



Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

MEETING	Fire Authority
DATE OF MEETING	18 October 2017
OFFICER	Lynne Swift, Director of People and Organisational Development
LEAD MEMBER	Councillor Steven Lambert
SUBJECT OF THE REPORT	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Objectives 2016-20, Review of Year 1 progress
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>Against a back drop of the Fire Reform Agenda set out by the then Home Secretary Theresa May MP in May 2016 and continued by the then Minister for Policing and the Fire Service Brandon Lewis MP; the Authority determined a new focus on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and refreshed the EDI objectives in June 2016.</p> <p>The Authority recognises that having a diverse flexible workforce which better reflects the community it serves can enhance performance and understanding of these diverse communities as well as improve our services to those communities.</p> <p>The Authority's philosophy is to embed Equality and Diversity into everything we do internally and externally.</p> <p>Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority (BMKFA) is subject to the specific duties as laid out in the Equality Act (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011. This is in addition to the general equality duty as laid out in the Equality Act 2010. These duties together are commonly known as the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), the aim of which is to ensure that fairness is at the heart of public bodies' work and that public services meet the needs of different groups.</p> <p>The purpose of this paper is to update on the progress made in year 1 of our four year plan (Annex A) and to provide an update on workforce diversity in the form of charts in comparison to the census data for the population of Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes (Annex B).</p> <p>This report contains updates on the key achievements in our internal year one priority performance areas including:</p> <p>Workforce Strategy, Workforce Monitoring, Equality Impact assessment, Employee Engagement, Promoting an Inclusive Working Environment, Equal</p>

	<p>Pay, Anti- Harassment and Bullying, Appraisal and Training Learning and Development.</p> <p>The report also contains an update on the key external performance areas;</p> <p>Working with our Communities as follows: Knowing Communities, Involving Communities and Responsive Services and Customer Care.</p>
ACTION	Noting.
RECOMMENDATIONS	That the contents of the report Annex A and Annex B be noted.
RISK MANAGEMENT	<p>A significant identified risk is the Authority’s ability to deliver a more diverse workforce within the funding and recruitment constraints against a background of changing demographics. This report and the objectives contained within the appendices and proposed monitoring aim to mitigate these risks.</p> <p>Discrimination in the workplace may give rise to a claim through the employment tribunal. In general, failure to comply with the statutory duties may give rise to a claim for compensation for injury to feelings and costs may be awarded on such a claim if it is successful. There is also a risk to reputational damage.</p> <p>The Authority’s People Strategy and well developed policies and procedures aim to mitigate these risks wherever possible.</p>
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	The Equality and Diversity action plan for 2016/20 will be delivered from within existing budgets and will help to move the provision of equality and diversity to a more integrated provision within public safety work.
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	<p>The Fire Authority is subject to the general and specific duties set out in the Equality Act 2010. The general duty requires the Authority when carrying out its functions, to have due regard to the need to: 1) eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and 2) the advancement of equality of opportunity between different groups and foster good relations between different groups.</p> <p>Specific duties are set out in regulations made under Equality Act 2010 bringing together existing race, disability and gender duties and also covering sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment. The specific duties are intended to help public bodies to meet the requirements of the general duty.</p> <p>The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 (SI 2011/2260) requires, since 31 January 2012, the Authority to: 1) publish information to</p>

	<p>demonstrate compliance with the general duty (above); and to prepare and publish one or more equality objectives that should achieve one or more of the aims set out in the general duty. Guidance on how and what to publish is provided in the "Equality information and the equality duty: A guide for public authorities" (ECHR, Revised (second) edition, 19 December 2011).</p>
<p>CONSISTENCY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF COLLABORATION</p>	<p>As part of the Thames Valley Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), each collaboration programme is assessed to determine if there are any EDI matters that can be implemented through collaboration. The three Thames Valley Fire Services are scoping a common approach to Apprentice recruitment aiming to maximise the diversity of this group.</p> <p>The Employee Relations and Engagement Manager takes the role of Buckinghamshire FRS Equality Lead at the National Fire Chiefs Council Equality and Diversity Professionals Group meetings on behalf of the Thames Valley Fire Services.</p> <p>The service has fully participated in the National Joint Council Inclusive Fire Service Initiative which recommended Improvement Strategies for Fire and Rescue Services to use.</p>
<p>HEALTH AND SAFETY</p>	<p>There are no implications with regards to health and safety.</p>
<p>EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY</p>	<p>The service has a statutory obligation under equality legislation to eliminate unlawful discrimination. The Authority's people strategy, policies and procedures aim to support us in meeting our requirements. If our policies and practices are fair and consistent then our service users will approach us and have greater levels of satisfaction. If we have greater representation of our diverse communities then we will be able to find solutions to barriers in relation to employment and accessing services.</p> <p>The relevant workforce equality data is included in Annex B.</p>
<p>USE OF RESOURCES</p>	<p>Communication with stakeholders; A comprehensive communication and consultation programme has been initiated both internally and with external partners to ensure the Authority is best placed to move this agenda forward in a positive and co-ordinated way. EDI is updated and discussed regularly at the Joint Consultation Forum.</p> <p>We have set up an EDI Advisory Group chaired by the Director of People and Organisational Development and attended by Councillor Steven Lambert, Lead Member for People and Equality and Diversity. The group's terms of reference include supporting the</p>

	<p>Authority to strive for future improvements in EDI and developing networks to enable the sharing of best practice.</p> <p>The relevant workforce equality data at Annex B is to be published on the external website in line with the PSED.</p> <p>The system of internal control;</p> <p>Monitoring arrangements will include a six monthly update to the Performance Management Board and annually to the Strategic Management Board and Fire Authority.</p> <p>The medium term financial strategy;</p> <p>It is intended that the achievement of the objectives for 2016/20 can be met within the existing budget.</p> <p>The balance between spending and resources;</p> <p>There are no cost implications of this report. The Authority’s philosophy is to embed EDI in everything we do internally and externally and to work in partnership to ensure a consistent approach to delivering equality and diversity, where possible reducing and sharing the cost of activities. Much of the work described in this update involves other public service providers, the voluntary and community sector and the communities themselves.</p> <p>The arrangements to promote and ensure probity and propriety;</p> <p>This report promotes Equality and Diversity and is intended to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty.</p> <p>This report fulfils the Authority’s legislative requirements under the Equality Act (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 and complements the Authority’s strategic objectives.</p>
<p>PROVENANCE SECTION & BACKGROUND PAPERS</p>	<p>Background</p> <p>Paper to Fire Authority 8 June 2016 - Equality and Diversity Objectives 2016-20, Public Sector Equality Duty and Review of 2012-16 Objectives: http://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/3614/9563/2194/small_FIRE_AUTHORITY_AGENDA_AND_REPORTS_7_JUNE_2017.pdf</p> <p>Paper to Executive Committee 3 February 2016 - The Authority’s People Strategy 2016 to 2020. Optimising the contribution and well-being of our people: http://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/3614/5528/0478/ITEM_8_People_Strategy_Executive_paper_final_Appendices.compressed.pdf</p> <p>The Equality Act 2010</p> <p>“Equality information and the equality duty: A guide for public authorities”(ECHR, Revised (second)</p>

	<p>edition, 19 December 2011): http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/documents/EqualityAct/PSED/ehrc_psed_equality_information_web.pdf</p> <p>Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework: https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/fire-and-rescue-services--50b.pdf</p> <p>Equality and Human Rights Commission Guidance; Equality information and the equality duty: A guide for public authorities: http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/documents/EqualityAct/PSED/ehrc_psed_equality_information_web.pdf</p> <p>Office of national statistics Integrated Household Survey: http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/integrated-household-survey/integrated-household-survey/january-to-december-2012/stb-integrated-household-survey-january-to-december-2012.html#tab-Sexual-identity</p> <p>Gender Identity Research and Education Society: http://www.gires.org.uk/prevalence.php</p>
APPENDICES	<p>Annex A – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Objectives 2016-20, Review of Year 1 progress. Annex B - Equality monitoring data – charts.</p>
TIME REQUIRED	10 Minutes.
REPORT ORIGINATOR AND CONTACT	<p>Mark Ridder, Employee Relations and Engagement Manager mridders@bucksfire.gov.uk 01296 744634</p>