

## **Equality & Diversity Objectives 2016–2020 – Workforce Measures**

### **Years 1-2**

**The workforce objective is designed to underpin our People Strategy to deliver our public safety plan and to meet the requirements of the equality duty in the exercise of our functions in order to:**

- **Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.**
- **Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.**
- **Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.**

### **1/ Advancement of the equality of opportunity**

#### **Ethnicity**

We will encourage and actively promote employment applications from all groups in the community. This is because proportionally, Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) employees are under-represented within BMKFA compared to the population ethnicity of both Milton Keynes and Buckinghamshire. Our aim is to increase the number of BMEs employed to better reflect the proportion of the community we serve. We will do this by developing stronger relationships with the equalities community infrastructure (specifically in respect of BME communities) that represent the voices and diversity of Bucks and Milton Keynes.

#### **Gender**

We will encourage and actively promote employment applications from females and provide fair access to opportunities. This is because only 15 per cent of the entire BMKFA workforce is female compared with 49 and 51 per cent of the population of Milton Keynes and Buckinghamshire respectively. We will promote the retention and recruitment of female employees and aim to increase the number of females employed, with a focus on operational employees to ensure this better reflects the proportion within the community we serve i.e. On-Call recruitment and the intention to create more opportunities for flexible working as a recruitment and retention tool. We will also review duty systems and ways of working to promote flexible working practices that are more attractive to female employees and those with family commitments.

## **Age**

Because 86 per cent of BMKFA employees are between 30 and 59 years of age in comparison to 43 per cent of the Milton Keynes population and less for Buckinghamshire, we will aim to better reflect the age profiles of the community we serve. We will do this through an annual apprenticeship programme for the next three years and by focusing on the ageing workforce aspects of our People Strategy.

### **2/ Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation**

In order to ensure that (high level) equality considerations are given to all service plans across the Authority through People Impact Assessment's, we will review processes and update the People Impact Assessment (PIA) Procedure and provide training to those responsible for completing PIAs.

In order to inculcate consistent knowledge of E&D, ensure 100 per cent completion of compulsory E&D training (e.g. online) for existing employees and for new employees at their induction. We will refresh this at two-yearly intervals.

Unconscious bias training will be undertaken for key employees and managers in order to improve self-awareness and an understanding of how experience shapes thought and personality. The aim is to increase trust across the workforce as people come to realise that others react to them on a level that is natural to them and their experience.

### **3/ Address issues that affect those with protected characteristics**

In order to address issues that affect those with protected characteristics we will conduct an E&D workforce census in order to improve our data relating to the protected characteristics of our employees. We will act on the results and maintain accurate up to date E&D data on our employees. This work will form part of the introduction of the new HR System in April 2017.

Our aim is to improve workforce profile statistics by improving existing rates of reporting of protected characteristics captured about the workforce, particularly for Sexual Orientation, Gender Reassignment, Religion and Belief and Marriage /Civil partnership. We will do this by encouraging a culture where employees feel comfortable to provide this information.

### **4/ Fostering good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who don't**

In order to further embed E&D into every area of the service, ensure that all employee objectives include a specific reference to embedding E&D across the service. The aim is for 100 per cent of employees to evidence delivery of their specific E&D improvements via the appraisal process within 2 years. Audit a minimum of 10 per cent to ensure consistency and benchmarking.

To further the engagement of employees, identify and train Diversity Champions to form an E&D Advisory Group containing members who either have a protected characteristic or an active interest in E&D. The group's terms of reference will include challenging the Authority to strive for future improvements in E&D.

### **Years 3-4**

#### **1/ Fostering good relations between all employees particularly between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who don't**

Taking the trends from any cases identified and reports from the E&D Advisory Group, identify initiatives and develop further objectives from years 3 to 4.

#### **2/ Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation**

Working with the results of the workforce census, further embed an inclusive workplace for the minority groups identified.

Review new appointments to promotion to ensure all line managers complete performance management training in appropriate procedures and best practice in; Discipline, Anti Bullying and Harassment, Grievance and Capability.

#### **3/ Advancement of the equality of opportunity**

We will publish the gender pay gap within BMKFA in line with the of the Government Equality Office guidance, once this has been received. We will audit in advance of the expected 2018 implementation date for compliance.

#### **4/ Public sector equality duty**

Review the impacts of partnership and collaboration, review the diversification of services and the impacts on our workforce and service to identify initiatives to further improvements in equality and diversity.

In order to benchmark against best practice in other similar organisations and to verify progress against these objectives we will seek independent assurance and communicate and act on the findings of this review.

## **Equality & Diversity Objectives 2016 – 2020 – Community Measures**

### **Years 1-2**

**The Authority's objective is designed to enhance community safety and meet the requirements of the general equality duty as defined by the public sector equality duty as follows:**

- **Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.**
- **Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.**
- **Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.**

#### **1/ Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics**

The elderly and those with physical and mental impairments, which stop them being able to respond to a fire situation are the most likely to be killed in fires, so we will ensure our Prevention targeting reflects this. We will measure the number of over 80 year olds and those with permanent or temporary impairments who receive 'Safe & Well' visits.

#### **2/ Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people**

Whilst the Fire Service has a great deal of data relating to the elderly and those with physical and mental impairments, we will work with partners to ensure our collective databases are robust. We will ensure the data is quality assured annually and that the data is consistent across our service delivery teams.

#### **3/ Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low**

Statistics indicate that young people are at risk from being injured in fires. The Service will interact with young people using different media to communicate appropriate safety messages. We will monitor the number of youth engagement events and we will gain feedback from young people using focus groups and questionnaires on an annual basis.

#### **4/ Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics**

This Service has a duty to enforce fire safety legislation to ensure public safety and also has a duty to comply with the Regulators' Code. We will give advice and guidance to businesses, focusing on small and medium enterprises to promote economic growth in our communities. We will measure the advice and guidance

given to all businesses and we will invite feedback from the community on this approach.

### **Years 3-4**

#### **1/ Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics**

Building upon the quality-assured data established in years 1 & 2, this Service will ensure fire service prevention measures are targeted according to risk and the most vulnerable members of our communities are supported appropriately. Robust reciprocal arrangements between partner agencies will ensure any person at risk will be dealt with by the most appropriate agency, whether that risk is from fire, from falling, or from any form of neglect. We will measure all inter-agency referrals and record outcomes to identify development areas.

#### **2/ Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people**

Building on the data from prevention activities and from the incident recording system information, built up in years 1 & 2, we will ensure that should any sector of our communities be disproportionately at risk from fire, we will target resources accordingly. We will measure this every year looking at those involved in fire-related incidents by their protected characteristics.

#### **3/ Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low**

To ensure our communities feel we are meeting their needs, we will undertake community engagement on an annual basis. In years 3 & 4 this will involve creating a peer challenge comprising members of the public and members of partner agencies to assure the public that we represent them equally. We will measure this by the levels of satisfaction and working towards identifying and reducing any areas where the public feels we need to do things differently.

#### **4/ Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics**

This Service will work with local authority partners who also have a duty to enforce legislative compliance, to share data and target intervention resources at those businesses who are considered to pose a higher risk to employees and the public. We will reduce interactions with well-managed premises and concentrate enforcement and support on those who most need that help. We will measure this by recording the number of businesses considered not to require intervention and those that do. We will also record the type of intervention to prove that the interaction has created an improvement, or had led to enforcement where it was not possible to support.