

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	HRMDC/18/28
MEETING	HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	3 JULY 2018
SUBJECT OF REPORT	WORKFORCE CULTURE, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION – QUARTERLY UPDATE
LEAD OFFICER	DIRECTOR OF SERVICE IMPROVEMENT
RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>That the report be noted.</i>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>This report sets out the progress in work the Service is undertaking in planning and delivering cultural change driven by the requirements of the new IRMP, Fire and Rescue Plan and national guidance.</p> <p>During this quarter, the Fire Minister has made an announcement regarding the creation of an independent Fire Standards Board that will impact on our diversity and inclusion requirements.</p> <p>Internally, the Service has published a new set of Values that have been created by the staff and have a far more inclusive approach. Work continues to develop a new appraisal system that will incorporate these values along with the objectives of the Fire and Rescue Plan.</p> <p>In addition, recruitment and promotion processes are being reviewed following the publication of the revised National Framework for Fire and Rescue Services and further links have been made with equality officers in constituent Local Authorities.</p>
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	None at this time
EQUALITY RISK AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS (ERBA)	Where required, ERBAs will be carried out on particular projects or areas of work.
APPENDICES	N/A
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS	N/A

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This is the report detailing progress in the first quarter of the 2018-2019 financial year towards achieving a more diverse workforce and a more inclusive working environment.
- 1.2 Addressing the Local Government Association's Fire Commission on 21 May, the Minister for Policing and the Fire Service, Nick Hurd, announced a new approach to improve professional standards for fire and rescue services across England.
- 1.3 A Fire Standards Board will be created to ensure standards are nationally coordinated to a high level across the sector. This new board will be independent from government and supported by the NFCC's central programme office which will produce the standards, drawing on external expertise as required.
- 1.4 This move is a key element of the government's ambitious fire reform programme, impacting on local Diversity & Inclusion agendas, which aims to improve the professionalism, effectiveness and accountability of fire and rescue services including encouraging employers to drive workforce reform, including increasing the diversity of the workforce and considering workforce issues like leadership and development

2. INCLUSIVE CULTURE/LEADERSHIP

- 2.1 Early in 2017, a culture review was undertaken by external consultants. This has resulted in a programme to redesign Values and Leadership Behaviours, introduce an interim Appraisal process 2017/18, design a new Appraisal process from 2018, develop a transparent promotion process, and upskill leaders and managers including unconscious bias training. The implementation plan for the Values has been completed and so has the roll out of unconscious bias training.
- 2.3 Work on development of the new appraisal process continues with determining objectives for the a few remaining role and fitting our service plans and department objectives into the appraisal objectives/system.
- 2.4 Although initial outcomes of this year's staff satisfaction survey have been available and have been presented to staff on 21 November 2017, in depth analysis and narrative have been discussed and will be available for discussion at the next Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Steering Group in July and by Executive Board.
- 2.6 The Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Steering Group met on 14 May 2018 when discussions took place around our Values and questions were raised around our Culture. The group considered what culture would be required to achieve the many objectives the Service has and guidance that exists around it. It was acknowledged that there are some locations/team in the Service where the values are not fully embedded yet, but it is expected that through challenge, development and discussion this will improve.
- 2.8 A cultural Audit will be undertaken in the last quarter of 2018 in line with the Public Service Internal Audit Standards, which will provide a gap analysis and assist in determining what actions need to be considered to ensure the Service's culture is inclusive and relevant to achieving the Service's objectives.

2.9 Our new Head of Corporate Communication, Engagement & Consultation has started in role and has taken responsibility for an action plan to address points raised in the internal communications review to ensure better communication and engagement with both staff and community.

3. RECRUITMENT, PROMOTION & RETENTION

3.1 With the FRS National Framework consultation and the creation of a Fire Standards Board, the Home Office continue to emphasise that increasing the diversity of the firefighter workforce is a key priority in their fire reform programme.

3.2 It is expected that each Fire and Rescue Authority could achieve this by having in place a people strategy. Work has started in relation to the Authority's People Strategy with a discovery stage and further planning and consultation meetings in June and July. The expectation is that this strategy will be at the final draft stage by the end of July.

3.3 Positive Action, as set out in the Equality Act 2010 section 159, is used for purposes of achieving a more diverse workforce and improved inclusion, particularly within Recruitment and Promotion processes. A working group has been set up through the National Fire Chiefs Council and the Service attended the first meeting on 26 April with the aim to learn from other's experience and share our good practice.

3.4 The work in relation to the development of a transparent promotion process has continued with new principles applied to the current Watch Manager promotion process.

3.5 To ensure leaders and managers in our Service are suitably equipped with all the skills and knowledge, a Leadership & Development role has been created which will link the requirements of inclusive practices with the operational standards into a comprehensive Leadership Framework.

3.6 The Diversity & Inclusion strategic Steering Group has been monitoring the following information:

- a. New Staff intake – women, Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME), Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT), disability;
- b. Promotion and temporary promotion - women, BAME;
- c. Gender/BAME/LGBT ratio.

3.7 The group considered the reports and noted the following in line with key findings in the reports:

- women are under-represented in all uniformed roles other than in Control;
- there is a low level of LGBT employees' self-identification in the Service;
- The amount of staff with a declared disability is low compared to the percentage of working age disabled individuals in the community, and agreed that the higher level of 'not stated' in the sexual orientation reporting needs further consideration as to whether this is a result of the way this is recorded or of the working environment.

4. COMMUNITY INCLUSION

- 4.1 Links have been made with County Council Equality Officers of both Somerset County and Devon County to work more closely together on community engagement for the purpose of consultation, recruitment and community safety.

**ACFO PETE BOND
Director of Service Improvement**