

Report of the Assistant Chief Fire Officer

12. Update from Equality and Diversity Advisory Group

Purpose of report

1. To provide the Policy and Resources (P&R) Committee with an update from the Equality and Diversity Advisory Group since the last report to P&R Committee on 4 September 2013.
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Recommendations

It is recommended the Committee notes that:

- i) the Equality Impact Assessment Process has been reviewed to ensure it continues to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010;*
- ii) a Disability Toolkit has been developed and implemented in conjunction with the Fire Brigades Union; and*
- iii) the Ethical Framework has been reviewed, implemented and refresher training has been rolled out Service-wide.*

Background

2. The core function of the Equality and Diversity (E&D) Advisory Group is to promote equality of opportunity and thereby help to eliminate unlawful discrimination within Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service and to develop a working environment where individual diversity is valued. The Group meets quarterly and is represented by each department across the Service in order to mainstream E&D across the whole Service. Two Elected Members and representatives of the trade unions also attend the E&D Advisory Group meetings.
3. It was agreed at the last Policy and Resources Committee on 4 September 2013 that six monthly updates would be provided. Since this meeting there has been one meeting of the E&D Advisory Group which was held on 7 November 2013. The Group was chaired by the Chief Fire Officer.

Six Monthly Update

4. The Service's Equality Impact Assessment Process was reviewed to ensure it continues to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. It was recommended that the full Business Impact Assessment form was updated and guidance notes relating to equality and diversity are provided to support Service

Managers when determining whether it is necessary to complete a full Business Impact Assessment form. This has subsequently been approved by the Senior Management Board (SMB) and implemented.

5. A Disability Toolkit which had jointly been developed by a Senior Human Resources Advisor and representatives of the Fire Brigades Union was developed. The purpose of the Disability Toolkit is to provide advice and guidance to managers when dealing with disability related issues in the workplace. The Disability Toolkit has subsequently been approved by SMB and implemented.
6. The Ethical Framework Booklet which mirrors the Ethical Framework Service Policy Instruction was reviewed. This has subsequently been approved by the Senior Management Board (SMB) and Booklets will be distributed to all existing staff and new starters.
7. The Ethical Framework refresher training has been rolled out Service-wide. The Ethical Framework identifies the Service's values, purpose and the roles and responsibilities of all staff. Refresher training was delivered to the Authority Members at the December 2013 FRA.
8. There have been some challenges in recruiting to the Positive Action Sub Group despite an extensive advertising campaign. This has subsequently been discussed at SMB, and staff have been nominated to participate in this Group. Councillors Fry and Obsorki will also be invited to attend the Group, to represent their communities. The first meeting of this Group is scheduled to take place on 13 March 2014.
9. The next meeting of the E&D Advisory Group is scheduled for 19 March 2014. At that meeting it is anticipated that the Service's progress against the Equality Objectives will be reviewed. A verbal update will be provided to the P&R Committee on 26 March 2014.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	None
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	None
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	None

Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	None
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	This is covered within the report

Supporting Information

None

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