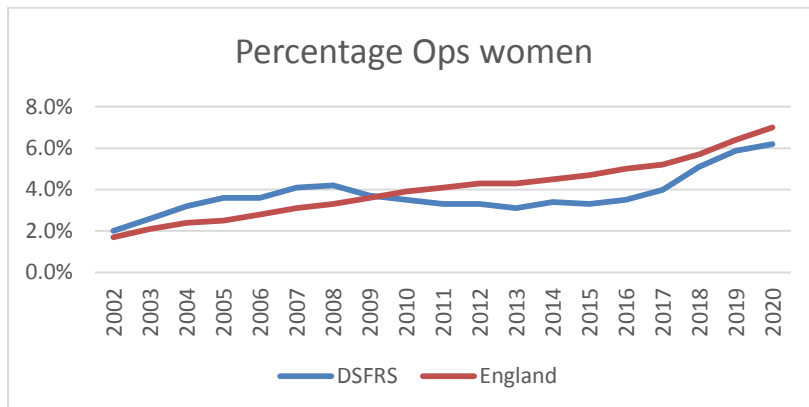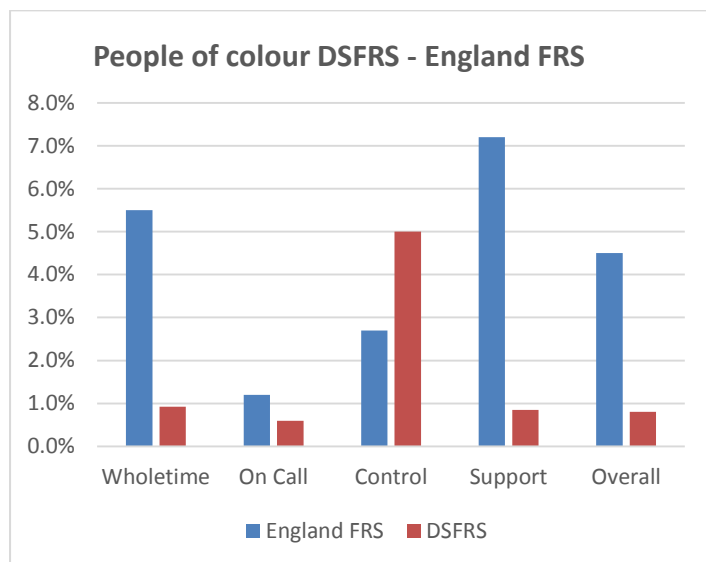

The proportion of female staff in the Support staff group dropped slightly to 44.5% and in the Control staff group it decreased from 76.3% to 75%.

Not taking into account the 5.0% of individuals who have chosen not to state their ethnic background, currently the Service's workforce consists of 2.7% ethnic minority staff, slightly up from the beginning of the period when it was 2.5%. The Control staff group is most diverse with regards to minority ethnic representation with 7.5% and 0% 'not stated'. The Support Staff group is the next highest with 4.0% at the end of

the period, but with 'not stated' of 5.9% (down from 7.4%). The English Fire & Rescue Service average of 'not stated' is 10.1% whilst DSFRS only have 5.0% 'not stated'.

Compared to the English Fire & Rescue Service average of 4.5% (this includes staff who have not stated ethnicity), DSFRS has a much lower diversity but this needs to be considered in light of the community ethnic makeup of the region, which is in general lower than other parts of the country.

People of colour DSFRS - England FRS

Category	England FRS	DSFRS
Wholetime	5.5%	0.9%
On Call	1.2%	0.6%
Control	2.7%	5.0%
Support	7.2%	0.85%
Overall	4.5%	0.8%

It needs to be noted that the 'ethnic minority' category in the national FRS figures does not include 'White Other' (groups like eastern Europeans, White South Africans, Australians etc), whilst the DSFRS figures does *include* those groups in the term 'ethnic minority' as they, despite their skin colour, have different cultural backgrounds and often have English as a second language.

For a better comparison, excluding all 'white' groups, the representation of People of Colour (Black, Asian, mixed, other) in the Service is 0.8%. The community percentage in most areas is 1.5-2.5%, but more in urban areas (Exeter 7%, Plymouth 3.8%). In the Southwest that percentage is 4.6%.

The identification as LGBT (anything else than Heterosexual), with 2.2% identifying within this category, closely reflects the community average of 2.2%. In addition, the 'prefer not to say' rate has remained at 7.5%. 'Not stated' (where no data has been provided) has further reduced from 7.1% to 5.7%.

Besides on average 5% of individuals who have chosen not to state whether they have a disability (visible or invisible), currently 2.6% of the Service's workforce has declared a disability. This is far below the average of 11% within the community.

As expected, considering the physical nature of the role, only 1.8-2.4% of operational staff indicated that they consider themselves to have a disability. Within the Control

staff group the percentage of 7.5% is much nearer the community average. In the Support group the percentage is 5.1%.

https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/workforce-and-business/workforce-diversity/fire-and-rescue-services-workforce/latest

Executive Board and Extended Leadership Team

In 2020 the Executive Board (EB) existed of the Chief Fire Officer, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, two Assistant Chief Fire Officers (Director of Service Delivery and Director of Service Improvement), the Director of Finance & Resourcing and the Director of Governance & Digital Services. Of these 6 posts, only one was occupied by a woman. Due to the size of the group and data protection regulation, no other diversity characteristics can be released.

The Extended Leadership Team (ELT) consists of EB and most of the managers with an Area Manager role or Grade 10 and above. At the beginning of the period the representation of women in this group was 28.5%. During the period 3 women left posts at Grade 10 and above (and one man left), which decreased the percentage of women to 21%. Other diversity parameters showed no statistically significant change.

Diversity in other (management) levels

Due to the overall small representation of women in the operational roles, the distribution at different levels shows a declining trend from entry role of Firefighter up to senior management roles. This trend is a result of the Service having no direct entry into uniformed management roles and progression to higher management roles can only be achieved through development time and time in role.
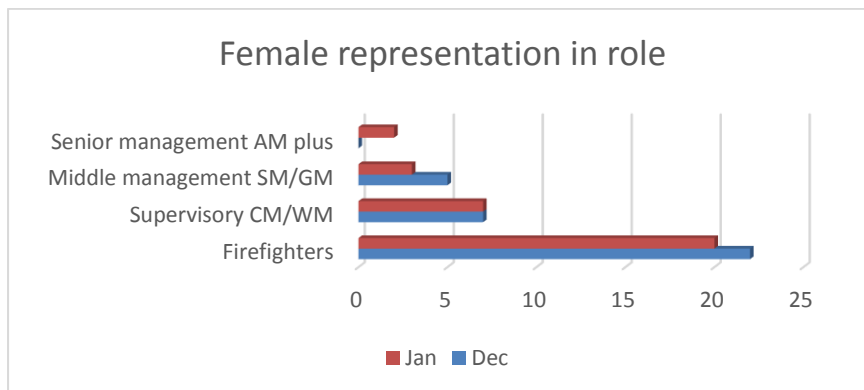
Entry to Support roles can be at any level. Therefore, the analysis in this section will only focus on Support roles.

In many organisations it is found that women hold most of the roles at lower grades and men hold relatively more management positions. A similar distribution is found here.

Gender balance in salary range
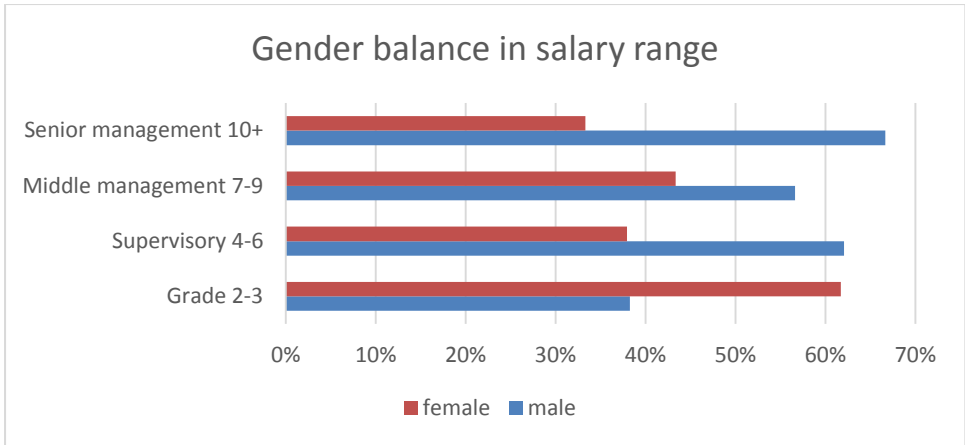
The picture is different for ethnic background, where the lowest and highest grades have no minority ethnic representation and the highest representation (9.6%) is found in Grades 7-9.

6   Promotion/Transfer

Promotion, whether temporary or permanent, is a regular occurrence within the uniformed roles and part of a career in an organisation with a rank/role structure like the Fire Service. This is much less so within Control and Support roles where the diversity and amount of available roles is limiting.

Forty eight vacancies were advertised as 'Promotion/Transfer'. These are opportunities for staff to gain a promotion, get access to development in preparation for a promotion or to change job role and/or location. Considering this only relates to staff, the diversity data should at least reflect the staff composition data.

There was a total of 133 promotions in this period across the Service of which 11.3% concerned female staff, 4.7% staff who identified as a minority ethnic group, 1.3% as LGBT and 3.3% who considered themselves to have a disability.

In comparison to the female representation in the group, the amount of women gaining promotion in the operational roles (On Call 2.9%, Wholetime 1.6%) is disproportionately low and no women gained a permanent promotion. This may indicate the existence of some barriers to progression.


Gender balance in Promotion
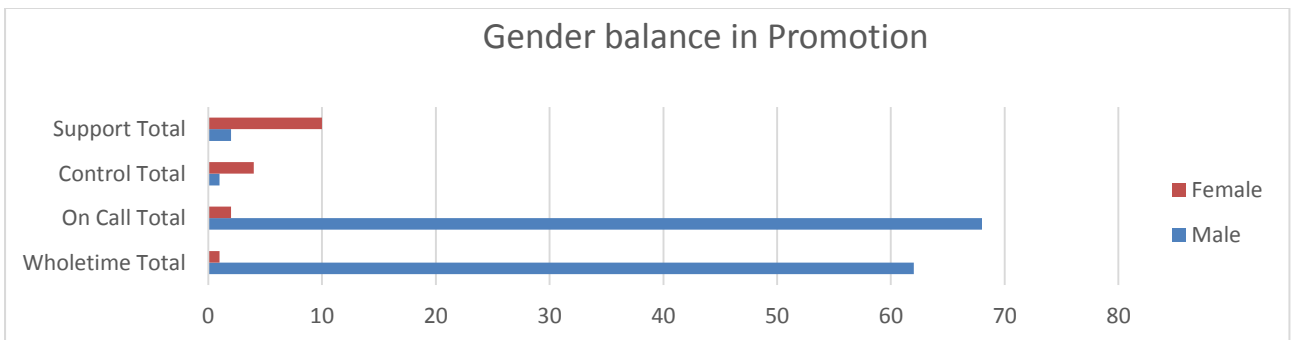
In the Support group, most women were promoted in and into the supervisory level.

'White Other' is the largest minority ethnic subgroup to gain promotion, except within Control, with 3.2% to 8% of those being promoted identifying as such.
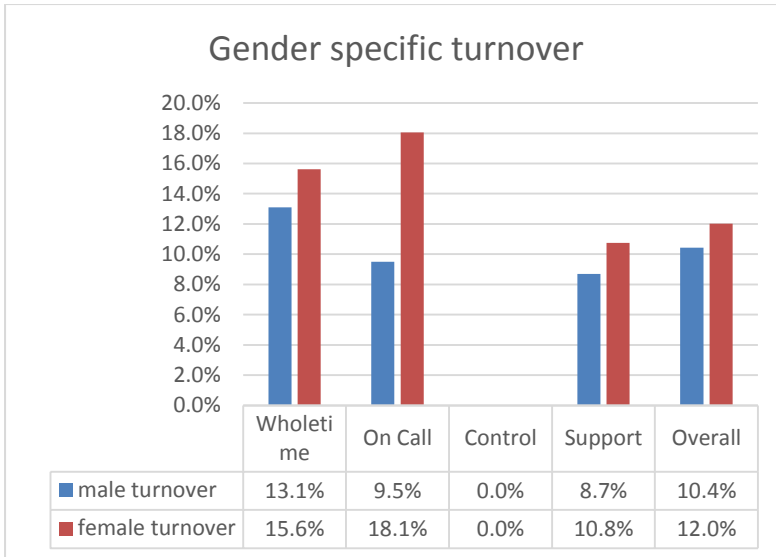
7   Leavers

In this period there were 229 leavers; more than last year when 184 people left the Service. This is mainly due to the expiring of temporary Wholetime contracts.

The resulting turnover rate is 10.5% over all staff categories, with On Call and Wholetime Staff turnover rates 10.2% and 14% respectively. Support Staff was 9.3% and Control had no leavers. The latter 2 staff groups are smaller and a few individuals leaving has a relatively big impact.
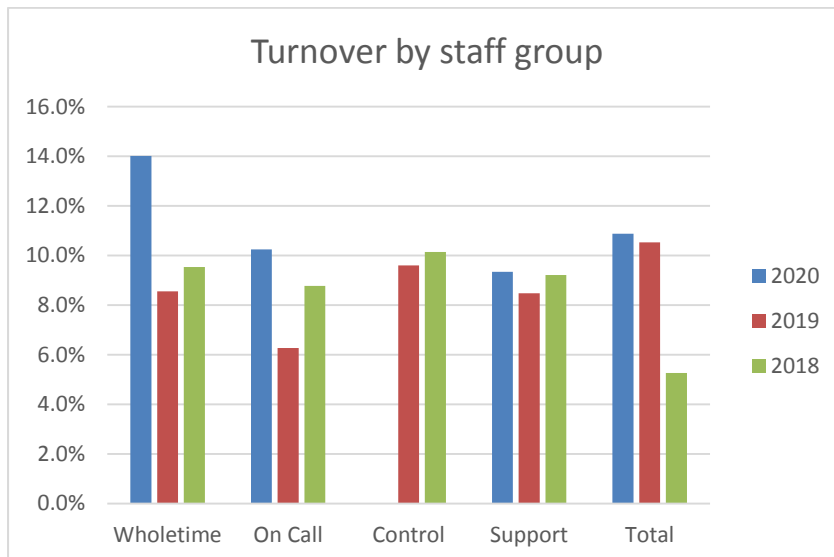
Male and female turnover is reasonably balanced across most groups, except in On Call where female turnover is twice (18.1%) the level of male turnover (9.5%). This may indicate retention issues specific to this period as retention levels were around 9.6% in 2019 for both genders.

Gender specific turnover

	Wholetime	On Call	Control	Support	Overall
male turnover	13.1%	9.5%	0.0%	8.7%	10.4%
female turnover	15.6%	18.1%	0.0%	10.8%	12.0%

Of the 76 Wholetime leavers, 47% retired and 38% completed their fixed term contract.

In On Call, only 12% left with the reason of retirement. All but 8, of 120, chose to leave voluntarily. 57 people (48%) resigned for personal, work/life (35), or other/no reason.

In Support the main reason for leaving is temporary contracts expiring (27%) followed by resigning for personal reasons (18%).

# 8   Unpaid Leave and Career Breaks

The purpose of the Career Break Scheme is to allow employees to request an opportunity to leave their employment on a medium to long-term basis (normally between six months and 2 years), with the intention of returning to the same or a similar post afterwards. Longer periods may be approved in exceptional circumstances. Shorter periods may be considered as Special Leave. The employee will be considered to have resigned from their post during the career break which means that these figures will appear in the Leavers data.

DSFRS will consider requests for special leave in any circumstances not covered by policies. This might include extending the entitlements for maternity, adoption, paternity, parental or compassionate leave; leave to cover periods of care; leave to cover attendance at rehabilitation centres, or unpaid leave of less than 6 months for the purposes of a career break. The individual normally returns to their previous post/role.

Unpaid Leave and Career Breaks are a regularly used option by the On Call staff Group when they experience periods when they are not able to provide the availability required within their contract due to a (temporary) change in primary employment or personal circumstances. The length of the periods is usually longer in

nature. The difference in uptake between men and women could be explained by the fact there are overall more men than women in this staff group.

On Call staff account for 58 occurrences of unpaid leave with an average duration of 112 days, compared to 8 in total by the other staff groups with an average around 60 days. In addition, 8 On Call staff started a Career Break in this period.
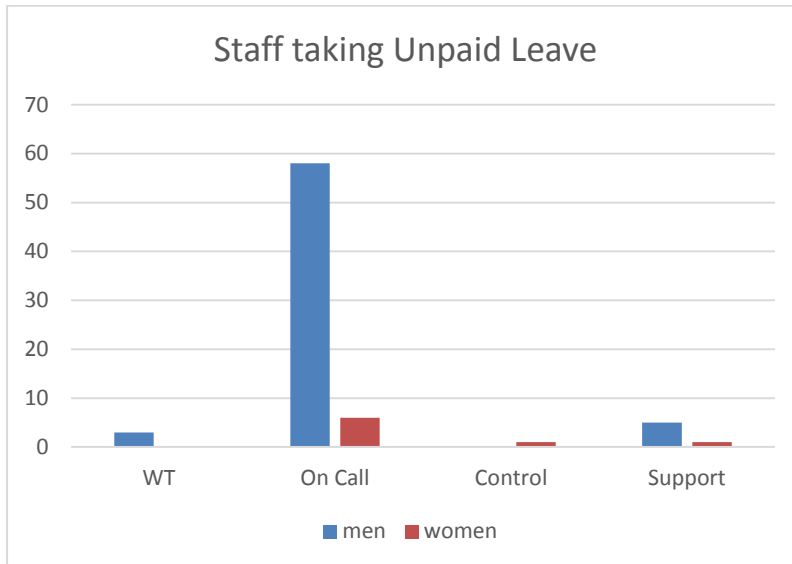
9   Discipline and Grievance cases

In this 12 month period 13 discipline cases were initiated of which 12 concerned men and 11 UK/white. There is a downward trend in discipline cases from 24 in 2018 to 13 in this period.

All 12 grievance cases were raised by UK/white individuals, including 1 woman. The amount of cases has remained constant since 2018.

Half of the grievances relate to either On-Call to Wholetime recruitment or development pathways, 16% relate to unwanted behaviour. All capability issues are in relation to Fitness standards

In total 3 members of staff, all male and UK/white, were dismissed for reasons of performance or conduct.

Appendix A   Equality duty

The equality duty consists of a general equality duty, supported by specific duties which are imposed by secondary legislation. In summary, those subject to the equality duty must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

General Duties
1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

These are sometimes referred to as the three aims or arms of the general equality duty.

Specific Duties (England)
1. Public authorities to publish information **annually** to demonstrate compliance with the general equality duty.
2. Public authorities to prepare and publish one or more equality objectives it thinks it should achieve to meet the general equality duty. To be done at least every four years.