



OFFICIAL

Hybrid Working Survey Results

Human Resources Committee

Date: 20 January 2023

Agenda Item:

07

Submitted By: Chief Employment Services Officer

- Purpose** To inform Members of recent activity to ascertain the views of colleagues on hybrid working to identify areas of improvement.
- Recommendations** That Members note the content of the report.
- Summary** Please note that the main body of the report is on pages 2 to 6 and the findings from the Hybrid working consultation and workshops are detailed in appendices starting on page 7.

Local Government (Access to information) Act 1972

Exemption Category: None

Contact Officer: Rachel McArdle, Head of HR
rachel.mcardle@westyorksfire.gov.uk

Background papers open to inspection: None

Annexes: None

Contents

1. Background to hybrid working
2. Scope of consultant activity
3. Summary of Findings
4. Conclusions
5. Recommendations
6. Next Steps
7. Appendix 1 – findings from consultation exercise
8. Appendix 2 – findings from employee survey
9. Appendix 3 – outcome from Manager workshops

1. Background to hybrid working

Due to the covid pandemic and the associated 'stay at home' restrictions, a large proportion of our workforce began to work from home. We then moved some of our workforce onto a hybrid working model on a trial basis. Our approach to hybrid working allows employees to split their time between attending the workplace and working remotely, i.e., at home.

The trial was to allow us to explore the potential to move these roles permanently to this new way of working. Following this review, managers confirmed whether hybrid working was suitable for the posts within their team and if so, these posts were designated a Hybrid Working post. Secondly it was established whether the incumbents in these posts wished and were able to adopt hybrid working. In situations where it wasn't suitable for them personally, they could continue to be office based. In these situations, if the postholder left we would advertise the post as a hybrid post. In June 2022, and in-line with many other employers, we contractually adopted hybrid working for most WYFRS non-operational roles.

Hybrid working is an important element in our:

- strategy for adapting to, and thriving in, the new working environment following the coronavirus pandemic
- commitment to supporting a positive work-life balance for our employees
- ability to be competitive in a challenging labour market

At WYFRS, hybrid workers are advised that the number of days to be worked between home and the workplace is to be agreed with their manager. The agreed split must be suitable for the organisation and not impact negatively on the service the postholder provides. Hybrid workers were also set the expectation that there may be occasions when they are required to attend the workplace on a day which they may deem to be one of their 'homeworking' days. This may include meetings, training events, and performance reviews. On the days when hybrid workers are working from home, they must be available for contact during their agreed normal working hours.

Given we are a fire and rescue service, a large proportion of our workforce simply cannot be afforded the benefit of being able to work from home and we need to continue to handle this sensitively.

2. Scope of consultant activity

Managing staff who work in dual locations can present challenges for managers and for those they manage. It's important that our managers feel comfortable managing their teams and individuals wherever or however they work and ensure that their service continues to meet the needs and expectations of internal and external customers. Regardless of location, colleagues need to feel connected to others and that they are being managed appropriately and supportively.

To explore how hybrid working is operating in practice we began working with an external consultant and trainer, and over the last few months this consultant has:

- a. **Engaged and consulted with our colleagues through drop-ins (face to face and via teams)**
The discussion and feedback with 18 individuals centred on what has worked well, what could be better, general feedback and training needs.

b. Drafted, and analysed a bespoke employee survey on hybrid working

Through the employee survey, colleagues were able to anonymously highlight any challenges and concerns they are experiencing around the hybrid working model. The survey had a response rate of 80 people which is approx. 30% of green book colleagues.

c. Facilitated five workshops with managers of hybrid teams (small groups of around 8)

These sessions were designed to discuss and come up with some actions and practical solutions to some of the issues and concerns identified.

3. Summary of findings – What do we think about hybrid working at WYFRS?

1 - Engagement with colleagues 1:1

The feedback received was quite wide-ranging however common elements are summarized below.

xc

What has worked well	What could be better	General feedback	Training needs
flexibility	Support with managing hybrid teams (expectations, engagement etc.)	Concerns around move to new HQ	Job specific courses
productivity	Duplication of data input		Managing hybrid teams and hybrid meetings
	Too many meetings to attend		Microsoft Teams
	Accessibility and visibility		
	Social isolation		

2 - Employee Survey

71% of respondents stated that they split their time between locations on a flexible basis, e.g., depending on their meetings and work activities on that day. In person meetings and the ability to meet with colleagues were the main reasons respondents gave for coming into the office. Whilst better work-life balance and less distractions were cited as the main reasons they opted to work from home.

75% respondents stated that their work-life balance has improved.

86.3% state they would feel comfortable asking their manager for support in sustaining a health work-life balance.

3 - Key discussion points and areas of focus and value in the Workshops

- **Communication** - pro's and con's of each communication method and using other communication channels, setting up group chats to avoid emailing everything as well as individual communication preference styles and being more clear about communication/tasks/delegation. The importance of communicating and collaborating face to face, not communicating through emails all the time.
- **Mindsets and myths**- Redefining/challenging certain mindsets around managing hybrid teams.

Key themes

Looking at the insight gleaned through the 1:1's, survey and workshops as a whole, you will see repetition of the following key themes:

Visibility and accessibility

Difficulty accessing staff who are working at home as well as colleagues feeling that they are asked to attend the office without a good business reason for doing so.

Technology

Email traffic and a lack of consideration regarding who is copied in and the reason for this. this was cited in survey feedback as well as a focal point in the workshops.

Environment

The benefits at working at home in potentially more comfortable and quiet surroundings – especially during the HQ re-development.

There are clearly some reservations around the move to the new HQ in terms of impact on productivity and ability to focus on work and issues around working on confidential documents/calls/meetings in a shared space.

Financial

Affordability of home working with rising energy costs/affordability of office working with rising petrol costs.

Social and connectivity

The risk of isolation and impact on team working and overall culture at WYFRS and the importance of in person meetings for collaboration, connection, and team building.

4. Conclusions

This exercise demonstrated some real positives for those who have the option to work from home, citing benefits in their productivity, work-life balance, and wellbeing (health as well as financial) and that on the whole their managers are supportive, and they feel managed appropriately in the hybrid context. The workshops were successful and managers who attended appreciated the time and space to reflect on their leadership style and approach they take to manage their teams to ensure we remain effective in the hybrid working context. The discussion within the workshops statements about the Hybrid working statements (page 30) suggested we could improve clarity and understanding of our corporate expectations around hybrid working.

Trust and Accessibility

Accessibility/visibility of colleagues was a common thread with all parts of this work. Given the feedback that having several Teams meetings in a day is a driver for colleagues to choose to work from home, this increases the possibility that colleagues working at home are busy on calls and therefore can't answer straight away. Alternatively, this inability to contact colleagues could be indicative of a training need. Colleagues may not be aware how to contact a colleague remotely, i.e. (work mobile for those who have then, Outlook, Teams and Cisco) or gain an understanding of who else in the individuals' team could be contacted instead.

Digital skills and etiquette

Equally there was some feedback about issues we are already aware of and have started to plan to address, i.e. It is clear we need to prioritise the raising of digital skills across the organisation. There are a few workstreams ongoing around digital and data skills which will start to address some of this. Training in Microsoft Teams is a key theme as well as more support dealing with IT issues at HQ. Revising our email etiquette guidance and asking colleagues to commit to these principles may help reduce frustrations regarding the number of emails received and the time taken to read those that are 'just for info.'

Financial considerations

There were a few comments about fuel cost and whether WYFRS can offer support with this. Clearly working at home regularly is potentially reducing fuel costs compared to working fully from HQ, however we need to remember that many colleagues don't feel that they have moved from office based to hybrid but from home working fully during covid to return to the office on a hybrid basis. Conversely colleagues have mentioned heating costs through the winter which are likely to be bigger issues however we are not compelling colleagues to work from home and hopefully the reduction in fuel will offset this somewhat. The issue of a hybrid working allowance or working from home allowance has been discussed at national level and rejected.

5. Recommendations

5.1 Internal communications

It's important that when we gather employee data like this, we take the time to consider people's views and then communicate back that we have listened and what we are planning to do in response. A key recommendation is therefore that we use our internal communication avenues to share pertinent information.

5.2 Resources and support

Several feedback areas can be attributed to a lack of understanding about current hybrid working

requirements at WYFRS so there appears to be a need for clarity/reminders for managers and their reports.

5.3 Initial action plan to address key themes

	Possible Actions
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Comms around how you can get hold of people and what to do if you continually struggle to do so. ✓ Reminder of teams SLA's and that these still apply in a hybrid context
Leadership and management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Consideration of cpd (peer support) sessions for hybrid managers ✓ Support managers who haven't been part of workshops ✓ Consideration of Manager cpd sessions ✓ Clarify expectations that managers take full accountability for understanding how their reports are delivering against service priorities and their objectives ✓ Induction - training should be included on hybrid working as mandatory ✓ Review PDR process - encourage quarterly reviews of annual objectives or set quarterly objectives to break down into smaller chunks which may be beneficial in hybrid working context by encouraging closer supervision
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ensuring regular home based risk assessments are carried out and colleagues are provided with the necessary equipment to work at home safely and ergonomically. ✓ Desks can be compact and fit into small spaces however if an ergonomic desk set up is not possible then that individual cannot work from home safely and should be based in the office.
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Increase IT competence of workforce, especially around Microsoft Teams functionality ✓ Refresh web policies to clarify expectations such as not accessing inappropriate material at work or getting lost down internet rabbit holes ✓ Standardise email signatures - which should include all the individuals contacts details and ways to be contacted, as well as, working days and hours ✓ Standardise Out of Office messages should explain who else to reach should that individual be away on leave/sick or if unavailable for another reason ✓ sharing top tips with colleagues for working smarter i.e. email shortcuts ✓ Consider digital wellbeing initiatives especially around reducing email traffic
HR/Contractual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In view of transitioning to the new build, we may wish to consider reviewing and potentially refreshing hybrid worker contracts ✓ Updating our agile (hybrid) working policy and flexibility policies to be explicit about our cultural expectations on time and what behaviours are appropriate. here we need to be mindful not to be too rigid, as we need to future proof for possible further changes which impact on our remoteness and flexibility. ✓ Communicate clearly about work time expectations, digital and otherwise ✓ Clarify expectations regarding flexibility when working at

	<p>home, i.e., providing childcare and working at the same time is not permissible and has implications on productivity and safety</p> <p>✓ Potential Agile Working Policy updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cap on hours working from home* • Part time workers holiday entitlements • Flexible hours • Commute compensation • Fuel/energy <p>*To come into place once moved into new build as some colleagues are 100% homeworking due to being displaced by site re-development.</p>
--	--

6. Next steps

6.1 Re-establish the Hybrid Working Group with key stakeholders

This would need to include representation from teams who work hybrid and 'own' some of the recommendations detailed in the table above, i.e., ICT/OD/Corp Comms/HR/OH. However, it should also contain representation from internal colleagues/customers who are not afforded that opportunity. This will ensure suggestions made and ideas explored do not unduly impact on service delivery and support.

The purpose of this group would be to consider the cultural issues raised in this feedback but also agree practical solutions to some of the themes detailed., i.e., ICT training and better IT support to navigate through IT issues, communication method guidance.

The outcomes of this Working Group would be to embed this learning and good practice in appropriate policies and organisational practices resources as well as supporting reviewing current resources such as our Agile Working Policy and Digital Wellbeing documents around email etiquette.

Explore further Learning & Development opportunities for managers

- ✓ Clarity of roles and effective team working
- ✓ Creating and managing high performance teams
- ✓ Encouraging work/life balance, managing healthy working relationships
- ✓ Conflict management
- ✓ Compassionate and inclusive leadership
- ✓ Agile thinking
- ✓ Managing stress/burn out
- ✓ Time management in hybrid working

5 Appendix 1

Focus group feedback

What has worked well

- More productive at work because of flexibility
- Productivity has increased
- Flexibility and autonomy which has been well appreciated
- Flexibility
- Commute time is saved
- saving time
- Saving money
- If hybrid doesn't continue, then will find it hard to continue working
- Team has over performed by 20%
- Communication is clear within team
- Accessibility has been great since WFH
- Feel more included
- Wellbeing offer is really good
- For me it has worked well since people don't need to know about my needs if I am WFH and that helps me avoid unconscious bias towards me
- E- learning was more accessible

What could be better

- Concerned about office move and how that would impact concentration and productivity
- Job role is not clear so end up working extra hours, feel like I am working full time for a part time role
- Can't work from other station (for quiet time work) and that restricts productivity
- A lot of duplication of work on Excel and Opax
- Lack of team building/engagement with other watch managers
- My contract is different from my colleagues who are on hybrid contracts
- Restriction on Flexible hours (7.30-7.30), if this is extended then it would be of huge benefit to me as can work after caring responsibilities in the evening
- Not had any career development conversations as team is highly stretched at the moment
- I struggle to understand how long they need to come to the office?
- Struggle with trusting the team and managing expectations
- If someone reports in sick in the morning and says can't come to the office but can work from home- how do you know if you should ask them to take a sick leave instead?
- I miss out on chat before/after hybrid meetings if I am remote
- Some of my team members never turn on cameras so it is very difficult to see if they are there/how engaged they are
- Feel left out
- New team members need better understanding of the team/culture/health and safety
- Annual PDR is only once a year- this needs to be more frequent
- Duplication of data
- People need to be more mindful about those who need to come to office everyday because of the nature of their job
- Mindful about extra costs others incur due to travel- currently the extra costs feels unfair to those who travel. Especially if your manager is WFH 100% at a much higher salary and you are not
- Some people are taking the policy for granted
- There is low visibility of my work
- I miss out on the small talk and team chats
- All going well- there is no need to over complicate things
- There are too many meetings to attend
- Time is not utilised properly because of attending meetings you don't need to attend
- There are ongoing IT issues that need to be fixed
- Getting hold of people can prove to be difficult
- Hybrid policy needs to be more tailored to individual needs rather than blanket policy
- Better communication around reasonable adjustments and accessibility to encourage more diverse workforce

- Visibility feels less
- Some people have a greater sense of responsibility towards the business and it all boils down to that at the end of the day
- Nothing as of now
- I find it difficult to communicate with my team
- Delegating small tasks becomes difficult so end up doing it myself
- Creativity reduces in hybrid work
- I miss the conversations/chats
- You pile up things to check when you meet next and that results in very long meetings
- You lose focus on what others are doing
- Sometimes we have IT issues but these are resolved
- How best to break bias around part-time and hybrid working on performance. Overcoming proximity bias within leadership – driving as the team member not necessarily the leader.
- The perception of hybrid working and how to manage people

Training needs identified

- There are a lot of operational courses but no visibility of specific to job courses
- Currently it is all coming from me, I am signing up for courses myself with limited input from my Manager
- Mandatory training is good but don't have visibility of job specific training
- Training on Diversity and Inclusion
- Managing hybrid teams- managing expectations and communicating
- Team building
- How to manage expectations- communicate effectively
- More training on Microsoft Teams
- Induction - training should be included on hybrid working as mandatory
- Manage arguments
- Encourage visibility
- How to get the best out of teams- managing expectations
- Managing burnout
- Managing meeting etiquette
- How to encourage visibility
- More training on Teams and all its features
- Training around meeting etiquette would be helpful
- Managing expectations
- More training on Teams and all its features
- I am encouraged by my manager to take up available leadership courses
- Body language- reading people's moods in hybrid meetings
- Time management
- How can we share information more effectively? (sometime the email trails are too long and important information is missed out)
- If managers can get peer support then that would be really beneficial
- How to get best out of the teams
- Setting boundaries- setting some framework of expectations
- how to keep teams engaged
- Defining productivity- understanding your role as a Manager

General feedback

- It is getting difficult to get hold of people now, people may not be available on phones now. Hybrid policy should include guidelines on how to be accessible on phone/reach out to people
- If working from home is okay then why not working from another station on one day a week? (mainly to get more quiet time to complete admin work.
- I am relatively new to the organisation and have limited understanding of the operational side, would be good to get a better insight into this.
- FAQ- Can we have a FAQ with a list of situations that can arise during hybrid working and how best to manage them?
- Young people have different expectations from work so hard to explain work culture
- No desk space could be an excuse for when we move to new HQ to not come to office
- Evidence report on how many hours team members have logged in

- Compensation-fuel for those who travel to work
- Better comms around hybrid work contracts and what that means?
- Wouldn't go full time back into office now
- More guidance to what to expect as a Manager

The communication is fragmented and there is low visibility of the wider organisation

6 Appendix 2 - Survey results

7

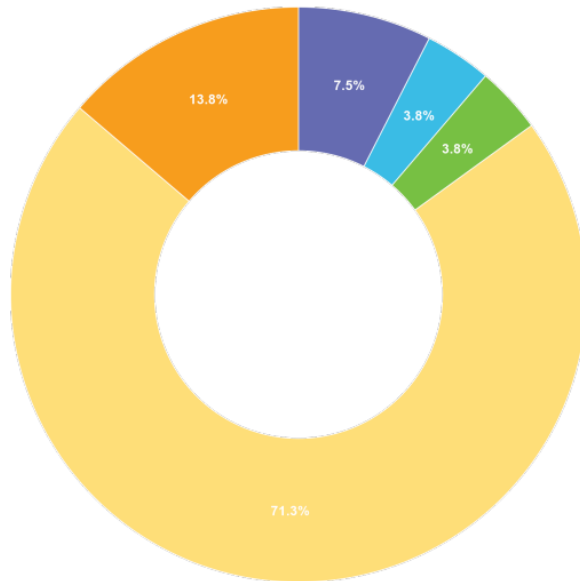
Respondents were advised that the aim of conducting the survey and acting on the findings was to ensure that we all feel included, productive, and positive at work. We gave all colleagues the opportunity to provide feedback on the current ways of working and what could be improved in order to best support them in hybrid working.

The survey was in two parts:

- 1- what is currently happening?
- 2- what opportunities for improvement are there?

Q1 PART ONE- Your feedback on what is currently happening?

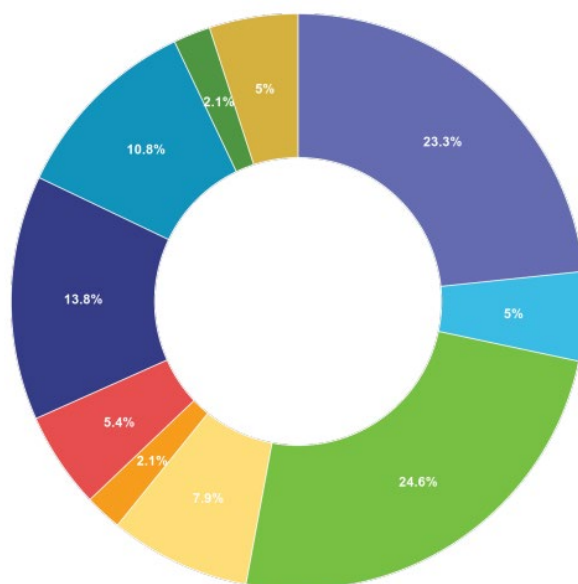
When we think of hybrid working, what does this look like for you?*



3-

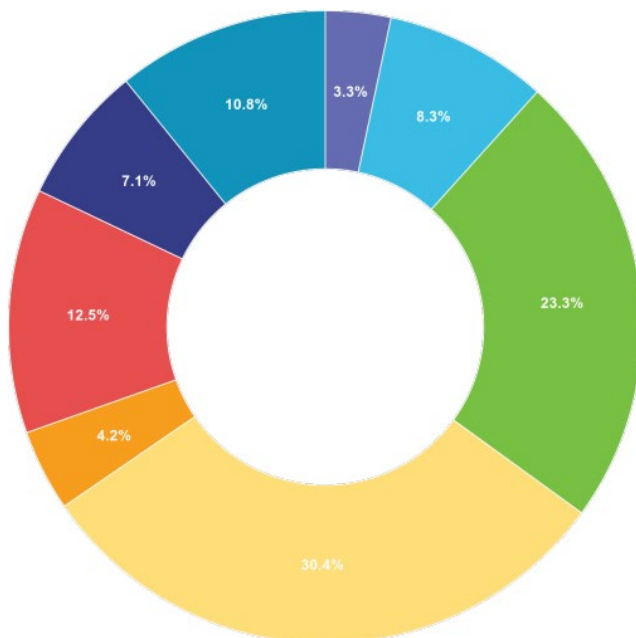
Choice	Total
100% working remotely	6
50% working remotely	3
100 % working on site	3
Flexible, depending on the circumstances	57

Q2 Please select the top **three** reasons that might influence you to choose to work in the office*



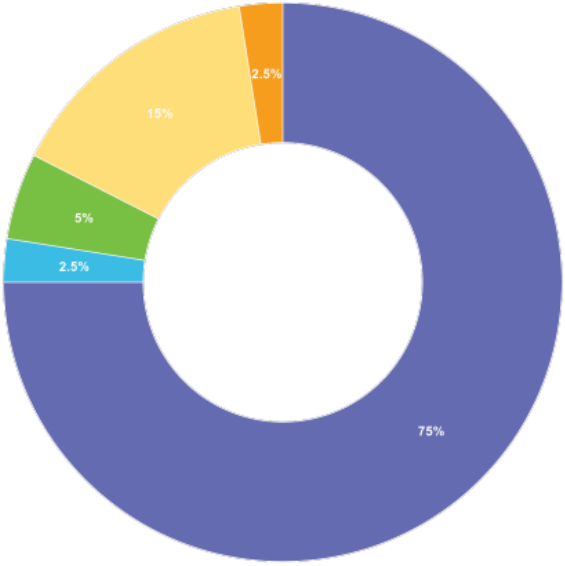
Choice	Total
In person meetings	56
Technology (i.e. stability of internet connection)	12
Ability to meet with colleagues at work	59
Ability to meet with colleagues socially	19
Prefer the routine	5
Prefer the office environment	13
In order to be visible	33
Nature of Job role	26
Less distractions	5
Other, please specify	12

Q3 Please select the top **three** reasons that might influence you to choose to work remotely-*








Choice	Total
Number of in person meetings	8
Lots of video meetings	20
Less distractions	56
Freedom- better work/life balance	73
Technology/better ergonomics	10
Prefer the working Space	30
Concerns about health and safety, i.e. covid risks	17
Other, please specify	26

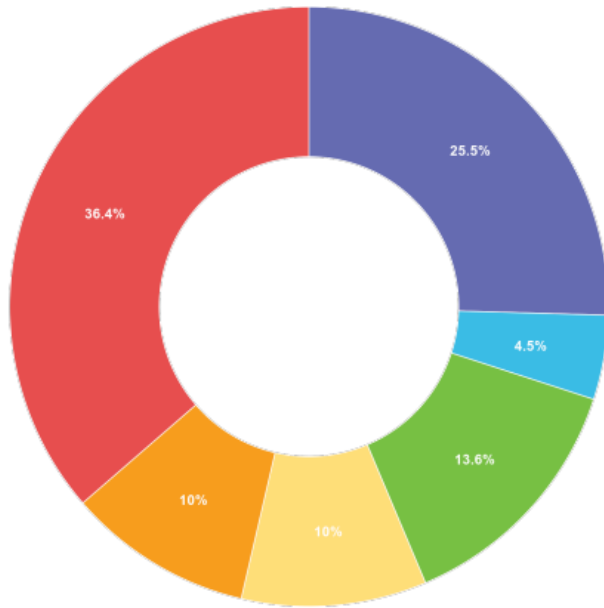
Q4 If you are a hybrid worker, do you feel that you have/ can better maintain an appropriate work life balance?*



Answered: 80 Unanswered: 0

Choice	Total
 Yes it has improved	60
 No, my work life balance is worse	2
 No! It feels/will feel as if I am always at work	4
 Not applicable	12
 Other, please specify	2

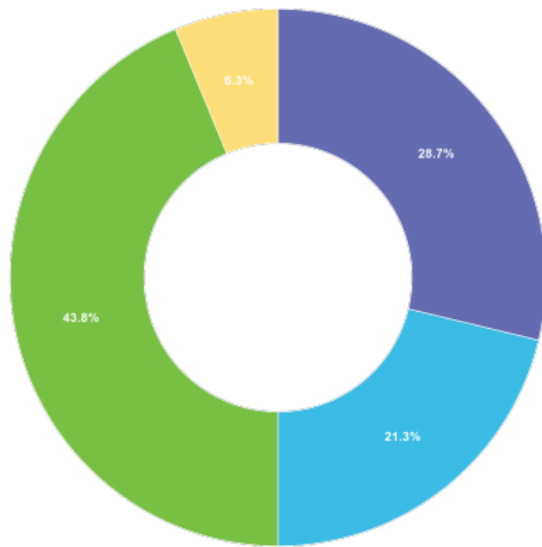
Q5 What are your views on what might be the causes of negative stress at work related to working in a hybrid context?*



Answered: 80 Unanswered: 0

Choice	Total
Manager less aware of my workload	28
Lack of autonomy	5
Lack of managerial support	15
Insufficient training	11
Poor/absent management	11

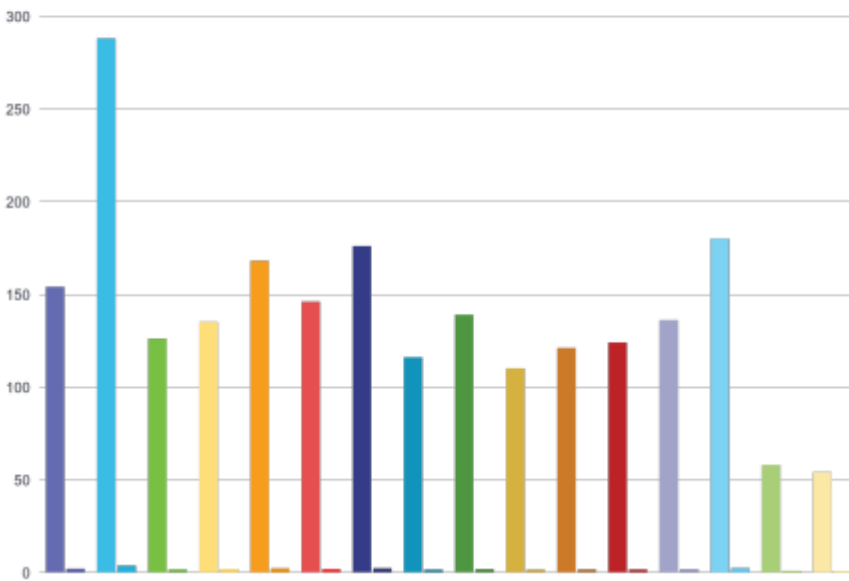
Q6 When you think of stress at work in hybrid working compared to pre-pandemic times, do you think the stress is the –*



Choice	Total
Same as pre-pandemic times	23
More than pre-pandemic times	17
Less than pre-pandemic times	35
Other, please elaborate	5

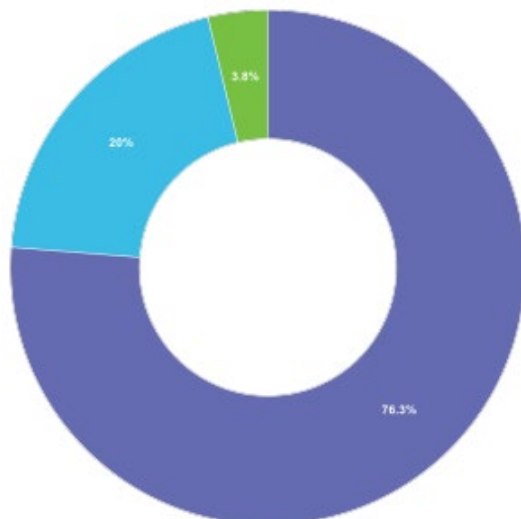
Q7 For the following questions, please select an option from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree

A Rating of 1 being Strongly Agree to a Rating of 5 being Strongly Disagree.



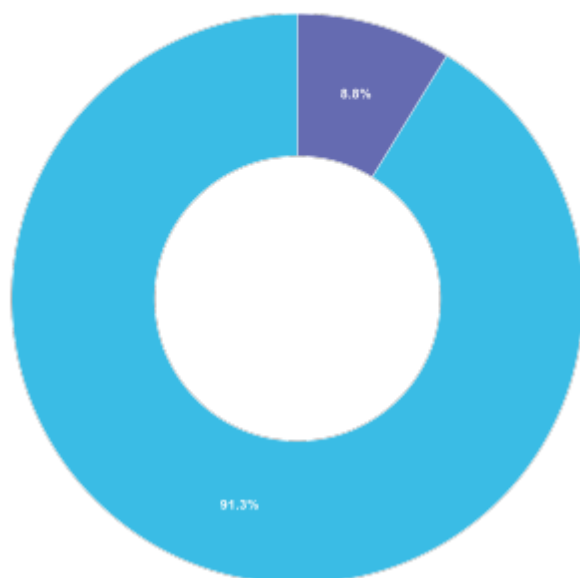
Choice	Score	Average
There are enough opportunities for people working in a hybrid way to discuss any emerging issues, particularly when you may all be based in different places at the time	154	1.93
I am regularly asked to do work on things I believe are outside the scope of my role	288	3.6
I take steps to keep in regular contact with my manager	126	1.58
I am able to contact my manager regularly to talk through my performance and any concerns I might have	135	1.69
My manager invests sufficient time and consideration into my annual review (PDR)	168	2.1
My manager gives me the support I need to carry out my job well	146	1.83
I get the personal development, training and learning I need to carry out my job well	176	2.2
I have enough autonomy (which means I can prioritise and make my own decisions rather than always being told what to do) to decide how my work will be organised and carried out	116	1.45
My manager listens to me and acts on any concerns I raise	139	1.74
There is trust between me and my manager that I will perform my role and responsibilities effectively while working in a hybrid structure	110	1.38
I am clear how my job and responsibilities connect with our WYFRS ambition and purpose	121	1.51
I communicate well with my colleagues when hybrid/remote working (e.g. MS Teams, phone calls, emails, text messages).	124	1.55
I feel confident in facilitating and managing the agenda and team communication during hybrid meetings	136	1.7
I have the time and resources I need to complete my work on time and within my normal working hours	180	2.25
As a line manager, I trust my team to manage their workloads and proactively support them to ensure deadlines are met. (Please skip rating	58	0.81
As a line manager, I have the skills and tools to manage conflicts arising in my team (Please skip rating this statement if not applicable)	54	0.75

Q8 1. Are you happy with the number of meetings you attend, (whether online, phone or in person)?*



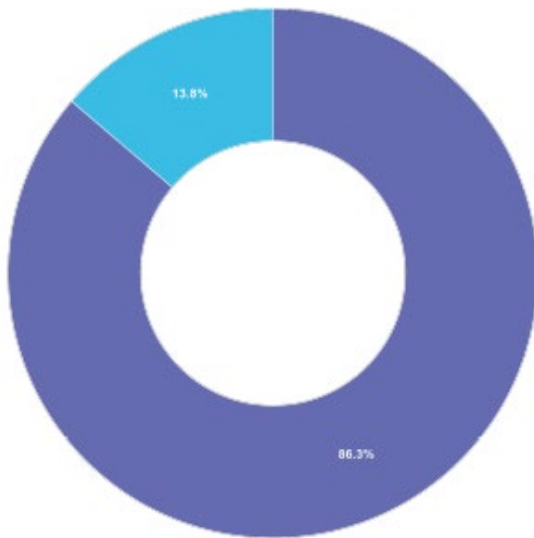
Choice	Total
Yes	61
No	16
Other	3

Q9 Does working away from the 'normal office' regularly impact on your progression and development at work?*



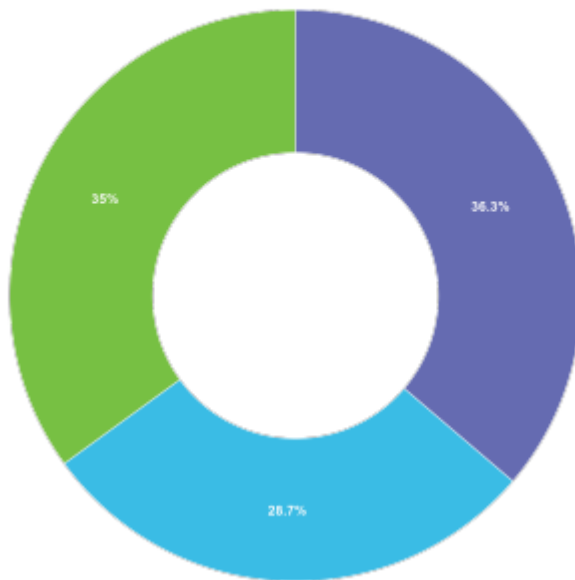
Choice	Total
Yes	7
No	73

Q10 Would you feel comfortable asking your manager for support in sustaining a healthy work-life balance?*



Choice	Total
Yes	69
No	11

Q11 We all need an appropriate work / life balance. Do you work outside of your normal working / daily hours? (e.g., do you respond to messages / emails / phone calls when off duty?)*



Choice	Total
Yes	29
No	23
Sometimes	28

Q12 Share with us any suggestions or changes you would like to see implemented to improve your work/ life balance and that of your colleagues.*

Key themes included:

1. Visibility and accessibility

The feedback on visibility was split into two camps. Those who wanted to see hybrid workers more in the office and those who felt they were asked to go into the office without legitimate cause.

2. Technical considerations

• Email traffic

Emails are not a new phenomenon and are not linked specifically with hybrid however quite a lot of feedback focused on the number of emails received.

• IT systems and training

Group pick-up, so if the one person you are trying to contact isn't answering their email/phone, you are able to contact someone else in their team. If you don't know another name of someone in the same department, it can be difficult to contact an alternative person.

3. Inclusion and connectivity

“More team social events to ensure communication and relationships are progressed and cemented”

Q13 We are keen to make sure everyone feels engaged and 'tuned in' to WYFRS, the team(s) you work in and connected to our purpose. What training or events (for example- Let's talk initiative) have you attended that helped?*

(These may be remote / face-to-face / mixed)

Key themes were around team connectivity and corporate information and consultation opportunities.

Q14 1. If you are working in a hybrid way, what has worked well for you?*

Frequent responses centred around:

- ✓ Being able to get on with duties without so many distractions
- ✓ Flexibility around private/personal appointments
- ✓ Not feeling stressed commuting to work by getting stuck in traffic every day
- ✓ Balancing Childcare

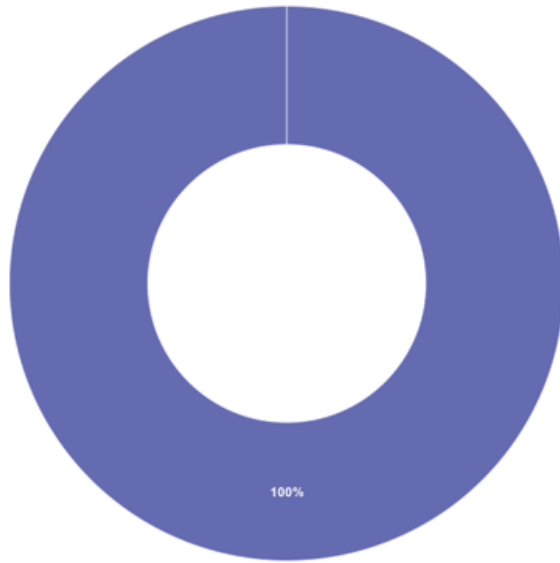
Q15 1. Going forward, what concerns, if any, do you have about hybrid working?

(whether your personal concerns or ones others have shared with you)*

Key themes include:

- Isolation and connectivity
- Availability and accessibility
- Environment
- Technological
- Health & wellbeing
- Career development opportunities
- Financial

Q17 As a manager of a team, do you feel comfortable starting or continuing a conversation about mental health, wellbeing and work place safety with your team? (either individually or together)*



Answered: 22 Unanswered: 58

Choice	Total
Yes	22
No	0

Q18 **Part Two- What opportunities for improvement are there? **

What flexible working arrangements would you like to see implemented across WYFRS?*

- d.
- e. **Key themes**
- meetings to start at 10am rather than 9am due to school drop off
 - Movement of public holidays
 - each department or individual will have their own requirements so therefore flexible working arrangements should be that Flexible and work for both the individual and the department as well as the organisation
 - We should have hybrid working but I believe 60% of peoples time, minimum, should be spent in the office.
 - Pooled cars available from other locations to use and not just FSHQ.
 - We need to remind people that when they are 'off duty' they shouldn't routinely respond to calls / messages / emails."
 -

Q19 What additional physical/digital tools do you think would support you to perform your role as a hybrid worker?*

- Working from home should require exactly the same equipment/technology as is available when in the office environment
- Teams' channels
- A Printer

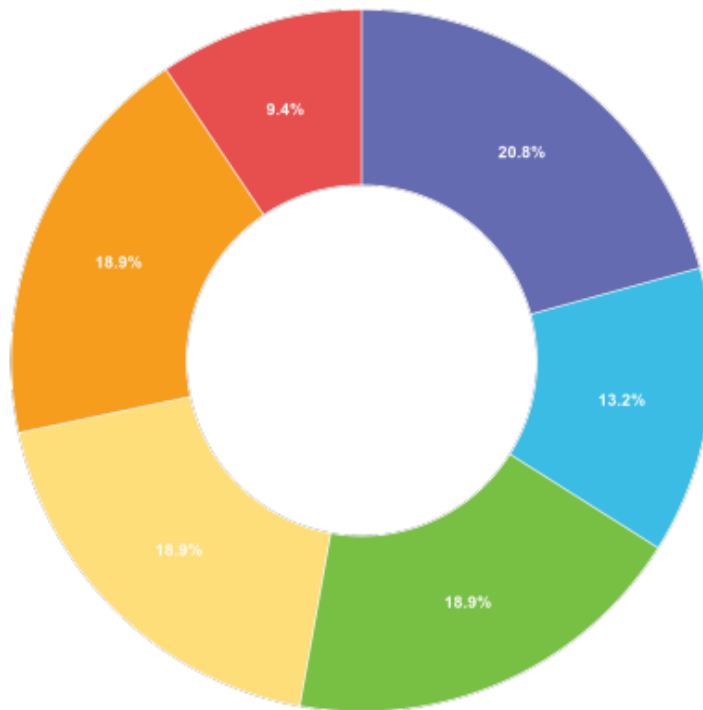
Q20 What could your line manager do to better support you to be more productive at work?*

- better communication and regular catch ups
- get rid of the idea of "presenteeism" days. I.e. come into the office just because, even though there is no need.

Q21 What could your colleagues do to better support you to be more productive at work?*

- Be more available to talk to (and reach on the phone/Teams).
- Ensure email signatures contain all contact information, including days and hours or work.
- less emails, being "CC" into everything

Q22 What would you like to see included in an ideal Hybrid working strategy for WYFRS? examples might include:*



Choice	Total
Open spaces/forums to discuss any issues and concerns	33
Support groups to discuss subjects of concern	21
Virtual coffee catch ups	30
Self-help materials, courses and webinars	30
Training or support	30
Other	15

Q23 How do you think WYFRS could improve internal team relationships for teams working a hybrid approach?*

- Hold the occasional team building day or in-person meetings

Q24 What would you expect a hybrid working policy or strategy to deliver for you and your colleagues?*

- more flexibility in working and hours - especially for parents of school age children
- Flexibility and trust
- To be on a rolling review where if productivity of communication levels drop they have to come in to the office more
- Clear definition and guidelines of do's and don'ts, what's included and what's not
- Make digital meetings less painful and more impactful

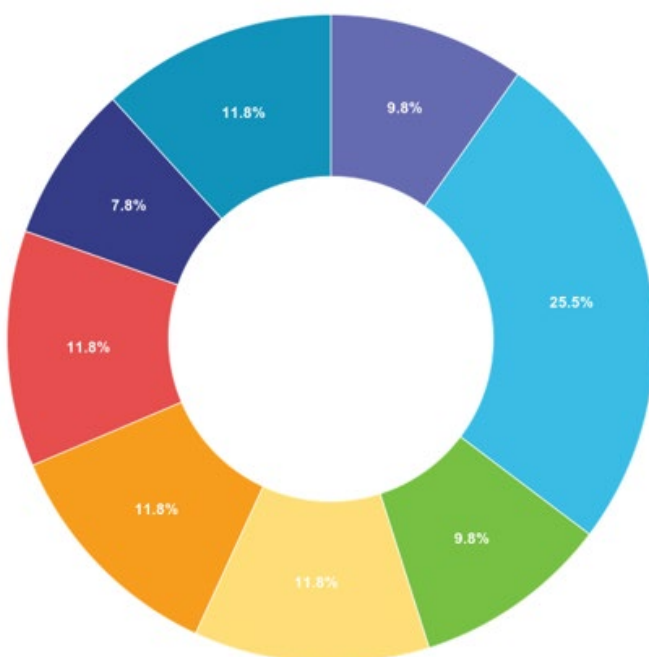
Q25 Anything else you would like to share?

- allow departments to have their own allocated space
- Any hybrid working approach has to be balanced - enough flexibility to manage the wider work life balance 'stuff', yet some clear boundaries and expectations of when people are available (i.e. customer / service requirements).
- discouraging people from responding outside of their working hours - otherwise nobody ever truly feels like they are 'off duty'."

Q27 As a manager of a hybrid team, is there anything the organisation could do to better support you?

- continue to allow me to work autonomously and agree hybrid working patterns based on my departmental priorities and demands
- management training essential so every manager has same consistent approach
- Support to assist monitoring of work levels whilst home working
- Support to motivate staff to come in to the office when required"

Q28 We are holding training workshops to better support you to manage your teams. What topics from below would help you to manage your team more effectively?



Choice	Total
Understanding different leadership styles	5
How to manage hybrid teams effectively?	13
How to manage stress at work?	5
Managing hybrid meetings	6
Conflict management	6
Understanding etiquette and body language in hybrid working	6
Building authentic influence through communication	4
How to build a more inclusive culture at work?	6
Others, please mention in the comments box below	0

6 Appendix 3 - Managing hybrid teams- Key Reflections from Workshops

Key areas of discussion and activities within the workshop

1. Hybrid working- what it means to us?
2. Mindsets and myths- Redefining/challenging certain mindsets around managing hybrid teams.
3. Communicating with colleagues – Using a brainstorming tool to find tangible, practical solutions to some of the most common challenges, managers face in hybrid working
4. Thinking of best practices/recommendations to support communicating with colleagues in hybrid working.
5. Actions- thinking of personal learnings that you would embed into your working lives.

Managing Hybrid teams

- ✓ Managing expectations
- ✓ Managing teams with diverse demographics and backgrounds
- ✓ Redefining productivity and encouraging autonomy
- ✓ Encouraging visibility- understanding workloads and personal circumstances
- ✓ Team engagement
- ✓ Managing hybrid meetings and recommendations

Hybrid meetings

- ✓ Adding only those that really need to attend meetings
- ✓ Reading material in advance
- ✓ Showing up more (actual attendance and camera use)
- ✓ Body language
- ✓ Managing agenda/attendees
- ✓ Engagement- how to include those that have logged in remotely
- ✓ Creativity

Below is the list of statements about Hybrid working that were discussed in groups within the workshops. Managers were asked to and write down if they think these statements are- True/False/Situation based and to explain

- 1- Hybrid means everybody comes into the office two or three days every week
- 2- Hybrid working means team members can work from any location at any time
- 3- Hybrid work is less innovative and collaborative than working from the same physical office space
- 4- For hybrid working to work, we need to have a 'one size fits all' approach
- 5- It's mainly women or those with caring responsibilities who tap into hybrid working
- 6- It's damaging for company culture to have teams working from different locations
- 7- If you are sick to drive to work, then you should take a sick leave and not call in to 'work from home'
- 8- Working from home reduces my chances of career growth -
- 9- Working from home offers lower job satisfaction-
- 10- I can log in at 10pm and complete my work in my PJ's

What has been most valuable for participants?

- Chance to have open and honest discussions with colleagues
- Opportunity to think about hybrid meetings, how I need to put more thought into this
- Talking through the different approaches that every one had and how all our situations/ circumstances are different and unique
- Mindsets and myths- Redefining/challenging certain mindsets around managing hybrid teams.
- Communication methods- pro's and con's of each communication method.
- Meeting structure and time management of meetings
- Thinking about ideas of engaging with colleagues for collaboration
- Discussing the myths around hybrid working and thinking of different views and opinions.
- Better planning and management of hybrid meetings.
- Being mindful about emails and how that impacts productivity
- Challenging my own mindset around my team's visibility and unconscious bias
- Thinking of staff welfare and being mindful of how I engage with them
- Communication preference styles

Key takeaways and actions

- User Me Manual- will ask team members to fill this in too"
- "Thinking of how I can build more trust with my team, working efficiently rather than working for long hours."
- "Keep doing what I am doing but also reflect on practices every few months."
- "Email management- understanding how to better manage emails."
- "Make the most of your time in the office and engage with colleagues from other teams"
- "Being more clear about communication/tasks/delegation"
- "Importance of communicating and collaborating face to face, not communicating through emails all the time"
- "Using other communication channels- setting up group chats to avoid emailing everything"
- "Thinking of traditional ways of communicating and picking up the phone for a chat"
- "Structure of meetings"
- "Scheduling in meetings – being mindful of lunch breaks"
- "Reflecting on some of the ways colleagues have navigated through hybrid working"
- "Understanding settings on Microsoft Teams"

Workshop feedback

"Well balanced, great engagement."

"Great course, found the activities and time to discuss in smaller groups really valuable"

"Enjoyed the variety of topics, found the time to share experience very useful"

"Good opportunity to network"

"Great mix of topics to discuss"

"Really enjoyed the superhero activity"

"Communication methods matrix was really useful to reflect on"

"Well timed and balanced with interesting topics to discuss"

"Very useful discussion, welcomed the opportunity to meet other colleagues in different teams"

"Thank you for the time to reflect, very informative"



OFFICIAL

Implications for WYFRS of the Independent Culture Review of London Fire Brigade

Human Resources Committee

Date: 20 January 2023

Agenda Item:

08

Submitted By: Chief Employment Services Officer

Purpose

To audit the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue approach and performance in relation to the recommendations contained in the Independent Culture Review of London Fire Brigade.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Members note the report.

Summary

The report assesses West Yorkshire's position against the recommendations contained within the Independent Culture Review of London Fire Brigade and explains that the organisation already complies with the majority of those recommendations

Local Government (Access to information) Act 1972

Exemption Category: None

Contact Officer: Ian Brandwood – Chief Employment Services Officer
Tel : 01274 682311 x 671358

Background papers open to inspection: Independent Culture Review of London Fire Brigade

<https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/about-us/independent-culture-review/>

Annexes: WYFRS Response

1 Introduction







- 1.1 The Independent Culture Review of London Fire Brigade (LFB) was published in November 2022. This followed an internal 'culture audit' in 2020 and subsequent review commissioned in Nov 2021, following the suicide of a firefighter where bullying and harassment was thought to have contributed significantly. Criticism of culture at LFB was also raised by the HMICFRS in their inspection report.
- 1.2 The review was undertaken by Nazir Afzal, former Chief Crown Prosecutor for NW England, supported by a team of subject matter experts. In the light of the serious findings of that review, 21 recommendations for improvement were made.
- 1.3 Whilst there is no evidence to suggest that the systemic problems identified in London exist in West Yorkshire, the organisation cannot be complacent. We know from previous disciplinary investigations that poor behaviour does occur occasionally despite the work that has been done over the last 5 years to improve the culture in West Yorkshire.
- 1.4 It was therefore felt prudent to audit the West Yorkshire culture and associated practices and policies against the LFB recommendations both to assure ourselves that appropriate measures are in place, but also to identify any areas of vulnerability and opportunities for further improvement.

2 Information

- 2.1 The Independent Culture Review of London Fire Brigade (LFB) identified some shocking failings in the culture of that organisation. Amongst the failings identified were:
- LFB was institutionally misogynist and racist
 - Ingrained prejudice against women and people of colour. They were frequently the target of racist and sexist abuse
 - Staff convinced that the consequences of speaking up were worse than the consequences of silence
 - The Commissioner was not wholly supported by those around him
 - A Toxic culture exists which allows bullying and abuse to be normalised
 - The close knit, clannish nature of watches creates a need to fit in. Watches seen as a place outside the law with regard to norms of behaviour
 - Women groped in training exercises
 - Muslim Firefighter had bacon and sausage put in his pockets and urine in his helmet
 - On station, men huddled round a screen watching porn

- Failing HR team and systems
- Inconsistent leadership with managers sometimes aware of or part of the abuse

- 2.2 The culture of the Fire Service nationally has been called into question on a number of occasions and has been the subject of a number of national reports, the most recent of which was the “Independent review of conditions of service for fire and rescue staff in England”, published in November 2016 and authored by Adrian Thomas, an experienced HR professional who previously held HR roles at GSK (Director of Recruitment - Manufacturing Divisions), Network Rail (Head of Resourcing) and Royal Bank of Scotland (Head Resourcing Policy & Governance).
- 2.3 Thomas identified the issues of bullying and harassment and was shocked at the lack of formal complaints when compared to anecdotal claims of bullying and absence of evidence of formal action being taken. Concern was raised about the lack of progress in relation to the diversity of the workforce and the impact that the cultural issues may be having on that. These are themes that are reflected strongly in the LFB report.
- 2.4 Given the findings in the LFB report and the apparent lack of progress since previous reports, questions are being asked nationally, i.e., within the House of Lords, about whether the culture in London is typical of the culture in the fire service more generally.
- 2.5 There is no evidence to suggest that the systemic problems identified in London exist in West Yorkshire. Following the Thomas Review in 2016, an action plan was agreed by the WYFRS HR Committee and significant work was undertaken on culture, values and diversity, work which continues today.
- 2.6 Nevertheless, the organisation cannot be complacent. We know from previous disciplinary investigations that poor behaviour does occur occasionally despite the work that has been done over the last 5 years to improve the culture.
- 2.7 The LFB Report contained 21 recommendations. It felt appropriate to review the WYFRS culture, policy and practice against the LFB recommendations both to ensure that appropriate measures are in place, but also to identify any areas of vulnerability and opportunities for further improvement.
- 2.8 The assessment is contained as an annex to this report, with the WYFRS position being RAG rated against each recommendation. There are no particular areas of concern with the response to the majority of the recommendations being assessed as green. There are some areas for improvement and review and the appropriate officers will progress these areas.
- 2.9 As an extra level of assurance, Members will recall that in the two HMICFRS inspections that we have had, the assessment of “how well does the fire and rescue service look after its people?” has been rated as good with the most recent report highlighting areas of good practice particularly around positive action and recruitment.

Question	This inspection	2018/19
 People	 Good	Good
Promoting the right values and culture	 Good	Good
Getting the right people with the right skills	 Good	Good
Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity	 Good	Good
Managing performance and developing leaders	 Good	Good

3 Financial Implications

3.1 None arising directly from this report.

4 Legal Implications

The Monitoring Officer has considered this report and is satisfied it is presented in compliance with the Authority's Constitution

5 Human Resource and Diversity Implications

5.1 Addressed within the report

6 Equality Impact Assessment

Are the recommendations within this report subject to Equality Impact Assessment as outlined in the EIA guidance? (EIA guidance and form 2020 form.docx (westyorksfire.gov.uk))	Yes / No
Date EIA Completed	DD/MM/YY
Date EIA Approved	DD/MM/YY

The EIA is available on request from the report author or from diversity.inclusion@westyorksfire.gov.uk

7 Health, Safety and Wellbeing Implications

- 7.1 The organisation has a statutory duty to protect the health and well-being of its staff. The report and its appendix explain the approach taken to help ensure this.

8 Environmental Implications

- 8.1 None arising directly from this report.

9 Your Fire and Rescue Service Priorities

- 9.1 None arising directly from this report.

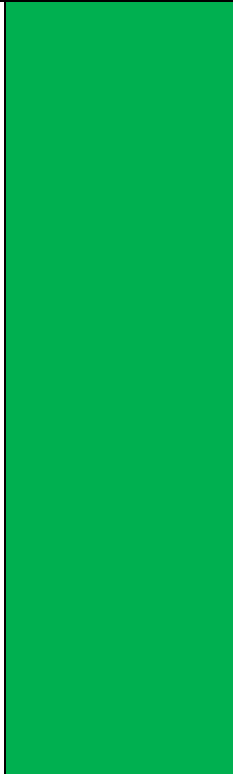
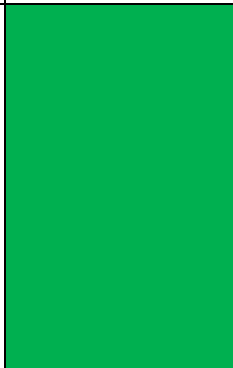
10 Conclusions

- 10.1 The report assesses West Yorkshire's position against the recommendations contained within the Independent Culture Review of London Fire Brigade and explains that the organisation already complies with the majority of those recommendations. Any areas for improvement will be addressed.
- 10.2 Our OD and Diversity Team and leaders right across the organisation strive to ensure that the organisation reflects good and innovative practice in these areas and that aspiration will continue.

LFB Report Recommendation	WYFRS Response	Rating
<p>Recommendation 1:</p> <p>All managers should adopt a zero-tolerance policy for bullying, racist and misogynistic behaviour in the workplace and appropriate disciplinary action must be taken to root out a toxic culture.</p> <p><i>Outcome 1: EDI training for managers and an independent complaints service</i></p> <p><i>Outcome 2: Managers can identify inappropriate behaviours and values and act decisively to tackle them.</i></p>	<p>Face to face training has been delivered to all staff using an external specialist provider. (Ioda) Training continues so that new starters are picked up.</p> <p>Consideration being given to how this can be further developed.</p> <p>Leadership training for senior managers emphasises the importance of both modelling and challenging.</p> <p>Training includes direction so that managers can identify inappropriate behaviours and values and act decisively to tackle them.</p> <p>Managers complete a mandatory e-learning course on Managing Diversity and Inclusion. All new staff complete an e-learning module on Understanding Diversity and Inclusion.</p> <p>Skill Booster on-line courses have been procured and are available to all staff on the virtual college.</p> <p>The Service provide an annual programme of Diversity and Inclusion training sessions based on need and recommendations from Staff networks.</p> <p>The Dignity, Respect and Integrity Policy and Guidance provides managers and staff with tools to identify and tackle inappropriate behaviours. An Anti-racism toolkit as also available to all staff.</p>	




Recommendation 2:		
<p>Consider anonymised reporting of incidents relating to bullying, misogyny and racism. In a closed team-based culture individuals /groups can and have become stigmatised for reporting poor behaviour or bad experiences.</p> <p><i>Outcome 3: Staff can report incidents anonymously with no fear of the repercussions.</i></p>	<p>We have a network of confidential contacts with whom staff can share their concerns and gain support.</p> <p>The whistleblowing policy allows anonymous reporting.</p> <p>We have recently introduced “Say So”. which provides a completely independent reporting facility (using cost-free telephone or online options) for staff to make reports of any issue that is of concern. The staff member chooses whether or not to disclose their identity.</p> <p>Any reports made are received directly by the DCFO and CESO for further investigation.</p>	
Recommendation 3:		
<p>Consider historic review of complaints about bullying, racism and misogyny over the last five years. This would establish a team to determine whether further action is necessary in cases where justice has been denied.</p> <p><i>Outcome 4: Review past cases and ensure all complaints over the past five years have been managed appropriately and the correct sanctions applied and where not an appropriate remedy has been introduced.</i></p>	<p>Very confident that cases about which we were aware have been dealt with appropriately. These have resulted in a number of high profile dismissals.</p> <p>Where appropriate we learn from cases we have had and create an action plan for avoiding similar situations arising.</p> <p>Will pull together a schedule of previous known cases. (RM/GC)</p>	

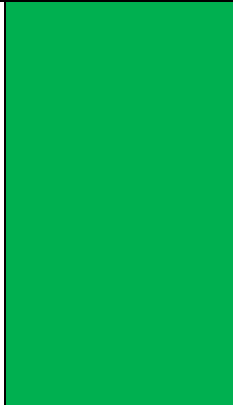
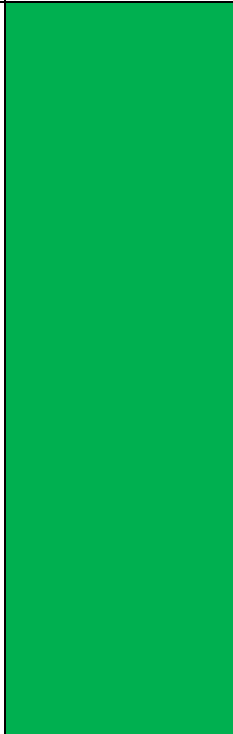
Recommendation 4:		
<p>Recognise the ‘Safe to Speak’ programme is not sufficiently trusted and that further policies and dedicated resources are needed to make it easier for people to report clear examples of racism, misogyny and bullying of staff.</p> <p><i>Outcome 5: Ensure staff are confident to speak up when they witness or experience racism, misogyny or bullying.</i></p>	<p>Senior managers (Directors) are visible and accessible across the organisation.</p> <p>HR Business Partners spend the major part of their time on station.</p> <p>Both “Say So” and our Employee Assistance Program (AXA PPP) offer staff alternative routes to raise concerns or complaints.</p> <p>Guidance and training is available to all staff on how to have difficult conversations and be an active bystander. An anti-racism toolkit is provided to staff who must demonstrate it’s use via the SIAT self-assessment process.</p> <p>A D&I assessment has been added to the SIAT assessment schedule which asks teams to demonstrate how they use the DRI policy and tackle inappropriate behaviours and comments.</p>	
Recommendation 5:		
<p>In conversation with the workforce and stakeholders, develop Brigade values that are ‘public service’ first, underpinning how we behave within the organisation and towards our public and partners. These values should inform the core code of ethics, recruitment, promotion, discipline, talent management, industrial relations, staff engagement, leadership</p>	<p>We already had an established and well publicised suite of values and behaviours.</p> <p>We audited our values and behaviours against the core code of ethics and concluded that our current values framework encompassed all the requirements of the code of ethics. We therefore felt it would be counter-productive to introduce another framework when our current framework was well established and understood.</p> <p>Perhaps some further reflection on how we evidence values based decision making.</p> <p>The proposed D&I strategy and framework uses a values based approach.</p>	

<p>development and strategic planning.</p> <p><i>Outcome 6: Eliminate the potential for bias or unfair treatment.</i></p> <p><i>Outcome 7: For this to be successful the values must be visible in everything from the most strategic plans through to staff appraisals. They must run as a golden thread through recruitment, promotion, discipline, talent management, Industrial Relations, staff engagement. All of which must be transparent and open to challenge. Action must also be visible where there have been transgressions.</i></p>	<p>The annual appraisal uses the values to demonstrate staff understanding and compliance with them.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 6:</p>		
<p>Build a culture dashboard of LFB stations and teams that uses a mix of metrics to assess whether these are red, amber or green on a scale of risk where the working environment is concerned. The worst offenders (red) will demonstrate toxic behaviours, while at risk stations (amber) will</p>	<p>Given that we do not believe such behaviours are institutionalised in WYFRS (although it would be naïve to think there aren't pockets of poor attitudes and behaviour) then there would be insufficient data to create this sort of dashboard and any information would be sparse, and therefore unreliable at best.</p> <p>Our staff survey can be broken down by location and would identify any outliers in terms of culture.</p>	

<p>demonstrate some areas of concern, and good practice stations (green) will demonstrate a healthy and supportive culture. Data to use includes grievances, staff turnover, exit interviews, people survey data, diversity and more. Use these dashboards to proactively address problem teams and identify and learn from good practice.</p> <p><i>Outcome 8: The Brigade can identify where toxic culture is a threat and managers take swift action to address it. Good practice is identified and shared, so that others can learn from it</i></p>		
<p>Recommendation 7:</p>		
<p>Develop a robust mechanism for measuring LFB culture, which operates on an ongoing basis using a number of tools and metrics, including big data, social media, exit interviews, complaints levels, turnover etc.</p> <p><i>Outcome 9: LFB can monitor the health of its culture on an ongoing basis and take action to address emerging issues.</i></p>	<p>The staff survey already gives a robust insight into culture. In addition, management team consider Exit Interview data every 6 months.</p> <p>Looking at the potential of pulse surveys.</p> <p>In addition, we produce an annual equality impact report.</p> <p>We will do some work trying to amalgamate this data into some form of annual report if necessary and explore the potential of the OneView system.</p>	

Recommendation 8:		
<p>Consider introducing body worn video (BWV) for free safety home visits.</p> <p><i>Outcome 10: Drive up standards of behaviour and professionalism.</i></p> <p><i>Outcome 11: To be rolled out across station and inspection teams.</i></p>	<p>The introduction of BWV has been contentious in the context of it being provided for staff protection/evidence gathering in respect of attacks on firefighters. The service approach has been to use volunteers to pilot the wearing of cameras, this is an ongoing trial that has not yet reached any conclusions.</p> <p>There is no evidence whatsoever either through complaint from the public or anecdote that the issue referred to that suggests their introduction is an issue in WYFRS. Implementing BWV for this purpose infers a significant lack of trust which is counter to the WYFRS values.</p>	
Recommendation 9:		
<p>Ensure there are secure facilities for all women in stations.</p> <p><i>Outcome 12: Afford greater dignity for all staff</i></p>	<p>This has been a priority for WYFRS for a few years. All new stations and station refurbishments ensure appropriate provision is made.</p> <p>Separate schemes are put in place to resolve any properties where the problem exists and where those stations aren't included in the station refurbishment problem.</p>	
Recommendation 10:		
<p>Borough Commanders should build a better understanding of and closer relationships with their local communities, which should include learning from them and seeking the input of diverse staff and the communities themselves.</p>	<p>The WYFRS model of District Commanders places these individuals at the heart of the communities we serve. The ever increasing use of data to develop more sophisticated understanding of vulnerability in the community is an ongoing process. Staff are being developed in respect of how the use and act upon this data.</p> <p>At a more human level we are working on implementation of our community engagement strategy – this is intended to give communities a voice in how we deliver our service in their area. We also believe that the strong links</p>	

<p><i>Outcome 13: Borough Commanders will own and implement their local Borough Community Risk Management Plan, informed by the community and local partners.</i></p> <p><i>Outcome 14: By 2024, local fire stations are seen as a community resource. Services are shaped by a deep understanding of local community needs.</i></p>	<p>between DCs and FRA members further supports that link between the community and our organisation.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 11:</p>		
<p>Recruit and progress firefighters who reflect and can demonstrate their commitment to London's diverse communities.</p> <p><i>Outcome 15: All Brigade staff understand London and its communities and are proud to serve them. Diversity is visible in all levels in the Brigade.</i></p>	<p>Significant work has been undertaken to develop a positive action programme which has started to improve the diversity of applicants and recruits. Our efforts were highlighted as good practice by the HMICFRS.</p> <p>Firefighter applications are restricted to West Yorkshire residents.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 12:</p>		
<p>Improve post-incident care by providing a named person to members of the public directly</p>	<p>The service conducts an annual 'Quality of Service' survey which includes a series of questions that focus on 'after the incident'. LINK - THIS VERSION WON'T WORK EXTERNAL TO OUR INTRANET . Satisfaction with the level</p>	

<p>impacted by an event that required LFB attendance</p> <p><i>Outcome 16: Members of the public affected by incidents are provided with an LFB Family Liaison Officer who offers sensitive and compassionate support. This increases community trust and confidence.</i></p>	<p>of service provided at both domestic and non-domestic incidents is consistently high. The service routinely provides an 'After the Fire' advice booklet and has mechanisms in place around particularly challenging domestic incidents to arrange for a Red Cross Fire and Emergency Support Service and vehicle (hosted at WYFRS Service Delivery Centre) to attend the scene.</p> <p>We will watch the development of the LFB scheme with interest but have no evidence to suggest that this is a gap in our current provision.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 13:</p>		
<p>Consider ways to integrate Head Office with operations immediately, and longer term when the lease of the Unions Street HQ expires in 2027.</p> <p><i>Outcome 17: Senior leaders work alongside operational and control staff regularly. Senior leaders are visible and regularly demonstrate their commitment to Brigade values and their understanding of the workforce at all levels.</i></p> <p><i>Outcome 18: Ensure there are transparent processes around ethics and conduct that reassure staff and communities that</i></p>	<p>A HR Business Partner model is already in place which results in an HRBP spending the majority of their time based in a district office and supporting the running of the operational response.</p> <p>Each operational team has a nominated finance contact to ensure appropriate budget management and development takes place.</p> <p>The completion of the new HQ will see the Control Team return to HQ, further improving the integration between HQ and Operations.</p>	

<p><i>selection processes are fair. Selection data demonstrates that no groups of people experience bias in the process.</i></p>		
<p>Recommendation 14</p>		
<p>Improve the fairness and transparency of senior selection panels by appointing independent chairs and panel members and asking all candidates and panel members to declare any interests, including membership of the Freemasons.</p> <p><i>Outcome 19: LFB staff declare potential conflicts of interest and memberships of any organisation that may conflict with our values and expectations.</i></p>	<p>The concept of an independent chair is not supported. All staff authorised to recruit have undertaken training, including unconscious bias training.</p> <p>The responsibility, enshrined in legislation, is clear that the responsibility for recruitment below director level sits with the Chief Fire Officer and with the Authority for director appointments.</p> <p>An assessment centre approach for recruitment is being used more frequently and we are making a conscious effort to ensure that interview panels are as diverse as possible.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 15:</p>		
<p>Increase the focus on mental health prevention by providing training for leaders and managers to identify and respond to stress at work; to understand their role in creating healthy cultures and understand</p>	<p>Extensive training delivered by Leeds Mind over the last few years.</p> <p>The current Assistant Occupational Health, Safety & Wellbeing Manager was recruited from Leeds Mind and indeed, delivered a lot of our previous training. She is currently carrying out a mental health & wellbeing review to determine what further interventions are necessary.</p>	

<p>the connection between inclusion and wellbeing</p> <p><i>Outcome 20: Training is delivered across all leadership roles. By 2024 - leaders and managers build and maintain inclusive, healthy and high performing teams. They can spot the signs of stress and anxiety and know their team members well, understand sources of stress and where more specialist support is needed to maintain or restore individual health and wellbeing. This is well funded, well signposted, well known and well used. The link between inclusion and wellbeing is well understood, and wellbeing metrics are integrated into culture measures.</i></p>		
<p>Recommendation 16:</p>		
<p>Gather better information on employee red flags that signal the need for early intervention to prevent deteriorating mental health.</p> <p><i>Outcome 21: Staff are able to spot red flags that indicate</i></p>	<p>Over the last few years, we have extended the managers mental health training to ALL staff. The training covers signs & symptoms of mental ill health and how to access help & support. Current mental health & wellbeing review will make further recommendations for improvement, including around trauma support.</p>	

<p><i>deteriorating mental health and know how to access appropriate support for those at risk.</i></p>		
<p>Recommendation 17:</p>		
<p>Investigate the root causes for LFB FRS staff being significantly more impacted by stress, anxiety and depression in comparison to their national colleagues and design wellbeing interventions that address these issues directly.</p> <p><i>Outcome 22: Ensure the sources of stress for FRS colleagues have been identified and appropriate support introduced to reduce occurrences</i></p> <p><i>Outcome 23: By April 2024 the particular workplace sources of stress for FRS colleagues have been reduced, so that stress, anxiety and depression are at or below national levels.</i></p> <p><i>Outcome 24: FRS staff are an integral part of the LFB community and their knowledge</i></p>	<p>Not applicable at WYFRS.</p>	

<p><i>and expertise are valued and rewarded.</i></p>		
<p>Recommendation 18:</p>		
<p>Make it a priority to try to understand the reasons for suicide by ensuring that a clear and robust system of reporting is established. Capture the learnings in a Guidance document that includes a communication plan and action plan to support staff in the event of a colleague's death by suicide.</p> <p><i>Outcome 25: In the event of a suicide, the Brigade is prepared to act promptly and compassionately to offer staff information and support. LFB gathers and records information to build an understanding of the issues and design interventions to address them.</i></p>	<p>Fortunately, we have not had any serving FRS staff take their own life, however this does not mean it will never happen. We will explore the possibility of introducing a recording system to capture the reasons for suicide and any subsequent learning. This will be included in the mental health & wellbeing review.</p> <p>Although not from suicide, recent events in Leeds district have demonstrated the FRS's commitment to act swiftly and support staff who may be affected by trauma at work.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 19:</p>		
<p>Review the triggers that are needed to generate interventions to support mental health and wellbeing. A more detailed</p>	<p>Any additional actions, including raising awareness of suicide and recognition of triggers and actions to take if they are spotted will be covered in the mental health & wellbeing review.</p>	

<p>critical incident log of all firefighters will show what they have been exposed to and indicate where wellbeing support is necessary.</p> <p><i>Outcome 26: Ensure LFB has a clear understanding of the range of incidents their staff are exposed to and systematically reaches out to those who could be particularly at risk. There is a range of easy to access support and all colleagues are offered a comprehensive programme of support for their mental health</i></p>		
<p>Recommendation 20:</p>		
<p>Conduct an independent review of People Services resourcing and provision to improve the professionalism and effectiveness of the service and deliver leading-edge HR solutions that managers and staff trust.</p> <p><i>Outcome 27: Ensure your HR service is valued and respected by all colleagues and plays an</i></p>	<p>A review was conducted following the appointment of the current CESO in 2015/16. As a consequence, the structure was changed and a HRBP model introduced. There are five HRBPs in post, each linked to a particular district and departments. They spend the vast majority of their time working within their allocated area.</p> <p>The review also introduced a new, modern, computerised HR System (Access) which allowed much better reporting and access to data. This will be further supplemented by the “One View” Business information system over the next year.</p>	

<i>integral role in maintaining an inclusive culture.</i>		
Recommendation 21:		
<p>Create an HR Data Analytics Strategy and develop HR data analytics skills. Use data to design and implement People Services' strategies, policies and practices (including the 'Togetherness Strategy'), as well as lead the organisation in the desired cultural change.</p> <p><i>Outcome 29: LFB staff will always understand why decisions are made that affect them at work.</i></p>	<p>Data is already used extensively to inform decisions. The organisation has a detailed and regularly reviewed workforce plan which supports staffing decisions.</p> <p>Key HR indicators are monitored and routinely reported to the HR Committee.</p> <p>The further development and review of KPIs is being considered as part of the OneView project.</p>	



OFFICIAL

Positive Action Evaluation 2020 - 23

Human Resources Committee

Date: 20 January 2023

Agenda Item:

09

Submitted By: Chief Employment Services Officer

Purpose To review the success of positive action during the wholetime firefighter recruitment processes during 2020 – 2023 and advise on future best practise.

Recommendations That Members note the content of this report.

Summary During this financial year, the Positive Action Officer has continued working alongside multiple different teams; including the HR team, Corporate Communications and staff networks to deliver successfully against our Positive Action goals.

The attached report provides a detailed update and review of the positive action work achieved so far through the wholetime recruitment processes in conjunction with the Positive Action Officer. It outlines recommendations moving forward based on the data recorded throughout 2020 – 2023.

Local Government (Access to information) Act 1972

Exemption Category: None

Contact Officer: Rhiannon Wraith, Positive Action & Community
Engagement Officer
07799894705
Rhiannon.Wraith@westyorksfire.gov.uk

Background papers open to inspection: None

Annexes: Positive Action Evaluation Report

1 Introduction

The attached report provides a detailed update concerning the positive action work which has been achieved throughout 2020 – 2023 in conjunction with wholetime recruitment processes. It outlines the successes we have achieved in engaging people from groups which are currently underrepresented within WYFRS, and the success of translating that engagement into job offers.

The report also outlines the recommendations made by the Positive Action Coordinator for future recruitment processes beginning from the new financial year in 2023. All recommendations made are based on the data collected and analysed from the past 3 years of recruitment practise.

2 Information

It has been identified that there are barriers to underrepresented groups being recruited as Firefighters. Online targeted advertising was successfully used to engage female and minority ethnic prospective candidates. Unfortunately, although we achieved success in recruiting women, this did not translate into the recruitment of minority ethnic firefighters due to the impact of barriers within the recruitment process.

Positive Action goals in the past 2 years have been focused on identifying and removing barriers these barriers experienced by underrepresented groups in the recruitment process. As such, the process has been updated to remove most online sifting tests and now includes mandatory awareness sessions where spaces are proportionally assigned based on gender and ethnicity. To supplement these changes, Forster College were engaged to provide support for application, maths and English, and interview. Fitness development sessions were continued in a bid to reduce the impact of the POEST (Point of Entry Skills Testing) on female and minority ethnic candidates.

The positive action initiatives and changes to the recruitment process have had a positive impact, with the diversity of those successful at interview increasing. Since the commencement of the new process, minority ethnic candidates have accounted for at least 20% of those successful at interview, in comparison with just 6% prior. Females continue to account for between 20 – 30% of those successful. Despite these positive outcomes, there is still room to improve, with further barriers to engagement being identified. For example, people under 25 are less successful throughout the process. Pakistani candidates are also frequently negatively impacted through each part of the process.

The report details a number of areas which require action to further improve recruitment, clearly outlining the evidence for continued positive action work. The report highlights a requirement for timely evaluations of recruitment and positive action initiatives against annual SMART goals. The Positive Action workstreams and goals must be clearly outlined within the next year to ensure that momentum is not lost. This may require further planning due to the end of the Positive Action Coordinator secondment role due in August 2023. Further consideration whilst creating a strategy and goals must be taken when considering this issue.

3 Financial Implications

No changes to previous budget provisions have been identified.

4 Legal Implications

The Monitoring Officer has considered this report and is satisfied it is presented in compliance with the Authority's Constitution

5 Human Resource and Diversity Implications

As detailed within the report.

6 Equality Impact Assessment

Are the recommendations within this report subject to Equality Impact Assessment as outlined in the EIA guidance? (EIA guidance and form 2020 form.docx (westyorksfire.gov.uk))	Yes
Date EIA Completed	11/11/2021
Date EIA Approved	

The EIA is available on request from the report author or from diversity.inclusion@westyorksfire.gov.uk

7 Health, Safety and Wellbeing Implications

None arising from this report.

8 Environmental Implications

None arising from this report.

9 Your Fire and Rescue Service Priorities

This report supports WYFRS' priority to 'provide a workforce that serves the needs of a diverse community'.

10 Conclusions

Support and resource must continue to be provided for Positive Action initiatives to ensure momentum is not lost and WYFRS continues to improve on the diversity of its operational workforce.



Positive Action Evaluation 2020-22

WHOLETIME RECRUITMENT

POSITIVE ACTION COORDINATOR RHIANNON WRAITH

Contents

.....	0
1 Introduction.....	2
2 What is Positive Action?	2
2.1 Workforce Equality Data	2
2.2 WYFRS' Positive Action Goals.....	3
3 Wholetime Recruitment 2020 - 23.....	3
4 Previous Barriers within the Wholetime Recruitment Process.....	4
4.1 Intersectional analysis.....	4
4.2 Initial identification of barriers to recruitment – 2018 process	4
4.3 Further identification of barriers – 2020/21 recruitment process	5
5. Identifying and Removing Barriers (Analysis of Wholetime Recruitment Processes 2020 – 23)	6
5.1 Registration and Awareness Session.....	6
5.1.1 Registration via JoinWYFirefighters Microsite / Thinkology.....	6
5.1.2 Awareness Sessions	0
5.2 Stage 1: Application.....	0
5.2.1 Survey Results	2
5.2.2 Eligibility Criteria – Driving License	2
5.3 Stage 2: Online Maths and English Testing.....	3
5.4 Stage 3: Physical Entry Tests	0
5.5 Stage 4: Interview.....	0
5.6 Stage 5: Pre-Employment Checks	2
6. Positive Action Initiatives and Outcomes.....	2
6.1 Collaboration with Forster College	2
6.1.1 Application Support Sessions.....	2
6.1.2 L2 Maths and English Support	2
6.1.3 Interview Support Sessions.....	3
6.2 Fitness Development Sessions	3
6.3 Trainee Support Volunteer Scheme	4
7. Conclusion	5

1 Introduction

This report will outline the work associated with the Wholetime Firefighter recruitment process which has been accomplished and implemented over 2020 – 2023. It will identify and evaluate the actions we have taken to achieve our recruitment and Positive Action goals, identify any barriers which are still present in the recruitment process, and make recommendations of how we can continue to improve our service in the future.

This report will outline our past commitments to creating and implementing a Positive Action strategy, in line with our Public Sector Equality Duty, our core values and our Diversity and Inclusion strategy. By continuing to work to eliminate barriers and bring equality of access to the recruitment process, we signify our commitment to addressing the diversity imbalance within our operational workforce and our goals for the future.

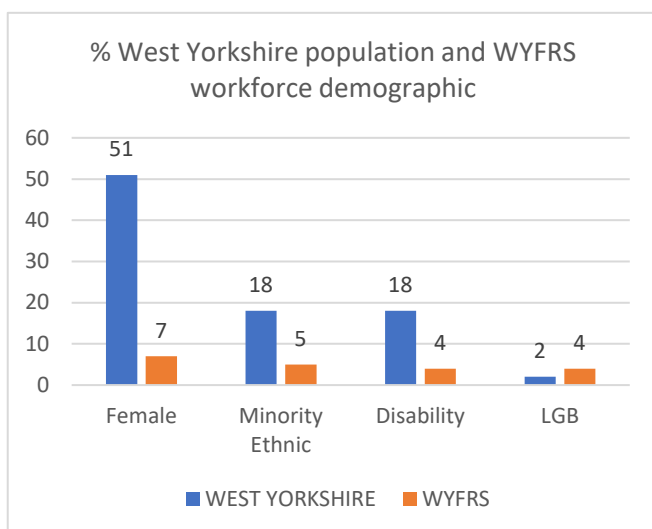
2 What is Positive Action?

Positive Action is a range of measure which can be employed by an organisation (under the Equality Act 2010) which aim to address and alleviate disadvantage or underrepresentation experienced by those who share protected characteristics or are underrepresented within the organisation. Positive Action should involve actions and initiatives which are equitable to the disadvantage or imbalance found in the workplace; with all Positive Action initiatives being driven by data.

2.1 Workforce Equality Data

To appropriately target our positive action work, we use data collected throughout each recruitment process, workforce equality data, and ONS data. WYFRS aims to reflect the diversity of West Yorkshire within its workforce.

When comparing the workforce equality data collated in March 2022 and the 2011 census data for West Yorkshire; it is evident that WYFRS’ workforce underrepresents people from a range of backgrounds. The largest disparity is between females and males. We currently overrepresent people who are LGB, however ONS data on the LGB community are estimates and may not reliably represent the general public’s sexual identity.



Based on this chart, we can clearly see the justification for positive action initiatives targeted at females, candidates from minority ethnic backgrounds, and those who have a disability.

Please note, throughout this report, the term ‘minority ethnic’ will be used. This term is used only when multiple ethnicities appear to share a common experience as identified through the data. More specific descriptors of ethnicity will be used where possible and

appropriate. Reference to minority ethnic backgrounds will include non-British White, Asian,

Black, Mixed and Other. White ethnicities have been included in this due to the evidence of health and equalities discrimination experienced by these groups within the UK.

2.2 WYFRS' Positive Action Goals

WYFRS' aims to reflect the diversity of the community that it serves. In order to do so, WYFRS aims to achieve the following:

- To encourage applications from groups currently underrepresented by WYFRS; advertising and raising awareness of WYFRS as an employer of choice.
- To identify and remove unfair barriers and bias within the Wholetime Firefighter recruitment process.
- To improve the retention of candidates who are statistically more likely to drop out of the recruitment process, including improving candidate's recruitment experience to ensure reapplication of unsuccessful candidates.
- To improve the onboarding of new recruits, including providing a supportive environment for them to flourish in.
- To be transparent and informative to all staff on our positive action work and initiatives.

3 Wholetime Recruitment 2020 - 23

After the recruitment of the Positive Action Coordinator, a new Wholetime Firefighter recruitment process opened in October 2020. West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service have delivered five recruit's courses have since reopening recruitment, with three further planned for 2023:

May 2021 (Course 202)

September 2021 (203)

January 2022 (204)

June 2022 (205)

September 2022 (206)

January 2023 (207)

May 2023 (208)

September 2023 (209)

When referring to a specific recruitment process throughout this report, it will be referred to by the month the course began (i.e. May 2021 or September 2023).

Courses 202, 203 and 204 derived from the initial October 2020 process which occurred during the Covid-19 pandemic. Due to organisational need and the announcement of an increase to establishment, recruitment was reopened in November 2021 on a 'rolling basis'. This has since resulted in courses 205, 206, 207 and 208; with further courses planned for September 2023 and January 2024.

4 Previous Barriers within the Wholetime Recruitment Process

4.1 Intersectional analysis

An intersectional analysis of the recruitment data was conducted to help identify any barriers specific to people of certain intersecting identities or created as a result of their intersecting identities. Frequently we focus on trends related specifically to race OR gender. This can ignore the experience of minority ethnic women as most minority ethnic candidates are male, as shown in the table below.

Percentage of all applications which are from minority ethnic males and females.

%	2021 courses	June 2022	September 2022	January/May 2023
Minority Ethnic Males (White British Males)	12.9% (67.8%)	27.2% (34.4%)	27.2% (41.5%)	18.8% (40.6%)
Minority Ethnic Females (White British Females)	2.2% (16.4%)	2.2% (33.3%)	5.4% (23.1%)	3.6% (24.4%)

Ethnic minority women tend to be more negatively impacted by discriminatory practises as the effects of race and gender are compounded. This is evidenced by the results of our recruitment process, and the lack of minority ethnic females successfully being recruited.

4.2 Initial identification of barriers to recruitment – 2018 process

Previous to the secondment of the current Positive Action Coordinator, the most recent recruitment process ran in 2018. Based on the data collected during this process, it was identified that:

1. A higher proportion of Asian (46%) and Other ethnicity (56%) candidates failed the Behavioural Style Questionnaire tests than White (43%), Black (36%) or Mixed ethnicity (44%) candidates.
2. A higher proportion of Asian (57%), Black (47%), Mixed ethnicity (37%) candidates failed the Situational Judgement tests than White (29%) and Other ethnicity (0%) candidates.
3. A higher proportion of Asian (86%), Mixed (64%) and Other ethnicity (75%) candidates failed the online Maths and English tests compared to White (58%) or Black (56%) candidates.
4. A higher proportion of females (65%) failed the online Maths and English tests than males (58%).
5. A higher proportion of females (67%) failed the Point of Entry tests than males (24%).
6. Black candidates were more likely to fail the assessment centre than other ethnicities.

This clearly shows a pattern of inequality throughout the recruitment process against Asian, Black and Other ethnicity candidates.

Unfortunately, we do not hold any data on age, disability or sexual orientation prior to 2020. This information has been recorded and analysed in all recruitment initiatives from 2020 onwards.

Based on the data and information recorded previously, recommendations made by the previous Positive Action Officer, and good practise identified in other Fire and Rescue Services; the following changes were made to the recruitment process before recruitment reopened in October 2020:

- Removal of Situational Judgement Tests.
- Removal of requirement to hold a full driving license.
- Changes to the assessment centre/interview to reduce the impact of unconscious bias.
- Change to eligibility criteria to include postcode boundary.

Positive action initiatives put into place for this process were:

- Online interview support sessions to help prepare candidates for the assessment centre.
- Increased email communication with candidates throughout the process in a bid to reduce withdrawals from the recruitment process.
- Targeted social media advertising campaign launched to complement each recruitment process.
- Targeted awareness sessions for females and minority ethnic candidates.
- Launched the 'Trainee Support Volunteer Scheme' which links mentors and trainees with shared protected characteristics.
- Fitness development sessions for females identified as requiring support.

4.3 Further identification of barriers – 2020/21 recruitment process

The recruitment process began in November 2020 and resulted in 3 recruit courses. The recruitment process had to be adapted due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This reduced the amount of face to face contact and community engagement possible before applications opening. We were also unable to re-engage candidates from previous years due to GDPR regulations as we had not expressly asked for permission to continue engagement outside of the recruitment process. Online targeted advertising was used successfully, and the interview was moved online, both of which have been continued for all firefighter recruitment since. We have increased the physical community engagement to pre-covid levels and reopened communication channels with several organisations. This has been achieved alongside district teams and crews.

The results of this process revealed some positive changes to the recruitment strategy and an increased diversity of successful candidates. This was particularly evident in successful female candidates, which accounted for 17% of successful candidates, compared with 11% in 2018 (resulting in 25% female recruits on a course). The proportion of minority ethnic candidates remaining in the process until the later stages increased, however this did not translate into higher recruitment numbers. Due to the results of this process and the lack of

diversity shown in WYFRS' operational workforce, it was deemed that more radical changes were required.

Based on feedback collated from operational staff from a range of ethnic minority backgrounds, a series of recommendations were made to senior officers. As a result, it was agreed that large changes to the recruitment process would be made to remove the barriers experienced by underrepresented groups and to speed up the rate of change.

Changes to the recruitment process included:

- Removal of Behavioural Style Questionnaire.
- Inclusion of an application form to personalise the recruitment process.
- Mandatory attendance at an awareness session for all candidates.
- Proportionate allocation of prospective candidates onto awareness sessions.
- Increased diversity on interview panels.
- Altered pass marks for English and Maths test to appropriately reflect the ability level required of a Firefighter (equivalent to a Level 2 qualification / GCSE Grade 4 or higher).

Positive Action initiatives included:

- Online application writing and interview support sessions available to all candidates run by a trained tutor provided by Forster College.
- Access to Maths and English support run by Forster College.
- Fitness development sessions available for female and minority ethnic candidates identified as requiring support.
- Increased interaction with the public through careers fairs.
- Continuation of the Trainee Support Volunteer scheme.
- Continue running online targeted advertising campaigns with Thinkology.

Since November 2021, there has been increase in the diversity of applicants and a general positive response to the new process. Further exploration into the successes of the new process will be explored below, including recommendations on further improvements to the process.

5. Identifying and Removing Barriers (Analysis of Wholetime Recruitment Processes 2020 – 23)

5.1 Registration and Awareness Session

5.1.1 Registration via JoinWYFirefighters Microsite / Thinkology

All candidates must now register their interest via the recruitment microsite. Thinkology has been working with WYFRS since 2020 to use demographic data and online tools to target underrepresented groups via social media advertising and refer them to the microsite for registration. This has been successful and continues to provide a high number of candidates from underrepresented groups registering their interest.

As evidenced in the table below, since utilising Thinkology, we have seen an increase in engagement with underrepresented groups, including minority ethnic groups, and females. The proportion of people from an underrepresented group registering their interest has been maintained throughout all the recent campaigns ensuring we have a diverse candidate pool to recruit from. A survey of applicants in 2021 found that 69% of respondents thought the targeted ads were ‘excellent’ or ‘good’ when asked about their quality, content and if they had influenced their decision to apply.

Recruitment Process	Male	Female	Non – Binary	Prefer not to say	White / White British	Asian / Asian British	Black / Black British	Mixed Ethnicity	Chinese	Other Ethnicity	Prefer Not to Say	Total ethnic minority candidates
2018 Process	85%	14%	0%	1%	82%	4%	1%	3%	<0%	<0%	9%	9%
May & September 2021 & January 2022	80%	20%	<0%	<0%	87%	6%	2%	5%	<0%	<0%	1%	15%
June 2022	82%	18%	<0%	<0%	87%	6%	2%	4%	<0%	1%	1%	16%
September 2022	88%	12%	<0%	<0%	89%	4%	1%	4%	<0%	1%	1%	13%
January & May 2023	81%	18%	<0%	<0%	84%	8%	2%	5%	<0%	1%	1%	19%

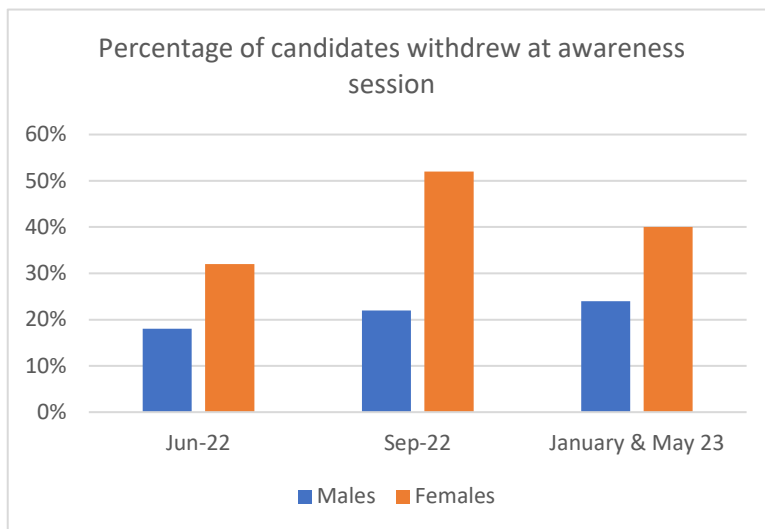
RECOMMENDATION:

Continue to work alongside Thinkology to run advertising campaigns targeting females and minority ethnic people. A renewed focus must be made on generating interest and applications from minority ethnic females.

5.1.2 Awareness Sessions

Awareness sessions are now mandatory for all external candidates. Potential candidates must attend an awareness session before each recruitment process (if a candidate fails and wishes to re-engage, they must attend another awareness session). This helps to reduce applications to manageable numbers since the removal of the initial sifting processes (the situational judgement and behavioural style tests). Places on the sessions are now proportionally allocated by gender and ethnicity to reflect the diversity of West Yorkshire. We aim to allocate places to achieve gender parity, and to reflect West Yorkshire’s ethnic diversity (50:50, female:male and 35:65 ethnic minority:White British).

Proportional allocation has had a positive effect by bringing through a higher proportion of female and ethnic minority attendees to awareness sessions, and therefore to application and beyond.



Females are more likely to not apply for an awareness session after initially registering their interest and are then more likely to withdraw after being invited to attend a session. A higher number of females need to be engaged at registration to deliver a high number of attendees at awareness sessions. Further research needs to be done to understand the higher withdrawal rate.

It was also found that Black African candidates are more likely to not attend an awareness session after being invited. In June 22, 67% of Black African candidates withdrew. In September 22, 82% (9 of 11) Black African candidates did not attend. In September 22 and January & May 23, 45% of people from Mixed ethnic background did not attend a session.

RECOMMENDATION:

Continue to proportionally allocate places at awareness session.

Look at initiatives to increase engagement with potential female candidates. Options being considered include linking with WFS (Women in the Fire Service) to support future summer schools aimed at raising awareness of the role for women and collating further information on candidate’s reason for withdrawing. Update content for awareness sessions to ensure information supporting female applications is shared (i.e. content relating to childcare, maternity, etc.)

5.2 Stage 1: Application

The application form gives candidates the opportunity to share their experience, values and personal reasons for pursuing a career in firefighting. Candidates must score at least 30 points on their application to be successful at this stage. Applications are shortlisted by a variety of staff members across the brigade, including green and grey book staff.

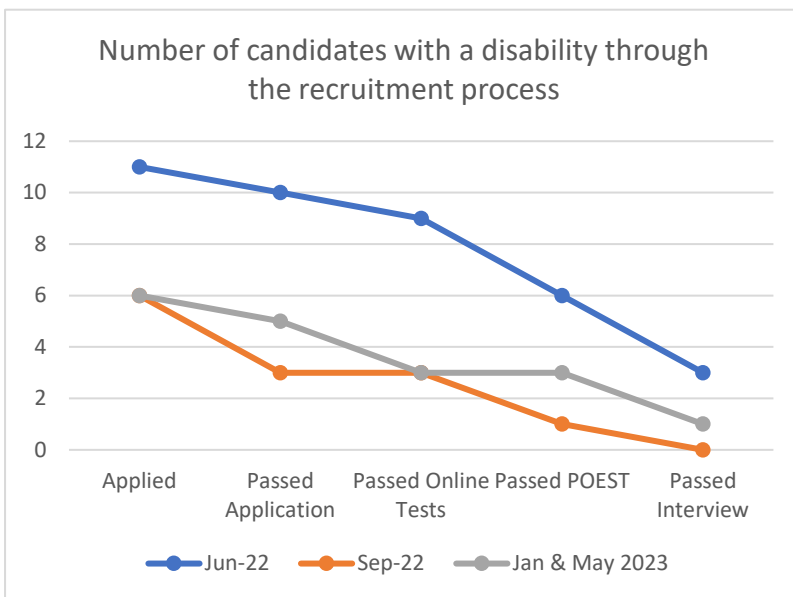
The following trends were identified in the past 3 processes:

- Females are less likely to apply after attending an awareness session, in January & May 2023 33% of females who attended a session did not apply.
- Males are less likely to be successful at application. In June 2022, 23% of males failed at application, in comparison with 19% of all candidates and 11% of females.

- Minority ethnic candidates were less likely to be successful at application, with 37% of minority ethnic applicants being unsuccessful compared to 27% of White British applicants in September 2022.
- Application submissions are evenly spread amongst age groups from under 25s to 35-39s. However, under 25s are less likely to be successful at application, with them accounting for 41% of all candidates who failed in June 2022, and 44% in January & May 23.
- LGBT females are better represented in applications than LGBT males, with 35% of females identifying as lesbian/gay or bisexual in comparison to 7% of males in June 2022.

The following was identified in the recruitment processes but weren't replicated in each process:

- In September 2022, 50% of candidates who reported having a disability failed the application (3/6).
- In January & May 23, minority ethnic candidates were less likely to submit an application after attending an awareness session (on average 48% of people from a minority ethnic background didn't apply, in comparison with 18% of White British people).



Approximately 3% of candidates report having a disability, in comparison with the national average of 16% of the working population. A large proportion of applicants with a disability have neurodiversity such as dyslexia. Based on the recruitment data, the recruitment process does not appear to be an unfair barrier to people with a disability, with appropriate

reasonable adjustments being available. The low proportion of applications may be due to the real and perceived barriers disabled people may face as part of the medical and the role.

RECOMMENDATION:

Continue running application support sessions with improved content targeted at areas of weakness for minority ethnic candidates and under 25s. Collect data at support sessions to understand perceived areas of weakness for candidates. Use data from the past processes to identify further trends in applications from minority ethnic candidates and under 25s that fail.

Further work needs to be done to reduce the number of females withdrawing from the process. Developing further relevant sessions as part of the development sessions throughout the process may help to maintain interest.

Share more information externally with potential candidates to raise awareness of operational staff who have a disability, with the potential of an external communications campaign.

5.2.1 Survey Results

Applicants who attended an awareness session but did not apply were sent a survey to gather feedback. 15 people responded (67% were male, and 47% White British). The results of the survey revealed that pay was the most common issue. Respondents stated they couldn't afford travel for training or afford to live on a trainee salary. Other respondents forgot to submit their applications or were unable to apply due to injuries and personal circumstances. 2 respondents stated they were worried they wouldn't pass the recruitment process; both were Indian males.

5.2.2 Eligibility Criteria – Driving License

Candidates are no longer required to hold a driving license at the point of application (new recruits will be required to hold a full driving license to qualify as competent firefighters). Driving license requirements can be a barrier to application for females, minority ethnic people and people aged under 29 (Government National Statistics). 77% of all UK adults hold a driving license.

	2021 courses	June 2022	September 2022	January/May 2023
Candidates without a driving license (% of all candidates)	275 (13%)	13 (7%)	20 (14%)	25 (13%)
Minority Ethnic (% of candidates without a driving license)	49 (18%)	4 (31%)	11 (55%)	16 (64%)
Female (% of candidates without a driving license)	54 (20%)	6 (46%)	7 (35%)	7 (28%)
Under 29 years of age or younger (% of candidates without a driving license)	223 (81%)	9 (69%)	10 (50%)	21 (84%)

On average, 12% of all candidates who have applied since 2020 have not held a driving license. 24% of candidates without a driving license have been minority ethnic, with no direct trend of a particular ethnicity being most impacted. 22% were female and 79% were

under 29. On average, 13% of all females who apply don't hold a driving license, with this increasing to 24% of all minority ethnic females who have applied since 2020.

RECOMMENDATION:

Retain removal of driving license from the eligibility criteria as it allows a greater number of females and minority ethnic people to apply, who are currently underrepresented in the workforce; particularly minority ethnic females. It also makes the process accessible to candidates aged under 29.

5.3 Stage 2: Online Maths and English Testing

Since introducing the static pass mark to the online testing there has been a large reduction in the percentage of candidates who fail the tests (from 69% to 23%). However, minority ethnic candidates are still more likely to be unsuccessful at this stage, with Pakistani candidates being worst affected. Under 25s were also more likely to fail the online tests in the past 2 processes. The below table shows there has been a gradual increase in the percentage of candidates who fail the online tests, despite the number of candidates beginning each process remaining relatively static.

Squares in grey represent where there were no candidates in the process of that ethnicity at Stage 2. Highlighted cells show where the percentage of candidates who failed was higher than the average.

% Failed online tests	Write British	White Irish	White Other	Bangladeshi	Indian	Pakistani	Other Asian	Black African	Black Caribbean	Other Black	White and Asian	White and Black African	White and Black Caribbean	Other Mixed	Chinese	Other Ethnic	Total BAME	TOTAL
2020/21	68%	100%	77%	100%	83%	85%	100%	91%	80%		64%	71%	76%	67%	0%	100%	78%	69%
June 2022	9%		25%	0%	0%	33%		0%	33%		0%	0%		0%	0%	50%	17%	11%
September 2022	18%	0%	67%	0%	0%	75%		100%	0%	0%	0%	50%	0%		100%	0%	37%	23%
Jan & May 2023	36%	0%	30%		0%	38%	100%	33%	100%	100%		25%	0%	0%	0%	100%	34%	35%

This data suggests that the implementation of a static pass mark has reduced the inequality experienced by minority ethnic candidates at the stage, with some of the high rates of failure for minority ethnic candidates being attributable to the low number of candidates in the recruitment process.

This table suggests a gradual increase in the number of minority ethnic candidates being successful at the online tests and being invited to POEST.

% invited to attend POEST	White / White British	Asian / Asian British	Black / Black British	Mixed Ethnicity	Chinese	Other Ethnicity	Total of all ethnic minorities
2020/21	90%	2%	1%	6%	0%	0%	10%
June 2022	79%	8%	2%	6%	1%	1%	24%
September 2022	78%	3%	3%	10%	0%	6%	24%
Jan & May 2023	77%	9%	3%	12%	1%	0%	36%

However, most candidate withdrawals at Stage 2 are from males or minority ethnic candidates.

5.4 Stage 3: Physical Entry Tests

The physical entry tests (or POEST) have remained largely unchanged. In September 2022, the equipment assembly test was reintroduced due to feedback from the recruit Training team. This test has removed a number of candidates out of the process since it's reintroduction, including a higher proportion of males.

Females account for the majority of candidates who withdraw at POEST, with 12% of female withdrawing in June 2022 (compared to 6% of males).

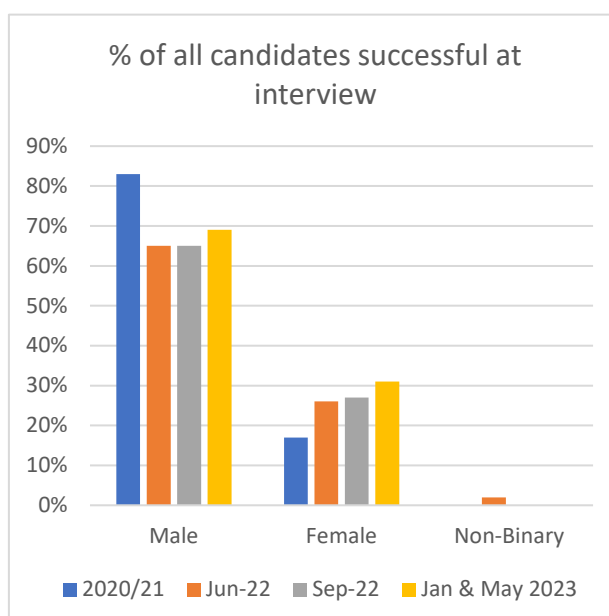
Females and under 25s are also more likely to fail at POEST compared to other groups. In June 2022, 9 females under 25 failed.

% Failed POEST	Male	Female	under 25s	Average
2020/21	12%	50%	19%	17%
June 2022	9%	36%	32%	19%
September 2022	11%	41%	19%	20%
Jan & May 2023	14%	22%	29%	18%

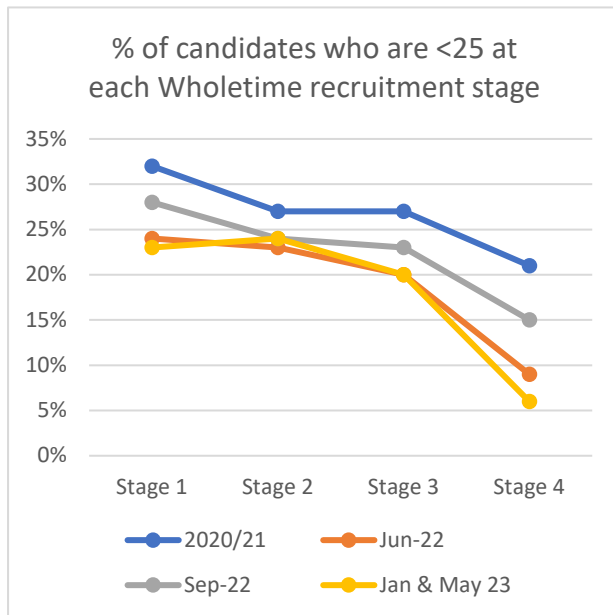
The table above shows a gradual decrease in the proportion of females failing, whilst the average proportion of candidates failing remains the same. Despite the decrease in females failing, they continue to be much more likely to fail in comparison to males. The proportion of under 25s failing also tends to remain above average. However, the proportion of males failing is increasing, potentially due the equipment assembly test. In January/May 2023, no candidates failed strength or stamina tests, however 10 people failed the equipment assembly test. Most of these candidates were male. The main reason for candidates failing the equipment assembly test was they ran out of time (7/10 candidates). 3/10 assembled the equipment incorrectly.

5.5 Stage 4: Interview

Interviews continue to be held online via Microsoft Teams due positive feedback received from colleagues and candidates. A lack of diversity on interviewing panels was raised previously, there has since been a number of interview training sessions to increase the diversity of trained interviewers (such as staff from the FireREACH network) and a wider participation of staff from across the brigade was requested through opening positions up to those without formal interview training. These changes have supported an increase in the number of candidates from underrepresented groups being successful at interview. This graph shows a gradual increase in the



proportion of successful female candidates. This shows the continued positive impact of the changes to the recruitment process.



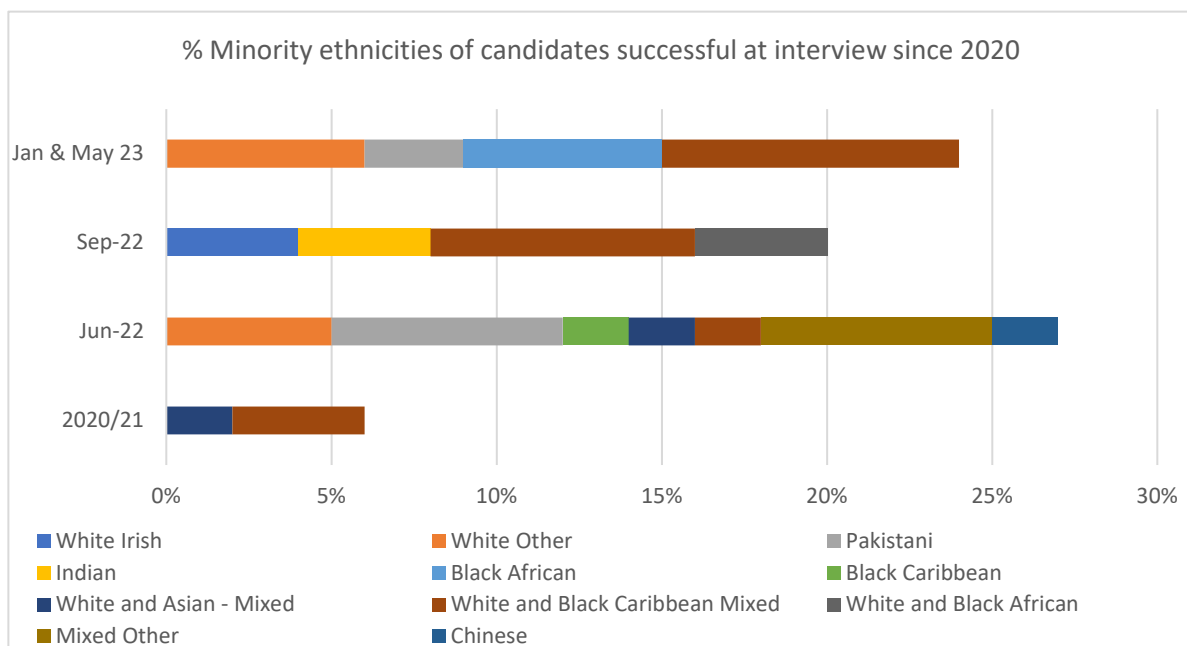
This graph suggests that Stage 2 (online tests) and Stage 4 (interview) are the two biggest barriers for candidates aged under 25. The steepest drop in the proportion of candidates was at interview, with under 25s accounting for 20% of those at interview, to just 6% of those who were successful.

In June 2022, despite under 25s accounting for the majority of registrations, the majority of offers of employment were given to those aged 30 – 34. 0% of successful female candidates were under 25, but 14% of successful male candidates were. This suggests that the interview may

be a barrier to candidates aged under 25, particularly females.

RECOMMENDATION:
 Create content on the interview support sessions which is targeted at younger candidates. Consider running unconscious bias interview training for interviewers. Consider if interview questions and format may be biased against younger candidates.

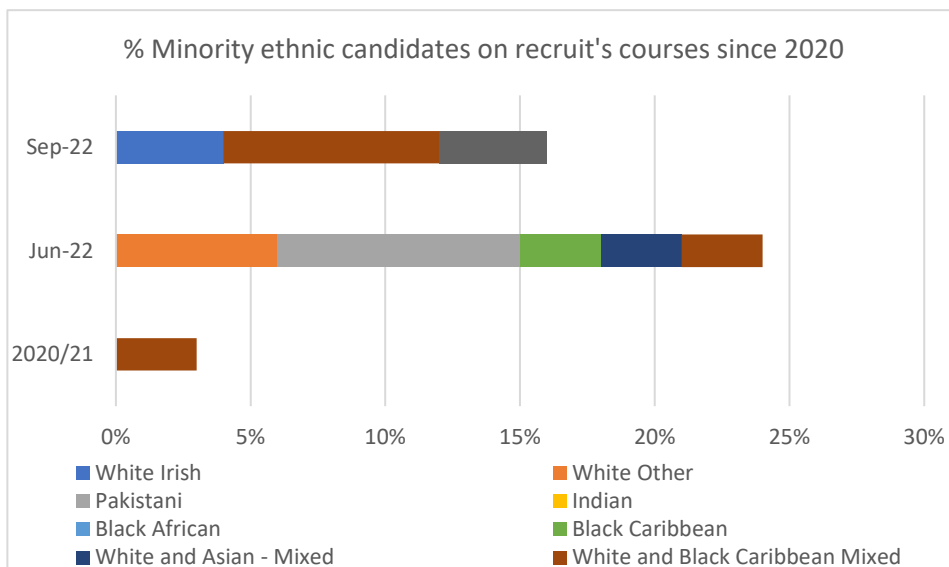
In June 2022, minority ethnic candidates accounted for 28% of those successful at interview. Despite the identified barriers throughout the process, minority ethnic candidates account for the same proportion of candidates at interview as at application. This shows a marked improvement in the recruitment process and a clear reduction in the impact of barriers and



bias on the success of minority ethnic candidates. However, this is still not reflected throughout the process when looking at specific ethnicities, showing there is still work to be done to ensure equality of access. This table shows a large increase in the diversity of candidates successful at interview since the introduction of the new recruitment process (June 2022).

5.6 Stage 5: Pre-Employment Checks

The below table shows the diversity of recruits successful in joining a recruit’s training course. A proportion of candidates are lost through the medical and HR checks. More



information is being provided to candidates at the beginning of the process about the medical to mitigate the impact of the medical.

There is a decrease in the diversity of candidates after the HR and medical checks.

RECOMMENDATION:

More research to be collated around the impact of the medical and HR checks on minority ethnic candidates to ensure the process isn’t discriminatory and is a fair experience for all candidates.

6. Positive Action Initiatives and Outcomes

6.1 Collaboration with Forster College

Forster College is an adult learning provision based in Bradford who provides free career support to prospective candidates. WYFRS have been working with them since June 2022 to bring targeted support and innovative initiatives.

6.1.1 Application Support Sessions

The application support sessions are run by a trained tutor and are available online and in person. Applicants who attended a session were more likely to pass, with 72% attendees being successful at application, compared with 67% of those who did not attend (June 2022).

6.1.2 L2 Maths and English Support

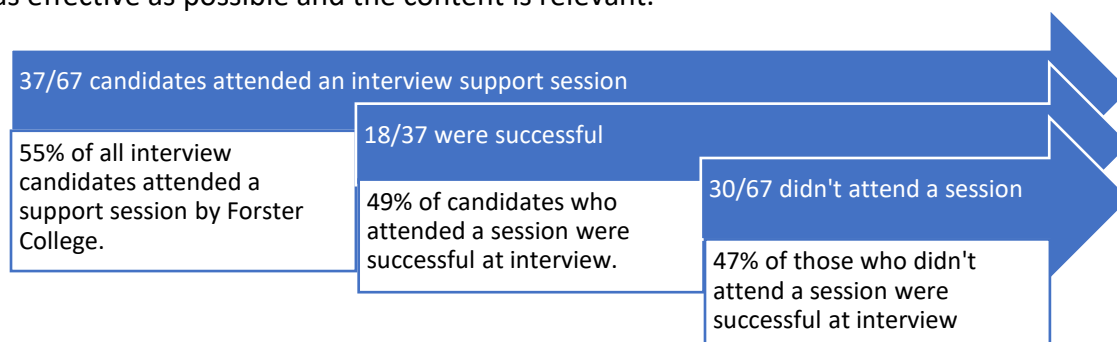
Forster College continue to offer Maths and English support for people interested in a career with WYFRS who are aged 18 and above. The college identifies the student’s areas of weakness and builds their skills to L2 standard. In September 2022, Forster College were

actively supporting 7 candidates; 5/7 were successful at Stage 2 (71%). In January & May 2023, 17 candidates were actively engaged. 12/17 (71%) passed the online tests and continued to the POEST. This is compared with a 65% pass rate for all candidates.

This support is unique to WYFRS and puts us in a position of improving candidate's opportunities through improved maths and English skills. Forster College are also able to support candidates who have not previously achieved a GCSE pass equivalent Level 2 certificate to formally do so. This clearly connects WYFRS with raising educational attainment across West Yorkshire, and our role as an active supporter of change to benefit people of all socio-economic backgrounds.

6.1.3 Interview Support Sessions

Based on data collected for the January & May 2023 process, there was a slight increase in the percent of candidates who were successful at interview and had attended an interview support session. Further feedback needs to be gathered for the sessions to ensure they are as effective as possible and the content is relevant.



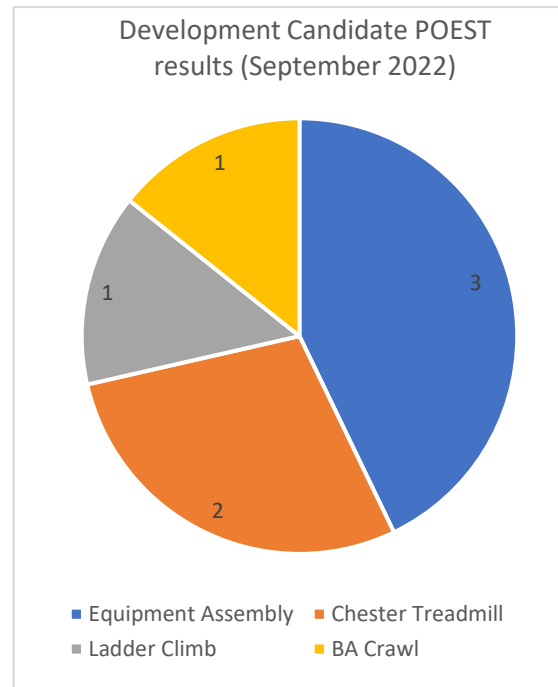
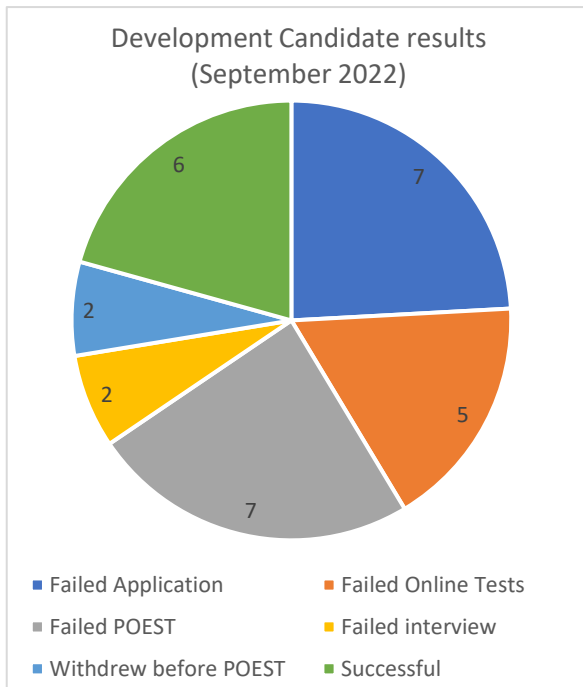
RECOMMENDATION:

WYFRS continues to work alongside Forster College to provide the suite of support tools and sessions to current and prospective candidates.

6.2 Fitness Development Sessions

Fitness development sessions are targeted at candidates who will have the most beneficial outcome from our engagement. Candidates are identified at awareness sessions using a scoring matrix/sheet. The sessions are available to any candidate regardless of gender or ethnicity. However, due to the POEST more commonly being a barrier to female candidates, the majority of those identified as needing support are female. The gradual decrease in the proportion of females being unsuccessful at POEST suggests that our fitness approach is having a positive affect on candidates; with them having the opportunity to sample some tests at awareness session and then further at the development sessions. In September 2022, 29 candidates were engaged (5 males, 1 non-binary person and 23 females).

8 of the development candidates were successful at POEST (53%), with 6 going on to be successful at interview. 7 failed the POEST, however only 2 of these failed a strength or stamina test.



In January & May 2023, 16 candidates who required development engaged in the sessions (12 females and 4 males). Due to the HQ rebuild, all development sessions took place at Morley fire station and were staffed by the crews. Unfortunately, 10/16 failed at Stage 1 or 2 and 1 did not apply. The sessions continued with attendance from 5 female candidates of which 2 passed their fitness test (33%) and 1/2 was successful at interview. 2/5 withdrew at POEST and 1 failed the equipment assembly test.

This shows a positive result in terms of development candidates being given a better chance at passing the strength and stamina tests at POEST, however it raises an issue of many development candidates being lost earlier in the process and the need for candidate awareness of the remaining point of entry tests (equipment assembly, BA crawl, etc.).

RECOMMENDATION:

Continue to run fitness development sessions for those requiring development. Session content to be reviewed and provide candidates with awareness on all point of entry tests. Ensure development session candidates are engaging with Forster College support for the initial stages.

6.3 Trainee Support Volunteer Scheme

The Trainee Support Volunteer Scheme was developed in the 2020/21 recruitment process and has been open to all new recruits for the past 2 years. The scheme links volunteer mentors with recruits to support them throughout their training course and onto station. Recruits are offered the opportunity to be linked with a mentor based on a shared protected characteristic. Thus far we have supported 43 recruits. Feedback from the recruits and volunteers has been positive overall, with the volunteers playing an important role in providing recruits with a positive and supportive start to their career with WYFRS. Most volunteers continue to volunteer for new recruits and also maintain contact with their previous recruits, creating a strong network of support across the brigade.

RECOMMENDATION:

Continue the scheme with training opportunities for TSVs who are well embedded into the role.

7. Conclusion

WYFRS has continued to make positive strides in the past 2 years to reduce barriers to the recruitment of people from underrepresented groups and enhance equality of access. This has included many changes to the recruitment process and rekindling relationships with the public and local organisations. We have engaged with a growing diversity of candidates since updates to the recruitment process have been put in place. Positive work is being done to physically engage with our communities, with the Positive Action Officer and local crews attending an increasing number of careers and community events, including attending Leeds West Indian Carnival for the first time.

Moving forward, a long-term commitment and community engagement strategy is required to embed positive action practises into the brigade's business as usual. It is key the brigade maintains the relationships formed internally and externally; and continues to build on its achievements. This will require district and team ownership and may require a realignment of work streams should the Positive Action role end in August 2023 with the close of the secondment. Based on the findings of this report, a positive action strategy for 2023 – 2024 must be created to clearly outline the brigade's goals for the coming financial year, and to continue WYFRS' journey to diversifying our workforce.



OFFICIAL

Human Resources Activity Report

Human Resources Committee

Date: 20 January 2023

Agenda Item:

10

Submitted By: Chief Employment Services Officer

Purpose

To inform Members of key employment services metrics incorporating data from quarter 2 of this financial year for sickness absence (to the end of September 2022), HR activity to the end of September 2022, establishment figures as of the end of November 2022.

Recommendations

1. That Members note the content of the report.
2. That Members approve the conversion of a green book post within Operational Risk Management to a grey book post

Summary

This report informs Members of key data relating to Human Resources for 22/23 and specifically quarter 2 (1 July – 30 September)

Local Government (Access to information) Act 1972

Exemption Category: None

Contact Officer: Head of HR, Rachel McArdle
rachel.mcardle@westyorksfire.gov.uk

Background papers open to inspection: None

Annexes: None

1. STAFF PROFILE (EMPLOYEE HEADCOUNT) - 1 December 2020 to 6 December 2022

Wholetime

The way information is presented in this report has been reviewed. To accurately reflect the impact of our positive action work, the data below reflects our current position as of 6 December 2022 rather than 30 September 2022.

As part of our smarter working drive, we feel it is advantageous to display ethnicity data exactly how this was entered by our colleagues rather than combining categories which unnecessarily introduces human judgement and potentially error. Therefore, the table detailing December 2022 data has 15 categories instead of 10.

Minority ethnic colleagues currently make up 4.7% of our Wholetime firefighters which equates to 45 individuals. However, 74 individuals have chosen not to declare which does impact on the accuracy of this data. Females currently make up 7.7% of our Wholetime workforce.

	White British or Irish	Any Other White	Any Other Ethnicity	Mixed	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British	Chinese	Not Known	Female	Male	Total Staff
Dec 2020	808	7	6	12	16	3	1	35	53	835	888
Mar 2021	808	7	6	12	16	3	1	42	53	842	895
Jun 2021	817	8	6	12	16	3	1	49	57	855	912
Sep 2021	813	8	6	12	16	3	1	48	61	846	907
Dec 2021	813	9	6	14	16	3	1	50	62	850	912
Mar 2022	806	11	6	13	17	2	2	60	67	849	917
Jun 2022	790	11	6	15	17	2	2	69	67	844	912

	White British	Any Other White	White and Asian	Asian or Asian British	Any other Ethnic Group	White and Black Caribbean	Mixed	Any Other Mixed Multiple Ethnic Background	Black or Black British	Chinese	Irish	Not Declared or Prefer not to specify	Female	Male	Prefer to use own term	Total Staff
Dec-22	792	11	1	17	6	4	11	2	2	2	1	74	71	851	1	923

Control

Minority ethnic colleagues currently make up 4% of Control and females currently make up 67.3%.

	White British or Irish	Any Other White	Any Other Ethnicity	Mixed	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British	Chinese	Not Known	Female	Male	Total Staff
Dec 2020	47	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	36	15	51
Mar 2021	47	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	36	15	51
Jun 2021	44	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	34	14	48
Sep 2021	42	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	31	15	46
Dec 2021	46	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	35	15	50
Mar 2022	46	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	35	15	50
Jun 2022	46	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	34	16	50

	White British	Any Other White	White and Asian	Asian or Asian British	Any other Ethnic Group	White and Black Caribbean	Mixed	Any Other Mixed Multiple Ethnic Background	Chinese	Not Declared or Prefer Not to Say	Female	Male	Total
Dec-22	45	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	33	16	49

On-Call

Minority ethnic colleagues currently make up 2.5% of On-Call and females currently make up 5%.

	White British or Irish	Any Other White	Any Other Ethnicity	Mixed	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British	Chinese	Not Known	Female	Male	Total Staff
Dec 2020	142	1	0	1	1	0	0	16	8	153	161
Mar 2021	144	1	0	2	1	0	0	15	11	152	163
Jun 2021	147	1	0	2	1	0	0	12	11	152	163
Sep 2021	143	2	0	1	1	0	1	13	11	150	161

Dec 2021	144	2	0	2	1	0	1	12	8	154	162
Mar 2022	146	2	0	2	1	0	1	10	8	154	162
Jun 2022	146	2	0	2	1	0	1	9	8	153	161

	White British	Any Other White	White and Asian	Asian or Asian British	Any other Ethnic Group	White and Black Caribbean	Any other Asian Background	Any other Black / African / Caribbean Background	Chinese	Not Declared or Prefer not to specify	F	M	Total
Dec-22	143	2	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	10	8	151	159

Green Book

Colleagues on green book terms and conditions are the most diverse subgroup however there is still more work to do. Minority ethnic colleagues currently make up 7.8% of green book colleagues and females currently make up 58%.

	White British or Irish	Any Other White	Any Other Ethnicity	Mixed	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British	Chinese	Not Known	Female	Male	Total Staff
Dec 2020	265	5	2	2	19	2	0	17	172	140	312
Mar 2021	266	5	2	3	18	2	0	21	172	145	317
Jun 2021	262	5	2	3	18	2	0	21	179	142	312
Sep 2021	269	4	2	2	17	4	0	24	178	144	322
Dec 2021	269	6	2	2	16	3	0	21	176	143	319
Mar 2022	271	5	2	2	20	3	0	24	184	143	327
Jun 2022	266	5	2	3	20	2	0	24	181	141	322

	White British	Any Other White	White and Asian	Asian or Asian British	Any other Ethnic Group	White and Black Caribbean	Any other Asian Background	Any other Black / African / Caribbean Background	Chinese	African	Indian	Pakistani	Not Declared or Prefer not to	F	M	Total
--	---------------	-----------------	-----------------	------------------------	------------------------	---------------------------	----------------------------	--	---------	---------	--------	-----------	-------------------------------	---	---	-------

		e	n	h	p	n		d					specify			
Dec-22	267	4	1	15	2	2	1	1	0	1	1	1	26	186	136	322

Brigade Total

Minority ethnic colleagues currently make up 5.2% of our workforce which equates to 75 individuals. However, 114 individuals have chosen not to declare which again does impact on our interpretation of this data. A key priority for the service is to increase representation of minority ethnic colleagues across the organisation and at all levels as well as improving disclosure levels. Females currently make up 20.5% of our workforce.

	White British or Irish	Any Other White	Any Other Ethnicity	Mixed	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British	Chinese	Not Known	Female	Male	Total Staff
Dec 2020	1262	13	8	17	37	5	1	69	269	1143	1412
Mar 2021	1265	13	8	19	36	5	1	79	272	1154	1426
Jun 2021	1270	14	8	19	36	5	1	83	281	1163	1435
Sep 2021	1267	14	8	17	35	7	2	86	281	1155	1436
Dec 2021	1272	17	8	20	33	6	2	85	281	1162	1443
Mar 2022	1269	18	8	19	38	5	3	96	294	1161	1456
Jun 2022	1248	18	8	22	38	4	3	104	290	1154	1445

White British or Irish	Any Other White	White and Asian	Asian or Asian British	Any other Ethnic Group	White and Black Caribbean	Mixed	Any Other Mixed Multiple Ethnic	Black or Black British	Chinese	Irish	African	Indian	Pakistani	Not Declared or Prefer not to	F	M	Prefer to use own term	Total Staff
------------------------	-----------------	-----------------	------------------------	------------------------	---------------------------	-------	---------------------------------	------------------------	---------	-------	---------	--------	-----------	-------------------------------	---	---	------------------------	-------------

								Background							specify				
Sep 2022	1330	18	4	33	8	7	12	2	3	3	0	1	1	2	113	297	1162	1	1460
Dec-22	1247	17	4	33	8	7	12	2	2	3	1	1	1	1	114	298	1154	1	1453

The above figures include Career Breaks, Maternity & Secondments.

West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service All Employees with Multiple Contracts

	Total
Control	1
Green Book	18
On Call	88
Wholetime	95
Total	202

	Wholetime	Control	On-Call	Green Book
All	923	49	159	322
Excluding career breaks, secondments, maternity leave.	918	48	153	317

2. Sickness Absence

Sickness absence remains above target however as of September it has dropped to the lowest level in the last 12 months. Musculoskeletal issues are the main cause of absence (32%).

In accordance with the 2022/23 audit plan a review of the Authority's attendance management policy and procedures was undertaken during September 2022.

The conclusions found that performance management arrangements are in place for the Authority to monitor and report its sickness absence performance. The Authority has an annual target which is currently 6.99 (average number of working days/shifts lost to sickness). The covid pandemic in 2020 has impacted on sickness levels; at the time of the previous audit the performance was 7.14. Performance reports provided for the purpose of the current audit shows that the target of 6.99 was not achieved in 2020/21 (13.75) nor in 2021/22. (16.53) but there has been a decrease in absence days in 2022 compared to the same period in 2021. (April to October)

The Authority contributes absence data to the National FRS sickness absence report which benchmarks its performance against other FRS's. This shows the Authority's sickness performance relating to duty days sickness absence per staff member as 10.33 which is slightly higher than the average of 9.41. (See Appendix 1). The report highlights that nationally there has been an increase in duty days lost compared to 2020/21 when the average was 6.83.

A SAP cost of absence report for sickness indicated that cost of absence had risen from £1.2 million in 2019/2020, to £1.7 million in 2021/2022. This does not take account of any additional overtime costs of covering absences which was outside the scope of the audit but overtime in total (not specifically cover for absence) has also risen from £1.2 million in 2019/20 to £1.7 million in 2021/22.

The Authority do have clear policies, procedures and guidance documents which set out responsibilities and a framework for managing and supporting the attendance management process. These are communicated via the Authority's Sharepoint site. Whilst the sample reviewed showed management adherence to the process, the current performance suggests that the attendance management policy may not be managing attendance levels as effectively as in the past or that other factors are contributing to the high sickness levels.

The Attendance and Absence policy has been reviewed and strengthened, specifically in relation to disability related sickness and extension to sick pay requests. The full audit report will be submitted to the Audit Committee.

SICKNESS ABSENCE - WORKING DAYS LOST PER EMPLOYEE

October 2021 - September 2022 PER MONTH

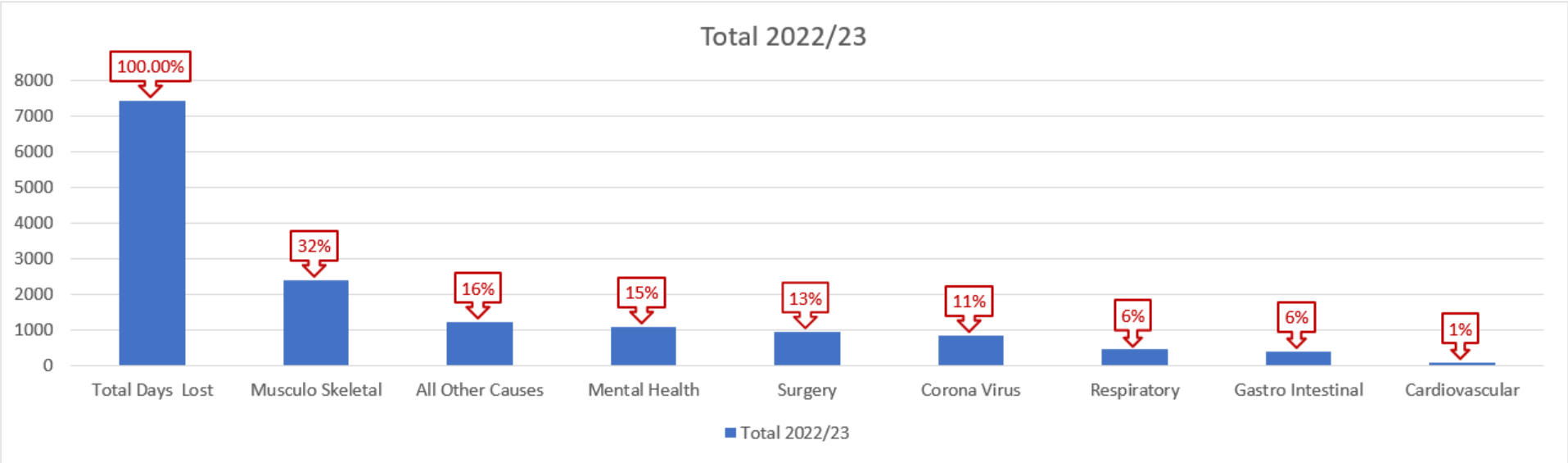
	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22
Ops Response	1.57	1.27	2.06	2.42	1.31	1.66	1.21	0.97	0.96	1.22	1.05	0.90
Ops Support	0.37	0.55	0.34	1.45	0.84	0.60	0.17	0.00	0.85	1.00	0.46	1.04
Prev & Prot	0.73	1.35	1.59	1.23	1.16	1.27	1.32	0.83	0.33	0.45	0.76	0.91
Legal & Gov	2.30	1.10	0.65	1.25	0.65	0.65	1.42	1.48	1.45	1.25	1.16	1.67
Service Support	0.76	0.96	1.04	0.91	0.75	1.14	0.94	0.93	1.06	1.01	0.54	0.66
Emp Services	1.47	1.21	2.02	1.60	0.67	1.71	1.05	0.47	0.69	0.95	0.94	0.48
Finance	0.53	0.71	2.16	1.11	0.71	0.00	0.88	0.00	0.00	0.40	0.00	0.00
Corporate Comms	1.56	1.81	1.94	1.71	0.94	2.05	2.26	1.90	2.60	1.90	1.86	1.05
FSHQ	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total	1.40	1.21	1.85	2.09	1.18	1.52	1.15	0.91	0.95	1.14	0.95	0.86
Target	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58
Previous Year Total (2020/21)	1.45	1.59	0.96	1.51	1.34	0.92	0.79	0.96	1.07	1.91	1.36	1.21

GREEN - BELOW TARGET
AMBER - WITHIN 10% OF TARGET
RED - OVER 10% OF TARGET

These figures include absence due to Covid19 and Self Isolating per

SICKNESS ABSENCE - MAJOR CAUSES FOR CURRENT YEAR 2022/23 (Financial Years)

	Total Days Lost	Musculo Skeletal	All Other Causes	Mental Health	Surgery	Corona Virus	Respiratory	Gastro Intestinal	Cardiovascular
Total 2022/23	7431.0	2396.0	1216.0	1097.0	943.0	849.0	451.0	406.0	73.0
Percentage	100.00%	32%	16%	15%	13%	11%	6%	6%	1%



3. ESTABLISHMENT AND STRENGTH 1 APRIL 2017 to 30 SEPTEMBER 2022

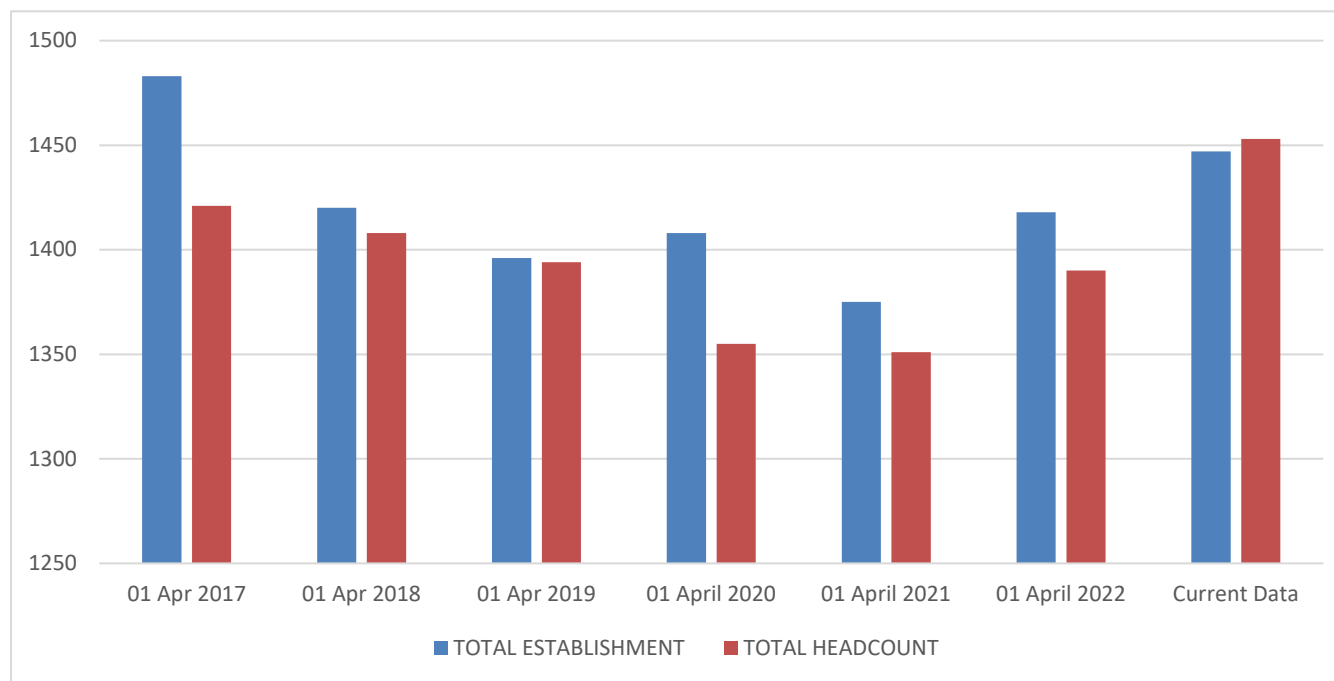
Summary Figures – Establishment and Strength

Since April 2022 we have seen an overall reduction in headcount across the workforce.

	TOTAL ESTABLISHMENT	TOTAL HEADCOUNT	WHOLETIME ESTABLISHMENT	WHOLETIME HEADCOUNT	ON-CALL ESTABLISHMENT	ON-CALL POSITIONS COVERED*	CONTROL ESTABLISHMENT	CONTROL HEADCOUNT	GREEN BOOK ESTABLISHMENT	GREEN BOOK HEADCOUNT
12 Nov 2010	2087	2045	1448	1449	165	134	53	54	421	408
28 Jan 2011	2083	2022	1447	1437	165	132	53	54	418	399
1 Jul 2011	1968	1928	1383	1396	161	130	52	55	372	347
11 Nov 2011	1954	1913	1381	1388	161	128	51	51	361	346
01 Apr 2017	1483	1421	1032	985	120	94	43	49	288	293
01 Apr 2018	1420	1408	963	959	120	87	43	47	294	315
01 Apr 2019	1396	1394	927	951	120	82	44	48	305	313
01 April 2020	1408	1355	930	914	120	87	44	46	314	308
01 April	1375	1351	900	895	120	96	44	51	311	309

2021										
01 April 2022	1418	1390	934	917	120	96	44	50	320	327
Current Data	1447	1453	965	923	120	79	44	49	318	317
changes since April 2022	-29	-63	+31	+6	0	-17	0	-1	-2	-10

Graphical Representation of Establishment and Strength



**Summary Figures - Employee FTE data -
Current Date**

	Current Headcount	Current Employee FTE
Wholetime	923	908.40
Control	49	44.76
On Call	153	79.26
Green Book	317	283.63

4. HEALTH AND SAFETY PERFORMANCE - 1 APRIL 2022 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2022

Lost time up to 3 days.

Actual performance 2022/23	Target 2022/23
9	24

Lost time over 3 days.

Actual performance 2022/23	Target 2022/23
16	22

RIDDOR Major injury/disease.

Actual performance 2022/23	Target 2022/23
0	No target set

5. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 1 JULY 2022 – 30 SEPTEMBER 2022

Please note the health screenings now include the Asbestos medicals.

Ref No.	KPI	Target	Quarter 1 ST July 2022 – 30 th September 2022	YTD 1 st April 2022 – 31 st March 2023	Target achieved for present quarter
1	Management referral to appointment date (3 weeks)	90%	100%	76%	Yes
2	AMA report to management within 48hr	90%	100	100	Yes
3	No. of Did Not Attends (DNA's) or cancellation <48 hr notice*		0 Nurse 0 AMA	0 0	

4	No. of physiotherapy referrals		34	72	
5	No. of counselling referrals		15	23	
6	No. of management referrals		5	17	
7	No. of health screenings		22	26	
8	No. of self-referrals		7	8	
9	No of AMA consultations		181	412	

6. DISCIPLINE AND GRIEVANCE CASES

Our HR system produces these statistics based on employee groups – Wholetime, On-Call, Control, Green Book and not by Directorate which requires manual collation of the data. As part of our smarter working drive, we feel it is advantageous to display this data slightly differently.

Discipline

01/04/2022	30/09/2022						
		Total Completed		Current Live Cases	Average / Time to Complete		
	Total Received in Period	In Target	Out of Target			Key, Green within 60 days	Key, Red over 60 days
Green Book	1		0	1			
Wholetime	5			4	112 days		
Total	6			5			

Grievances

There was a previous discussion at HR Committee about the target of 15 days to resolve grievances, some of which can be complex and require significant investigation. As a result of this, for the purposes of this report and to align more closely with discipline this target has increased from 15 to 30 days. It should be notes that on receiving a formal grievance, a manager will invite the employee to a meeting which should be held within 14 days of receipt of the grievance, as per our policy. However often this is waived by employees to have their trade union or colleague in attendance.

01/04/2022	30/09/2022						
		Total Completed		Current Live Cases	Average / Time to Complete	Key, Green within 30 days	Key, Red over 30 days
	Total Received in Period	In Target	Out of Target			Key, Green within 30 days	Key, Red over 30 days
Control	1	0	1		26 days		
Green Book	1	0	1		257 days [includes significant period of sickness absence]		
Wholetime	3	0	3		34 days		
Total	5	0	5				

7. RECRUITMENT STATISTICS – 1 APRIL 2022 – 30 SEPTEMBER 2022

External Recruitment by Directorate 01-Jul-22 to 30-Sep-22

Directorate	Total Received	Total Complete in Period	Total Complete Within Target	Total Complete Outside Target	Live vacancies	Average Time to Complete	Vacancies not appointed to
Corporate Comms	0						
Finance & Procurement	1				1		
Service Delivery	2	1			1	31	
Corporate Services	0						
Employment Services	2	1			1	32	
Service Support	8	3			1	35	4

Internal Recruitment by Directorate 01-Jul-22 to 30-Sep-22

Directorate	Total Received	Total Complete in Period	Total Complete Within Target	Total Complete Outside Target	Live vacancies	Average Time to Complete	Vacancies not appointed to
Corporate Comms	1	1				41	
Finance & Procurement	0						

Service Delivery	7	5			2	25	
Corporate Services	0						
Employment Services	0						
Service Support	2	1				19	1

8. Increase in grey book establishment

A staffing review within the Operational Risk Management Team (ORMT) has resulted in a recommendation to convert a green post into a grey book post.

Due to difficulties recruiting into the vacant Fire Protection Inspector role and a subsequent review of the team the conclusion is that the Fire Protection Officer role, whilst being a valued and worthwhile role can, in the future, be provided in other ways and it is felt that the role would be better suited at being a Crew Manager position.

The change to a Crew Commander role in lieu of the Fire Protection Officer role means changing from a green book role to a grey book role. The Crew Manager role will be based at Service Delivery Centre and will be subject to the Grey book flexi duty system.

The role at present is a Grade 8 and following previous unsuccessful recruitment processes, permission was granted to add a market supplement of 7%. However, even with this supplement added on, we have been unable to appoint into this role.

Following the green book pay and grading changes which were implemented in September 2022, this post is now a Grade 7 and salary including oncosts is £47,444. This includes the pay award for 22/23. Whilst the Crew Manager Development (2015 scheme) is £47,611 so represents an increase of £167 per annum.



OFFICIAL

Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Framework 2023-2028

Human Resources Committee

Date: 20 January 2023

Agenda Item:

11

Submitted By: Chief Employment Services Officer

Purpose

The Diversity and Inclusion strategy aims to formalise our objectives, aims and priorities for 2023 to 2028.

Recommendations

HR Committee to approve the strategy.

Summary

The proposed Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2023-2028 has been designed to replace the Equality Framework Action Plan which was completed in 2022. The proposed strategy is linked to organisational values and service priorities and aims to embed equity, diversity and inclusion into everything we do.

Following approval of the strategy and framework, an action plan will be agreed that defines roles, responsibilities and deadlines. The actions from this will be mapped over to departmental and district action plans. The action plan will be agreed and monitored at Diversity and Inclusion Board (DIB) with 6 monthly updates to HR Committee.

Local Government (Access to information) Act 1972

Exemption Category:

None

Contact Officer:

Gill Cockburn, Diversity and Inclusion Manager
E: gill.cockburn@westyorksfire.gov.uk

Background papers open to inspection:

None

Annexes:

Proposed Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Framework

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The proposed Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) strategy aims to provide a values-based approach to how we deliver and embed D&I across the organisation. The strategy outlines:
- Our commitment to D&I.
 - Purpose of the strategy.
 - Our approach.
 - Objectives, aims and priorities.
- 1.2 The document outlines the next steps in determining an action plan, roles and responsibilities, timelines and evaluation.
- 1.3 The D&I strategy will be delivered through our organisational values; Communication, Teamwork, Integrity, Learning and Responsibility, which are aligned to the Core Code of Ethics. A D&I objective for each value, and subsequent priorities, will determine the framework. Progress will be reported at Diversity & Inclusion Board (DIB) and every 6 months at HR Committee.

2 Information

- 2.1 The D&I strategy will:
- Be structured to fit our organisational priorities and include all districts, departments and teams in a collaborative approach.
 - Embed Diversity and Inclusion as standard practice into all areas of WYFRS processes, policy, and strategy.
 - Provide a unified approach to the positive implementation of Diversity and Inclusion principles and actions, with staff investment and understanding of our goals.
 - Be a time measured framework using actions that are SMART and for which responsibility is clearly identified and shared.
- 2.2 Following approval of the strategy and framework, an action plan will be developed that defines roles, responsibilities and deadlines. The actions from this will be connected with departmental and district action plans. The action plan will be agreed and monitored at Diversity and Inclusion Board (DIB) with 6 monthly updates to HR Committee.
- 2.3 The action plan will be overseen by the D&I team with support from the Staff Network Chairs Forum and staff network members. The D&I Manager will meet with departments quarterly who have responsibilities within the action plan and provide a report which evaluates the impact using data, staff feedback and benchmarking tools and share with members of the Diversity and Inclusion Board (DIB). The Action Plan will be a standing item on the DIB agenda where the progress of actions will be scrutinised and discussed.

3 Financial Implications

- 3.1 Existing D&I and staff budgets will be used to deliver the actions. Training bids will be submitted for learning and development initiatives.

4 Legal Implications

- 4.1 The Monitoring Officer has considered this report and is satisfied it is presented in compliance with the Authority's Constitution

5 Human Resource and Diversity Implications

- 5.1 This strategy aims to improve the staff experience through establishing actions that will enhance inclusion, belonging and wellbeing in the workplace which will impact positively on staff.

6 Equality Impact Assessment

Are the recommendations within this report subject to Equality Impact Assessment as outlined in the EIA guidance? (EIA guidance and form 2020 form.docx (westyorksfire.gov.uk))	Yes
Date EIA Completed	In progress – will be finalised when action plan is determined.
Date EIA Approved	TBC

The EIA is available on request from the report author or from diversity.inclusion@westyorksfire.gov.uk

7 Health, Safety and Wellbeing Implications

- 7.1 This strategy aims to improve the staff experience through establishing actions that will enhance inclusion, belonging and wellbeing in the workplace which will impact positively on staff.

8 Environmental Implications

- 8.1 None

9 Your Fire and Rescue Service Priorities

- We will continue working towards delivering a more inclusive workforce, which reflects and serves the needs of the diverse communities of West Yorkshire.
- Support, develop and enable our people to be at their best.

10 Conclusions

- 10.1 The proposed D&I strategy will provide a defined, transparent and measurable approach to embedding D&I at WYFRS which includes involvement from all teams in delivery.
- 10.2 The proposed D&I strategy reinforces WYFRSs commitment to D&I, helps further our embedding of the NFCC Core Code of Ethics, and behaviours aligned with our values.



‘OneTeam’

Our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Framework 2023 – 2028

(Replacing Equality Framework Action Plan).

A values-based approach to progressing, embedding and measuring Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) at West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service (WYFRS) using the behaviour led model of the organisational values.

The importance of Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity and inclusion are central to our core values and bring many benefits to our organisation. Having a diverse and inclusive workforce improves team performance, communication, innovation and wellbeing. An inclusive workforce results in individuals who feel confident, valued and able to deliver the best service to our communities and each other.

WYFRS promotes equality of opportunity for all by fostering good relations. We work under the Public Sector Equality Duty to eliminate illegal behaviour such as discrimination, harassment and victimisation. We have an organisational and moral responsibility to promote diversity and inclusion across all protected characteristics: race, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships and pregnancy and maternity.

Our approach to diversity and inclusion is to ensure everyone is invested and included in our journey. We promote dignity and respect, kindness, allyship and appreciate the value that any individual can bring to the workplace. We respect each and everybody’s individual journey and we hope to provide staff with the knowledge, skills, and awareness of why and how we do this.

Statement of Commitment

“WYFRS are committed to promoting a diverse workforce and ensuring inclusion of all staff. The Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) and People Strategy both incorporate diversity and inclusion as priorities for the organisation and I am personally committed to ensuring that we embed the principles of D&I into all areas of our work. This Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and framework will support the organisation to progress with our priorities through structured actions that all staff will be responsible for. Delivering this against the organisational values will give a clear direction on what we hope to achieve and align it with the behaviours we expect from our workforce and communities”.

John Roberts, Chief Fire Officer.

The strategy will:

- Be structured to fit our organisational priorities and include all districts, departments and teams in a collaborative approach.
- Embed Diversity and Inclusion as standard practice into all areas of WYFRS processes, policy, and strategy.
- Provide a unified approach to the positive implementation of Diversity and Inclusion principles and actions, with staff investment and understanding of our goals.
- Be a time measured framework using actions that are SMART and for which responsibility is clearly identified and shared.



Our Approach

At WYFRS we are proud to support the NFCC [Core Code of Ethics](#), which underpins our vision and our values. Through this strategy we will led by our ethics, achieve our vision and ensure everyone demonstrates our values and behaviours every day.

Our WYFRS OneTeam Vision is to promote, celebrate and elevate our diverse workforce and demonstrate our passion and commitment to providing a truly inclusive organisation.

This will be delivered through our organisational values; Communication, Teamwork, Integrity, Learning and Responsibility, which are aligned to the Core Code of Ethics. A D&I objective for each value, and subsequent priorities, will determine the framework. Progress will be reported at Diversity& Inclusion Board (DIB) and every 6 months at HR Committee.

Communication: how we share the D&I message and embrace our workforce diversity.

Communications about D&I is everyone's responsibility and sits with staff across the whole organisation to ensure this is delivered in everything that is done. The pending communications strategy will include clear messaging to enable and facilitate this happening across the organisation. The internal communications focus on being proud to work for WYFRS and enabling change and transformation to become a modern and efficient fire service in line with HMIFRS and NFCC national expectations will include action plans to facilitate this approach.

All planned communications activity will be led by communications objectives aligned to business objectives which uphold the overarching vision and aims of the organisation. These objectives need to be measurable, targeted and evaluated to ensure change is actually delivered. The communications activity will be data and insight led.

Objective: Promote WYFRS, internally and externally, as a diverse and inclusive employer by delivering appropriate and positive communications. To role model and celebrate colleagues and communities and share this with all audiences. To ensure we are using appropriate terminology and inclusive language across all departments and teams.

Teamwork: how we work together to create a positive and inclusive organisation.

Objective: To continue our commitment to improving the diversity of our workforce, both operational and support staff, through positive action, onboarding and policy development.

Aim	Priorities
Work together as one team to promote and encourage opportunities to hear all employee voices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure a direct link between staff network chairs and members of Management Board.• Devise a robust consultation process which incorporates staff network members and underrepresented staff.• Create a process to measure the impact of diverse staff involvement in decision making.• Implement reverse mentoring to enable senior colleagues to connect with people from underrepresented groups. To hear and understand issues from their perspective and to identify solutions.
Work together as one team to deliver positive action.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write and deliver a Positive Action Strategy and Guidance that incorporates the new processes and initiatives.

Aim	Priorities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver Positive Action training for staff to improve awareness and understanding. • Analyse and report on barriers to progression and retention of underrepresented staff. • Review HR processes to include Positive Action initiatives in progression and retention.
<p>Connect our people with services, systems and colleagues at the earliest opportunity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the onboarding process to ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ D&I induction is thorough. ○ Equality data is recorded and retained. ○ Quickscan is completed. ○ Reasonable Adjustment plan completed. ○ Neurodiversity tools demonstrated. ○ Access to Work application highlighted.
<p>To put workforce diversity at the heart of everything we do.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devise a process which supports inclusion of D&I principles in all departmental strategy or roadmaps. • Create a toolkit to support the promotion of embedding and measuring D&I outcomes. • Report on positive outcomes to all staff and highlight areas of improvement.

Integrity: how we treat people and challenge inequality.

Objective: Demonstrate our commitment to the Public Sector Equality Duty by eliminating discrimination, fostering good relations and advancing equality of opportunity through analysis of our provision and taking a zero-tolerance approach to inappropriate or unacceptable conduct.

Aim	Priorities
<p>Make sure that we treat everyone with dignity and respect, calling out and tackling behaviour which falls short.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver manager training on the Dignity Respect and Integrity Policy and the skills they need to implement it. • Deliver Dignity and Respect training to teams and crews. • Publish policy / guidance externally for attention of contractors, visitors and community. • Contracts to include agreement from providers that they will acknowledge and abide by Policy.

Aim	Priorities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce anonymous reporting tool for staff which provides feedback on the improvements we need to make to improve culture and staff welfare.
Be proactive, transparent and fair.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to analyse and report on the gender pay gap and support further pay gap reporting in accordance with guidance from government and best practice. • Continue to analyse and report on Equality Data Monitoring.
Get to know and understand our communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve mechanisms for tracking community engagement, outcomes and satisfaction by protected characteristic. • Elevate our interaction with communities and attend a diverse mix of community events.
Make sure we act ethically and in a way which promotes equality of access for the diverse workforce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streamline and continue to use Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) methodology to ensure processes, procedures and changes do not adversely impact on underrepresented staff. • Use EIA findings to improve policies and practices and measure the effectiveness of the outcomes.

Learning: how we improve knowledge and embed new skills.

Objective: To develop a 'OneTeam' approach that encourages allyship and accountability. To improve learning, awareness and celebration of Diversity and Inclusion through providing a training programme, events and campaigns that educate staff, provide tools and dispel misconceptions.

Aim	Priorities
<p>Help our people learn and understand more about the diversity within and beyond our organisation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop, organise and oversee an overarching programme of learning on diversity and inclusion for all staff and managers. • Drive completion of Diversity for Everyone roll out and additional content for managers. • Ensure attendance at training and events covers all staff, watches and teams.
<p>Increase the knowledge and understanding of D&I within the workforce.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D&I team to visit stations and watches to increase awareness of the work, projects and initiatives conducted by the team. • Implement D&I champions in all areas of work and provide specific D&I qualification and training. • Staff network quarterly newsletters to teams and stations. • Bi-annual staff network roadshows to visit stations and watches to increase staff engagement and awareness.
<p>Help everyone to understand the diverse communities within WY and act to fulfil our duties.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and deliver an effective monitoring process which uses equality data effectively. • Analyse equality data of our communities and use this to inform engagement activities. • Provide specific awareness training and guidance on the diversity of our communities. • Engage with WYP and YAS to identify cross working opportunities in community working groups, such as interfaith.
<p>Provide tools to help our people learn more, understand more and do more to promote D&I.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop toolkit and guidance library to support staff on all aspects of D&I. • Publish available webinar learning and monitor attendance, assess the impact of the learning. • Review the D&I e-learning modules and ensure they are engaging and fit for purpose. • Create a library of Skillbooster courses and monitor engagement. • Implement D&I essential skills as part of the leadership and promotion programme.

Responsibility: how we share accountability for D&I and measure success.

Objective: To elevate Diversity and Inclusion in the decision-making process and increase visibility of the D&I priorities across the leadership team, managers and staff. To demonstrate the commitment to D&I externally and internally and the value we place on being a diverse organisation.

Aim	Priorities
<p>Hold the senior team and fire authority to account for decisions made, championing diversity and inclusion always.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce a bi-annual meeting between Management Board, D&I Team and staff network chairs. • Provide regular updates on progress of the D&I work to the HR Committee Chair and DIB Authority member. • Improve mechanisms to ensure completion of consultation and EIA is carried out for organisational decisions.
<p>Harness the knowledge and experiences of our diverse workforce.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff network chairs to be formally consulted on key decisions that affect the workforce. • Role model and celebrate our diverse workforce and the impact of effective inclusion through Corporate Comms, reward and recognition. • Use data from the anonymous reporting tool, acknowledge the difficulties and implement actions to address. • Improve transparency of how we address and target issues that affect the wider workforce.
<p>Evaluate our commitments and actions against external measures to continually challenge and push us forward.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Inclusion Standard every 2 years and promote outcome, successes and areas for improvement. • Elevate our Inclusion Standard award from bronze to Silver by 2028. • Elevate our Disability Confident rating to 'Leader' by 2028. • Achieve 'Outstanding' for our D&I offer within the HMICFRS inspection by 2028.

Roles, Responsibilities and Deadlines.

Following approval of the strategy and framework, an action plan will be developed that defines roles, responsibilities and deadlines. The actions from this will be connected with departmental and district action plans. The action plan will be agreed and monitored at Diversity and Inclusion Board (DIB) with 6 monthly updates to HR Committee.

Evaluation

The action plan will be overseen by the D&I team with support from the Staff Network Chairs Forum and staff network members. The D&I Manager will meet with departments quarterly who have responsibilities within the action plan and provide a report which evaluates the impact using data, staff feedback and benchmarking tools and share with members of the Diversity and Inclusion Board (DIB).

The Action Plan will be a standing item on the DIB agenda where the progress of actions will be scrutinised and discussed.