

Appendix 1 – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The Service is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI). There are a range of workstreams across the Service to achieve our EDI objectives. These objectives were reviewed, updated and approved at the June 2022 Fire Authority meeting.

Change 100 Internship

The Service made progress through the preparation, engagement and selection process. The Service was unable to progress internships this year as applicants expressed a desire to work remotely. As a result, the role was unfilled; a similar situation was encountered by other Fire Services. Following a review of this process, it was agreed to broaden the Service's approach and investigate introducing work experience opportunities in 2023. The Service continues to maintain contact with the provider to enable future collaboration regarding internship opportunities in 2023.

EDI Champions training

EDI group members attended a face-to-face training session on 5 October 2022. This provided EDI information, legislation and best practice to ensure they are confident and consistent in their promotion of EDI matters. Effectively role-modelling the expected behaviours and cascading EDI information and behaviours to employees and in the community.

Equality impact Assessments

The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) guidance note and template have been reviewed. Significant work has been undertaken to consult with employees through Intranet articles, presentations, 1:1 support, drop-in sessions and group training workshops. The Service has committed to embedding EIA's into all areas of the Service. As part of organisational governance, reports must be supported by an EIA. Good practice is shared by communicating and storing completed EIA's in a single location, allowing authors to view examples of completed documents.

Individual training toolkits

A training toolkit was completed and distributed for hidden disabilities. The toolkit has been promoted internally through intranet articles, videos and signposted employees towards the hidden disabilities' website. The Service is a supporter of the Sunflower scheme, a stock of lanyards is held within the Service and are made available to Service employees as well as being distributed at community engagement events.

A training toolkit for sign language was published in September 2022. BSL999 and emergency SMS pages have been drafted for the Safety Hub area of the website to go in the "accessible services" area.

Create interest groups

The primary focus is on establishing a women's network; links are being created with existing employees to understand their objectives and gauge levels of interest.

EDI calendar

There is an established EDI calendar which enables the Service to share information about EDI dates and events via our "Valuing Our Diversity" section of the Intranet.

They signpost employees to linked Service activities such as Islamic calendar events or Pride, providing employees with the opportunity to support the planning process and/or to attend and support.

The EDI calendar is reviewed on a monthly basis as part of the EDI meeting. This includes reviewing articles to identify good practice and the areas where engagement has been most effective by reviewing interaction data.

Community engagement to increase the diversity of the Service

The Service delivers a range of positive action events to support recruitment and community engagement activities. There have been targeted On-Call familiarisation events, "have a go" days and public engagement sessions to promote both Wholetime and On-Call vacancies within the Service.

Careers events are supported by the Service's recruitment team; this is supplemented by other opportunities including stands at the Bucks County Show, National Apprenticeship Show and Fire Station open days.



The Service's current focus, as approved at SMT level, is to engage further with the South Asian community over the next twelve months. The objective is to advance our presence in the community and promoting careers opportunities in the Fire & Rescue Service. The Chief Fire Officer attended a local school and Islamic group as part of our engagement plan, the Service subsequently attended the "Eid in the Park" event in July 2022. This was a significant success promoting community engagement, gathering data about what may affect someone's interest in applying to work for the Service. These activities, alongside local school visits and further follow up activities at local mosques, should help to further raise our profile within the community. A range of Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA) events are attended by the EDI group and learning, and resources are shared with employees across the service.

The Service continues to support the LGBTQ+ community and planned to attend the Milton Keynes Pride Festival in September 2022 with an estimated attendance of 20,000 people. Unfortunately, due to the Death of HRH Elizabeth II the Service were unable to participate in the event. Employees support and attend other Pride events in the region and the Service has invested in promotional materials to ensure we are visible and can engage effectively at events.

A positive action work group has been established. This group meets monthly to review the action taking place and look to improve the work our employees do in the community. Work is on-going to develop a library of EDI storyboards, enabling our employees to display the Service's history and current role in promoting EDI.



Employers Network for equality and inclusion (ENEI) Talent Inclusion and Diversity Evaluation (TIDE)

The Service was previously awarded bronze accreditation in 2020 and 2021. The ENEI TIDE survey was completed by the Head of Human Resources following collaboration with the EDI group. The results of this submission are expected in October 2022, where the Service is targeting a silver award.

Addressing Inequalities Five Shires collaboration

The Service is member of the Fire Shires collaborative group and are actively involved in monthly meetings. This allows the sharing of good practice, idea generation and communicating information, such as EDI data. Examples of this include sharing presentations to support Unconscious Bias training, EIA documentation, recruitment information and collaboration in workforce planning.

Focus on ensuring current employees have what they need to carry out their role effectively

There are range of opportunities to support EDI for existing employees. Work is on-going to make improvements in the following areas.

Premises – A review of premises facilities has been completed with the objective of developing facilities available to support employee's needs. Examples of this include reviewing rest facilities, washing and changing facilities. This project is managed by the facilities team but there is an expectation that the EDI group will be consulted regarding planned works and improvements.

Uniform – A lead for uniform within the Service has been established. The Services Culture Survey raised a range of concerns with the Services existing stock, this has been updated through the national uniform procurement contract. A uniform working group has been established to ensure the existing and future provision is suitable and appropriate for all uniformed employees. This project is managed by the Group Commander Technical role but there is an expectation that the EDI group will be consulted regarding any changes to uniform provision.

Operational – Welfare at incidents has been reviewed with a wider range of meal packs provided on Appliances to support dietary and religious requirements. Informal meetings have been held with female Firefighters regarding access to sanitary products in the workplace and whilst at operational incidents. Work has also been carried out to highlight the availability of the Oxfordshire Fire Service welfare unit at operational incidents, to ensure it is utilised as normal practice. This was added to a recent Operational Assurance newsletter to promote general awareness, further opportunities to support our employees at operational incidents will continue to be explored and raised as appropriate.