

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	HRMDC/18/34
MEETING	HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	10 DECEMBER 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 identifies progress in work being undertaken by the Service in planning and delivering cultural change in support of the requirements of the new Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP), the Fire and Rescue Plan and national guidance.</p> <p>Chief Fire Officer Askew has taken up the lead role of the NFCC Diversity & Inclusion group to progress the agenda both nationally and within the Service.</p> <p>Internally, a draft of the People Strategy is now at consultation and the Diversity & Inclusion Plan has been implemented.</p> <p>In addition, a cultural survey has been started which will provide a gap analysis to 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.</p> <p>Diagnosis has started of recruitment practices to allow identification of interventions which will lead to good practice being shared and implemented more consistently across the Service. Evaluation of training provision to Wholetime Firefighters is taking place at the same time to support in determining requirements for future entrants.</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 report details progress in the third quarter of the 2018-2019 financial year towards achieving a more diverse workforce and a more inclusive working environment.
- 1.2 As part of the government's ambitious fire reform programme (which impacts on local Diversity & Inclusion agendas) the Home Office launched a new campaign on 24 August. 'Join the Team: Become a Firefighter', developed with support from the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), the Local Government Association and the Inclusive Fire Service Group, is designed to support fire and rescue services to attract a more diverse range applicants in their upcoming recruitment drives.
- 1.3 To ensure this reform programme maintains momentum both nationally, through the NFCC, and locally within Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service, CFO Askew has taken up the role of lead for the NFCC Equality, Diversity & Inclusion group.

2. INCLUSIVE CULTURE/LEADERSHIP

- 2.1. Early in 2017 a culture review was undertaken for the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service ("the Service") by external consultants – Innovation Central. This resulted in a programme to:
- redesign new Values and Leadership Behaviours;
 - design a new Appraisal process;
 - develop a transparent promotion process; and
 - upskill leaders and managers.
- 2.2. The only outstanding work from this programme relates to the development of the new appraisal process, which is now at the IT system development stage.
- 2.3. A cultural audit has started in line with the Public Service Internal Audit Standards with a desk top review of policies and procedures. This will be followed by interviews with staff and a survey. The audit has been designed to examine progress made since culture review and provide a gap analysis to 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. It will also inform any work required to either amend or replace the current Bullying & Harassment Policy.
- 2.4. In line with Home Office guidance, national best practice and the Fire and Rescue Plan, a People Strategy has been drafted and is now ready for consultation. Since the workshop in September, the detail of the Change and Improvement Programme has been developing rapidly and this includes work streams and projects that are relevant for the People Strategy. The proposals are still being discussed and refined and will be included in the final strategy. The final document will also clarify how the work streams will be monitored and delivered.
- 2.5. The project to develop and implement a People Impact Assessment is reaching its final stages with the completion of a process which will be implemented following agreement from the Executive Board.

- 2.6. Other ongoing initiatives to ensure an inclusive working environment include:
- The Transgender policy has been published and necessary actions to allow for full implementation will be considered through the Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Steering Group
 - In collaboration with the Local Government Association a Diversity & Inclusion development day has been organised for members of the Fire Authority to take place on 31 January 2019
 - Two thirds of the workforce have now completed their Unconscious Bias training.
 - From January 2019 an Inclusion Think Tank will come into being.

3. RECRUITMENT, PROMOTION & RETENTION

- 3.1. In support of both the Integrated Risk Management Plan and the Fire and Rescue Plan, multiple initiatives are either underway or planned to increase diversity in the workforce. These include an analysis of the relative levels of success of recruitment practices in different Service groups to ensure that good practice is shared and implemented more consistently across the Service and an analysis of the training provided to Wholetime Firefighters with different operational backgrounds.
- 3.2. The first two of scheduled monthly positive action meetings have taken place to provide women information about the recruitment process and give them confidence in undertaking the various stages.
- 3.3. All the Wholetime recruits have now started their Apprenticeships and so have 4 On Call Firefighters. The Service is the first in the country to provide this opportunity to On Call staff.
- 3.4. The Leadership & Development Manager is developing a comprehensive Leadership Framework, linking the requirements of inclusive practices and operational standards as well as exploring initiatives with Exeter University in relation to suitable development programmes.
- 3.5. At its last meeting on 13 September 2018, the Service Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Steering Group considered monitoring information on:
- (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
- 3.6. The key findings from the information considered were:
1. women are under-represented in all uniformed roles other than in Control;
 2. there remains to be a lower level of LGBT employees' self-identification in the Service compared to other protected characteristics;
 3. The amount of staff with a declared disability is low compared to the percentage of working age disabled individuals in the community
 4. Support staff saw the lowest rate of leavers in 15 months.
 5. The amount of recorded data for new employees has significantly decreased

- 3.7. In the quarter from July to September 2018 there were 77 new starters, of which 11 females (14%). 14% of employees starting in On-call positions were female (4) and 38% in Support positions. A similar percentage of female On Call new starters was recorded in the same quarter of 2017, although in numbers there was one more then.
- 3.8. The Service introduced a 6-month temporary opportunity for its On Call staff. Twenty nine individuals took up this opportunity, of which only 1 (3%) was female. A further 3 men took up Wholetime positions in posts other than Firefighter. There were no new starters in Control. Of all starters 1 identified as disabled, none as an ethnic minority and 2 as LGBT.
- 3.9. In order to address key finding 1 in section 3.6, good practice within recruitment will be shared and implemented across the Service, which includes specific Positive Action initiatives. One of those initiatives involves specific information and experience evenings for female applicants and applicants from a minority ethnic background.
- 3.10. To achieve more visible LGBT inclusion, with the aim to ensure staff and applicants feel their sexual orientation will be accepted and accommodated (key finding 2), the Fire Pride & Allies staff support group relaunch and a transgender policy has been published.
- 3.11. Finally, in relation to key finding 5, discussions have taken place those involved in the recording of diversity data in order to increase the amount of recorded data.
- 3.12. Since the Diversity Data Quarterly report of July to September, the Home Office has released the latest figures in relation to staff diversity across English fire & Rescue Services. Specifically the figures on percentage of female Wholetime staff show that the Service is below both England and non-metropolitan Fire & Rescue Service figures. The On Call female staff percentages are, however, the same as non-metropolitan On Call percentages. The percentages in relation to women entering the Service in operational roles is slightly higher than nationally, but this is only slightly and, especially for Wholetime, will be lower in this financial year due to no recruitment.
- 3.13. All staff group percentages in relation to religion and sexual orientation are below the national average. Other than in Control, all staff groups are on average older than the national average, with Wholetime staff (average age of 45), being two years above the national average of the comparator group.
- 3.14. Other initiatives in relation to progression include a Women's Springboard Development Programme, Action Learning Sets in collaboration with various regional emergency service partners and collaboration with Exeter University's sociology department to initiate research into women's career progression in the Service.

4. COMMUNITY INCLUSION

- 4.1. The Service has started collaboration with Devon & Cornwall Constabulary in relation to Community Engagement & Consultation to increase efficiency, consistency of campaign messages and prevent consultation overload. A Consultation & Engagement Officer has been recruited who will be able to focus on the relevant work in more detail.

ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE OFFICER PETE BOND
Director of Service Improvement