

**Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority
Equality & Diversity Objectives 2016-2020**

OBJECTIVE 1: We aim to be an employer of choice, attracting, recruiting, retaining and developing staff from diverse backgrounds, to reflect the communities we serve

Equality Framework for Fire & Rescue Services (Revised 2017) Priority Area	Equality Framework for Fire & Rescue Services (Revised 2017) Element:	2017/2018 Update
Recruitment, Training and Selection for Progression/Promotion	17 Recruiting, Retaining and Employing a Diverse Workforce	<p>Officers actively look to improve networks in the community to increase awareness of the diversity needs of the communities we serve.</p> <p>Recruitment Plan created with a particular priority to attract and retain a diverse workforce by encouraging and actively promoting employment applications from all groups in the community and, in particular, Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) and females.</p> <p>Apprentice Recruitment - structured approach to apprentice recruitment with the aim of attracting a diverse pool of applicants.</p> <p>The Authority’s innovative apprenticeship programme provides an excellent opportunity to improve the diversity make-up of the Authority. Targeted “have a go” days were organised for female and ethnic minority applicants and further dates are being organised.</p> <p>Following our first apprenticeship recruitment where it proved difficult to attract females, we seconded an operational female firefighter into the role of Resourcing Officer. She maintained personal contact with females throughout the attraction & recruitment process, offering advice and providing training tips to help with the physical tests. Albeit a small</p>

		<p>group, 25 per cent of the apprentices recruited in Cohort 2 were female, compared to the previous year's 9 per cent.</p> <p>E-Recruitment portal implemented to ensure a modern recruitment process and to allow easier access to information about the Service, the roles available, and a modern candidate experience. This reduces time, and is efficient and cost effective.</p> <p>"A day in the life of a firefighter" video created.</p> <p>Additional target-specific videos are being scoped and created.</p> <p>Recruitment information area is on intranet/People Strategy.</p> <p>Application sifting introduced where information on protected characteristics is removed, and a range of stakeholders have a hand in selecting candidates.</p> <p>Comprehensive recruitment and selections policies in place.</p>
	<p>18 Recruitment and Selection Processes</p>	<p>Impact Assessments Training/Workshops/Education and a programme to enhance managers' capabilities and confidence in working across diversity and progressing equalities in the workplace was undertaken, including anti-discrimination legislation and the Authority's role as a provider of high quality services, and being an employer of choice.</p> <p>Unconscious bias training undertaken for the leadership group and HR in order to improve self-awareness and an understanding of how experience shapes thought and personality. HR staff have undertaken interview training, which includes unconscious bias.</p> <p>Inclusive leadership workshop for SMB held in Q3 2017/18, and scheduled to roll out throughout the Service from 2019.</p>

	<p>19 Organisational and individual learning and development</p>	<p>EDI online training in place. This is mandatory at induction and repeated regularly by all employees.</p> <p>Managers are trained in people management, including skills such as how to have difficult conversations, to ensure they all recognise their responsibilities in promoting an inclusive culture.</p> <p>All employees have an annual appraisal, where their commitment to EDI is an essential element. Quality assurance of appraisal returns is undertaken to identify themes, and to assist with business training requirements.</p> <p>77 per cent of employees had recorded appraisals in 2017/2018, against 63 percent in 2016/2017. This is a significant year on year improvement. New employees who follow a probationary period are not included for the full year and apprenticeships and are tracked separately. Management information is provided and we continuously aim for 100 per cent completion. When the new electronic appraisal system is introduced during 2019, new employees and apprenticeships will be incorporated into the statistics.</p> <p>Performance management training in appropriate procedures and best practice in discipline, anti-bullying and harassment, grievance and capability for new managers, and those that missed last year's sessions.</p> <p>There is training for Diversity Champions so they are empowered to challenge the Authority to strive for future improvements in EDI.</p>
	<p>20 Retention and Progression within the organisation</p>	<p>In November 2016 and February 2017, the Senior Management Team approved the pilot Aspiring Leaders Pathway (ALP). The pilot ALP was designed to deliver the first development centre-type process open to all staff.</p> <p>There was a notable success following the ALP in terms of the number of female staff members (both operational and non-operational) which attended and who were successful.</p>

		<p>2017/18 saw the first year since 2010 that female operational firefighters attended a promotion process and were successful in entering the development pool and securing a supervisory manager position.</p> <p>Promotion processes are open, fair and transparent and are applied consistently. They are clearly explained to all employees, and are underpinned by a fair and transparent policy which sets out clearly the criteria by which such opportunities will be offered.</p> <p>Support networks and meaningful mentor/coaching programmes will continue to be provided. Leadership training, opportunities for development such as job swaps, taster weeks and acting-up/temporary promotion will be available.</p> <p>Staff know the selection, promotion process is fair, and that this is reflected in the diversity of staff represented at all levels of the organisation.</p> <p>Leadership training, opportunities for development such as job shadowing and acting-up/temporary promotion (so that an individual can experience the different role) are in place. These are in line with fair and transparent policies which set out clearly the criteria by which such opportunities are offered.</p>
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OBJECTIVE 2: We will provide a more diverse range of service to better protect the communities we serve

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Effective service delivery	5 Responsive and Accessible Services	<p>Year on year the delivery of Home Fire Risk Checks (HFRC) has enabled the Service to improve the fire safety of thousands of households.</p> <p>The risk-modelling sitting behind the Safe and Well system is looking at targeting people through a combination of demographic factors combined with screening for age, health and wellbeing factors.</p> <p>New collaborations are looking at focused partnerships which target the most vulnerable e.g. beginning to work with a number of agencies under the auspices of the HIU (High Intensity User) group aimed to reduce demand on emergency services and the NHS across the county.</p> <p>Strengthening partnership working with safeguarding boards to build awareness of emerging issues, especially self-neglect. Elements have included presenting at Oculus Gateway during a recent SAR learning outcome event, and working with the Chief Executive of MKC to plan a rapid response review in October 2018 to improve public awareness and establish self-neglect indicators. This will then be used by the Board to inform an agreed and consistent strategy, which all partners can use more effectively to improve public safety.</p> <p>Preparations for a multi-agency flood fair in Marlow in October with the Environment Agency, Thames Water, BCC Resilience Forum, etc., to increase local awareness and preparedness in the event of future flooding events. This will target in particular how those</p>

Annex B EDI Objectives Year 2 Progress compared against the Equality Framework for Fire & Rescue Services (Revised 2017)

		<p>who are older or less mobile would be identified and supported in their preparations in the event of a flood warning.</p> <p>Working with partners to target current and emerging risks based on a multi-agency approach e.g. educating secondary school staff about dealing with acid attacks following recent high profile recent events.</p> <p>Targeting youth engagement work on those most in need. Running evaluated programmes in conjunction with schools and Local Authority partners.</p> <p>Working in partnership with the NHS to provide venues for blood donations from members of the public. Using BFRS premises saves the NHS funds to hire rooms and gives the fire service access to members of the public to offer them fire safety advice.</p>
	<p>6 Commissioning and Procuring Services, Facilities or Estates</p>	<p>Equality and Inclusivity is an assessment criteria as part of the procurement exercise. EDI is fully embedded throughout the procurement cycle.</p> <p>The following is stated in our Purchase Order Terms and Conditions for all goods and services procured by BFRS and in our contract terms with contracted suppliers.</p> <p>“BFRS require all suppliers at all times to comply with all equal opportunities legislation and not discriminate against any person unlawfully. In particular, the Supplier shall comply in full with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and all amending or succeeding legislation or regulation. The Supplier shall co-operate with any investigation or proceedings concerning alleged contravention of any anti-discrimination legislation in performing the contract and shall impose the same obligations on any sub-supplier.”</p>
<p>Community knowledge and engagement</p>	<p>7 Collecting, Analysing and Using Information</p>	<p>We use data to identify the groups that are most at risk, recognising trends against local and national statistics, to pinpoint areas to address through targeted engagement.</p>

Annex B EDI Objectives Year 2 Progress compared against the Equality Framework for Fire & Rescue Services (Revised 2017)

		Business and Systems Integration (BASI), is developing a new Premises Risk Management System (PRMS) which will enable the Service to store all relevant information on all premises in one place, making trend analysis and data sharing much more straight-forward.
	8 Engagement with communities	Focus is on building a safer and more resilient community, protecting people and places from harm, targeting the hardest to reach and most vulnerable members of our community.
	9 Customer/Public Satisfaction	<p>By making every contact count, the Service is ensuring that home visits and general prevention activities improve quality of life outcomes for all members of society, and leads to a reduced demand on services.</p> <p>Further work is required to identify and better understand the needs of marginalised and under-represented members of our communities; we are committed to achieving this over the next twelve months.</p>

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OBJECTIVE 3: Our employment offer will be inclusive and embrace flexibility to support improved diversity representation across the service.

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Employment, Health and Wellbeing	10 Workforce Strategies and Policies	<p>The People and Organisational Development (P&OD) Directorate uses the NJC improvement strategies, EDI Strategy and the Recruitment Plan to design, update and support the People Strategy.</p> <p>The Anti-Bullying and Harassment, Whistleblowing, and Code of Conduct procedures have been reviewed and staff consultation on the latter is underway.</p> <p>Policies are promoted through site displays and a range of communication methods, including core briefs and the I Drive. Training sessions for line managers are promoted regularly when new policy or significant changes are introduced.</p> <p>Guidance has been written on disability related absence.</p>
	11 Workforce Monitoring	<p>Improvement in workforce profile statistics relating to the protected characteristics has continued this year.</p> <p>Annual Reports to the Fire Authority include workforce profiling with community demographics. Please see Appendix 1.</p>

Annex B EDI Objectives Year 2 Progress compared against the Equality Framework for Fire & Rescue Services (Revised 2017)

		<p>We continue to develop and improve monitoring systems to identify workforce protected characteristics, following the implementation of employee self-service and the introduction of the HR Information System in April 2017 as part of the BASI project.</p> <p>We monitor cases relating to the discipline, dignity at work and grievance procedures to ensure the full abilities and attributes of all employees are recognised based on their competence, and to ensure our preventative measures regarding discrimination and inequality remain fit for purpose.</p> <p>Exit interview processes are under review, to ensure that any EDI themes are identified and actioned.</p> <p>The gender pay gap was published in March 2018. Action plans are being progressed to work on reducing the gap, and are subject to separate reporting mechanisms.</p>
	<p>12 Workforce Values and Behaviours</p>	<p>The cultural survey included questions around EDI, values and behaviours. Staff were asked specifically to look at the perceptions, to see if there were any gaps, and to help with action plans for the future. The action plans for the SMB and each department are well advanced for presentation at the 29 October 2018 Leadership and Management Forum.</p> <p>Employee engagement initiatives continue to evolve. These include the strategic review of resourcing, Chief Fire Officer Birthday forums, leadership events, shadowing opportunities and working groups.</p>
	<p>13 Staff Engagement and Communication</p>	<p>The National Inclusive Fire Service Group has identified actions and outcomes for individual fire service focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural survey outcomes • Various engagement initiatives outcomes

Annex B EDI Objectives Year 2 Progress compared against the Equality Framework for Fire & Rescue Services (Revised 2017)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity Champions identified and an EDI Advisory Group set up, with associated structures. <p>The internal voluntary EDI Advisory Group and Working Group meet regularly to seek ways of promoting EDI awareness, and to assist with progressing initiatives across the service.</p> <p>Continuous equalities communications were published on the I drive, e.g., 'How to raise a concern at work' reminder.</p> <p>We continue to embed the Authority's Vision and Values through induction, policies and the way we work. Diversity is one of the values.</p> <p>Joint Consultative Forum (JCF) – minutes and actions are recorded and circulated. EDI is a standing agenda item on the agenda.</p>
	<p>14 Performance Management</p>	<p>The Authority's policies and procedures make it clear that discrimination is unacceptable and must be eliminated. No areas have been identified as a concern through monitoring. If they were to be in the future, measures would be put in place to deal with them.</p> <p>Regular and ad hoc line manager performance management training is carried out.</p> <p>A six monthly case management report is reviewed at the Performance Management Board.</p>
	<p>15 Health and Well being</p>	<p>A cross directorate Well-being Group was set up in partnership with the representative bodies. The group uses a nationally recognised benchmarking tool designed by the College of Policing called Oscar Kilo to identifying areas of improvement in well-being initiatives.</p> <p>The group meets regularly and is working on various work streams such as Mental Health First Aiders, Critical Incident Stress Debrief, and Mind Blue Light Training.</p>

Annex B EDI Objectives Year 2 Progress compared against the Equality Framework for Fire & Rescue Services (Revised 2017)

		<p>The Employee Assistance Provision (EAP) is promoted online, via posters and leaflets, and via the managers and the HR team. This provision is available 24/7.</p> <p>Mental Health Awareness posters are displayed, leaflets are available at fire stations, and information is on the intranet.</p> <p>Our policies and procedures support employees with responsibilities for both children and elderly parents with increased flexible working arrangements.</p> <p>The employee proposition is being reviewed continuously, and a range of contracts used to support employees work more flexibly.</p>
	<p>16 Equal Pay and Job Segregation</p>	<p>An equal pay audit was carried out in 2014, and the Service is in the process of planning another audit for 2019, in line with best practice.</p> <p>The results of the gender pay gap reporting for the Service as at 31 March 2017 found a gender pay gap of 19%. The Service's aim is to prioritise ways to lower the gender pay gap to below the national UK gender pay gap of 18% and to reduce it further.</p> <p>A priority for the Service is attracting and retaining a more diverse workforce.</p>

OBJECTIVE 4: Our culture will engage and value diversity and difference to enhance our service offering to the public

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Leadership, partnership and organisational commitment	1 Vision and Commitment	<p>Our vision and values are reinforced through the Corporate Plan, and through all the work that is carried out. Diversity is one of the values – “we value diversity in our service and in the community”. Our values are accessible on the intranet, message boards, in our induction programme, and as part of appraisals.</p> <p>Employees are aware of, and understand, the relevant policies. This was confirmed as part of the culture survey.</p> <p>Discipline and grievance procedures are monitored in order to identify and correct any problematic trends. This includes an element of monitoring at the informal level in order to pick up and resolve issues at an early stage.</p> <p>The latest culture survey was carried out in late 2017. Vision and values were key to it. Action plans are currently being developed by managers with their teams, and will be discussed and agreed at the next leadership event on 29 October 2018. The SMB action plan includes promotion of the values and role modelling leadership behaviours.</p>
	2 Accountability	<p>Annual EDI reports go to SMB and the Fire Authority</p> <p>All employees are educated on EDI awareness as part of induction. It is everyone’s responsibility to ensure they consider EDI in their everyday work and that they behave in the manner expected.</p>

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		<p>In late March 2018, the gender pay gap was published in line with the reporting requirements of the Mandatory Gender Pay Gap Reporting for the public sector. Action plans have been written.</p>
	<p>3 Organisational Commitment</p>	<p>EDI objectives are in everyone’s appraisals throughout the organisation. The EDI objectives are monitored, and appraisals are monitored on a six monthly basis at the Performance Management Board.</p> <p>All corporate policies are written with EDI in mind, and impact assessments carried out on them</p> <p>EDI is a standing item on the Joint Consultative Forum. Minutes are taken and actions allocated and tracked</p>
	<p>4 Partnerships</p>	<p>The Authority endorsed the submission of a pledge, and were the first Fire and Rescue Service to be accepted by the Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network (ADCN) in February 2018.</p> <p>Managers attend a variety of external events, where membership includes diverse groups, encompassing both the public and private sectors, charitable groups and service end users, e.g., Asian Fire Service Association, NFCC EDI Professionals Group, and the Thames Valley collaboration group.</p>