



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 Service)

Wednesday, 26th April, 2023

A meeting of the People Committee will be held on the above date, **commencing at 10.00 am in Committee Room A, 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 - 4)

Of the previous meeting held on 25 January 2023 attached.

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 **Application for Retirement/Re-employment (Pages 5 - 8)**
Report of the Director of Finance, People & Estates (PC/23/3) attached.
- 5 **Performance Monitoring Report 2022-23: Quarter 4 (Pages 9 - 28)**
Report of the Director of Finance, People & Estates (PC/23/4) attached.
- 6 **Workforce & Recruitment Diversity Report 2022 (Pages 29 - 54)**
Report of the Director of Finance, People & Estates (PC/23/5) attached.
- 7 **People & Culture Update (Pages 55 - 64)**
Report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (PC/23/6) attached.
- 8 **His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary & Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Cause of Concern and Areas for Improvement Action Plan (Pages 65 - 78)**
Report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (PC/23/7) attached.

MEMBERS ARE REQUESTED TO SIGN THE ATTENDANCE REGISTER

Membership:-

Councillors Hannaford (Chair), Best, Clayton (Vice-Chair), Kendall, Peart, Thomas and Trail BEM

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.	<p><u>Part 2 Reports</u></p> <p>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.</p>
5.	<p><u>Substitute Members (Committee Meetings only)</u></p> <p>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.</p>
6.	<p><u>Other Attendance at Committees)</u></p> <p>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.</p>

PEOPLE COMMITTEE

(Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority)

25 January 2023

Present:

Councillors Hannaford (Chair), Best, Kendall, Peart, Randall Johnson (vice Clayton), Thomas and Trail BEM.

Apologies:

Councillor Clayton.

* **PC/22/12** **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 31 October 2022 be signed as a correct record.

* **PC/22/13** **Performance Monitoring Report 2022- 23: Quarter 3**

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of Finance, People & Estates (PC/23/1) detailing performance as at Quarter 3 of 2022-23 against those Key Performance Indicators agreed by the Committee for measuring progress against the following three strategic priorities as approved by the Authority:

- 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.

In particular, the report provided information on performance against each of the following key measures:

- operational core competence skills (breathing apparatus; incident command; water rescue; safety when working at heights or in confined spaces; maritime; driving; and casualty care);
- health and safety (accidents [including near misses]; personal injuries; vehicle incidents; and reporting against the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR));

- sickness and absence (including mental health) for wholetime, on-call, support, Control and casual staff, by type of sickness and details of the health and wellbeing support offered by the Service. The report also provided comparisons with national fire service data and featured benchmarking for sickness absence against comparable, neighbouring fire and rescue services;
- fitness testing (including support offered for red and amber groups) and a review of testing to explore a more inclusive, role-related functional fitness test for operational staff;
- diversity, with a particular emphasis on the work being undertaken on retention and promoting inclusion by developing strong leadership living the Service's values ;
- promoting inclusion, developing strong leaders, living Service values and being a fair place to work;
- grievance, capability and disciplinary issues;
- strategic workforce planning including details of staff turnover in all categories of the workforce; and
- employee engagement.

The Committee welcomed the new RAG rating on operational core competence which it found increased its understanding of the performance in this area. Reference was made to the position in respect of vehicle accidents and near misses both of which had reduced in quarter 3 of 2022-23. It was noted that there was a correlation between the number of incidents attended and the overall reductions in vehicle accidents, largely as a result of the covid pandemic. The number of incidents attended would be added in to this paper in future to show this correlation.

The Committee expressed concern in respect of the average number of days/shifts lost due to sickness absence which had increased to 6.73 days/shifts lost per person for the period April to November 2022 as compared with 5.90 days/shifts lost for the same period in 2022. The Co-Head of Human Resources advised the Committee that this was still due to Covid related illness which was no longer a separate category but was included within the general cold/flu category which had, for the first time, overtaken mental health issues as the primary cause of sickness in Quarter 3 of 2022-23. Health and wellbeing support continued to be the focus for the Service in getting staff back to work. It was suggested that a trend line be added to the report in future as sickness absence seemed to be increasing and needed to be monitored carefully.

It was noted that the retention of women in the Service seemed to have improved which was positive news although women continued to be underrepresented within the Service as a whole. Reference was also made to the issue of promoting inclusion and ensuring that all staff felt empowered to report any incidence of noncompliance with Service Values in order to improve the organisational culture.

(See also Minute *PC/22/14 below).

* **PC/22/14 His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary & Fire & Rescue Services Cause of Concern and Areas for Improvement Action Plan Update**

The Committee received for information a report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (PC/23/2) outlining progress to date against the Action Plans developed to address both the Cause of Concern and Areas for Improvement identified following the most recent Service inspection by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

The Cause for Concern Action Plan had been submitted to HMICFRS by the deadline of 31 August 2022. Four of the actions within the Cause for Concern Action Plan were recorded currently as "In Progress – Off Track" due to:

- 01a.01: As at 16/01/2023, completion of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) eLearning across the Service is 90% (1998 of 2223 members of staff). A target of 95% compliance for the wholetime workforce had been set. A target for the on-call workforce is to be determined;
- 01a.08/ 01b.01: The Head of Communications had designed the core brief, which will now be presented to the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) for approval; and
- 01b.04: The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) was currently in discussion with the CFO and Director of Finance, People and Estates on what the Service can and cannot publish from a legal perspective. Once this was established, the appropriate data will be made available to the workforce.

Delivery of the Areas for Improvement Action Plan was on track overall.

*** DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The Meeting started at 10.15 am and finished at 12.30 pm

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Agenda Item 4

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	PC/23/3
MEETING	PEOPLE COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	26 APRIL 2023
SUBJECT OF REPORT	APPLICATION FOR RETIREMENT & RE-EMPLOYMENT
LEAD OFFICER	Director of Finance, People & Estates
RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>That the application for retirement & re-employment as identified in paragraph 2.3 of this report be approved.</i>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	The Authority has an approved Pay Policy Statement for 2023-24 in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and which sets out the arrangements for consideration of any requests for re-employment of employees following retirement. This report sets out specific requests for approval from one non-operational member of staff.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	None.
EQUALITY RISK & BENEFITS ASSESSMENT	The Retirement & Re-Employment Policy has had an equalities impact assessment.
APPENDICES	Nil
BACKGROUND PAPERS	DSFRA Pay Policy Statement for 2023-24.

1. **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Authority's Pay Policy Statement for 2023-24 sets out the arrangements for consideration of any requests for re-employment of employees following retirement. The re-employment of any employee (up to Area Manager or non-uniformed equivalent) who has retired will be subject to approval by the People Committee (the Committee).
- 1.2 The Pay Policy Statement sets out that the Authority will, in principle, allow the re-employment of employees who have retired, subject to a break in service of at least one month, because it is recognised that this often represents an effective way of retaining specialist knowledge and skills without any increase in cost to the Authority (and noting that costs to the Pension Scheme are no more than would be the case for normal retirement).
- 1.3 The Pay Policy Statement also notes that the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, published by the Home Office in May 2018, sets out that "fire and rescue authorities must not re-appoint principal fire officers after retirement to their previous, or a similar, post save for in exceptional circumstances when such a decision is necessary in the interests of public safety". In this context, Principal Officers refers to those officers at Area Manager and above, or those with comparable responsibilities to those roles. The Fire and Rescue National Framework also states that fire and rescue authorities will "have regard to this principle when appointing at any level".
- 1.4 For staff within the Local Government Pension Scheme, where an individual is re-employed on the same terms and conditions as previously, the same abatement rules as apply to those within the Fire Fighters Pension Scheme will be applied. However, the Authority's policy on Pension Discretions refers to flexible retirement and states that this "may be subject to abatement during such time as the individual remains employed by the Service". This allows the Authority to use flexible retirement opportunities where key employees may wish to continue working as they get older but step down in grade or reduce their working hours. This can be beneficial to the Authority in retaining key skills, knowledge and experience whilst also reducing costs.
- 1.5 With this in mind and taking account of the National Framework provisions, the Authority has agreed the following approach in relation to requests for re-employment following retirement, subject in each case to an approved business case:
- (a). the Chief Fire Officer has delegated authority to approve such requests up to and including Watch Manager level (or non-uniformed equivalent posts);
 - (b). the People Committee has delegated authority to approve such requests for Station Manager up to and including Area Manager level (or non-uniformed equivalent posts); and

(c). the approval of the full Authority is required for the re-employment, following retirement, of any post-holder at Brigade Manager (or equivalent non-uniformed) level i.e. in effect, any member of the Service Executive Board (the Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Assistant Chief Fire Officers, Director of Governance & Digital Services and Director of Finance and Resourcing). Such approval will only be granted in exceptional circumstances where the re-appointment is necessary in the interests of public safety. The rationale for the decision (together with any alternative approaches considered but deemed not appropriate) must be published.

1.6 The Service's Executive Board has considered the application for retirement and re-employment set out within paragraph 2.3 of this report and considers that the requests are beneficial in helping to retain key skills and to support the existing Temporary Democratic Services Manager with cover for absence and holidays given that the Democratic Services Officer post has not been filled. The request for retirement and re-employment is therefore submitted to the People Committee for approval in accordance with paragraph 1.5.(b). above.

2. RETIREMENT AND RE-EMPLOYMENT

2.1 The Service policy on retirement & re-employment is linked to workforce planning arrangements. Retirement and re-employment provides a transition for the employee from full employment into retirement.

2.2 An application has been received from the former Democratic Services Manager to be re-employed on the basis of a zero hours contract. This would provide support for the Temporary Democratic Services Manager for absence, holidays and peak workloads in view of the fact that the post of Democratic Services Officer is being held vacant. This will also avoid a single point of failure within the organisation and retain skills and knowledge when back up is required. The importance of the business continuity element of this arrangement is amplified given the retirement (at the end of April) of the current Monitoring Officer/Clerk to the Authority. The retired Democratic Services Manager would return on the same pay grade on a zero-hours contract initially for 12 months.

2.3 The request for retirement and re-employment is summarised in the table below:

Role	Position	Station/Dept.	Decision
Non-Operational	Associate Senior Democratic Services Officer	Service Headquarters	FTC for 1 year on a zero hours contract from May 2023

2.4 This application gives the Service certainty as to business continuity whilst additionally providing support for the Temporary Democratic Services Manager and enables the Service to plan for the future.

SHAYNE SCOTT
Director Of Finance, People & Estates

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Agenda Item 5

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	PC/23/4
MEETING	PEOPLE COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	26 APRIL 2023
SUBJECT OF REPORT	PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT 2022 – 23: QUARTER 4
LEAD OFFICER	DIRECTOR OF FINANCE, PEOPLE AND ESTATES
RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>That the report be noted.</i>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>The strategic priorities against which this Committee is measuring performance are:</p> <p>3(a) - Ensure that the workforce is highly trained and has the capability and capacity to deliver services professionally, safely and effectively;</p> <p>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</p> <p>3(c) - Recognise and maximise the value of all employees, particularly the commitment of on-call firefighters, improving recruitment and retention.</p> <p>This report sets out the Services' performance against these strategic priorities for the period January – March 2023 (Quarter 4) in accordance with the agreed measures. A summary is also set out at Appendix A for ease of reference.</p>
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	N/a
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	N/a
APPENDICES	<p>A. Summary of Performance against Agreed Measures.</p> <p>B. Forward Plan</p>
BACKGROUND PAPERS	N/a

1. **BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION**

1.1. The Service's 'People' strategic policy objectives 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

1.2. The performance in quarter 4 of 2022-23 as measured against the agreed indicators is set out in this report for each of these policy objectives.

2. **PERFORMANCE MONITORING – STRATEGIC POLICY OBJECTIVE 3(a)**

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

Operational Core Competence Skills:

2.1. As of 1st April 2023, all 'Day Duty' operational staff (FF-WM) are required to provide Operational Cover on a regular basis. Historically operational staff in a day duty role were not required to requalify in:

- Water Rescue
- SHACS height and Confined Space
- Manual Handling level 2.

2.2. As a result, an additional 90 members of staff's skills are now captured across the full suite of Operational Core Competencies

2.3. Operational Core Competence Skills: The Core Competence Skills recognised by the service are Breathing apparatus (BA), Incident Command (ICS), Water Rescue, Working at Height (SHACS), Maritime, Driving and Casualty Care (CC).

2.4. The newly agreed (as per the October 2022 People Committee meeting, Minute PC/22/8 refers).

2.5. Core Competency performance thresholds are:

- 95% - 100% Green
- 90% - 95% Amber
- <90% Red

2.6. The performance in quarter 4 as measured against the revised core competencies.

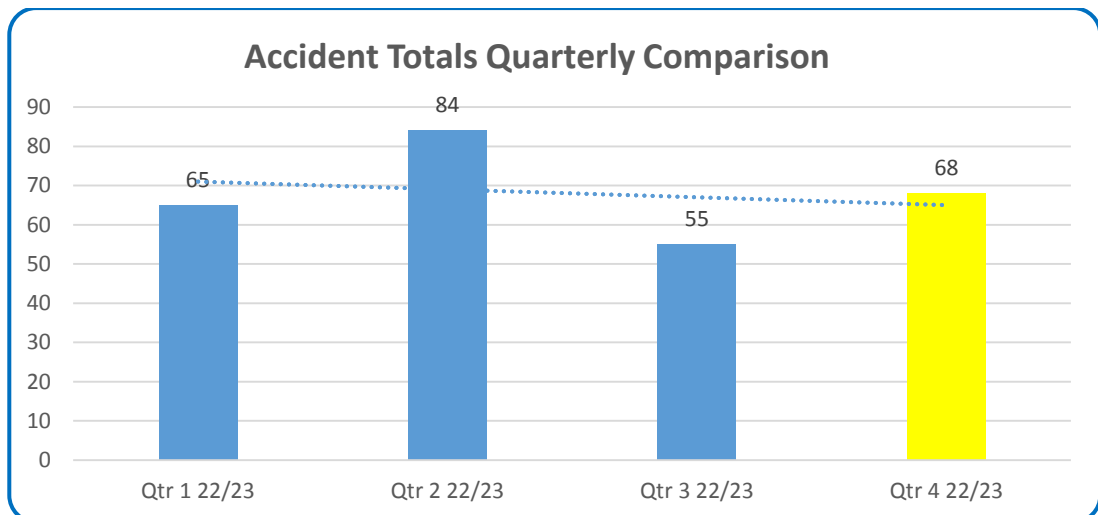
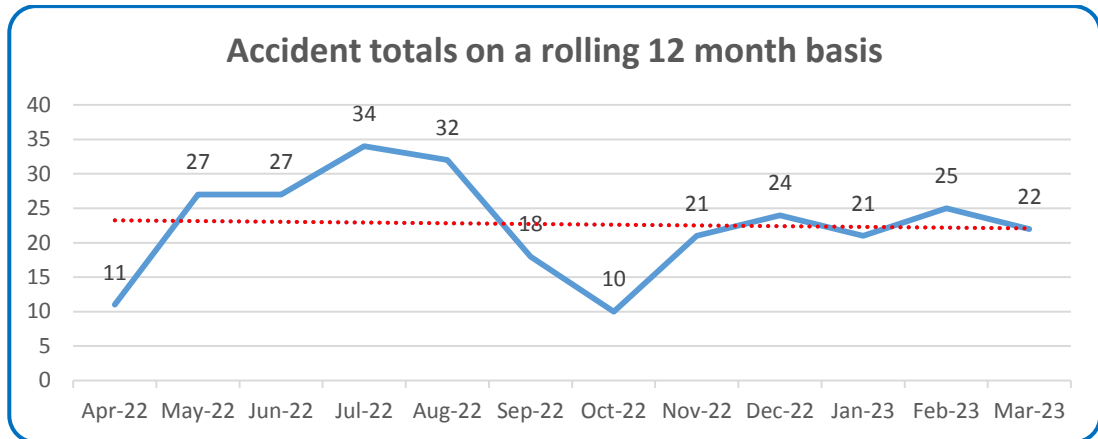
Core Competence inc. subsections of competence.	Measure	Rationale	%	Impact and action taken
Breathing Apparatus (BA)	< 90% + Risk based impact identified	90% provides tolerance for course failures, personnel returning from long-term absence and non-attendance.	99 %	Within tolerance for each location. No action required.
Incident Command (ICS) Inc.: Operational, Tactical, Strategic and JESIP	< 90% + Risk based impact identified	Only people required to assume operational command have this skill this is currently 713 members of staff.	98.1 %	Within tolerance for each location. No action required.
Water Rescue Inc.: Water Rescue 1st Responder Water Rescue Technician	< 90% + Risk based impact identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimum of 2 trained people per appliance is required to enable a response. • Water Rescue Training has now been completed for 2022/23. 	96.5 %	Within tolerance for each location. No action required
Working at Height and Confined Spaces	< 90% + Risk based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In December 2022 the Service introduced a new SHACS recording system 	93 % (87%)	Within tolerance for each location.

Core Competence inc. subsections of competence.	Measure	Rationale	%	Impact and action taken
(SHACS) Inc.: Level 1, 2, 3	impact identified	for training undertaken from December onwards. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Service dashboard (New System) for SHACS is 87% The total number of SHACS competency across both recording systems is 93% which does not impact service delivery. 		No action required.
Maritime Level 2	< 90% + Risk based impact identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 464 people, across 15 stations are required to maintain the Maritime Skill. 	99 %	Within tolerance for each location. No action required.
Casualty Care (CC) Inc.: Level 1, 2	< 60% + Risk based impact identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service policy states 60% of operational personnel trained to this standard. 60% is 844 people. Currently 1383 trained. 	98.3 %	Within tolerance for each location. No action required.
Response Driving Inc.: Primary Response (PRDC) Fire Appliance (EFAD) Specialist Vehicles	< 90% + Risk based impact identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 90% provides tolerance for course failures, personnel returning from long term absence and non-attendance. 	98.5 %	Within tolerance for each location

Health & Safety:

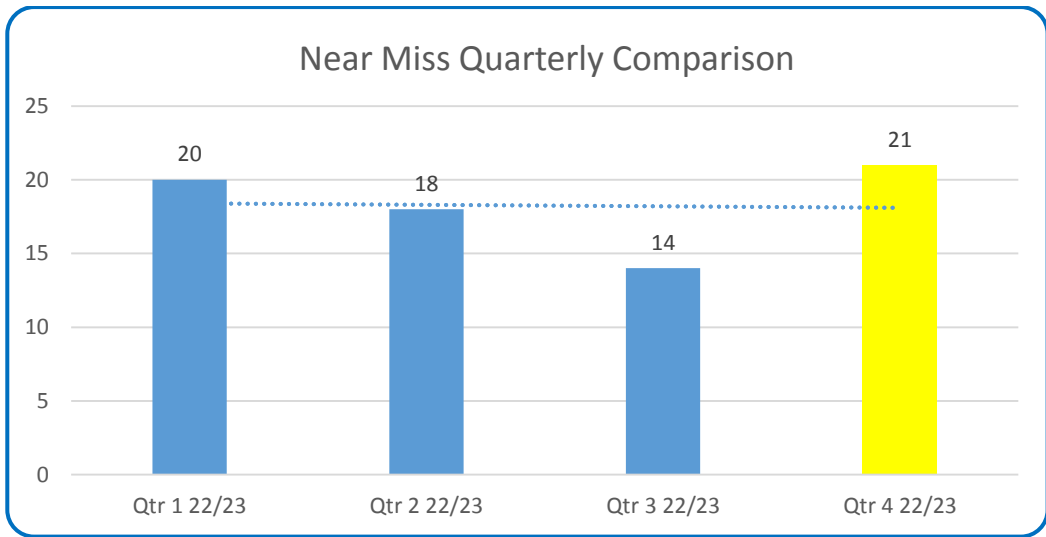
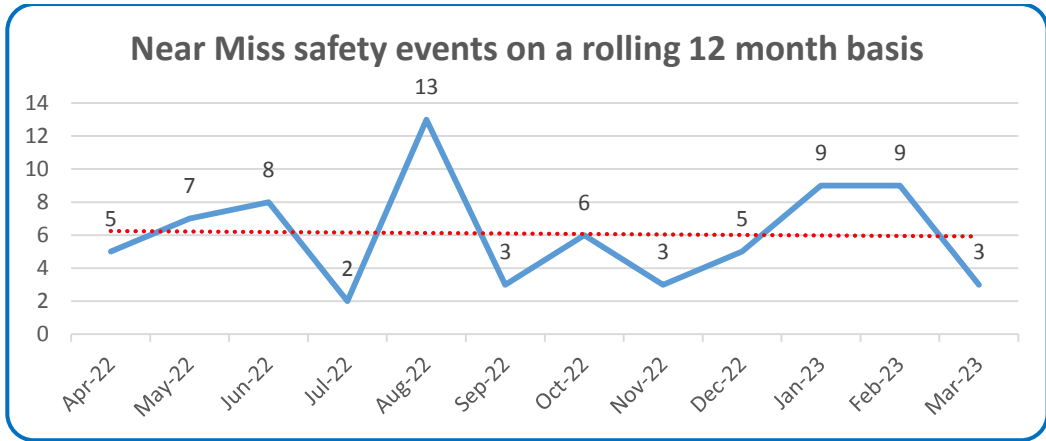
Accidents:

- 2.7. The overall trend for accidents in 2022/23 financial year showed a very slight decrease. Accident rates fluctuating through the year, which were in general linked to periods of increased operational activity. The quarter 4 accident numbers are up by 13 on the previous quarter.



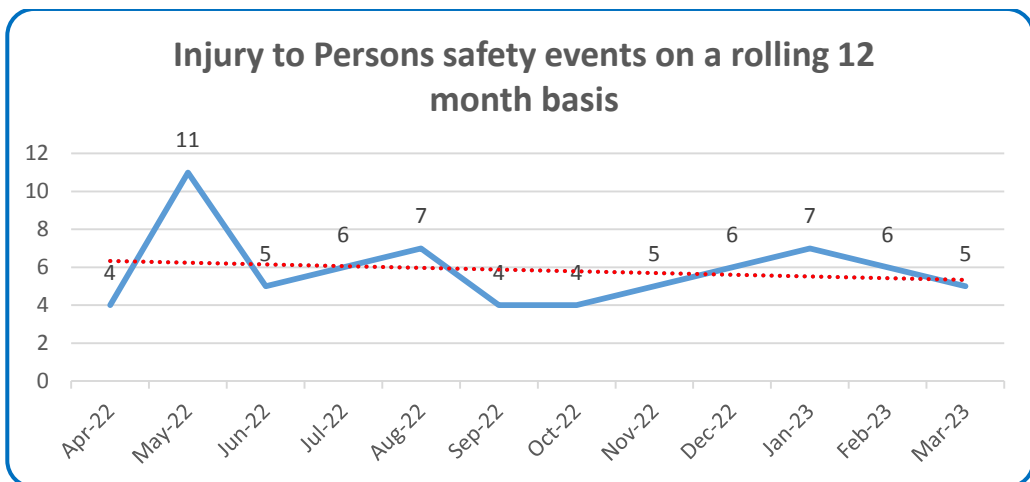
Near Miss:

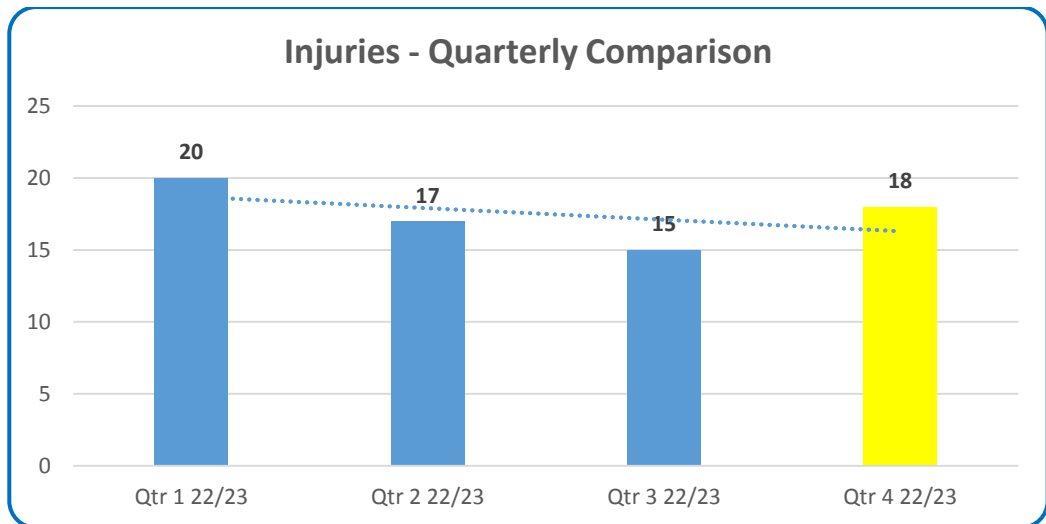
- 2.8. There were 21 near misses in Quarter 4, a 50% (7 events) increase on reporting from the previous quarter. The benefits of near miss reporting continue to be communicated by the Health and Safety Team and the Organisational Development team. The wider cultural work with the 'Safe to' campaign will help to influence improvements in this area.
- 2.9. The near miss reports during Quarter 4 are varied, there is a theme of them being predominantly equipment orientated. I.e., loss of water pressure when firefighting, appliance door opening whilst mobile, water rescue line not secured to throw bag.



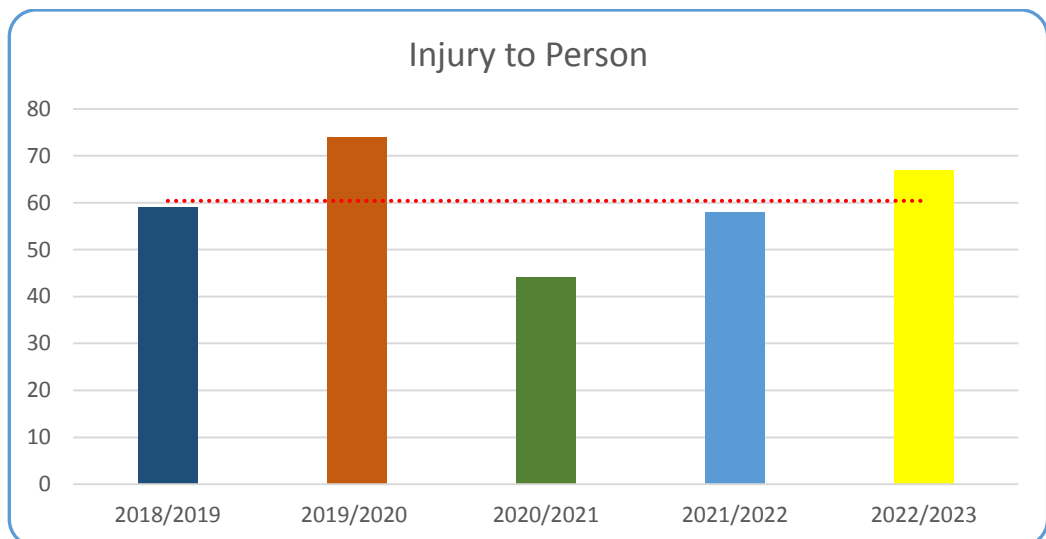
Personal Injuries:

2.10. The charts overleaf compare the Service’s injury rates over a rolling 12-month period, as well as highlighting the Quarter 4 figures. The injury figures in general remain low, the trendline showing a reduction over 2022/23 financial year. Quarter 4 showed an increase of 3 injuries when compared to the previous quarter, a 20% rise in injuries.



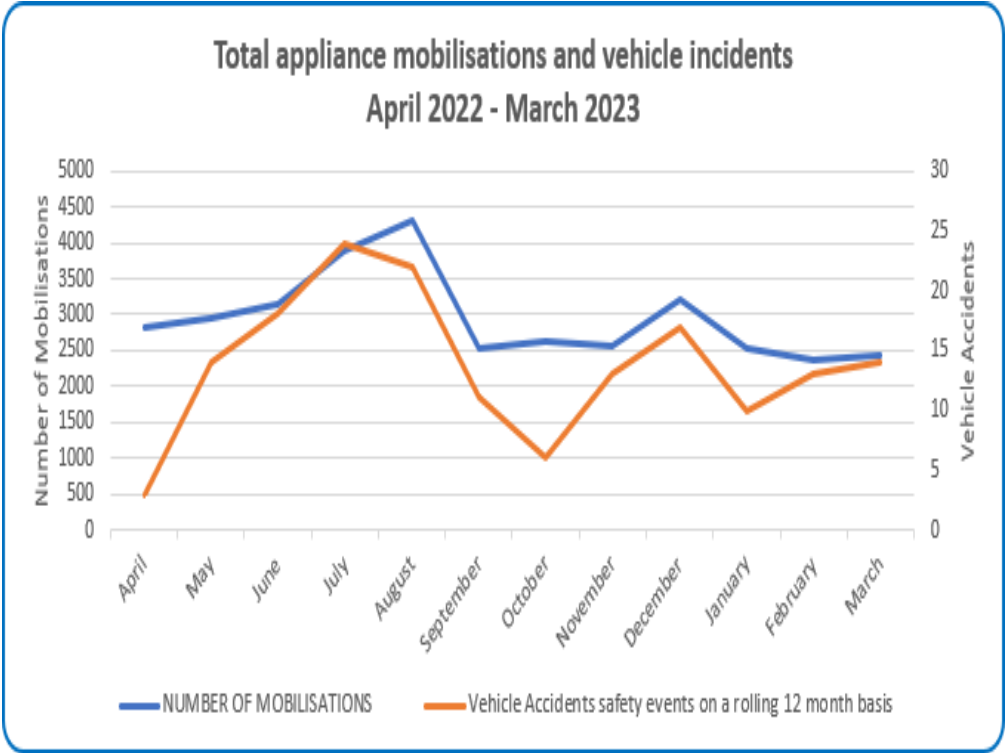
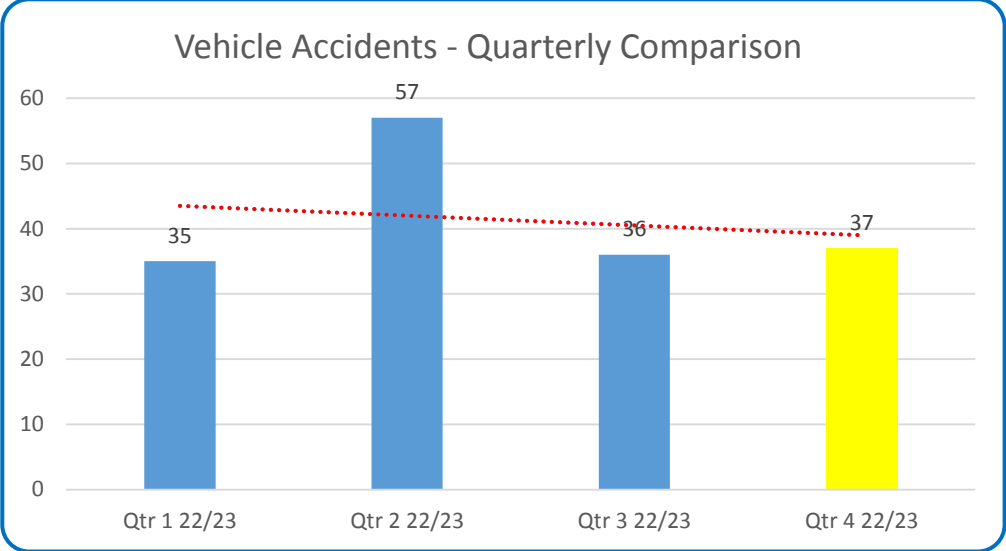
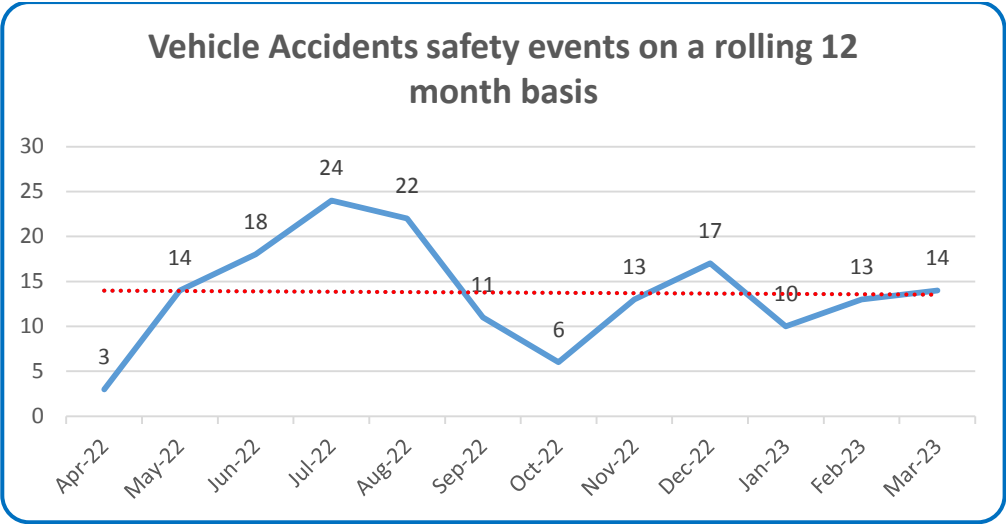


2.11. The annual trend over the last 5 financial years (2018/19 – 2022/23), however, has remained level:



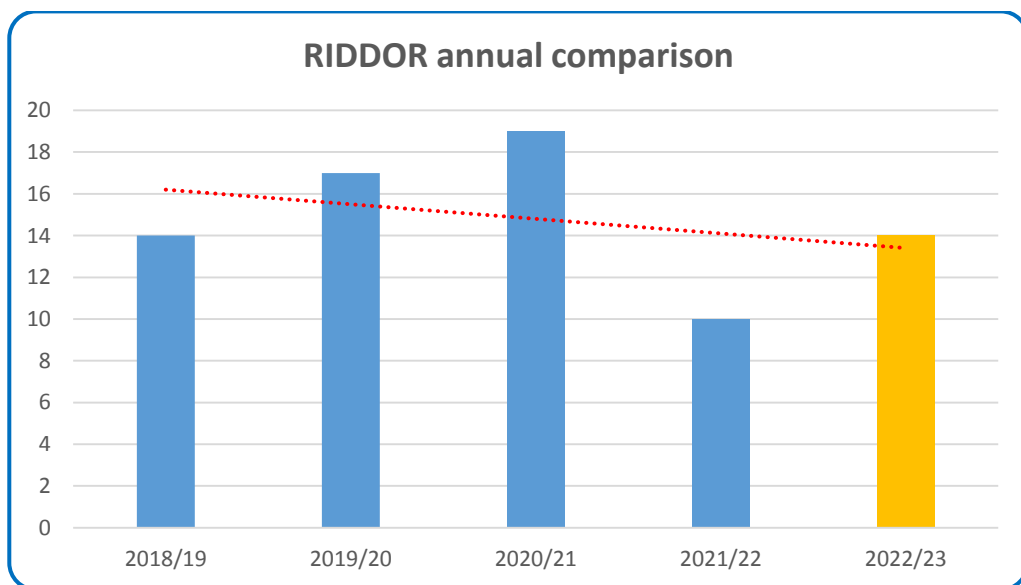
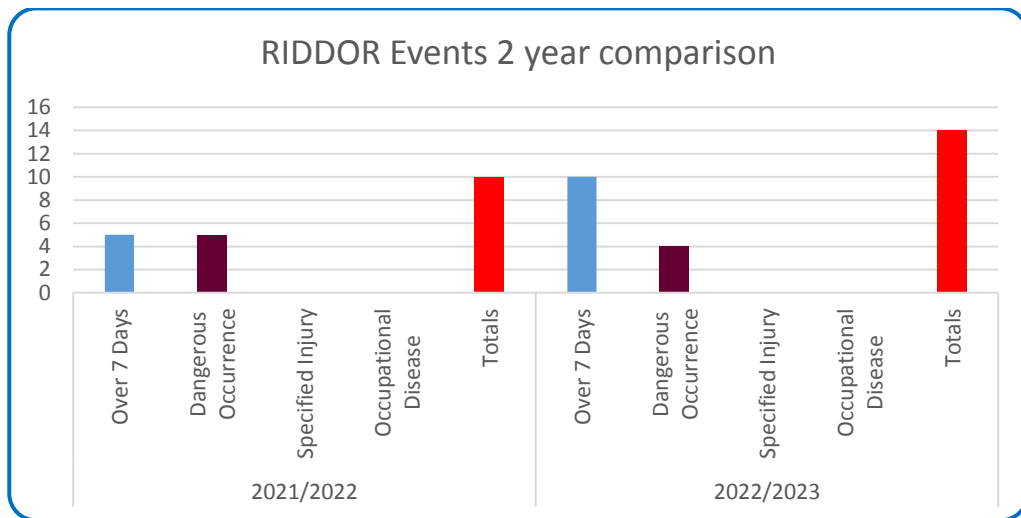
Vehicle Incidents:

2.12. Vehicle related incidents increased in quarter 4, though by one incident. Vehicle related accidents are primarily during non-blue light activity, the majority related to slow speed manoeuvring. Clipping hedges and banks on tight lanes, or another vehicle in congested streets, as well as when manoeuvring at the incident. There were a few in January linked to icy road conditions. Investigations into more significant vehicle incidents has been greatly enhanced through the increase in telematics and cameras within Service vehicles. The Services Occupational Road Risk group meets quarterly to review driving and vehicle related issues. This includes suggesting proactive action to improve individual or organisational driving and vehicle related outcomes.



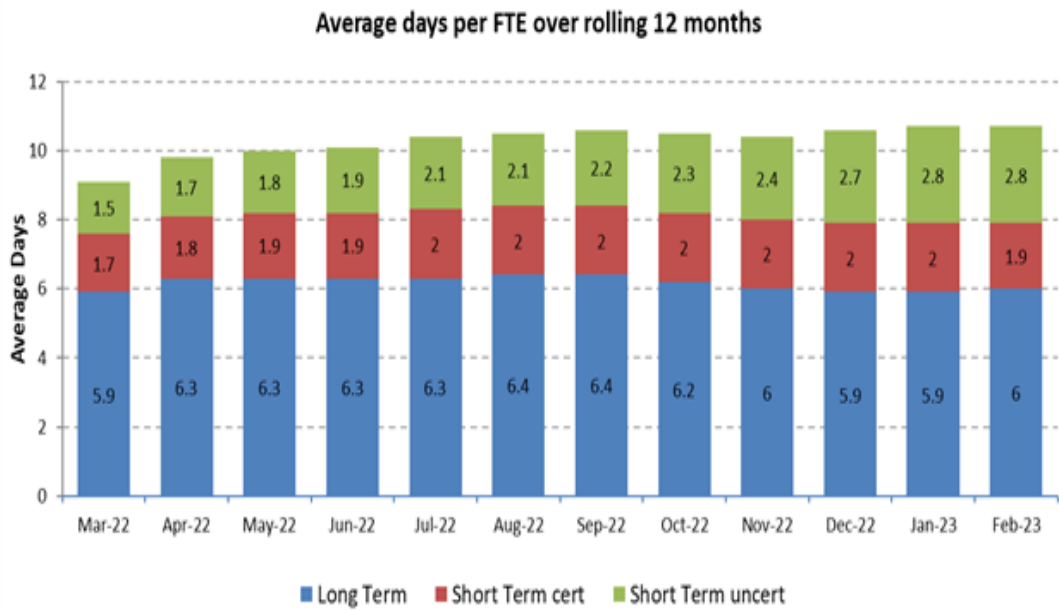
Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR):

2.13. The RIDDOR trend line over the last 5 years indicated a decline in RIDDOR reports. During the COVID-19 Pandemic there was a reduction in RIDDOR reportable events, mostly a reduction in 'Over 7 day injury' related events. The 'Dangerous occurrence' events are predominantly related to Breathing Apparatus failures. All have been investigated with the lessons learnt communicated.



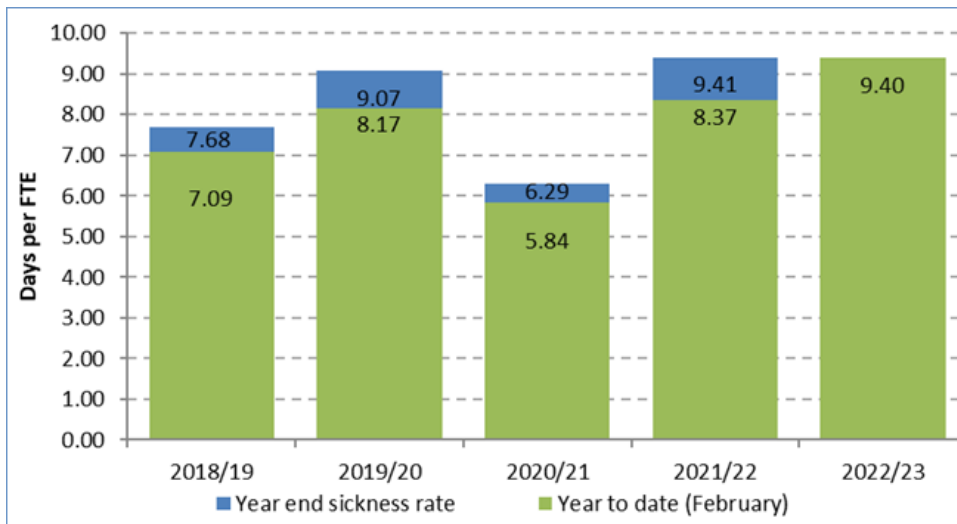
Sickness and Absence:

2.14. Total sickness absence average days have stabilised since July 2022, but there is a difference in contribution from the 3 absence types; short term uncertified (1-7 days), short term certified (8-27 days) and long-term sickness (28 days or more), with the latter now contributing less than at the start of the period. Short term certified absence has remained largely unchanged during this reporting period, but the big difference can be seen in the increase of absences with a length of between 1 and 7 days, caused by cold/flu.



Annual comparison (average days lost) year on year per FTE

2.15. The Service increase in average days lost at 9.40 April to February compared to 8.37 for the same period last year, an increase of 1.03 days per employee, 12.3%.



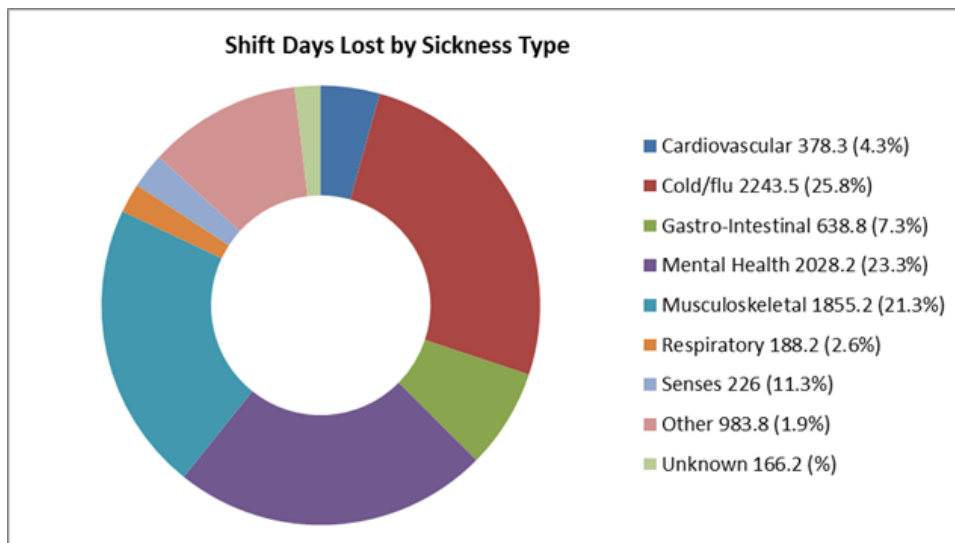
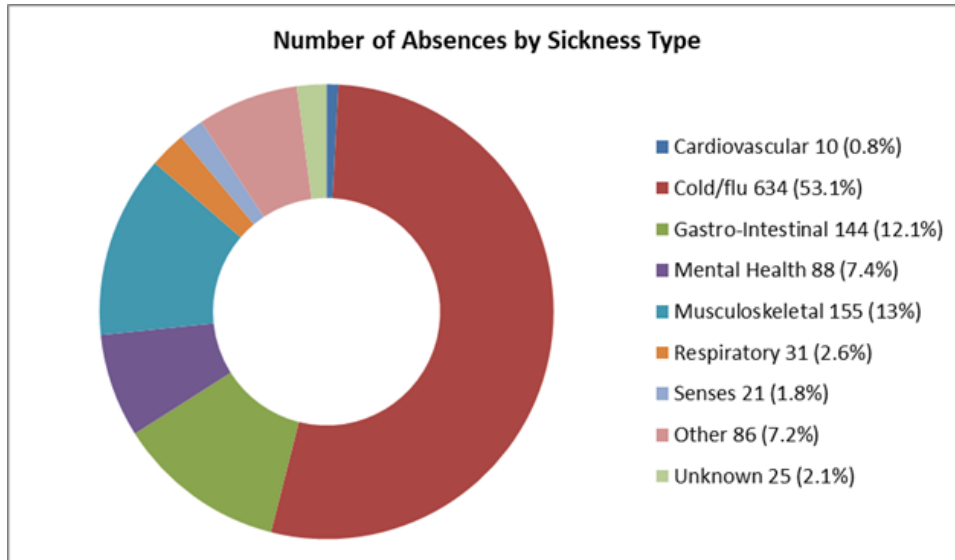
2.16. Covid related sickness absence in 2020 and 2021 was not recorded within our sickness data but collated separately. Since 1 April 2022 any Covid related sickness has been recorded, reflecting an increase to our sickness absence figures within the colds/flu category.

National Fire Service Data

2.17. The Cleveland National Fire Service report for Quarter 4 will be published in July and reported at the next People Committee.

Shift days lost by sickness type

- 2.18. In the year to date 'cold and flu' 'mental health' and 'musculoskeletal' are the top 3 sickness absence reasons across all staff groups. The highest number of absences is caused by cold/flu, but as they are often the shorter absences, they don't lead to the most shift days lost. Musculoskeletal absence, although lower in number, on average, lead to longer absences.



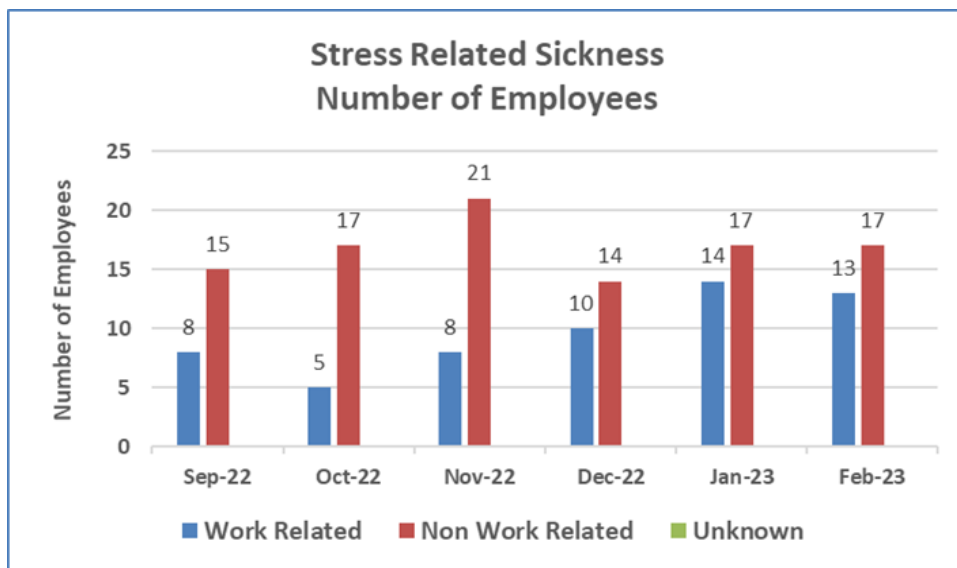
- 2.19. Understanding our top 3 reasons for absence allows us to establish and maintain interventions which directly address those, for example our physio provision for musculoskeletal injuries, counselling service for mental health issues and the flu jab for cold/flu related absence.
- 2.20. Musculoskeletal injuries are the main cause for absence in our operational staff groups, with most reports in our On Call staff group. This is not surprising as this is also our largest staff group, i.e. twice the size of our Wholetime staff group.

2.21. Since November there has been a slight increase in the number of absences due to musculoskeletal injuries in our operational staff groups, although the number is still far lower than earlier in 2022. There has been a healthy uptake of physiotherapy sessions in line with this. Around 10% of the number of musculoskeletal absences is as a result of an injury on duty.

Mental Health

2.22. The graph below shows stress related sickness reported from September to February for work related and non-work-related sickness absence. It shows a fairly steady number of non-work-related absences, but a higher number of work-related absences towards the end of the period.

Stress related sickness absences



2.23. Where stress is, or is likely to, affect performance at work a Personal Stress Assessments (PSA) can be undertaken to identify means to support the employee as an early intervention. There is a correlation between the number of (non-)work related stress absences and the number of PSAs and an increase has been observed in recent months. Referrals for Counselling sessions have a steady uptake.

2.24. In response to the increase in PSAs and to ensure staff are receiving appropriate support, the welfare team are upskilling managers in having mental health conversations. In addition, more staff have been trained as mental health first aiders to identify issues and signpost/support where required.

2.25. The Service works closely with the Firefighters Charity to anticipate stress related issues, engaging in workshops and providing access to resources. Teams and departments dealing with significant change in staffing and structure are supported by the welfare team with targeted initiatives.

Health and Wellbeing Support

- 2.26. Since the Service started a partnership with Benenden Health in July 2022 there has been a reduction in participating members from 94 to 78. It is most likely a result of the cost-of-living crisis, and other factors which may affect a family's financial situation, leading to families reviewing their monthly spending and setting different priorities.
- 2.27. From July 2022 to February 2023 those scheme members who accessed a benefit were 64% for 24-hour GP advice line and 25% for diagnostic consultation & tests.
- 2.28. The current wellbeing network which includes trained Staff Supporters and Mental Health First Aiders is being rebranded and supported to develop into a Wellbeing Champions network. This will pro-actively support the health and wellbeing agenda across the Service.
- 2.29. Since December, a new restricted duties procedure has been implemented together with the relevant risk assessments, guidance and advice. This will support both management and employees when a return to full duties is not possible in the short term.
- 2.30. At the same time, a new maternity procedure has been published together with a toolkit to support returning mothers and line managers, including Frequently Asked Question pages. The procedure implements the more beneficial terms and conditions introduced in 2022, which may result in better retention and attraction of women.
- 2.31. Health and Wellbeing information has now been introduced within the induction packs and sessions. This will embed the awareness of support from the start of employment with the Service.

Fitness Testing

	Total Number as of 16/04/2023	Percentage as 16/04/2023
Number requiring test (in scope)	1560	100%
Number passed	1549	99%
Red & Amber (additional support)	11	1

- 2.32. All in scope staff have taken a fitness test. 1549 met the required standard and 11 did not. The remaining 6 individuals are out of date for various reasons (long term absence etc.) 2 of which are being case managed by HR Business Partners.

Supporting the Red & Amber groups



- 2.33. The 1 Red and Amber (Fail) group equates to 11 individuals who require additional support. Every member of staff in the Red/Amber category is subject to a 3 month retest period and receives a development plan, including a fitness and nutrition plan and ongoing additional support from the fitness instructor.
- 2.34. At 6 months, if staff are still unable to achieve the required standard, then a capability process is started, working with the HR business partners.

3. PERFORMANCE MONITORING – STRATEGIC POLICY OBJECTIVE 3(b)

Strategic Policy Objective 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.'

Diversity:

- 3.1. This is an annual measure looking to see a year-on-year improvement in addition to the separate Diversity and Recruitment annual report January 2022 – December 2022. The data in the table is the most recent data from 31st March 2023.

Protected Characteristic (as per 31 st March)	WT	On-call	Control	Green book	Total %	Community	Trend
% Female Staff							
2022	6.9	6.0	75.6	46.8	14.4	51.0	
2021	6.3	6.2	72.5	47	14.6	51.0	
2020	6.3	6.1	75.0	44.5	13.9	50.5	
% Ethnic Minority background							
2022	3.7	2.8	8.1	4.7	3.5	8.3	
2021	2.2	2.4	7.5	4.6	2.8	8.3	
2020	2.0	2.4	7.5	4.0	2.7	5.3	
% Female Senior roles							
2022	11.1			36.4	20.0		
2021	0			30.8	18.0		
2020	14.3			33.0	20.8		
% Ethnic Minority Background Senior roles							
2022	0			9.1	5.0		
2021	0			11.1	4.5		
2020	0			0	0		
% LGBT Senior roles							
2022	0			9.1	5.0		
2021	0			11	4.5		
2020	0			0	0		

Promoting Inclusion, developing strong leaders, living the values, a fair place to work:

- 3.2. Progress against actions related to both this data and other findings in the People Pillar of the HMICFRS report are being reported to this Committee separately to this performance report.
- 3.3. A new training presentation and facilitated conversation on values, behaviours and ethics has been delivered face to face to all staff. This training, together with an increase in internal communications around cultural reform, has embedded the expectations of the organisation specifically in relation to addressing inappropriate behaviour. Members of ELT visit teams, together with cultural leads, further support that work in operational teams.
- 3.4. A confidential reporting line has been established and a Speak Up Guardian has been appointed, both providing additional ways for staff to highlight and address issues.
- 3.5. International Women's Day was celebrated on 8 March with an event at which female speakers presented their views and experiences within the fire sector.
- 3.6. E-learning packages have been released in relation to 'Banter' and management of hybrid teams, and throughout the year more will be released, to develop capability in managers to create a work environment which is inclusive and psychologically safe.
- 3.7. A working group has revised our onboarding and induction process for all staff, specifically but not solely, to include the setting of expectations of behaviour, values and ethics. New induction sessions have been implemented for On Call, Professional, Control and Wholetime staff

Update on Strategic Workforce Planning

- 3.8. On a monthly basis, the People Services team provide the following information to the Strategic Workforce Planning group:
 - Current position on the overall establishment to provide an overview of current establishment figures, starters and leavers for staff groups.
 - Sickness absence data, including long term and short-term sickness and an overview of restricted duties cases
 - Updates on recruitment and selection processes, including information on uniformed positions to give clear indication on where current vacancies are, and the overall effect on workforce numbers.
 - Development Programme updates to outline and inform the number of individuals progressing through assessment centres in order to be ready to apply for promotion into crew, watch, station manager roles as and when they become vacant.

- Apprenticeships update.

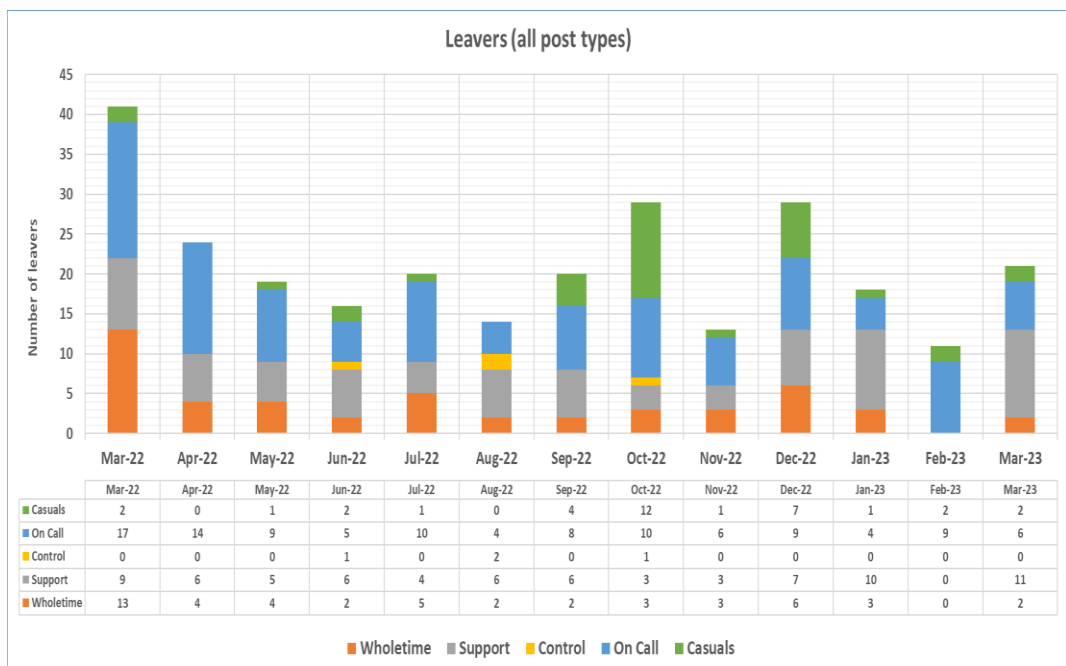
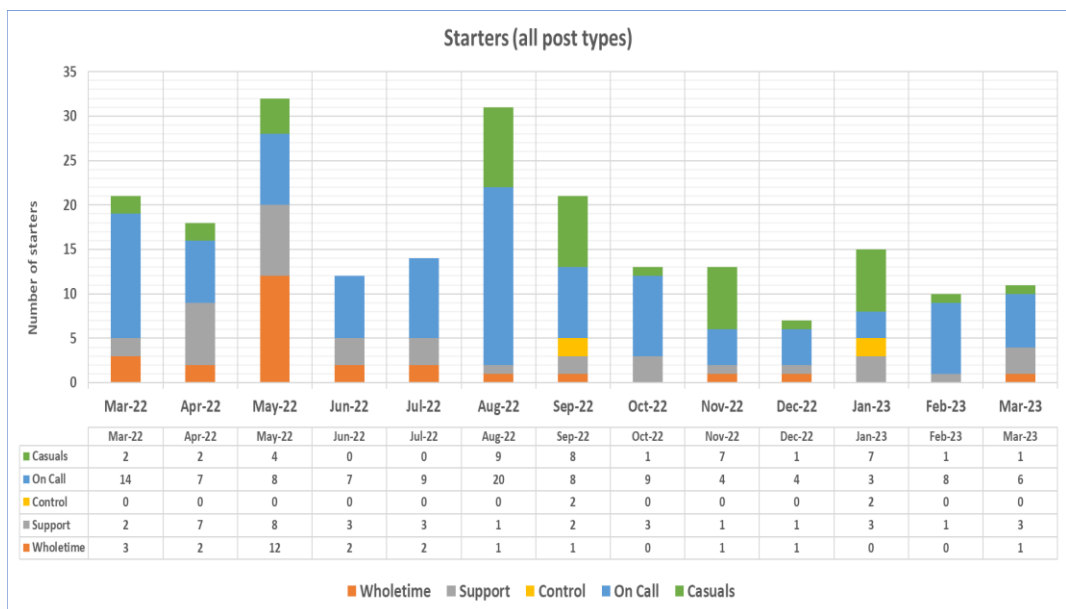
3.9. This data enables the Service to workforce plan effectively in a proactive way, giving assurance on overall establishment numbers and enabling us to identify trends more easily going forward.

3.10. The following iterations of the data presented will start to inform the Committee on trends that are relevant to workforce planning.

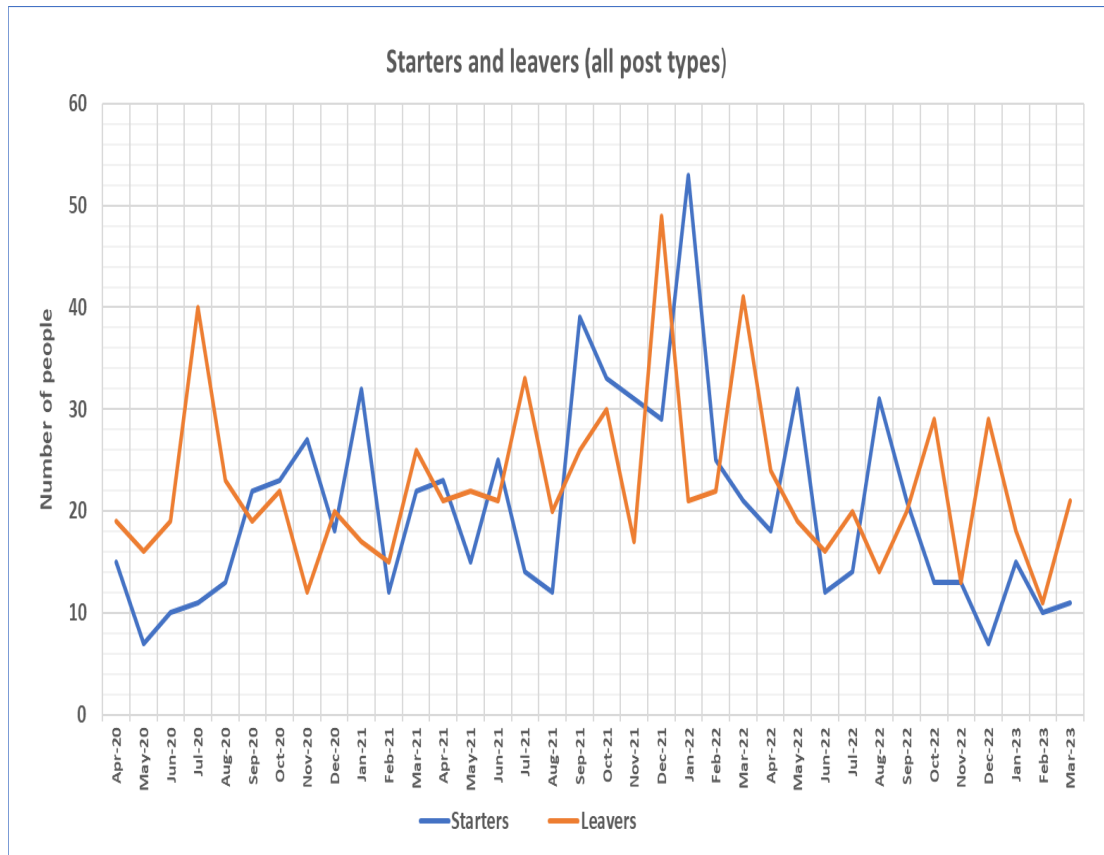
Turnover

3.11. The impact of restricting recruitment activity over the last year has meant that staff numbers are dropping overall in comparison to earlier years. The Service will need to monitor this closely in terms of what can be effectively delivered with reduced resourcing in place.

3.12. The tables below show the last 12 months of starters and leavers.



3.13. The graph below provides an overview of starter and leaver activity (all role types) in the last 3 years:



3.14. Looking at data that is currently available, the highest turnover is from on-call roles. In the 2022-23 year:

- there was a total of 94 on-call leavers (average of 7.8 people per month);
- For support roles, a total of 67 leavers (average of 5.6 per month);
- For wholetime staff, a total of 36 leavers (averaged of 3 per month).

3.15. In terms of starter averages:

- On call totals 93 (average of 7.75 per month);
- Support staff totals 36 (average of 3 per month);
- Wholetime totals 23 (average of 1.9 per month).

3.16. These figures continue to indicate that the Service is losing more staff than it is recruiting for. The Service is currently in the process of establishing some cross-function working groups to better assess the requirements for improving staff engagement and retention levels with on-call colleagues.

- 3.17. The project to implement a new HR system is now underway. This will provide managers with greater visibility of people management data within their teams, including structure, performance, sickness and other absences. Phase 2 of the project (early 2024) will include the introduction of an integrated recruitment module and help to better inform workforce planning at an organisational level. Project benefits include improvements to a number of processes and enable more efficient working practices, but a high level of effort and time will need to be invested to make this implementation successful.

4. **PERFORMANCE MONITORING – STRATEGIC POLICY OBJECTIVE 3(c)**

Strategic Policy Objective 3c) ‘Recognise and maximise the value of all employees, particularly the commitment of on-call firefighters, improving recruitment and retention.’

Recruitment & Retention

- 4.1. Reported above within the update on Strategic Workforce Planning.

Employee Engagement









- 4.2. A new annual staff survey is launching at the end of April 2023, and the response rates and results will be presented in a future report to this Committee.

SHAYNE SCOTT
Director of Finance, People and Estates

APPENDIX A TO REPORT PC/23/4

SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE AGAINST INDICATORS

Quarterly Reporting:

Target area:	Agreed performance measure:	Q1 (2022-23)	Q2 (2022-23)	Q3 (2022-23)	Q4 (2022-23)	Trend
Firefighter Competence	90% (as of October 2022)	1 of 7 core competencies below 95%	1 of 7 core competencies below 95%	1 of 7 core competencies below 90%	0 of 7 core competencies below 90%	
Accidents	Decrease	65	84	55	68	
Near Miss-	Monitor	20	18	14	21	
Personal injuries	Decrease	20	17	15	18	
Vehicle Accidents	Decrease	35	57	36	37	
Short term (average days per person, per month)	Improvement	4.0	4.2	4.7	4.7	
Long term (average days per person, per month)	Improvement	6.3	6.4	5.9	6.0	
Stress related absence (average number of people per month)	Improvement	28	24.3	25	30.5	

APPENDIX B TO REPORT PC/23/4

People Committee Performance Reporting Forward Plan

Meeting scheduled	Reporting on	Subjects
April 2023	Quarter 4	Performance Monitoring report including financial year data: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• RIDDOR reporting,• Workforce planning• Diversity
July 2023	Quarter 1	Performance Monitoring report including financial year data: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• National FRS Sickness comparisons• National FRS H&S comparisons,
September 2023	Quarter 2	Performance Monitoring report including 6 - monthly data: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Workforce planning
January 2024	Quarter 3	Performance Monitoring report including Calendar Year data: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fitness testing,• Grievance, Capability & Disciplinary

Agenda Item 6

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	PC/23/5
MEETING	PEOPLE COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	26 APRIL 2023
SUBJECT OF REPORT	WORKFORCE & RECRUITMENT DIVERSITY REPORT 2022
LEAD OFFICER	DIRECTOR OF FINANCE, PEOPLE AND ESTATES
RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>That the report be noted.</i>
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.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	N/A
EQUALITY RISK AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	N/A
APPENDICES	A. Annual Diversity and recruitment Report 2022
BACKGROUND PAPERS	N/A

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:

- Female representation in operational roles (on-call and wholetime) remains small at 6.5%. This represents a movement of 0.3% over the previous year, but remains below the national fire sector representation of up to 8%.
- For the third year in a row there was a reduction in female on-call new starters, which, at 8, was 2 less than in 2021. However, the overall number of operational posts occupied by a woman increased to the highest ever at 110.
- The 2022 female application percentages for Wholetime and on-call were 13.1% and 15.1% respectively which represents a reduction of 14.2% and 17.7% respectively over the previous year.
- The percentages of female applicants for internal operational promotion opportunities at 4.6% for Wholetime and 8.7% for on-call is broadly in line with the female workforce representation of 6.5%. However, increased success in attracting female applicants at 17% has been observed through the introduction of progression development, i.e. assessment centres which affords access to progression and additional development opportunities.
- The attraction rate from female applicants for Support vacancies reflects the communities of Devon and Somerset at c49%.
- The percentage of applicants with a minority ethnic background 7.8% is near the representation in our community (8%) for externally advertised vacancies. The percentage of minority ethnic new starters in across all positions was 7.5%. Specifically within our wholetime positions this was well above the application rate at 13%.

- Around 1% of new starters in On Call and Wholetime Firefighter positions were people of colour. No people of colour started Professional/ Support roles.
- The representation of people of colour in the service (0.8%) which is 4 times lower than in the communities of Devon & Somerset (4.0%).
- No people of colour were promoted either temporarily or permanently in any of the staff groups. For 2022, there were four applicants in this category who applied for operational promotion.
- External application rates from LGB (anything other than Heterosexual) are higher than the community and identification of staff as LGB, with 2.5% identifying within this category, is slightly lower than the community average of 3.7%
- Female representation in the senior management team increased from 19% to 27% i.e. 1 additional female manager.

3. ACTIONS AND PLAN

- 3.1. Corporate commitments to equality, diversity and inclusion are set out in the Community Risk Management Plan. The plan states how the Service will meet the needs of different communities and vulnerable people to reduce risk and align with the changes needed to support the new target operating model and external inspection outcomes.
- 3.2. The People Committee monitors progress of actions relating to the people aspects of and particularly matters of diversity and inclusion, every three months. In addition, the Service has introduced a Diversity and Inclusion Commission consisting of key stakeholders, including union representatives and staff support network chairs. This Commission has the mandate to propose and agree actions to improve the Services' diversity and inclusion. An action plan is currently under development.
- 3.3. The Service has a process in place to ensure that potential equality impacts are identified and mitigated when preparing or reviewing policies and procedures, including possible racism. The process is called Equality Risks and Benefits Analysis (ERBA) and it helps the Service to deliver better services and working practices as well as ensuring compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty. It sits within a broader assessment, the People Impact Assessment. Besides equality impacts, this assessment also includes impacts on people in relation to wellbeing, data protection, health & safety and safeguarding.
- 3.4. Mandatory equality, diversity & inclusion training has been reviewed and rolled out in line with the cause for concern action plan and the Service is increasing awareness of psychological safety with the aim to improve safety and wellbeing in the workforce. Part of this work will focus on addressing identified levels of unwanted behaviour by introducing learning approaches to build capability in challenging unethical and inappropriate behaviour.

- 3.5. Work to build understanding of and integrating the national code of ethics into relevant processes has been completed and incorporating ethics into a cultural communication and engagement is now business as usual.
- 3.6. The Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion benchmarked the Service against Talent, Inclusion, Diversity & Equality and awarded the Service a Silver Award in August 2022.
- 3.7. New recruitment processes for operational staff are in place with a particular emphasis on eliminating bias including several anonymous stages at the start. 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.
- 3.8. Positive action initiatives in relation to development in the form of Action Learning Sets and a Sponsoring programme continue, with completed sets and sponsoring relationships showing good outcomes.
- 3.9. 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.

SHAYNE SCOTT
Director of Finance, People and Estates



Recruitment & Workforce Diversity Annual Report

January – December 2022

Diversity & Inclusion Team

February 2023

Recruitment & Workforce Diversity Annual Report

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Document Control

Amendment History

Version	Date	Author:	Remarks/Reason to Change
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Sign-Off List

Name	Position
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Distribution List

People Committee
Diversity & Inclusion Commission
Intranet/internet

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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.

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 - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 being 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)

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

2. Methodology

This report has the purpose to identify any potential equality issues within recruitment, retention and promotion.

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 People & Culture 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 all Firefighter recruitment processes in relation to several characteristics. Monitoring this data is not mandatory. Other recruitment workflows are not currently actively monitored in relation to protected characteristics for the stages in between application and starting employment.

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 2021/22 are taken from the data used to support the Communities and [Local Government Association](#) returns which were last updated October 2022.

Data is correct as of 4/1/2023 Only valid data has been analysed. No data gaps have been identified. Some vacancies were still open for applications at the time of data extraction.

The word 'On Call' 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.

'Wholetime' are our group of fulltime Firefighters, working 42 hours per week.

'Minority ethnic group' means all ethnic groups, including people of colour, other than UK white, including Irish, European, Australian etc.

'People of Colour' (PoC) means Black, Asian, mixed and 'other'.

The recruitment system uses 4 classifications for vacancies;

- 1 On Call
- 2 Wholetime
- 3 Promotion/Transfer/Development
- 4 Support, which includes Control

Data from those groups has been split further to separate 'Control' vacancies, 'Promotion On Call', 'Promotion Wholetime', 'Development' opportunities like assessment centres and access to progression pools and 'On Call to Wholetime'.

3. Summary of key observations

The key findings identified in this set of data are:

- Female representation in operational roles (on-call and wholetime) remains small at 6.5%. This represents a movement of 0.3% over the previous year, but remains below the national fire sector representation of up to 8%.
- For the third year in a row there was a reduction in female on-call new starters, which, at 8, was 2 less than in 2021. However, the overall number of operational posts occupied by a woman increased to the highest ever at 110.
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- Around 1% of new starters in On Call and Wholetime Firefighter positions were people of colour. No people of colour started Professional/ Support roles.
- The representation of people of colour in the service (0.8%) which is 4 times lower than in the communities of Devon & Somerset (4.0%).
- No people of colour were promoted either temporarily or permanently in any of the staff groups. For 2022, there were four applicants in this category who applied for operational promotion.
- External application rates from LGB (anything other than Heterosexual) are higher than the community and identification of staff as LGB, with 2.5% identifying within this category, is slightly lower than the community average of 3.7%
- Female representation in the senior management team increased from 19% to 27% i.e. 1 additional female manager.

Actions and plan

Corporate commitments to equality, diversity and inclusion are set out in the Community Risk Management Plan. The plan states how the Service will meet the needs of different communities and vulnerable people to reduce risk and align with

the changes needed to support the new target operating model and external inspection outcomes.

The People Committee monitors progress of actions relating to the people aspects of and particularly matters of diversity and inclusion, every three months. In addition, the Service has introduced a Diversity and Inclusion Commission consisting of key stakeholders, including union representatives and staff support network chairs. This Commission has the mandate to propose and agree actions to improve the Services' diversity and inclusion. An action plan is currently under development.

The Service has a process in place to ensure that potential equality impacts are identified and mitigated when preparing or reviewing policies and procedures, including possible racism. The process is called Equality Risks and Benefits Analysis (ERBA) and it helps the Service to deliver better services and working practices as well as ensuring compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty. It sits within a broader assessment, the People Impact Assessment. Besides equality impacts, this assessment also includes impacts on people in relation to wellbeing, data protection, health & safety and safeguarding.

Mandatory equality, diversity & inclusion training has been reviewed and rolled out in line with the cause for concern action plan and the Service is increasing awareness of psychological safety with the aim to improve safety and wellbeing in the workforce. Part of this work will focus on addressing identified levels of unwanted behaviour by introducing learning approaches to build capability in challenging unethical and inappropriate behaviour.

Work to build understanding of and integrating the national code of ethics into relevant processes has been completed and incorporating ethics into a cultural communication and engagement is now business as usual.

The Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion benchmarked the Service against Talent, Inclusion, Diversity & Equality and awarded the Service a Silver Award in August 2022.

New recruitment processes for operational staff are in place with a particular emphasis on eliminating bias including several anonymous stages at the start. 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.

Positive action initiatives in relation to development in the form of Action Learning Sets and a Sponsoring programme continue, with completed sets and sponsoring relationships showing good outcomes.

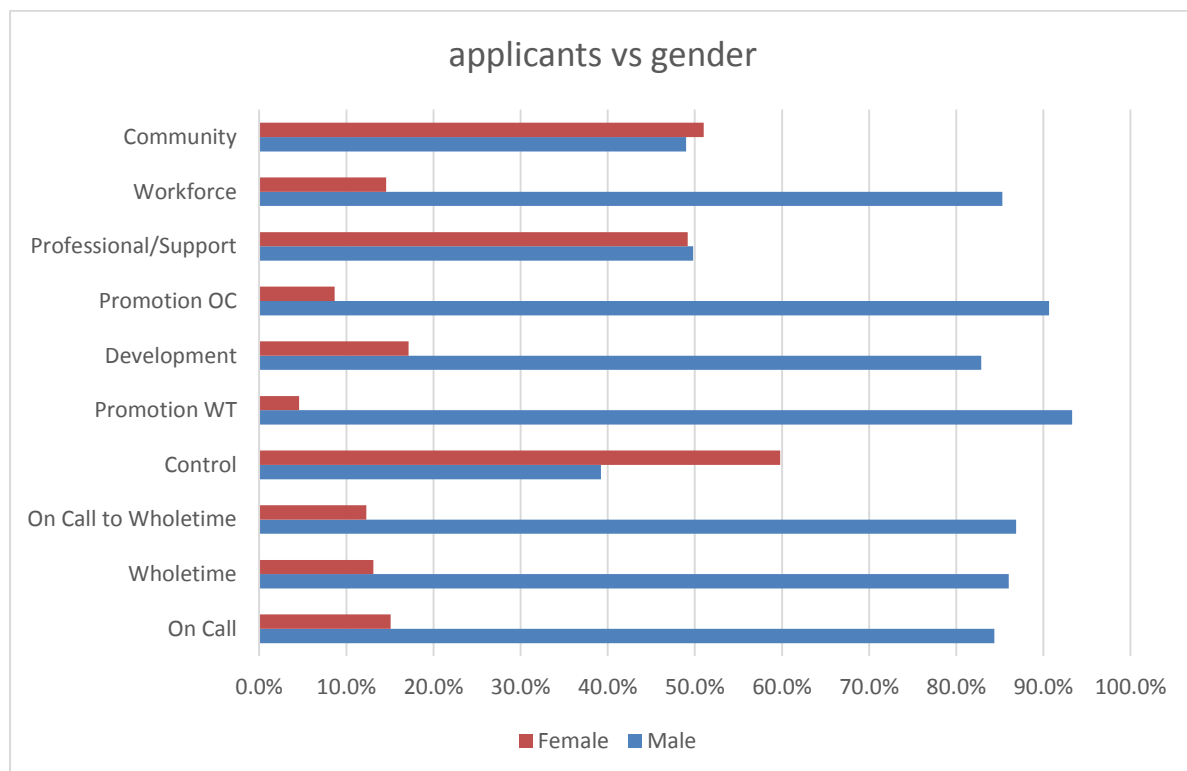
Any positive action work is and will continue to be supported through working closely with the Asian Fire Service Association and the Employer Network of Equality and Inclusion.

4. Recruitment

4.1 general recruitment

In 2022 a total of 2084 applications were received through the recruitment system for 225 advertised vacancies, of which 148 vacancies were advertised externally.

The graph below shows the vacancy type against applicant gender and the gender percentages for the workforce and the Community. The few transgender applicants and staff have not been included in this graph for data protection reasons.

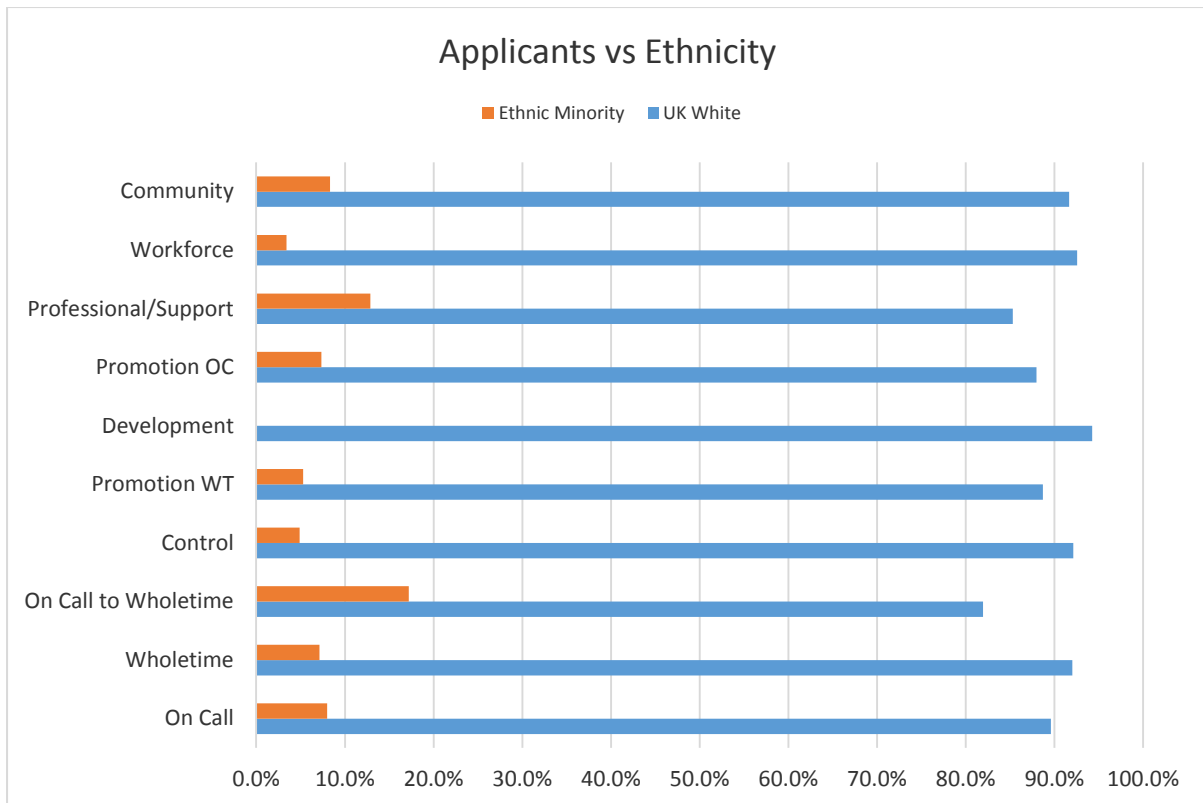


The graph highlights that the Professional/Support application gender balance is very near the gender balance in the working age community. The Control gender balance reflects the workforce representation within that staff group and the type of work.

It also shows a continuing underrepresentation in female applicants in Wholetime and On Call groups. However, the application percentages of 12-13% and 15% are higher than in the representation in the operational workforce (6-7%), but 1-2% lower than in 2021.

Percentages of female applicants for internal operational vacancies remain low as can be expected in an operational workforce with low female representation. Interest from women for progression development was much higher at 17%.

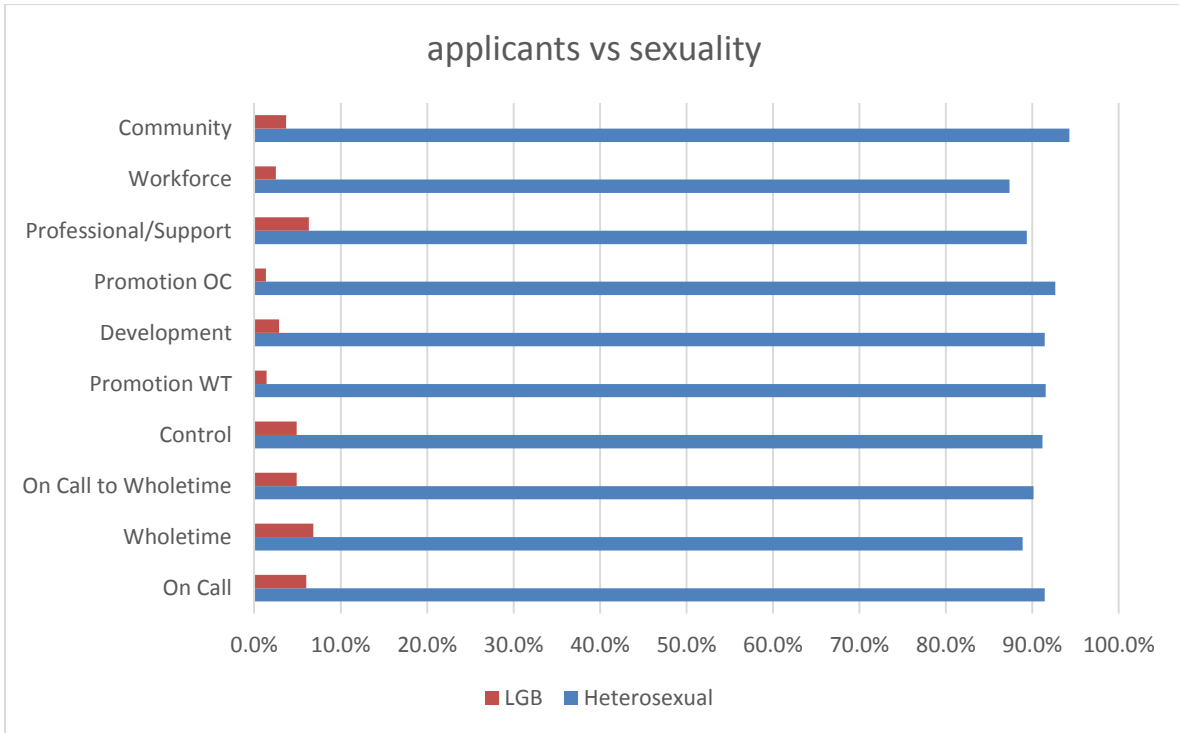
The next graph shows the vacancy type against applicant ethnicity and the ethnicity percentages for the workforce and the Community.



Ethnic minority [representation in Devon and Somerset](#) was 8.3% in 2021. The graph shows that for 2 of the vacancy categories, the minority ethnic group applications are above the representation in the community i.e. On Call to Wholetime 17.2% and Professional/Support 12.9% On Call and Wholetime application percentages are near the community average. Two people of colour started in an operational roles and another 13 people with a minority ethnic background started across the groups.

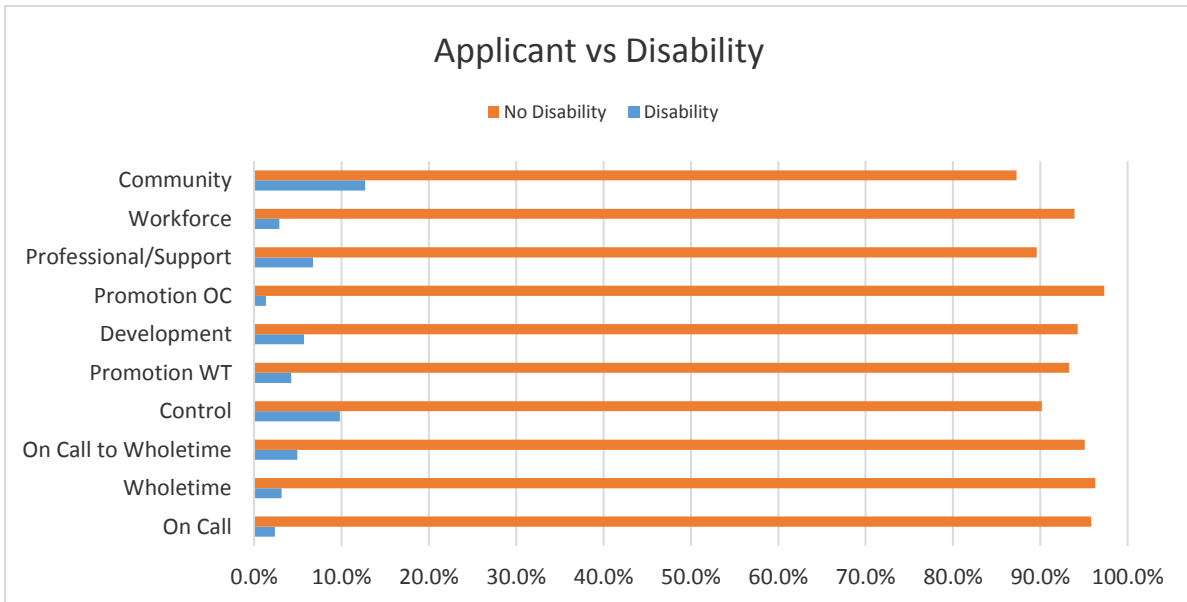
In the promotion, transfer and development groups, which consists mainly of internal/Fire Service applicants, the percentage of ethnic minority applicants is higher than the representation in the workforce as a whole. No one with a minority ethnic background, including people of colour, applied for development opportunities. 2.8% of those promoted identified as having a minority ethnic background and of these 0.5% were people of colour.

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



From the graph it is apparent that the application rates from LGB individuals in all vacancy groups, except the internal promotion, transfer and development groups are a lot higher than the community (3.7%). The Workforce percentage (2.5%) is slightly less than in the community and is similar to hiring percentages. This is despite the 'non-disclosure' rate (10%) for this characteristic.

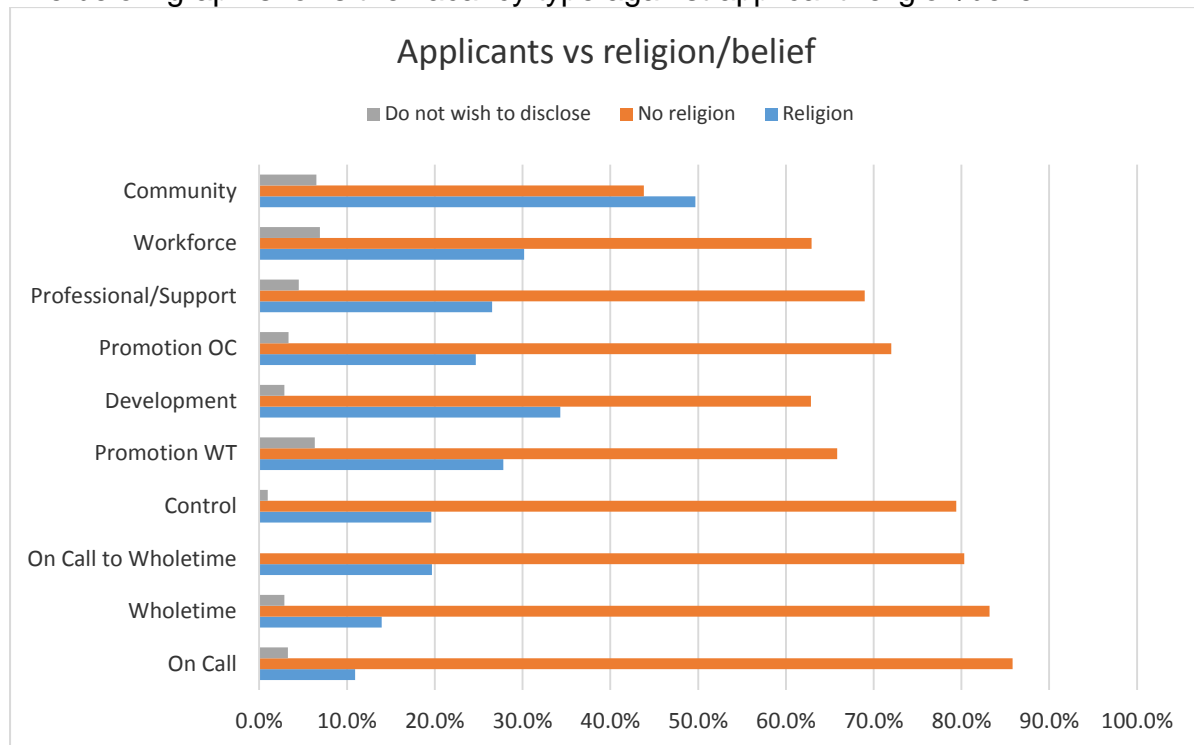
The next graph shows the vacancy type against applicant disability status.



According to the ONS Labour market status A08, in the community 12.7% of people of *working age* live with some sort of disability and are economically active. There are more disabled women than men in the UK. People from white ethnic groups are almost twice as likely as people of colour to have a limiting long-standing illness or disability.

Disabled people are less likely to be in employment. In September 2022 52.6% of disabled people were in employment, down from 54.1% in December 2019. The employment rate for people who are not disabled is around 80%.

The below graph shows the vacancy type against applicant religion/belief.



The main observation in relation to the religion figures is how many applicants (80-90%) and staff (60-70%) 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/belief.

Non-disclosure rates	applicants	new starters
Disability	1.9%	1.7%
Ethnicity	2.7%	2.4%
Sexual orientation	4.3%	4.7%
Religion	3.6%	2.8%

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 from our On Call staff and from external applicants. The latter recruitment opened in 2021 and closed end of June 2022. None of the applicants who applied in 2022 have been hired by the end of the reporting period, but some are still in the process or awaiting vacancies. 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 available through the promotion process.

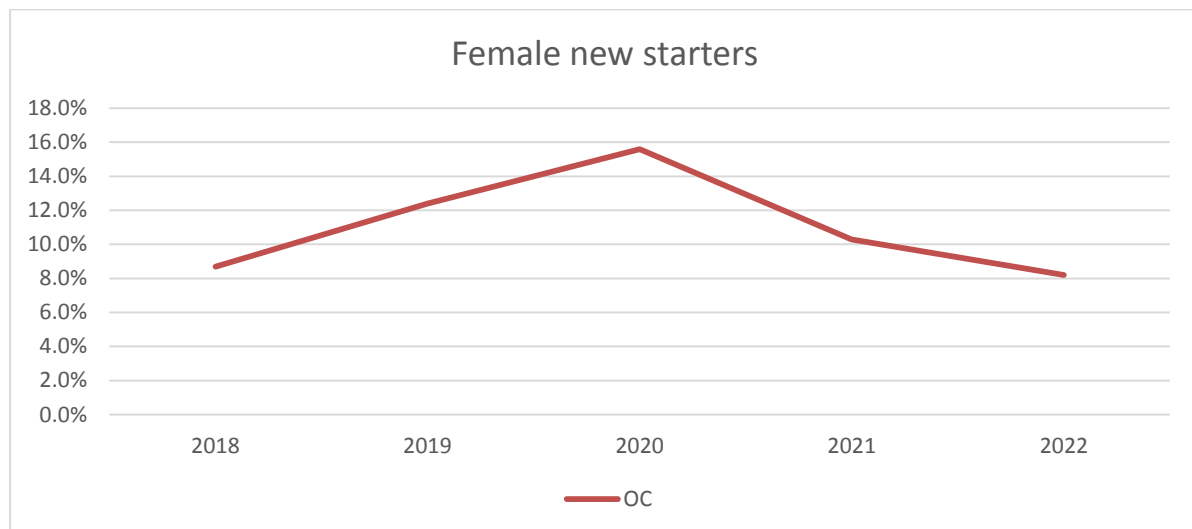
Forty-six external women applied for the position Wholetime Firefighter, 13.1% of all applicants. Of the On Call staff who applied for a Wholetime Firefighter position, 15 were female (12.3%). These percentages are more than twice as high as the female representation in either the Wholetime or On Call staff group.

Sixty-one people started a Wholetime contract. Of these starters 14.8% were female.

Thirteen percent of the new starters in this group identified as belonging to a minority ethnic group (including 1.6% people of colour), which is much higher than the 7.1% of the applicants recording as a member of a minority ethnic group. 3.3% of new starters indicated they consider themselves as having a disability and 6.6% of new starters identify as LGB+, both similar to staff representation.

4.3 On Call recruitment

Eighty-three women (15.1%) applied for positions at On Call stations which were recruiting. The total applicants in 2022 was 550, which is significantly more than in 2021 (404) when 73 women applied. Eight new starters were female (8.2%), 2 less than in 2021 (10.3%), but 13 less than in 2019. All On Call recruits start at Firefighter level.



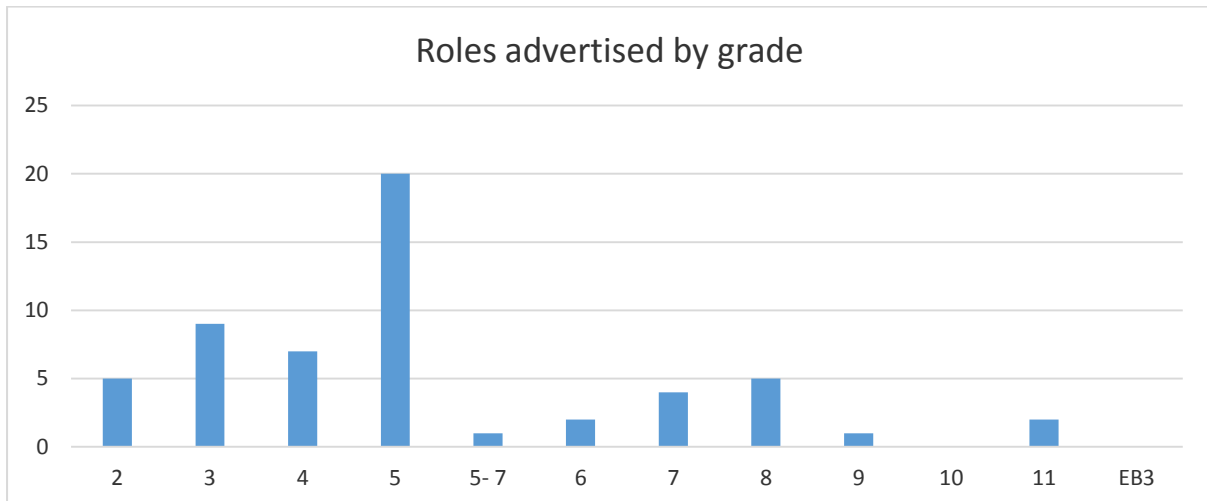
6% of applicants recorded as LGB+, 8% as being a member of a minority ethnic group (including 3.8% people of colour) and 2.4% indicated they considered themselves to have a disability. For the new starters the percentages were respectively 1%, 6.1% and 0%.

4.4 Support Staff recruitment

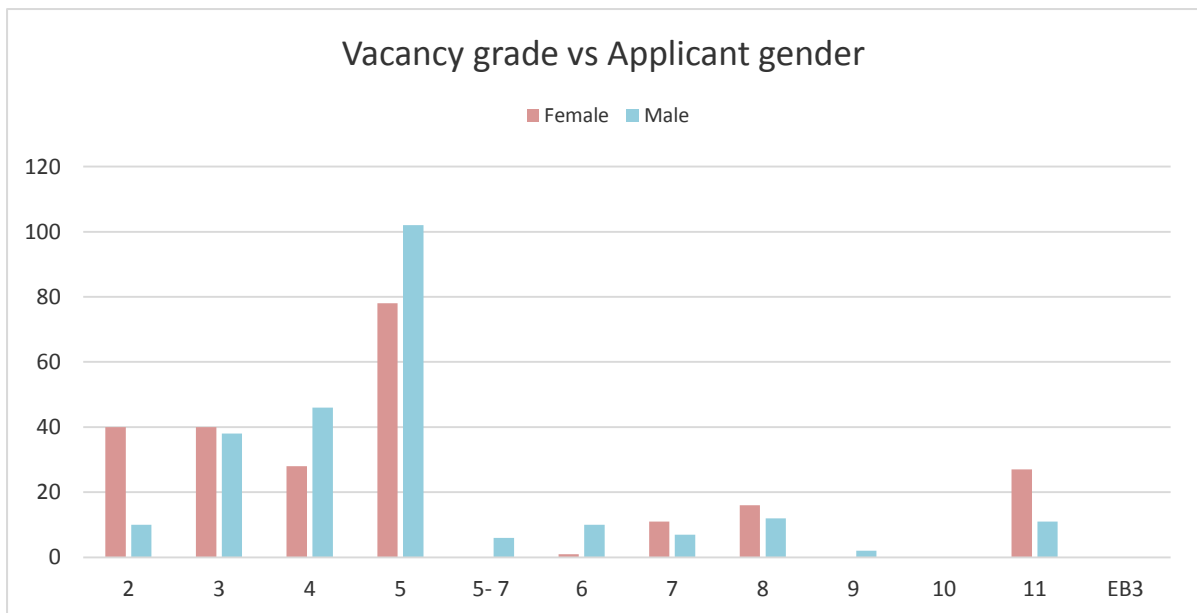
In 2022 490 people applied for 51 advertised positions. Twenty-two jobs were advertised as permanent and 22 as temporary opportunities. A further 4 were casual and 3 variable hours contracts.

The attraction rate for Support vacancies from female applicants (49.2%) is only slightly below the percentage of women of working age in employment (50.5%), and more than 2021 (41%). This may be because of the amount and type of Support Staff vacancies advertised in 2021. 47% of the new starters were female with most of them starting in supervisory roles.

The graph below shows the number of jobs advertised per grade.



Almost all roles with grades 2 and 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 and EB grade roles are within the Executive Board.



Grade 3, 7 and 8 jobs attracted fairly similar amounts of male and female applicants, grade 2 and 11 vacancies had more female applicants than male and grade 4, 5 and 6 had more male applicants than female.

The amount of LGB applicants in this group (6.3%) is higher than in 2019, and more than twice the representation in the workforce and the community. No new starters identify as LGB.

Of the applicants, 12.9% 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%).

Out of 63 applicants who identify as a member of a minority ethnic group (including 47 people of colour) 2 people were successful or appointed who identified as 'White/other' or 'Other'. No people of colour started employment in this group in 2022.

5.1% of applicants indicated they considered themselves to have a disability and 4.4% of new starters did.

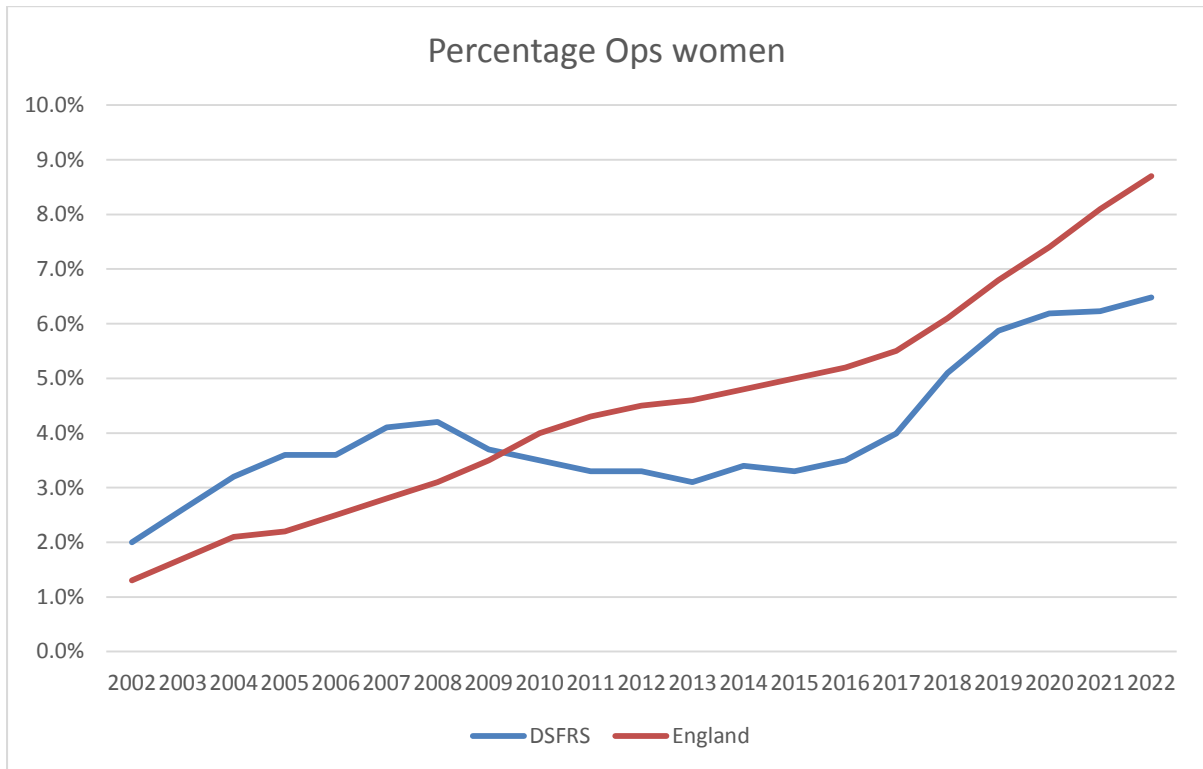
4.5 Control recruitment

Of the 8 Control room positions which were advertised, 3 were advertised as temporary. Seven positions were promotion opportunities and only open for internal applicants. All vacancies included, there were 102 applicants. 59.8% of those were female, 4.9% identified as LGB and 4.9% as a member of a minority ethnic group.

Two external new starters were female and, of the 7 promotions, 4 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 14.6% of the workforce at the end of the period. Within the operational categories this proportion was 6.2% for the On Call group and an increase from 6.3% to 7% for the Wholetime staff. Nationally, these percentages are 6.5% (On Call) and 8.0% (Wholetime). We have 3 Wholetime stations and 34 On Call stations without any women on the team.



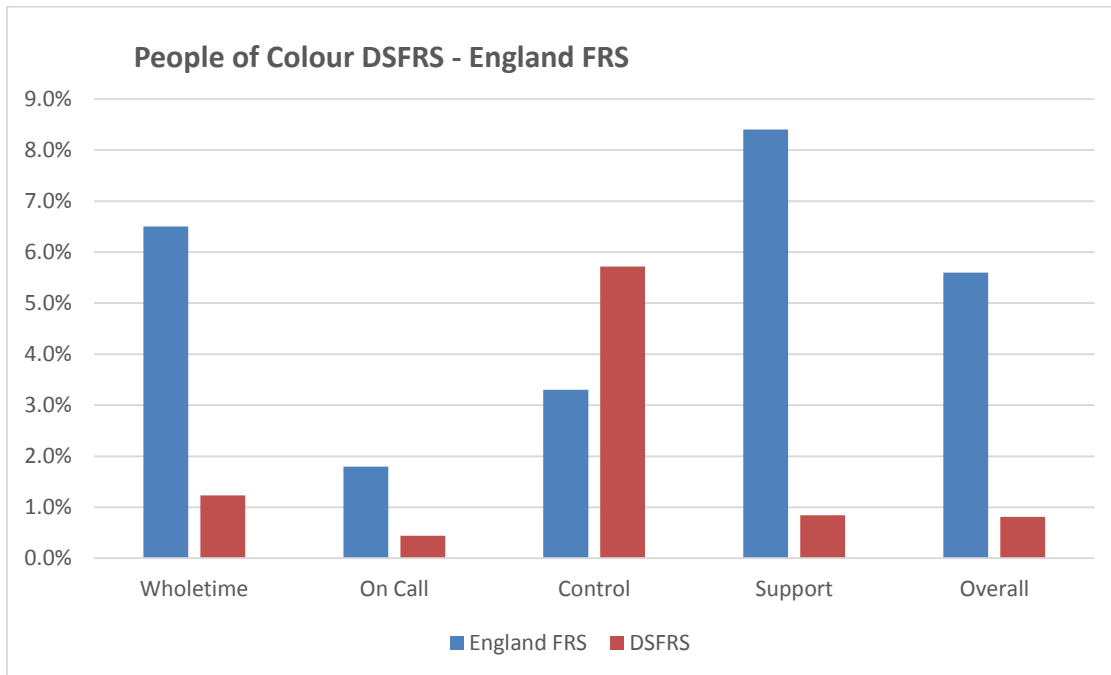
The proportion of female staff in the Support staff group remained at 47% and in the Control staff group it increased from 72.5% to 74.2%. 0.1% of staff identify as transgender.

Not considering the 4.0% of individuals who have chosen not to state their ethnic background, currently the Service's workforce consists of 3.4% ethnic minority staff, slightly up from the beginning of the period when it was 2.8%. The English Fire & Rescue Service average of 'not stated' is 8.7% whilst DSFRS is less than half of that.

It needs to be noted that the 'ethnic minority' category in the [national FRS figures](#) (table FIRE1104) does not include 'White Other' (groups like eastern Europeans, White South Africans, Australians etc), whilst the DSFRS figures do *include* those groups in the term 'ethnic minority' as they have varied cultural backgrounds and on many occasions 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%.

Compared to the English Fire & Rescue Service average of 5.1% for representation of People of Colour (this includes staff who have not stated ethnicity), DSFRS has a much lower diversity. This needs to be considered in view of the community ethnic makeup of the region, which is in general lower than other parts of the country. The community percentage (2021 census) in most areas is 2-4%, but more in urban areas (Exeter 10%, Plymouth 6%). In Devon and Somerset, on average, that percentage is 4%.



The identification as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or other sexuality, with 2.5% identifying within this category, closely reflects the community average of 2.5% (4.5-5% in urban areas). The 'prefer not to say' rate is 7.2%. 'Not stated' (where no data has been provided) has further reduced to 3%.

Besides on average 3.2% of individuals who have chosen not to state whether they have a disability (visible or invisible), currently 2.9% of the Service's workforce has declared a disability. This is far below the average of 12.7% within the community.

As expected, considering the physical nature of the role, only 1.6-3.5% of operational staff indicated that they consider themselves to have a disability. Within the Control and Support staff groups percentages are higher at 4.8-8.6%.

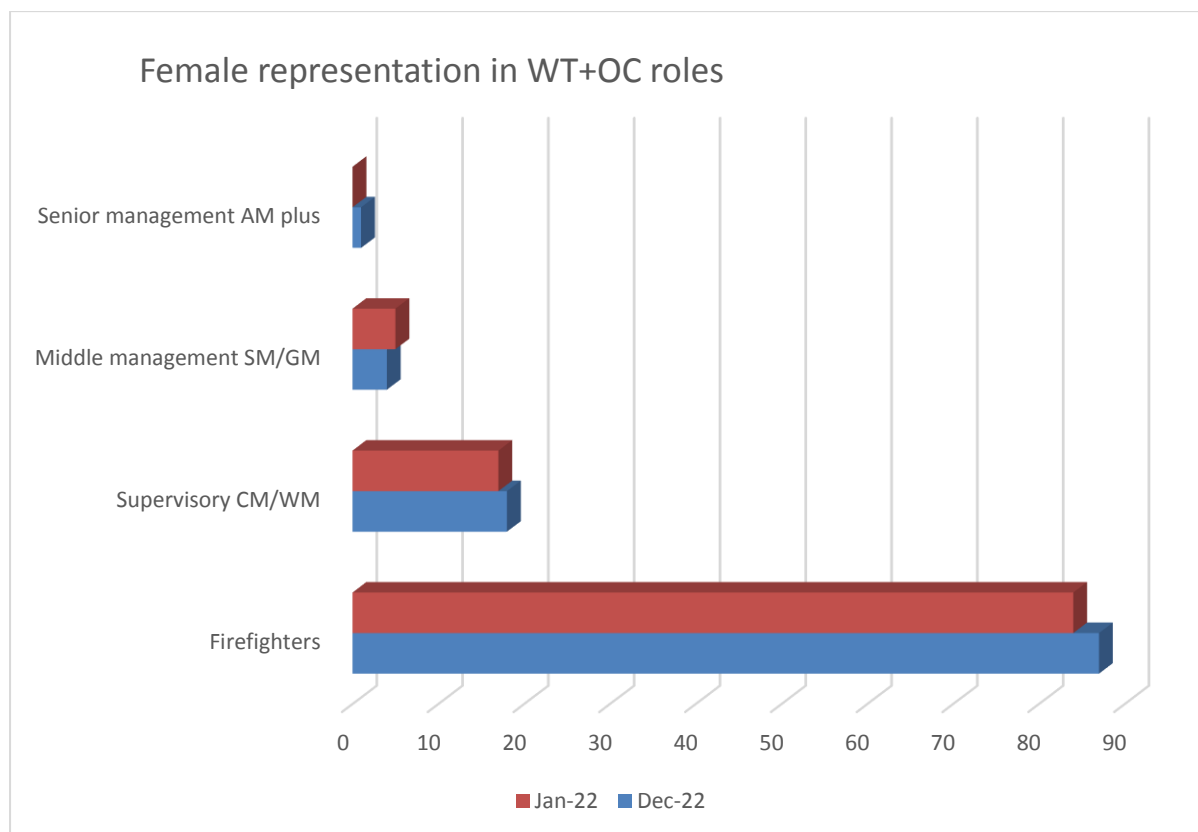
Executive Board and senior management team

In 2022 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, People and Estates and the Director of Governance & Digital Services. All posts were occupied by white men. Due to the size of the group and data protection regulation, no other diversity characteristics can be released.

The senior management team consists of EB and managers with an Area Manager role or Grade 11 and above. At the beginning of the period the representation of women in this group was 19%. During the period 2 women joined the team and 1 man left, which increased the percentage of women to 27%. Other diversity parameters showed no significant change.

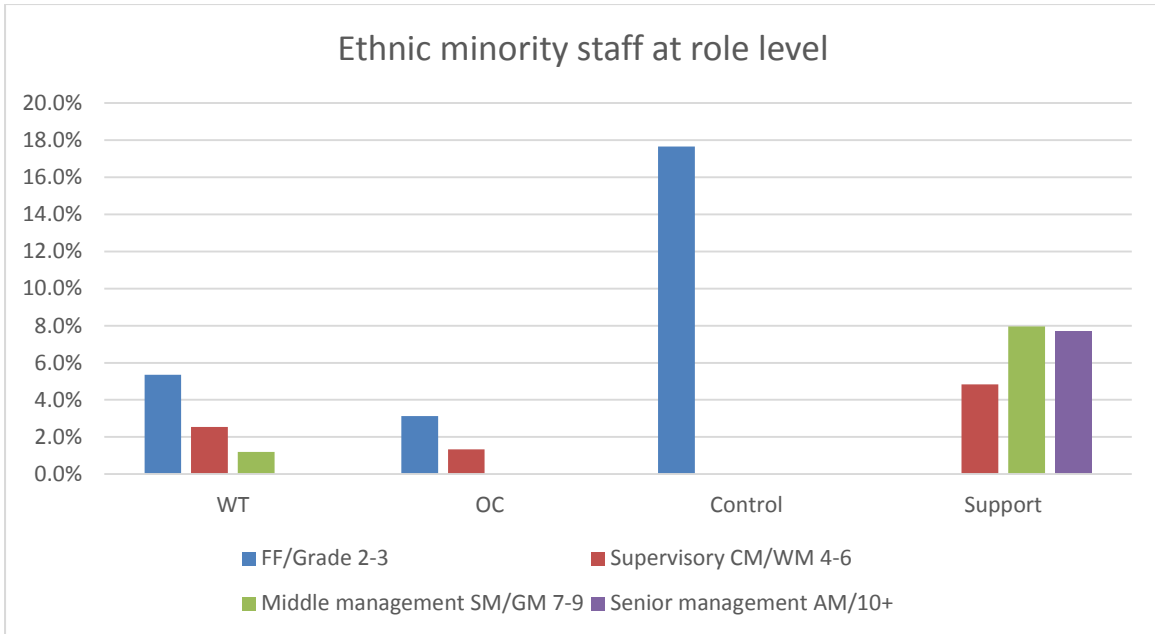
Diversity in other (management) levels

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.



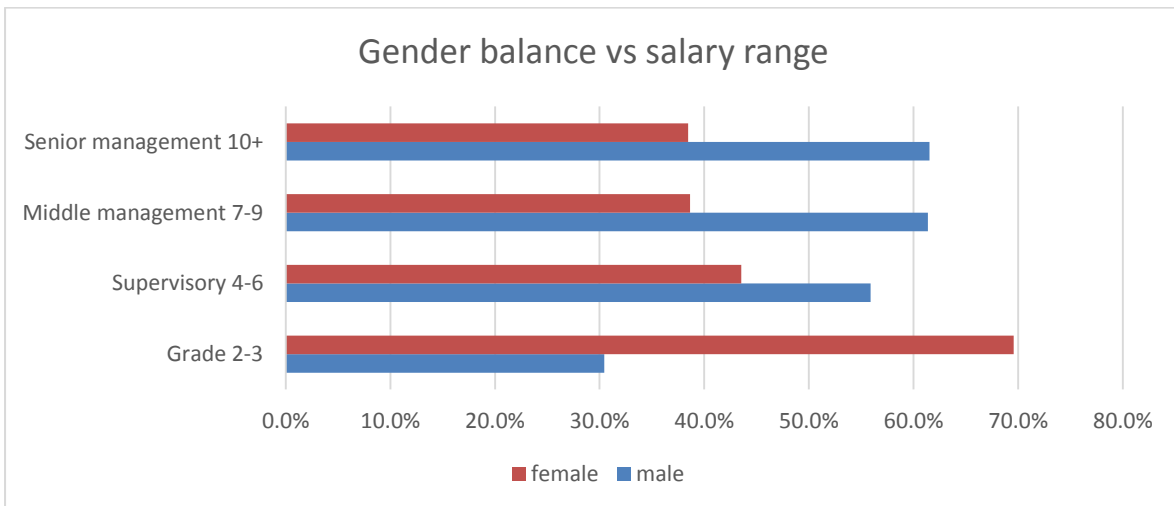
A similar explanation can be used for the distribution of those with an ethnic minority background and people of colour in operational posts where all but two people of colour are at Firefighter level with none in operational middle management roles.

A different pattern emerges in the Support staff group where there is direct entry to every level and a more even distribution can be found with most staff with an ethnic minority background in middle and senior management.



As entry to Support roles can be at any level, 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, although the representation of women in middle and senior management is similar.



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 number of available roles is limiting.

Eighty-one vacancies were advertised as ‘Promotion/Transfer’ for operational staff. 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 214 promotions in this period across all staff groups of which 9.8% concerned female staff, 2.8% staff who identified as a minority ethnic group, 3.3% as LGBT and 3.7% who considered themselves to have a disability.

In the Support group, more women were promoted than men.

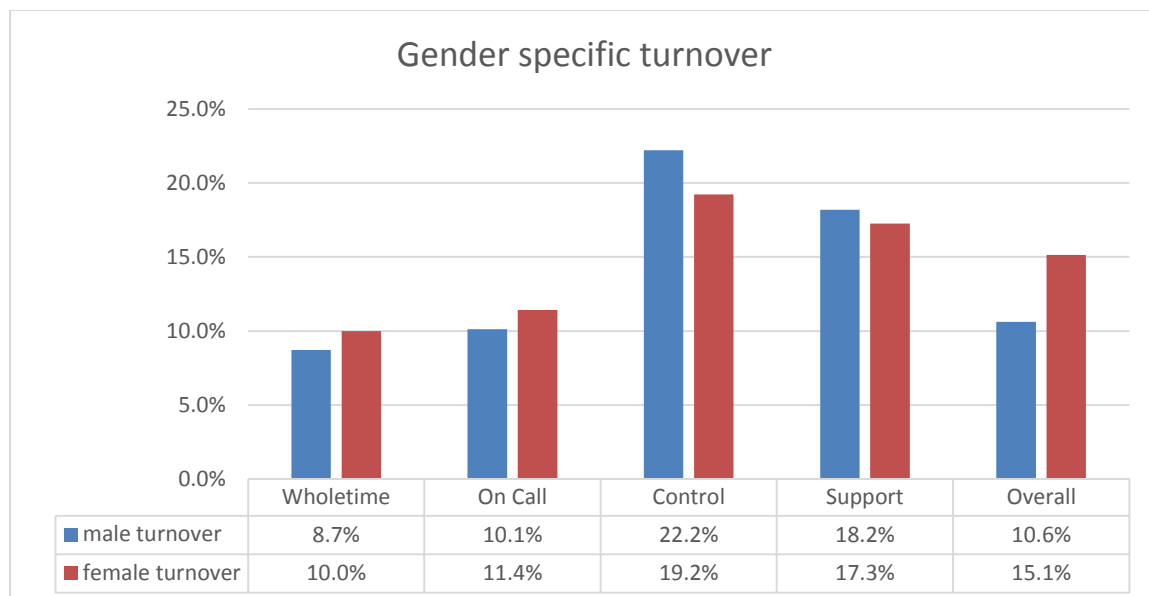
‘White Other’ is the largest minority ethnic group to gain promotion with 1.9% of those being promoted identifying as such. No people of colour were promoted either temporary or permanent in any of the staff groups. This is the same as 2020 and 2021.

7 Leavers

In this period there were 235 leavers; less than last year when 243 people left the Service. The main reason for leaving is voluntary retirement or resignation as a result of a change in personal circumstances.

The resulting turnover rate is 11.3% over all staff categories, with On Call and Wholetime Staff turnover rates 10.2.% and 8.8% respectively. Support Staff was 17.7% and Control 20%. The latter 2 staff groups are smaller and a few individuals leaving has a relatively big impact.

Female turnover is slightly higher (around 1%) than male turnover, the reverse is true for Support and Control staff.



Of the 50 Wholetime leavers, 62% retired and 14% completed their fixed term contract.

In On Call, only 10% left with the reason of retirement. All but 8, of 115, chose to leave voluntarily. After resignation for reasons of work/life balance, the biggest group of leavers are for personal and relocation reasons (30), followed by other/no reason (16) and career break (5).

In Support, voluntary retirement as a reason for leaving was recorded for only 8% of the leavers. The biggest group of leavers did not state a reason (31) and for 9 people their temporary contract came to an end.

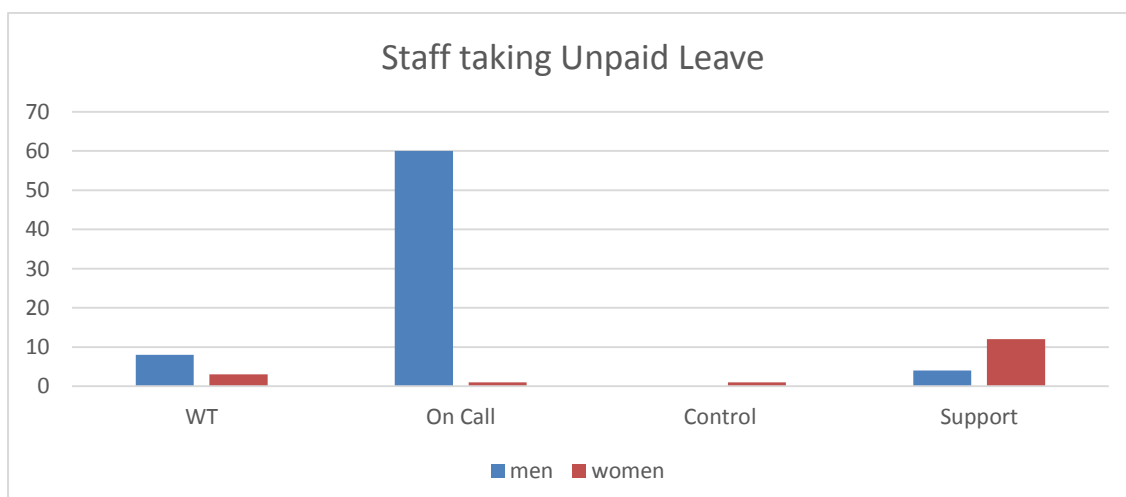
8 Unpaid Leave and Career Breaks

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 which is 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 On Call staff 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 61 occurrences of unpaid leave with an average duration of 93 days, compared to 28 in total by the other staff groups with an average around 20-30 days. Of the 61 occurrences, 7 were taken as Career Break i.e. more than 6 months



9 Discipline and Grievance cases

In this 12 month period 21 discipline cases were initiated of which 19 concerned men and 21 UK/white individuals. Cases have slightly decreased from 29 in the 2021.

Twenty-five grievance cases were raised, of which 24 by UK/white individuals, including 5 women. The number of cases has increased since the last period, most likely as a result of a focus on 'speaking up' and introduction of additional ways to raise concerns.

In total 2 members of staff, 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.

Agenda Item 7

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	PC/23/6
MEETING	PEOPLE COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	26 APRIL 2023
SUBJECT OF REPORT	PEOPLE AND CULTURE UPDATE
LEAD OFFICER	Deputy Chief Fire Officer
RECOMMENDATIONS	That the Committee notes the content of the paper
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	The service has been driving its cultural improvements since 2019. In 2021 His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary & Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) issues the service with a Cause of Concern for its culture, and specifically for how staff treat one another. The Executive Board has developed an action plan and provides the strategic leadership and drive through the DCFO. Several actions have been complete or are on track for completion. Our cultural improvements and plan are also measured against the outcomes of national recommendations, such as the LFB independent cultural review, the Met Police cultural review and the spotlight report published by the HMICFRS. The service continues to drive the improvements through staff engagement and the delivery of initiatives and training.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	Considered within the Action Plan where appropriate.
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	Considered within the Action Plan where appropriate.
APPENDICES	None
BACKGROUND PAPERS	HMICFRS Report – Values and Culture in Fire and Rescue Services

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Since 2019, the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service (the Service) has had a focus on driving cultural improvements following an area for improvement highlighted by the 2019 (His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary & Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) report. In 2021, the HMICFRS issues the Service with a Cause of Concern for its culture, and specifically for how staff treat one another. The Executive Board has developed an action plan and provides the strategic leadership and drive through the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO). A number of actions have been complete or are on track for completion. The Service's cultural improvements and plan are also measured against the outcomes of national recommendations, such as the London Fire Brigade (LFB) independent cultural review, the Metropolitan Police cultural review and the spotlight report published by the HMICFRS. The service continues to drive the improvements through staff engagement and the delivery of initiatives and training.
- 1.2. The paper below has been written to show the progress made and the continued focus on cultural improvement by the Executive Board.

2. PROGRESS ON IMPROVING CULTURE SINCE 2019

- 2.1 In 2019, the Government Equality Office released guidance aiming to reduce the gender pay gap, again highlighting the importance of creating an inclusive culture and supporting women's careers and progression for part time workers.
- 2.2 Within the above guidance, recommendations were made to facilitate a sponsorship programme for women. The Service initiated a collaboration with Devon & Cornwall Constabulary, Dorset Constabulary and Devon County Council to facilitate implementation of a sponsorship programme, 'Our Time', originating from Greater London Authority with the aim to remove barriers to increasing diversity and inclusivity in our workforce particularly in relation to progression for female staff. The first cohort of women participating in the programme began their 12-month sponsorship in June 2020, with the second starting in September 2022.
- 2.3 Evaluation of the first cohort demonstrated that the women who took part found it valuable, and three of the cohort have since been promoted. The Service will continue to evaluate and review the model to ensure that those who take part do not have any barriers to participation, can continue their development after finishing the programme and support the development of others.
- 2.4 Other initiatives in relation to progression include Action Learning Sets, undertaken in collaboration with various regional emergency service partners.

- 2.5 Since 2019, the Service has been a member of the Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion (ENEI), which is a leading employer network covering all aspects of equality and inclusion in the workplace. They provide guidance, support around developing policies and facilitate benchmarking through an assessment called TIDE. This assessment measures an organisation's approach and progress on diversity and inclusion (D&I) in areas like Strategy, Leadership, Recruitment Training, Communication and Procurement.
- 2.6 In 2018/19, the Service completed the assessment for the first time and received a Bronze Award. In the year 2019/20, the Service received a Silver Award, which was maintained for 2022/23.
- 2.7 In December 2020, the Service introduced the intervention programme 'Safe To'. The intervention aims to foster organisation-wide psychological safety so our people feel included, safe to learn, safe to contribute, and safe to challenge.
- 2.8 This work also supports the Service in developing an engaged safety culture, improving behaviours around health and safety in the workplace.
- 2.9 The Service has also developed a toolkit, the Respect and Fairness Toolkit (RAFT), to provide staff with options and resources needed to deal with experiencing, witnessing or managing unwanted behaviour.
- 2.10 The Diversity & Inclusion policy has been published and implementation has commenced. The purpose of this policy is to ensure we promote an environment and culture that is consistent with our values and code of ethics, where individuals are valued and treated with respect and fairness.
- 2.11 The implementation of the Core Code of Ethics is continuing to feature in reviews of policies, procedures and training in line with the gap analysis undertaken. 'Leading Conversation' sessions for middle and senior management have raised awareness of the Core Code of ethics and training at On Call Watch Manager meetings is being undertaken on a face-to-face basis, bringing together the concepts of Safe To, acceptable and unacceptable behaviours, and introducing the Core Code of Ethics.

3. PROGRESS AGAINST THE CAUSE OF CONCERN

3.1. In July 2022, HMICFRS published the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service (DSFRS) 2021 inspection report. The report included a Cause of Concern in relation to values and behaviours.

3.2. The Cause of Concern is as follows:

The service has shown a clear intent from the executive board to improve the culture of the service. However, more needs to be done throughout the organisation. We have found evidence of poor behaviours that are not in line with service values. Some staff didn't have the confidence to report these issues. By 31st August 2022, the service should develop an action plan to:

- Make sure that its values and behaviours are understood and demonstrated at all levels of the organisation.; and
 - Make sure that staff are trained and supported to identify and challenge inappropriate behaviour when identified and that they have clear mechanisms in place to raise their concerns.
- 3.3. 23 actions were established to address the Cause of Concern, Progress against these actions is detailed below.
- 3.4. Two new eLearning packages on Diversity and Inclusion, one for all staff and one for managers, have been completed by 96% of the workforce (as at 12 April 2023). This is now a required annual assessment and a core skill on the competency dashboard.
- 3.5. The Service is in the process of delivering a new training presentation on values, behaviours and ethics through senior and middle managers. As at 13/04/2023, 90% of staff had undertaken this training. There has already been great feedback about the training from teams across the Service. In addition to this, work continues around 'Safe To', ensuring individuals feel safe to learn, contribute and challenge, and the 'It's ok, it's not ok' campaign which outlines appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.
- 3.6. All inappropriate material has been removed from Service premises. Managers continue to monitor workplaces to ensure that no new inappropriate material is introduced.
- 3.7. Mandatory questions on bullying, harassment and discrimination have been added to PPDs which are now being completed through a new PPD form, introduced on 10 March 2023.
- 3.8. The Service has agreed to develop three expectations charters; a trainee/ trainer charter, a customer service charter (external) and an internal charter for staff. The trainee/ trainer charter and the customer service charters are in development and currently both out for consultation and review. Work has started on developing the internal charter through work with the Service's Cultural Leads.
- 3.9. A presentation and input on expected behaviours, role modelling, values and ethics was delivered to managers (Station Manager/Grade 7 and above) at leading conversations events on 3 November 2022, 10 November 2022 and 28 November 2022. 138 individuals attended one of these events out of a possible 208 members of eligible staff. After the events, the presentations were made available via Yammer for those unable to attend.
- 3.10. New optional performance and conflict training for managers has been made available via the eLearning portal.

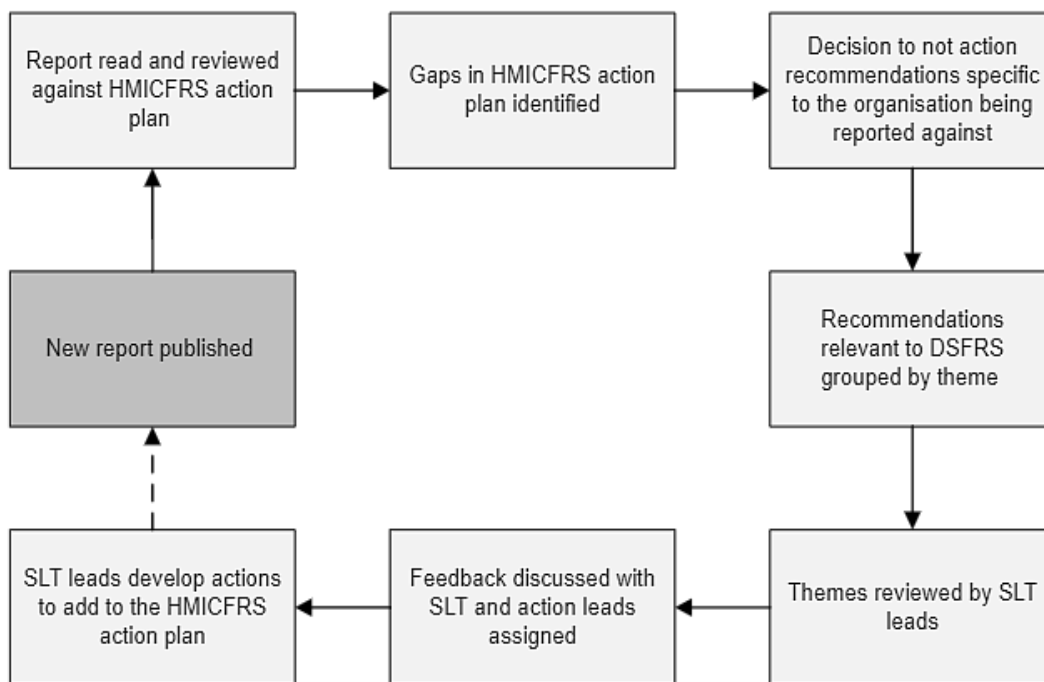
- 3.11. The first communication to the workforce on concluded disciplinaries was published in the Chief Fire Officer's blog on 24 February 2023. These are expected to be published on a monthly basis. A report has been produced for EB on grievance and disciplinary cases to include type of case, speed of completion and outcome.
- 3.12. All standard DSFRS presentation templates now have a slide on values, expected behaviours and ethics.
- 3.13. A confidential reporting line has been established where individuals can raise concerns directly to the Deputy Chief Fire Officer. The confidential reporting line was launched on 01/02/2023 in a blog by the Chief Fire Officer (CFO). The reporting line is open to all members of staff and involves leaving a message via voicemail. In the blog, the Chief also outlined that the Service are also welcoming feedback on concerns via email or post. The Respect and Fairness Toolkit was also linked.
- 3.14. The Executive Board has now approved the plans to implement a 'Freedom to Speak Up Guardian' in Service as part of an existing role. A working group was established to develop the initial concept, and progress continues through work with the Organisational Development department.
- 3.15. An Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Commission has been established, which includes representation from representative bodies, staff support groups and service leaders. The commissions aims to ensure there is collective ownership and coordinated action towards addressing diversity and inclusion challenges, both within the Service and with the communities we serve.
- 3.16. Questions on culture and ethics are now included in the recruitment and selection processes.
- 3.17. A working group has been created to revise our onboarding and induction process for all staff, specifically but not solely, to include the setting of expectations of behaviour, values and ethics.
- 3.18. A number of other services were identified as doing well in the people pillar. As a result of this, internal HMI Team facilitated meetings between Merseyside, Oxfordshire and Lancashire and DSFRS. These meetings included discussion around leadership training, staff networks, staff engagement and feedback, positive action and mental health and wellbeing.

4. LEARNING FROM OTHER SERVICES

- 4.1. As a service, it is important to consider learning from other organisations and how this may link to improvements internally. Over the past couple of months, the HMI Team have undertaken a review of the recommendations outlined in the London Fire Brigade Independent Culture Review, the Met Police Culture Review and the HMICFRS report on Values and Culture in Fire and Rescue Services.

4.2. The methodology for reviewing these reports is outlined in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1 – Methodology for Reviewing Learning from Other Services



4.3. The review of these reports has been undertaken using the same process for each. The report is reviewed by the HMI Team against current actions in the Service’s HMICFRS action plan and any gaps are identified. Recommendations from the report are considered in relation to relevance to the Service with a decision not to action recommendations specific to the organisation being reported against, or in the case of the HMICFRS culture review, those which are for national level action. Recommendations relevant to DSFRS are the grouped by theme and reviewed by SLT. Feedback from SLT is discussed and action leads assigned. It is the responsibility of these leads to then develop actions to add to the HMICFRS action plan, either under existing improvement areas or under the new improvement area that the Service has created, ‘Learning from Other Services’.

5. **HMICFRS REPORT – VALUES AND CULTURE IN FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES**

5.1. On Friday 31 March 2023, HMICFRS published a report into the values and culture in fire and rescue services. The report contains 35 recommendations, 1 specific for the police, 16 which require action at a national level and 18 which are specific for fire and rescue services.

5.2. Table 1 overleaf outlines the 18 recommendations which are specific to fire and rescue services.

Recommendation	Details
1: Confidential Reporting	By 1 October 2023, chief fire officers should make sure their services provide a confidential way for staff to raise concerns and that staff are aware of whistleblowing processes.
3: Support for individuals raising concerns	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should review the support available for those who have raised concerns and take any action needed to make sure these provisions are suitable.
4: Handling of raised concerns	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should assure themselves that updates on how concerns are being handled are shared with those who have raised them. The updates should be given in an accessible way that encourages trust and confidence in the service response. Consideration should be given to creating a professional standards function to handle conduct concerns in service (or from an external service) to have oversight of cases, to make sure they are conducted in a fair and transparent way and to act as a point of contact for all staff involved.
5: How to raise concerns (staff and public)	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should make sure they provide accessible information for all staff and members of the public on how they can raise concerns and access confidential support (including through external agencies). Chief fire officers should also make sure accessible information is provided on how concerns and allegations will be investigated in a way that ensures confidentiality and is independent of the alleged perpetrator.
9: Background Checks	<p>By 1 January 2024, chief fire officers should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediately review their current background checks arrangements, and make sure that suitable and sufficient background checks are in place to safeguard their staff and communities they serve; and • Make sure that appropriate DBS check requests have been submitted for all existing, new staff, and volunteers, according to their roles as identified by the Fire Standards Board.
14: Misconduct Allegations standard	By 1 March 2024, chief fire officers should provide assurances to HMICFRS that they have implemented the standard on misconduct allegations and outcomes handling.

Recommendation	Details
17: Allegations of staff gross misconduct	<p>With immediate effect, chief fire officers should notify HMICFRS of any allegations that have the potential to constitute staff gross misconduct that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve allegations of a criminal nature that have the potential to affect public confidence in FRSs; • Are of a serious nature; or • Relate to assistant chief fire officers or those at equivalent or higher grades.
18: Support during ongoing investigations	By 1 August 2023, chief fire officers should provide assurances to HMICFRS that all parties are supported in relation to ongoing investigations.
20: Fire Standards	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should have plans in place to ensure they meet the Fire Standards Board's leading the service standard and its leading and developing people standard.
21: 360 Feedback (ACFO and above)	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should make sure there is a full, 360-degree feedback process in place for all senior leaders and managers (assistant chief fire officer equivalent and above) in service.
22: 360 Feedback (all managers)	<p>By 1 September 2023, chief fire officers should make sure there is a full, 360-degree feedback process in place for all other leaders and managers in service. The process should include gathering feedback from a wide range of sources including colleagues and direct reports.</p>
23: Feedback from staff	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should seek regular feedback from staff about values, culture, fairness and diversity, with due regard to the leading and developing people standard. They should show how they act on this feedback.
24: Monitoring and Evaluating Feedback	By 1 October 2023, chief fire officers should put plans in place to monitor, including through the gathering and analysis of staff feedback, watch and team cultures and provide prompt remedial action for any issues they identify.
27: Equality Impact Assessments	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should make sure their equality impact assessments are fit for purpose and, as a minimum, meet the requirements of the National Fire Chiefs Council equality impact assessment toolkit.

Recommendation	Details
28: Equality and Diversity Data	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should review how they gather and use equality and diversity data to improve their understanding of their staff demographics, including applying and meeting the requirements of the National Fire Chiefs Council equality, diversity and inclusion data toolkit.
32: Diversity in succession planning	By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should, as a priority, specify in succession plans how they intend to improve diversity across all levels of the service. This should include offering increased direct-entry opportunities.
33: Progression of non-operational staff	By 1 August 2023, chief fire officers should develop plans to promote progression paths for existing staff in non-operational roles and put plans in place to reduce any inequalities of opportunity.
34: Code of Ethics	With immediate effect, chief fire officers should review their implementation of the Core Code of Ethics and make sure it is being applied across their services.

- 5.3. The HMI Team have reviewed these recommendations against the current HMICFRS action plan to identify areas which are already captured within existing actions and where additional actions may need to be undertaken in order to address the recommendation. This analysis also considered existing actions with target completion dates that needed to be moved to meet the new deadlines outlined.
- 5.4. Figure 2 overleaf outlines this analysis. Recommendations highlighted in green are linked to an existing Area for Improvement (AFI) and on-track for the completion deadline outlined within the recommendation, orange is the recommendation links to an existing AFI but the target completion date needs to be moved to align with the completion deadline, and red is no current link to an AFI. It is important to note that recommendations are shown as red solely based on whether or not they link to a current AFI being tracked through the HMICFRS action tracker. This does not suggest that there is no work going on to achieve them.

Figure 2 – Analysis of Recommendations against HMICFRS Action Plan

Recommendation 1 Confidential Reporting	Recommendation 3 Support for individuals raising concerns	Recommendation 4 Handling of raised concerns
Recommendation 5 How to raise concerns (staff and public)	Recommendation 9 Background Checks	Recommendation 14 Misconduct Allegations standard
Recommendation 17 Allegations of staff gross misconduct	Recommendation 18 Support during ongoing investigations	Recommendation 20 Fire Standards
Recommendation 21 360 Feedback (ACFO and above)	Recommendation 22 360 Feedback (all managers)	Recommendation 23 Feedback from staff
Recommendation 24 Monitoring and Evaluating Feedback	Recommendation 27 Equality Impact Assessments	Recommendation 28 Equality and Diversity Data
Recommendation 32 Diversity in succession planning	Recommendation 33 Progression of non-operational staff	Recommendation 34 Core Code of Ethics

- 5.5. Service Leadership Team (SLT) Leads have been assigned responsibility for each recommendation and meetings are being held to discuss the additional actions required.
- 5.6. The actions will be reviewed and discussed, including any identified barriers to completion, at a full SLT meeting on Wednesday 19 April 2023.
- 5.7. Updates will be provided to the HMI Team and uploaded to the same software used to manage the HMICFRS action tracker (SharpCloud). The tracking and management of actions against these recommendations will also follow the same governance process as the HMICFRS action plan, coordinated centrally by the HMI Team.

GAVIN ELLIS
Deputy Chief Fire Officer

Agenda Item 8

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	PC/23/7
MEETING	PEOPLE COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	26 APRIL 2023
SUBJECT OF REPORT	HMICFRS CAUSE OF CONCERN AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN UPDATE
LEAD OFFICER	Deputy Chief Fire Officer
RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>That the Committee reviews progress in delivery of the action plan.</i>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>On Wednesday 27th July 2022, His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary & Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) published the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service (DSFRS) 2022 inspection report. The inspection report identified one Cause of Concern and 14 Areas for Improvement (AFIs). Of these AFIs, eight have been linked to the People Committee.</p> <p>The paper appended to this report outlines the progress that has been made against the HMICFRS Cause of Concern and Areas for Improvement action plans since the last update to the committee in January 2023. The key highlights are that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seven actions within the Cause of Concern action plan are currently recorded as ‘In Progress – Off Track’. This is due to the following factors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 01a.03: 90% of individuals have completed the training presentation on values, behaviours and ethics. A decision needs to be made on the target completion level for all staff across the Service. - 01a.06: This action has been delayed due to problems with the current PPD system and therefore is off track as its target completion date (28/02/2023) has now passed. - 01a.07: This action has been changed to now include three charters instead of the four originally planned. These will be trainer/ trainee charter, customer service charter (external) and an internal charter between staff. Work is already being progressed on the trainee/ trainer and external charters, the internal charter will now be developed. - 01a.08/ 01b.01: The first core brief on culture will form part of the next ACFO blog and additional training will be delivered through Innovation Central. This action has been marked as off track as its target completion date (31/12/2022) has now passed.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 01b.08: Support has been given from the Organisational Development department to incorporate the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian into an existing role. Due to the approach taken to establish this role, through consultation with a working group, the action has taken longer than expected to complete. EB have agreed that the action will remain as 'Off Track' until the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian has been established. - 01b.11: This action has been completed but there is an issue with the policy management system and getting the policy approved. This action has been marked as off track as its target completion date (28/02/2023) has now passed. • 1 action within the Areas for Improvement action plan is currently recorded as 'In Progress – Off Track'. This is because action 01a.06 'PPDs to be completed in line with policy and recorded on Workbench' (outlined as off track in the Cause of Concern update above) is also linked to HMI-3.4-202214 (PDR Process), which is therefore now also showing as off track. • 1 Area for Improvement, HMI-3.4-202215 (High Potential Staff) has been paused due to dependencies on the Area for Improvement around the selection and promotions process (HMI-3.4-202213).
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	Considered within the Action Plan where appropriate.
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	Considered within the Action Plan where appropriate.
APPENDICES	A: HMI People Committee Update
BACKGROUND PAPERS	None



DEVON &
SOMERSET
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

HMICFRS Action Plan People Committee Update

HMI Team

Devon & Somerset
Fire & Rescue Service

April 2023

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. On Wednesday 27 July 2022, His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary & Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) published the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service (DSFRS) 2022 inspection report. The inspection report identified one Cause of Concern and 14 Areas for Improvement (AFIs).
- 1.2. This report provides an update on the Cause of Concern and Areas For Improvement action plans that have been produced following the inspection, which concluded in October 2021.

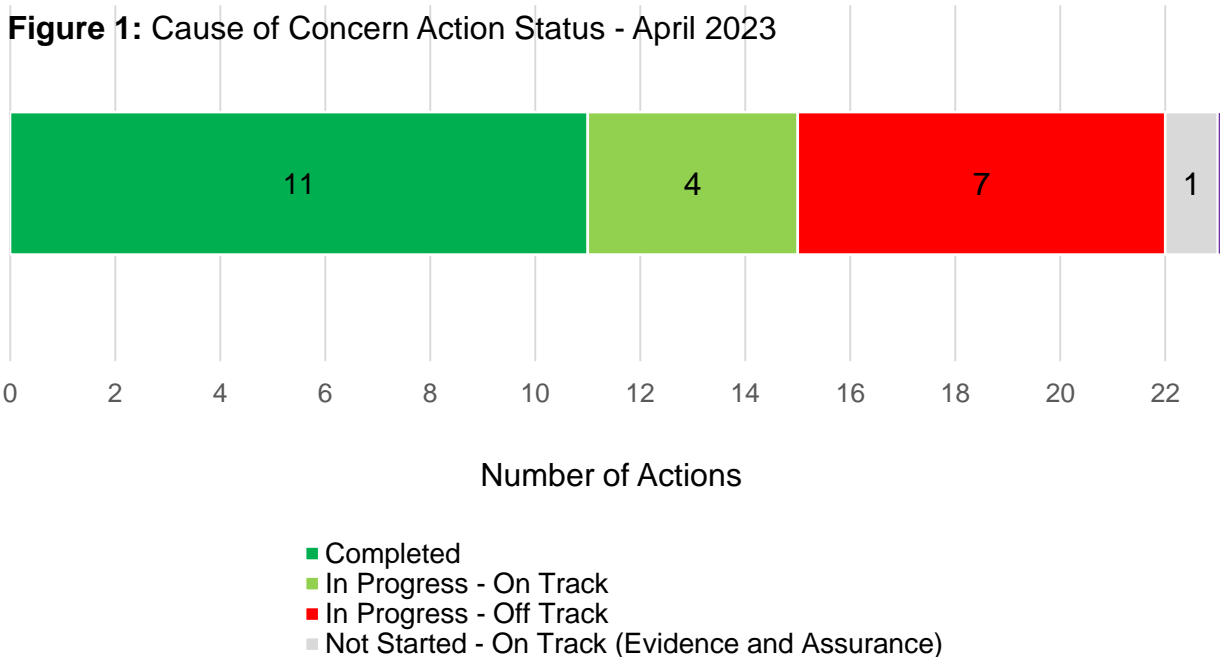
2. CAUSE OF CONCERN ACTION COMPLETION STATUS

2.1. The Cause of Concern is as follows:

The service has shown a clear intent from the executive board to improve the culture of the service. However, more needs to be done throughout the organisation. We have found evidence of poor behaviours that are not in line with service values. Some staff didn’t have the confidence to report these issues. By 31st August 2022, the service should develop an action plan to:

- Make sure that its values and behaviours are understood and demonstrated at all levels of the organisation;
- Make sure that staff are trained and supported to identify and challenge inappropriate behaviour when identified and that they have clear mechanisms in place to raise their concerns.

2.2. 23 actions have been established to address the Cause of Concern. Figure 1 below outlines the completion status of these actions.



2.3. Table 1 below outlines the completion status of these actions in table view.

Table 1: Summary of progress against the individual actions					
Cause of Concern – Values and Behaviours					
Not started (on track)	Not started (off track)	In progress (on track)	In progress (off track)	Completed	Closed
1 * (→ at 1)	0 (→ at 0)	4 (↓ from 10)	7 (↑ from 4)	11 (↑ from 8)	0 (→ at 0)

* Please note that the action which has not yet started is the evidence and assurance required once all other actions have been completed.

2.4. Table 2 outlines the individual actions currently in progress within the Cause of Concern action plan and their current status.

Table 2:

Ref.	Description	Progress Update	Target Completion	Status
01a.03	New training presentation on values, behaviours and ethics to be delivered to all staff and support to embed the expectations of the organisation (as part of the Safe To programme).	Staff are now undertaking this training through facilitated group sessions with their line managers. As at 13/04/2023 90% of staff have undertaken this training. This action is marked as 'In Progress – Off Track' as the target completion date has now passed.	31/03/2023	In Progress – Off Track
01a.06	PPDs to be completed in line with policy and recorded on Workbench.	A new PPD report has been established which provides much greater detail on important performance management issues, including bullying and harassment and whether these have been reported. 864 staff have completed this to date and those that are outstanding will be chased. This action	28/02/2023	In Progress – Off Track

Ref.	Description	Progress Update	Target Completion	Status
		will remain off track as the target completion date has now passed.		
01a.07	Expectations documents x4 (charters) between: a. Managers and staff b. Trainers and recruits c. Staff and staff d. Staff and clients/ customers/ partners	This action has been changed to include 3 charters - trainee/ trainer, customer service charter (external), and internal charter. The trainee/ trainer charter and the customer service charters are in development and currently both out for consultation and review. Work has started on developing the internal charter through work with the Service's Cultural Leads. This action is marked as off track as the target completion date has now passed.	28/02/2023	In Progress – Off Track
01a.08	Comms team to build a core brief on culture to be included in a regular programme of awareness (produced on a quarterly basis – sent to all stations and departments in advance and discussed during station/ department visits).	The update from the ACFO on values and culture (Friday 31/03/2023) will be cascaded through managers to teams are the first core brief on culture as part of the next ACFO blog. In addition to this, outcomes of the SLT meeting (05/04/2023) to discuss the new HMICFRS report will be shared with the wider Service.	31/12/2022	In Progress – Off Track
01b.01	Pre-recorded quarterly updates to all staff (leading conversations tone) on expectations to reinforce core brief, with CFO and DCFO.	This will be coordinated through Innovation Central as part of new training for staff.	31/12/2022	In Progress – Off Track

Ref.	Description	Progress Update	Target Completion	Status
	Followed up by face-to-face engagement session (See 01b.02).			
01b.03	Performance/ conflict training for managers.	The Area Manager for Service Delivery Resilience is currently reviewing the training that the Service has in place. Further conversations around what this will look like in the future are in progress. The Director of Finance, People and Estates will consider these future plans in relation to the financial implications.	30/09/2023	In Progress – On Track
01b.04	Monthly communication to the workforce on concluded disciplinarys including sanctions and rationale for those sanctions.	The first of these updates was communicated in the Chief Fire Officer's blog (24/02/2023). The target completion date for the action will be pushed back to 31/05/2023 to allow for 3 further monthly updates. After these have been evidenced the action will be marked as completed.	30/11/2022 <i>Revised Target Completion Date – 31/05/2023</i>	In Progress – On Track
01b.08	Establish 'Speak Up' champions in each group and workplace that are accessible to all staff. Individuals will be interviewed and selected by senior staff (training allowance required). Individuals will support station visits and training/awareness .	Support has been given from the Organisational Development department to incorporate the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian into an existing role. Due to the approach taken to establish this role, through consultation with a working group, the action has taken longer than expected to complete. EB have agreed for the action will remain as off track until the Speak Up Guardian	28/02/2023 <i>Revised Target Completion Date – 01/06/2023</i>	In Progress – Off Track

Ref.	Description	Progress Update	Target Completion	Status
		has been established. The anticipated target completion date for this, in line with the deadline for linked recommendations in the HMICFRS Culture Report, is 01/06/2023.		
01b.09	All recruitment and selection processes will include elements to assess applicants' cultural awareness and how this links to the Service Values. Internal processes, including promotional processes, will include questions and/or assessment to evidence cultural awareness and how applicants demonstrate and/or embed behaviours that link to the Service Values, Code of Ethics and NFCC leadership framework.	The assessment centres for uniformed staff include elements to assess candidates awareness of culture and ethics. This is also included in questions for non-uniformed staff. There is ongoing work around improving the selection and promotions process which will be linked to this action.	30/06/2023	In Progress – On Track
01b.11	Exit process to be formalised. This to include specific questions on cultural improvements.	This action has been completed but there is an issue with the policy management system and getting the policy approved. Once the new policy has been published there will be communications and additional information for managers.	28/02/2023	In Progress – Off Track

Ref.	Description	Progress Update	Target Completion	Status
01b.12	Revise induction process for all staff to include the setting of expectations of behaviour, values and ethics.	The first new induction session took place on 27/03/2023 for corporate staff, some control staff and on-call staff. The behaviours, values and ethics training was not included in this session due to the 31/03/2023 deadline for service wide training. The new training on behaviour, values and ethics will be included in future sessions, the first of these is scheduled for 28/06/2023.	30/06/2023	In Progress – On Track

2.5. Table 3 outlines the individual actions within the Cause of Concern action plan that have been marked as completed.

Table 3:

Ref.	Description	Update	Date completed
01a.01	EDI e-learning to be repeated for all staff.	As at 12/04/2023 96% of the workforce has completed the e-learning.	09/02/2023 (Director of Finance, People and Estates)
01a.02	EDI eLearning to be an annual assessment and made a core skill on the competency dashboard.	The EDI e-learning modules have been made an annual required assessments and are a core skill on the competencies dashboard.	26/10/2023 (Director of Finance, People and Estates)
01a.04	All inappropriate material to be removed from Service premises. This includes inappropriate mugs, which was an issue highlighted by HMICFRS.	All inappropriate material has been removed from Service premises.	30/09/2023 (DCFO)

Ref.	Description	Update	Date completed
01a.05	Mandatory PPD questions to be introduced: Have you experienced or witnessed any bullying, harassment or unwanted behaviour since our last meeting? Have you seen any inappropriate material?	Mandatory PPD questions have now been introduced and added to the PPD system.	20/09/2022 (ACFO)
01b.02	Senior Managers (SM and equivalent, and above) to attend a leading conversations presentation which will include input on expected behaviours, role modelling and accountability via an external trainer (follow up to quarterly process).	138 people attended out of a possible 208 members of staff at SM/ Grade 7. The presentations from the event are available via Yammer for those unable to attend the event.	03/01/2023 (DCFO)
01b.05	Report to the Executive Board on grievance and disciplinary cases to include type of case, speed of completion and outcome (e.g. improve speed of investigations and reconsider the use of outside investigators).	Report presented to the Executive Board on 15/12/2022.	13/01/2023 (Director of Finance, People and Estates)
01b.06	Every presentation to include a slide on values, expected behaviours and ethics.	The standard DSFRS presentation template now includes a slide on values, expected behaviours and ethics.	27/02/2023 (DCFO)

Ref.	Description	Update	Date completed
01b.07	Create and publish effective confidential reporting mechanisms which include several avenues for staff. To include, a confidential reporting line directly to the DCFO, direct to ACAS, HMICFRS confidential reporting line, and whistle blowing policy.	The confidential reporting line was launched on 01/02/2023 in a blog by the CFO. The reporting line is open to all members of staff and involves leaving a message via voicemail. In the blog, the CFO also outlined that the Service are also welcoming feedback on concerns via email or post. The Respect and Fairness Toolkit was also linked.	06/03/2023 (DCFO)
01b.10	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion commission to be established. To include representation from representative bodies, staff support groups and key leaders.	The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion commission has been established. This includes representation from representative bodies, staff support groups and service leaders.	30/09/2022 (DCFO)
01b.13	To identify where other services are doing well in the People Pillar and State of Fire Annual Review. Contact them to understand the areas of best practice that they have implemented and how this may improve our Service.	Best practice has been identified and reviewed with SLT leads, linking to current actions within the HMICFRS action plan.	20/12/2022 (DCFO)
01b.14	To review best practice with our Service leads in order to enhance improvement plans.	Best practice has been identified and reviewed with SLT leads, linking to current actions within the HMICFRS action plan.	12/01/2022

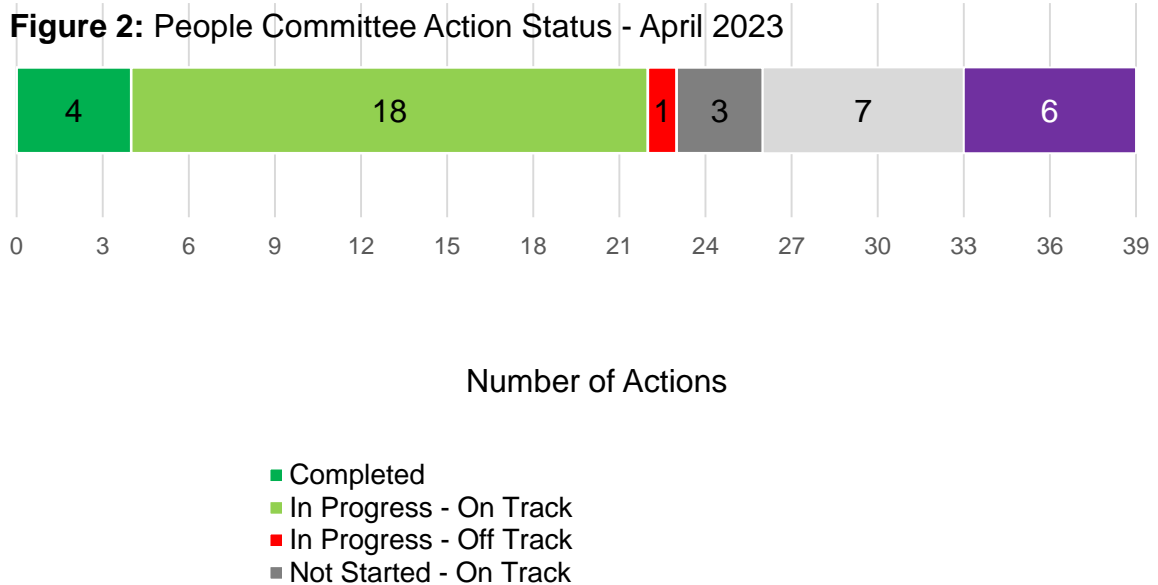
3. AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN COMPLETION STATUS

3.1. Table 4 lists the Areas For Improvement linked to the People Committee and their individual implementation status.

Table 4:

Reference	Description	Target Completion	Status
HMI-3.1-202208	The service should monitor secondary contracts to make sure working hours are not exceeded.	31/01/2024	In Progress – On Track
HMI-3.2-202209	The service should make sure its workforce plan takes full account of the necessary skills and capabilities to carry out the integrated risk management plan.	30/09/2024	In Progress – On Track
HMI-3.2-202210	The service should address the high number of staff in temporary promotion positions.	30/09/2023	In Progress – On Track
HMI-3.3-202211	The service should make sure that it has effective grievance procedures. It should identify and implement ways to improve staff confidence in the grievance process.	31/01/2024	In Progress – On Track
HMI-3.3-202212	The service should improve staff understanding of the purpose and benefits of positive action.	30/09/2023	In Progress – On Track
HMI-3.4-202213	The service should make sure its selection, development and promotion of staff is open and fair, and that feedback is available to staff.	31/01/2025	In Progress – On Track
HMI-3.4-202214	The service should improve all staff understanding and application of the performance development review process.	30/04/2024	In Progress – Off Track
HMI-3.4-202215	The service should put in place an open and fair process to identify, develop and support high-potential staff and aspiring leaders.	<i>Review</i> 30/06/2023	Paused

3.2. Figure 2 below outlines the completion status of all actions designed to address the Areas For Improvement linked to the People Committee, as outlined above.



3.3. Table 5 below outlines the completion status of these actions in table view.

Table 5: Summary of progress against the individual actions						
Areas for Improvement (People Committee)						
Not started (on track)	Not started (off track)	In progress (on track)	In progress (off track)	Completed	Closed	Paused/ No Longer Required
10 * (↓ from 13)	0 (→ at 0)	18 (↓ from 23)	1 (↑ from 0)	4 (↑ from 3)	0 (→ at 0)	6 (↑ from 0)

* Please note that seven of the actions which have not yet started are the evidence and assurance required once all other actions have been completed.

4. **IMPROVEMENT AREAS WHICH ARE 'OFF-TRACK'**

4.1. Table 6 below outlines the improvement areas which are currently marked as 'In Progress – Off Track'.

Table 6:

Improvement Area	Status
HMI-3.4-202214 – PDR Process (Area for Improvement)	In Progress – Off Track
Factors impacting delivery	
Action 01a.06 'PPDs to be completed in line with policy and recorded on Workbench' (outlined as off track in the Cause of Concern update above) is also linked to this improvement area, which is therefore now also showing as off track.	

5. PAUSED IMPROVEMENT AREAS

- 5.1. Table 7 below outlines one improvement area which has been paused during March 2023.

Table 7:

Improvement Area	Status
HMI-3.4-202215 – High-Potential Staff (Area for Improvement)	Paused
Reason for pause	
This improvement area has been paused until work has been completed on the revised selection and promotions process. ACFO Gerald Taylor has approved the pausing of this improvement area (HMI-3.4-202215) and all actions within it (initial target completion date 31 July 2023). The HMI Team will review the pausing of this action on 30/06/2023.	

GAVIN ELLIS
Deputy Chief Fire Officer