

Report of the Head of Community Risk and HR & Development

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2020-2025

Purpose of report

1. To present the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion plan 2020-2025 and to outline the proposed areas of focus.

Recommendation

It is recommended the Authority considers the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2020-2025 and notes the proposed areas of focus.

Introduction and Background

2. The Service is committed to providing an efficient and effective service that meets the needs of our communities across Herefordshire and Worcestershire. We believe we can continue to make a positive difference to the safety and wellbeing of the people in our communities and our organisation, by better understanding their many and diverse needs and creating an inclusive workplace.
3. The Service's People Strategy 2020-2022 identifies a commitment to "actively promote equality, diversity and inclusion in our workforce and in our services to the community".¹ The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan sits under Commitment 2 – Equality & Diversity but is also the golden thread running through how we work together to support our vision of "Saving More Lives: building on our successes to continue to make a difference, improve lives and help secure resilient communities."²
4. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan ensures that the Service meets its legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty.
5. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan draws on recommendations of the 2018 inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS); one of the key findings being "the Service needs to improve how it promotes the right values and culture...and needs to improve how it ensures fairness and promotes diversity."³

¹ HWFRS (2020) [People Strategy: Enabling all our staff to make a difference every day.](#)

² HWFA (2019) [Annual Report 2019-20](#)

³ HMICFRS (2018) Fire & Rescue Service: Effectiveness, efficiency and people 2018-19. [An inspection of Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service.](#)

Key aspects of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan

6. There are four areas of focus in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan for the next five years:

Our Organisation: Leadership and Corporate Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Our leaders will provide visible leadership to ensure our people, our partners and our communities see the personal commitment to inclusion.• We will maximise the transparency of our organisation so our activities can be scrutinised and we can be held accountable.
Our Communities: Understand, engage and build good relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will better understand our communities by ensuring we put in place systems that enable the collection, collation and analysis of community data and information.• We will enhance our engagement with our communities to foster good relationships and understand the community priorities.
Our People Develop, engage and understand	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will develop our people to better understand equality and diversity.• We will create an inclusive culture where our people feel able to be themselves.• We will better understand our workforce composition through our workforce data.
Our Partners Working together	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will work with external partners to develop strategies that enable effective service provision to our communities.• We will collaborate across our own business functions and staff networks to better build equality and inclusion into our policies, processes and practices to ensure inclusion and our values are at the heart of everything we do.

7. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan is attached as Appendix 1. A delivery framework has been developed which identifies our key priorities and actions for the next two years.

Delivering the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan

8. The Authority and Senior Management Board (SMB) collectively hold governance responsibilities for improving our equality and diversity performance.
9. The lead SMB member for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is Chief Fire Officer, Nathan Travis. Cllr Oborski and Cllr Baker-Price were appointed as the Member Champions for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at the last FRA meeting. Details of their role are set out in Appendix 2 and they will both be meeting with representatives from the Service on a regular basis. A progress update report will be provided to the Audit and Standards Committee every 6 months and the Member Champions will be invited to contribute to those meetings..
10. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan aims will be met through the delivery framework supported by HR & Development and a number of other key stakeholders including the Organisational Development and Challenge Group (ODCG) and representative bodies.

Conclusion/Summary

11. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan enables the Service to articulate its equality objectives and aspirations, meet its legal duties and address areas for improvement.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	<p>The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan applies to the entire workforce. All managers and employees will be involved in achieving its aims.</p> <p>It is anticipated that costs associated with its delivery will be contained within existing budgets. However, where there is an additional financial implication, a business case will be submitted for any additional costs / expenditure, where identified.</p> <p>The Equality Act 2010 introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan aims to help us meet our statutory duty.</p>
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	<p>The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan will help to support our Saving More Lives vision. It specifically links to the People Strategy - Commitment 2: Equality & Diversity. The plan also draws on HMICFRS recommendations, the Inclusive Fire Service Group recommendations and the wider Fire Reform programme.</p>

	Links to organisational values – Integrity, Teamwork, Honesty, Openness and Respect.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	<p>Failure to adopt measures that demonstrate an ongoing commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion may damage our reputation as an employer of choice and attract public, media and political scrutiny.</p> <p>Health & Safety - Where health and safety implications are identified, for example events involving young people, appropriate risk assessments will be carried out.</p>
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	<p>Engagement is required with managers and employees across the Service to ensure that all understand their role in mainstreaming equality, diversity and inclusion. This includes the Organisational Development and Challenge Group and representative bodies.</p> <p>Engagement with community groups and similar organisations will be required to ensure consideration of best practice and that actions will be appropriate and effective in achieving the aims of the delivery framework.</p>
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	Equality Impact Assessments will be completed as outputs from the plan are identified and the requirement arises.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2020-2025

Appendix 2 – Member Champions: Description of Role

Background papers – [People Strategy 2020-2022](#)
[HMICFRS Inspection Report 2018](#)