

Terms of Reference

# Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Cultural Audit to Understand People, their Behaviours and Workplace Practices

17 March 2023



HEREFORD & WORCESTER  
**HWFR**  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



# Foreword

The Fire Authority and I are rightly proud of Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS), our culture and our staff, and we truly believe we have a progressive culture in which staff can feel safe, secure and respected in their work places. However, recent national events have brought into question the culture of the UK Fire and Rescue Service and unfortunately there have been too many examples of simply abhorrent behaviours by UK Fire Service staff whilst at work.

We recognise that the Service does also have cases of poor behaviour, these are limited to a small minority of staff and we do not believe they are endemic. We firmly believe we have a positive culture in regards to reporting poor behaviour and that management takes concerns seriously and deal with these issues robustly, as has been evidenced in our recent staff survey results. However, these occurrences do show us that there continues to be a minority of staff that simply do not understand that their behaviours are not welcome and will not be tolerated in our workplaces.

As a result of this the Chairman, Vice Chairman and I are pleased to be able to announce that we have agreed to commission and launch an Independent Cultural Audit which will be led by Dr Debra Willoughby. We have given Dr Willoughby complete autonomy, discretion, and open access for this audit and have also given a commitment to publish the report in full and act on any recommendations as a result of her findings. This Cultural Audit will also take into account and support the planned comprehensive mandatory training programme commencing in April 2023 by ioda, the recent implementation of SaySo in March 2023 (our confidential independent reporting line), and the incredibly informative and positive results of our recent staff survey which highlighted many areas of our culture that we should be proud of.

HWFRS staff and our communities should not fear the outcome of this Audit, conversely we should all welcome and truly value this opportunity to improve our Service and make HWFRS an even better place to work. Our communities should have complete confidence in our professionalism and behaviours when we access their homes, buildings and vehicles during their worst times, and when our staff come to work they should know their colleagues will act, behave and treat them with respect and dignity at all times, regardless of who they are.

Our strategic vision for our culture is underpinned by the belief that despite how much we train and support our staff, there may still be occasions where mistakes are made that need to be addressed. It is therefore our duty to be tolerant and supportive in helping our staff understand when they need to modify, change or cease their actions or behaviours, but likewise where these behaviours cannot be tolerated and do not align with our values, we will take swift and decisive action.

Our vision means that we need to ensure that each and every member of staff plays their role in challenging and reporting unacceptable behaviours at source, and that this is properly managed. Management will always listen and carefully consider each issue raised, and act appropriately and proportionately when these matters cannot be resolved at a local level.

I hope you will all make Dr Willoughby and her team feel welcome and that you will be as open and honest as you can be, as this way we can ensure we portray a rich and true picture of our organisation. Your view is important and I would urge you to get involved in this Cultural Audit when the opportunity arises as it will be helping us to grow and improve as a team and organisation.



**Jonathon Pryce**  
**Chief Fire Officer**



**Kit Taylor (Cllr)**  
**Chair of Fire Authority**



**Roger Phillips (Cllr)**  
**Vice Chair of Fire Authority**

# Terms of Reference

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<b>Objective</b>	<p>To develop a culture where every member of staff takes ownership for challenging and reporting poor behaviours at earliest possible level and when poor behaviours are identified management will act promptly and proportionately to address the concerns raised and we will always strive to grow, learn and develop our culture to continually improve our behaviours at work underpinned by the NFCC Core Code of Ethics.</p>
<b>Purpose</b>	<p>To undertake an audit across the organisation to gather detailed information and data on organisational culture and practices, staff and management views and levels of understanding of Equality, Diversity &amp; Inclusion to inform future development.</p> <p>To highlight and evidence the positive cultural elements, progressive nature of the organisation and demonstrate how the majority of staff behave to a high standard.</p> <p>To identify areas of poor behaviour and help management to target these areas for improvement.</p> <p>The results of this audit should therefore provide a holistic view of the organisation in terms of equality, diversity and inclusion, as well as providing information to develop future refined strategies to help deliver targeted cultural benefits for the organisation, the workforce and ultimately the service provided.</p>
<b>Background</b>	<p>The Service is deeply committed to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion agenda and the importance it places on ensuring all its employees are exposed to a healthy and fair working environment.</p> <p>The Service began this initiative to gain a deeper understanding of the organisation and its culture towards EDI by engaging specialist support early in 2022 starting with a senior leadership workshop facilitated by an EDI expert consultant to revise, improve and create a bespoke mandatory training package to replace the previous dated programme of training.</p> <p>As a result of recommendations from this event HWFRS undertook a comprehensive procurement process to identify an expert training and consultancy provider to facilitate an organisational wide cultural audit and deliver bespoke training to all staff.</p> <p>This was and continues to be a proactive initiative driven by the Chief Fire Officer. As a result, it has already put in place a mandatory comprehensive EDI training plan for all employees (uniform and non-uniformed including on call staff) and wishes to ensure that the training content and approach is fully bespoke to the needs of the Service, its employees and ultimately deliver benefits to the communities it serves.</p>
<b>Accountable to</b>	Chief Fire Officer

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# Terms of Reference (continued)

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<b>Duration</b>	Audit will commence on 16 March 2023 until mid-April 2023.  The bespoke inclusion training will follow commencing from 28 April to take place over an 18 month period.
<b>Method of Delivery</b>	The audit will consist of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• a desktop review of relevant policy, procedure and documents</li><li>• a review of previous cases relating to culture and behaviours</li><li>• a number of confidential focus groups across the Service to ensure all staff groups have the opportunity to take part in providing feedback</li><li>• for those wanting to take part but unable to attend one of the focus groups a selection of confidential one to one's are available for staff to speak individually with Dr Willoughby across the geography of the Service</li></ul>
<b>Single Point of Contact</b>	To ensure appropriate strategic support is provided to this key project the Assistant Chief Officer: Director of Prevention will act as main point of contact.
<b>Objectives</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To undertake an audit across the organisation to gather detailed information and data on organisational culture and practices, staff and management views and levels of understanding of Equality, Diversity &amp; Inclusion to inform future development.</li><li>2. Undertake a desktop review of relevant documents, strategic plans and national best practice and guidance to include but not limited to:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relevant HWFRS policies such as Disciplinary, Grievance, Dignity and Work</li><li>• HWFRS Employment and Gender Pay Gap Report</li><li>• NFCC Core Code of Ethics and related Fire Standard</li><li>• HMICFRS State of Fire Reports</li><li>• Independent Culture Review of London Fire Brigade</li><li>• AFSA – Letter to Chief Fire Officers</li></ul></li><li>3. Gather a suitable robust sample of data from over 30% of the workforce including both qualitative and quantitative data using the following methods:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Focus Group interviews</li><li>• One to one interviews</li><li>• Quantitative questionnaire</li></ul></li><li>4. Hold one to one interview's away from normal Service premises and not in uniform, if requested by respondents.</li><li>5. Conduct focus groups in normal working location such as HQ and local stations.</li></ol>

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# Terms of Reference (continued)

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<b>Objectives (continued)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>6. Review historical conduct cases, investigations &amp; outcomes and correlate results against findings to inform the final formative document and strategic recommendations.</li><li>7. Review HR/people practices (including previous and recent cases) to identify strengths, lessons learned potential areas for improvement.</li><li>8. Review data and information gathered from the HWFRS staff survey 2023.</li><li>9. Publish the results of the audit, and produce a comprehensive action plan in response to the recommendations.</li></ol>
<b>Reporting requirements to SLB</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Produce a report which includes clearly interpreted charts and text, providing a well-defined qualitative and quantitative picture of the data.</li><li>2. Report to reference relevant supporting/original data in line with academic best practice.</li><li>3. Submission of a comprehensive final evaluation report within two clear days of the receipt of any final feedback.</li><li>4. Presentation of report findings to key stakeholders through a PowerPoint presentation that summarises the findings.</li></ol>
<b>Strategic Policy Links</b>	<p>The results of the cultural audit will be reported to the Fire Authority and will directly link to ensuring the Service can better enact the requirements set out in the Community Risk Management Plan.</p> <p>In addition, it will support the People Strategy and align to the Core Code of Ethics and the five ethical principles.</p>
<b>Administration</b>	<p>To support the review administration to arrange focus groups and interviews will be provided directly by the CFO / Principal Officer Personal Assistants</p>
<b>Team Conducting the Audit</b>	<p>Two long-standing ioda consultants have been appointed to carry out this important audit based on their experience, qualifications, and personal qualities – Dr Debra Willoughby working with Research interview specialist and EDI Trainer, Emily Mellors.</p>

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# Team Conducting the Audit



## Dr Debra Willoughby

Twenty-five years in police and justice development leadership roles including international projects as part of UK sponsored aid programmes.

As the proposed lead consultant, Dr Debra, served as a UK police officer for two decades until 1994, when she began working with ioda. An internationally recognised consultant, researcher, evaluator, equalities advisor, trainer and development expert with over 40 years, Debra's experience is enhanced by a Doctorate focusing on communication in sensitive environments and a Master's Degree in Education and Evaluation, concentrating on the reduction of bias and discrimination in equality, diversity and inclusion within the workplace.

Debra's roles that relate specifically to this project include but are not limited to: delivering training and/or strategic organisational guidance on the Equality Act of 2010; investigating discrimination cases in the UK with a view to finding constructive solutions without the need to seek redress in a tribunal. She has carried out a number of cultural audits post the MacPherson report into equality and fairness across the public sector including the Police and Fire Services. She also has training and mentoring inexperienced research teams; writing the 'Guidelines & Framework for the Saferworld In-Country Team to Carry out the End Evaluation of the Kenyan Police Reform Programme', which included guidelines on interviewing and carrying out Focus Group Discussions (FGDs); and researching, writing then supporting the implementation of a Training Needs Analyses Toolkit for the Jordanian Police Family Protection Department to enable them to effectively and efficiently utilise a variety of research methodologies to accurately identify training needs. Specific examples include:

- Debra has recently finished research into the preparation of case papers regarding complex UK harassment cases (redacted documents regarding the case are available if required).
- In 2022 she provided support and executive coaching to leaders working within Palestine as part of their role in providing inclusive and non-discriminatory medical aid to the local communities.
- In 2015 and 2016 she completed a comprehensive research and development assignment on behalf of UNICEF Jordan.
- In 2015 Debra completed the end evaluation of a Saferworld programme in South Sudan covering community security/protection focusing on the mobilisation and strengthening of vulnerable communities – including women and girls – and conflict-sensitive aid/development.
- Earlier in 2015 she completed the final evaluation of Saferworld's Police Reform Programme in Kenya including the programme's impact on VAWG particularly female genital mutilation, early marriage, rape, sexual assault and sexual harassment.
- During 2014 Debra led the Mid-Term Review (MTR) of Saferworld's four-year, multi-country community security programme (CSP) in South Sudan, Bangladesh and Yemen. The review found that the CSP had contributed to an improved environment for reconstruction and development in those countries by creating more active, informed and inclusive societies, and more effective and accountable institutions – in turn increasing public safety and security.

## Team Conducting the Audit (continued)



### **Emily Mellors**

#### ***Research interview specialist and EDI Trainer***

Emily is a senior EDI trainer and practitioner within ioda and delivers training and support across the UK including Fire Services. Emily currently delivers professional standards training within West Yorkshire FRS as well as Equality and Inclusion and leadership training with South Yorkshire FRS. Emily inclusion as a research interviewer is designed to ensure a practitioner's oversight and assessment of the information gathered and analysed.

Emily has been a member of the ioda EDI training and consultancy team since 2011 and across the UK in this field. She works closely with Debra (lead researcher) in areas such as learner development and assessment.

Before joining ioda Emily had a strong background in EDI and conflict resolution within the social care setting, providing training and consultancy to local authorities and third sector charities. Her proficiencies include handling sensitive situations, conflict resolution, logistics planning, prioritising tasks, meeting deadlines, resourcefulness, problem solving and managing difficult or stressful situations.

Emily is highly proficient when working within sensitive areas, particularly when it comes to creating a safe atmosphere ranging from organisational harassment and bullying through to working with women affected by violence and sexual harassment.



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