

Minutes

People and Culture Committee

Date: 4 July 2025

Time: 10:30

Venue: FSHQ

Present:

Cllr F Shaheen (in the chair), Cllrs Ahmed, Anwar, Bruce, Dickenson, Pollard, Renshaw (as sub for Cllr Parnham), Sutcliffe, Tudor and Wood (as sub for Cllr Tulley)

Apologies:

Cllrs Downes, Parnham and Tulley

1. Minutes of meeting held on 4 April 2025

Resolved

That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 4 April 2025 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

2. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

3. Urgent items

There were no urgent items.

4. Admission of the public

There were no items requiring the exclusion of the public and press.

5. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

6. Diversity and Inclusion Strategy – 6 monthly update

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The Director of People and Culture provided a report to update Members on the work of the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (EDI) team. This included 2 Spotlight Ons, the first detailing the key objectives delivered by the team, including the use of Quick Screen and the work of the staff networks, and the second detailing the positive action and community engagement events attended during the last quarter.

Members welcomed the report and were pleased to note the excellent work done by the team, particularly the recognition of unseen disabilities.

Members challenged the report author on the cost savings and productivity gains from introducing the Quick Screen test and discussed the viability of its use at recruitment stage. Members further discussed the current recruitment process and whether it is weighted towards neurotypical applicants and were advised that green book recruitment follows traditional recruitment methods, with reasonable adjustments being readily available upon request and that the FF recruitment process had recently been updated after a lengthy in-depth review process but would continually be adapted.

Members requested that their congratulations be passed to FF Shelley Jones and SM Sophie Green who were selected as winners at the Women in the Fire Service Awards 2025 in the Firefighter Rising Star and Bright Light categories respectfully.

Resolved

That the report be noted

7. Equality Data Monitoring Report

The Director of People and Culture submitted a report which provides workforce data for 2024/25 on gender, ethnicity, sexuality, disability, age, religion, disciplinary and grievance and fulfils WYFRA's obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Members were provided with an update on the leavers data.

Members challenged the report author to clarify if there are any statistics the Service are particularly concerned about and the actions being taken to address these. It was acknowledged that there are slight fluctuations in the figures which are expected due to the natural turnover of staff. Members were pleased to note that the WYFRS figures are very encouraging with increases in female and ethnically diverse wholetime firefighters and that results show we are in line with National Statistics.

Members suggested that the statistics for the Principal Officers should be detailed within future reports.

Resolved

That the report be noted

8. Human Resources Activity Report

The Director of People and Culture submitted a report which advised Members of the key HR metrics for the reporting period January to March 2025, including establishment strength, sickness absence data and high-level discipline and grievance figures.

Members challenged the report author on the following:

- The work being done to reduce the “not declared” percentage for ethnicity
- Use of standard UK government categories
- Providing detailed information for sickness absence, disciplinary and grievance cases i.e. the history and background if relevant, ethnicity and gender statistics.
- The high proportion of sickness absence due to Mental Health issues and whether staff morale, the increase in staff attendance at non dynamic environments, and the legacy from the Covid pandemic could be potential drivers for this.

Resolved

That the report be noted.

9. Yorkshire and Humber Local Authority Employers’ Association Minutes of Meetings held on 10 June 2025

Resolved

That the minutes of the YHEA meeting held on 10 June 2025 be noted.

10. Quarterly Update on the 12 month People Plan

The Director of People and Culture presented their recorded video message updating all staff and members of the progress made on the 12 month People Plan.

Members noted the positive work happening across the Service and welcomed the new rewards and recognition scheme which will work to change the culture of the Fire Service and recognise colleagues’ contributions above and beyond their role.

Chair