

Inclusive Fire Service Group

Improvement strategies: tables for completion

Some services have asked if there is a preferred format of return in respect of the Improvement Strategies document circulated to Chairs and CFOs on 5th June, with responses due by 28th July.

Therefore, in order to assist, we have developed the approach below, which you may wish to use. Please note, the text boxes will expand to accommodate your answers.

General

The Inclusive Fire Service Group set out a number of general points at the start of its report.

- (i) Inclusivity should be embedded in every aspect of the fire and rescue service
- (ii) There is a need for visible senior ownership and leadership - to lead by example and to ensure that local strategies and initiatives become reality on the ground, thereby embedding inclusion as the norm. Within a service this should be at chief officer level. Within a fire authority a specific member of the authority should hold the portfolio.
- (iii) Union involvement should be recognised as an important factor in delivering improvement, particularly in respect of peer to peer involvement.
- (iv) Fire and Rescue Services should ensure the workplace is fit for purpose for all groups of employees including correct Personal Protective Equipment and gender specific station and fireground facilities.

	Please indicate if this will be taken forward. If yes, how and by when
(i) Embedding inclusivity in every aspect of the fire and rescue service	<p>Yes, as per the text below some aspects are already in place, with others already in progress and for completion in 2017/18.</p> <p>This commitment will be highlighted in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (ED&I) strategy/plan which is being reviewed in line with the Workforce Development (WFD) Strategy and IFSG recommendations.</p> <p>A module on inclusivity will be developed as part of the leadership programme.</p> <p>ED&I learn pro module mandatory for all staff to complete once every 2 years. Additional mandatory ED&I learn pro module specific for line managers to complete once every 2 years.</p> <p>Consideration will be given on what needs to be delivered and by what means at induction/onboarding for new employees.</p> <p>Needs to form part of the initial recruitment process, ensuring we measure behaviours around inclusivity at an early stage.</p>

	Equality analysis is undertaken on all service documentation to ensure inclusivity of all groups.
	Please indicate the management and authority leads Chief Fire Officer, who is a member of the IFSG and CFA have overall ownership with the strategic responsibility discharged through a member of the Service Leadership Team and CFA Member Champion.
(ii) Senior ownership and leadership	Endorsement of the ED&I strategy/plan by the CFO and Combined Fire Authority (CFA) member champion. ED&I working group is led by a strategic manager with a CFA member champion. ED&I is a standard agenda item on the Service Leadership Team (SLT) meeting. Messages are regularly delivered regarding ED&I issues via the monthly communications brief. Unconscious bias and emotional intelligence training is programmed to be delivered to SLT by an external consultant. A workshop for SLT is being developed focussing on values, behaviours, impacts, perceptions and language.
	Please indicate if this will be taken forward. If yes, how and by when Yes, as per the text below some aspects are already in place, with others already in progress and for completion in 2017/18.
(iii) Union involvement	Rep bodies presence on ED&I group. Dyslexia training delivered in conjunction with FBU learning. Rep bodies formal meetings with SLT and ad-hoc meetings as necessary. FBU catch up meetings with CFO. Rep bodies consultation on service policy and procedures. Need to explore further opportunities for training via FBU lifelong learning around inclusivity issues (mental health, ED&I awareness, sign language).
	Please indicate if this will be taken forward. If yes, by when and what improvements do you expect to see within your timeframe
(iv) Fit for purpose workplace	Yes, as per the text below, these aspects are already in place.

	<p>In CDDFRS, all buildings are fitted with male and female toilet facilities. Shower facilities in some are unisex however, separate cubicles are in place. All new premises are provided with accessible facilities, all premises renovated are provided with accessible facilities.</p> <p>Gender specific uniform and PPE is provided, a maternity wear provision is also provided.</p> <p>Welfare vehicle and welfare packs are available for use on the incident ground.</p>
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A number of specific recommendations were included in the document and are listed below. In each case you are asked to indicate whether you will be acting upon the recommendation and, if so, within what timescale, the improvement you expect to see and by when.

Promoting an inclusive culture

(i) Fire and Rescue Services should ensure that all managers are trained in people management including skills such as how to have difficult conversations and that all managers recognise their responsibilities in promoting an inclusive culture.

(ii) Senior managers should lead by positive example. They should challenge bullying and harassment behaviours at every level, ensuring where necessary that management styles change in order to drive a different and improved culture

(iii) Fire and Rescue Services should promote a culture where challenge is accepted and welcomed as a positive contribution. This should be in both directions.

(iv) Fire and Rescue Services should ensure that all employees are aware of, and understand, the relevant policies. Where an incident is reported and found to be accurate it is important that action is taken and is seen to be taken as a result. Everyone needs to be confident in the process.

(v) Fire and Rescue Services should monitor the use of discipline and grievance procedures in order to identify and correct any problematic trends. This should also include an element of monitoring at the informal level in order to pick up issues at an early stage.

(vi) Fire and Rescue Services should consider the creation of trained Equality and Diversity champions. These are voluntary roles based on enthusiasm and commitment and irrespective of seniority. Champions play a central role in actively supporting the mainstreaming of equality and diversity initiatives and disseminating equality and diversity good practice, whilst also supporting the strategic development of initiatives to create an inclusive culture. Consideration should also be given to the role Allies can play. In relation to LGBT for example, 'allies' is a term used to describe heterosexual people who believe that lesbian, gay and bisexual people should experience full equality in the workplace and use their role within the organisation to create a culture that is inclusive of everyone.

(vii) Fire and Rescue Services should also consider the creation of mediators (and may wish to consider whether they should be provided externally as well as internally).

	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vii)	(vii)
Will be taken forward (Y/N)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
If taking this area forward, please indicate the timescale within which you expect to do so.	In progress for completion in 2018/19	In progress for completion in 2017/18	In progress for completion in 2017/18	In progress for completion in 2018/19	In progress for completion in 2017/18	In progress for completion in 2017/18	Complete
<p>Please indicate the improvement you expect will result and by when.</p> <p><i>A cultural survey was conducted in conjunction Durham University in 2016. Improvements in sections i - vii will be measured via a further cultural survey to be delivered in 2018/19.</i></p>	<p>Included in the WFD strategy to develop an inclusive culture, this training will be delivered to all managers across the service within the next 12 months and will form part of the wider leadership programme for future management training.</p>	<p>Introduction of service values and the behavioural framework which communicates the way the service expects its employees to conduct themselves at work.</p> <p>Introduction of meeting the CFO or DFCCO as part of induction programme for all new employees – set standards from start.</p>	<p>Measured via the cultural survey via ‘voice behaviour’, ‘silence motives’ ‘positive culture’ and ‘making improvements’ measures. Positive results were achieved in these areas however we will strive for continuous improvement.</p> <p>Development of a ‘you said we listened’ scheme – to be communicated via the service</p>	<p>Procedural justice (fairness) scored average in the cultural survey which could suggest confidence in this process is low, this is an area of focus for improvement.</p> <p>A review of policies and procedures is being undertaken with changes already actioned, e.g. Driving Standards Panel and drug and</p>	<p>We currently monitor all formal Employee Relations cases. This will be widened to informal cases via meetings between the Human Resources Business Partners and line managers to identify any problematic trends or issues.</p> <p>HR have added additional space on</p>	<p>ED&I group is inclusive of a CFA member champion.</p> <p>Currently have Dignity at Work Advisors in place which will include an SLT champion.</p> <p>Review of the ED&I membership undertaken to ensure those attending are actively interested and engaged in the work streams and act as champions.</p>	<p>The service has a small number of trained mediators.</p> <p>Access to external mediators where required can be sought from DCC / ACAS.</p>

		<p>Values and behaviours utilised as the measurement framework in appraisal process.</p>	<p>information bulletin.</p> <p>SLT station visits undertaken twice per year to communicate and seek feedback on service strategy and key work streams.</p> <p>Delivery of middle manager and supervisory manager workshops to provide clarity and importance of role.</p>	<p>alcohol testing to promote clarity and fairness.</p> <p>Have delivered bullying, harassment and victimisation workshop to all watches, this is to be reviewed and redelivered.</p> <p>Trainees and apprentices have received this workshop however, this needs to form part of the wider induction process.</p> <p>Consideration needs to be given to a wider measure for this regarding confidence in the process, use the cultural survey?</p>	<p>register to monitor diversity information.</p>	<p>ED&I group members to be given additional training up to a level 4 qualification to enhance knowledge and understanding to enhance credibility.</p> <p>Allies training undertaken by LGBT champion of ED&I group, consider completion by all ED&I members to enhance knowledge and credibility.</p>	
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Recruitment

(i) There should be a national media campaign covering the full range of the modern firefighter role (similar to the current Army campaign) and what the fire service does in order to inform perception. It should be supported by a website which would also include information on recruitment and potentially divert the interested person to their 'home' fire and rescue service; include information on selection (based on national guidance, not prescription) recognising that the skill set needs to be wider than operational ie people skills, and provide information on fitness requirements. This suggestion was seen, by far, as the most influential way to alter perceptions and improve diversity. It would be useful in terms of recruitment and retention. Recruitment because it would dispel the myth that the job is just about fighting fires and retention to avoid the job not living up to expectations. Note: This recommendation is included here for completeness. However it is recognised that this is something to largely be progressed on a national level initially. Therefore the questions under (i) below have been amended accordingly.

(ii) Fire and Rescue Services should explore, and where appropriate utilise, recruitment opportunities such as apprenticeships and cadets in order to increase diversity in the workforce.

(iii) Fire and Rescue Services should undertake greater and early engagement with specific communities/schools/colleges and not just when recruitment is on the horizon. This would further reinforce understanding of the role as it is today. This should utilise employee role models whilst being careful to maintain a balance with their core work.

(iv) Fire and Rescue Services should ensure they have visible family friendly working policies supported by a greater use of flexible working arrangements.

(v) Fire and Rescue Services should develop an internal communications strategy to explain the difference between positive action and positive discrimination in order to counteract the view of some that an individual has only been employed/promoted because they are female/BME/LGBT. This would be supportive to such individuals and also be helpful in terms of encouraging progression.

(vi) Fire and Rescue Services should consider commissioning work in their own areas to identify any obstacles that local communities feel there are to applying to work with the service.

	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
Will be taken forward (Y/N)	Support? Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

If taking this area forward, please indicate the timescale within which you expect to do so.	N/A	In progress for completion in 2018/19	In progress for completion in 2017/18	In progress for completion in 2017/18	In progress for completion in 2017/18	In progress for completion in 2018-19
<p>Please indicate the improvement you expect will result and by when.</p> <p>Improvements in sections ii – vi will be measured via the diversity of applicants and successful candidates in future recruitment and progression campaigns to be held over the period of the current MTFP to 2019/20.</p>	<p>Please indicate just the improvement you would expect to see at local level, if introduced nationally.</p> <p>Increased awareness of the role of a modern firefighter and modern fire and rescue service (FRS) to dispel myths and increase the recruitment and retention appeal to underrepresented groups.</p> <p>Development of a standardised and professional package to aid FRS to drive recruitment.</p>	<p>FF apprenticeship scheme developed, first cohort started in May 17, outcome of recruitment shows an increase in diversity with a 50/50 male/female split. Working in partnership with the NJC to promote and evaluate the scheme.</p> <p>RDS recruitment campaign to commence imminently with significant numbers required, this provides the service with an opportunity to increase the diversity of the workforce.</p>	<p>ED&I strategy/plan to outline strategic intent for positive action.</p> <p>A positive action plan is being developed in anticipation for next WT recruitment process in 2018, however will continue beyond this to maintain a continuous focus and encourage applicants to the 'on call' duty system. This work will be conducted with our regional partners.</p> <p>Business ambassador scheme in development to enable wider engagement with</p>	<p>The service has several work-life balance procedures in place which provide flexible working options such as job share, other leave, flexible working, enhanced maternity/paternity / adoption and shared parental leave, career break, flexible retirement and union leave.</p> <p>The service is supporting the 'dying to work' campaign and developing a 'carers leave' procedure.</p>	<p>This will be developed as part of the unconscious bias training to be delivered to all staff.</p>	<p>Work undertaken with students from Teesside University to identify obstacles to a career within the FRS, report received with recommendations.</p> <p>To be considered as a dissertation project for a degree student.</p>

		<p>YFA / cadet scheme has both male/female members.</p> <p>However, positive action to increase BME in addition to female representation will continue.</p> <p>Career paths to be identified for YFA / cadets into roles across the full service.</p> <p>Apprenticeship & Recruitment Co-ordinator is to attend careers events (designing supporting materials).</p> <p>Employability and interview technique sessions to be delivered to those at school leaver stage. Work experience week to be arranged twice per year.</p>	<p>schools and colleges regarding roles within the FRS.</p> <p>Role profiles to be developed and advertised on our website of personnel from underrepresented groups.</p>			
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Progression

(i) Fire and Rescue Services should ensure that promotion processes which are fair and transparent are applied consistently and clearly explained to all employees.

(ii) Fire and Rescue Services should develop support networks and meaningful mentor/coaching programmes. (Note - mentors/coaches do not need to come from the particular group eg a BME mentor for a BME crew manager).

(iii) Fire and Rescue Services should encourage interest in promotion in general and through talent spotting by including leadership training, opportunities for development such as job swaps, taster weeks and acting-up/temporary promotion (so that an individual can experience the different role). This should be underpinned by a fair and transparent policy which sets out clearly the criteria by which such opportunities will be offered.

(iv) Fire and Rescue Services should explore the greater use of flexible working arrangements which may also assist with improving e.g. the bottle neck at Station Manager level given the extent of on-call commitment which for some may conflict with caring responsibilities.

	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)
Will be taken forward (Y/N)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
If taking this area forward, please indicate the timescale within which you expect to do so.	In progress for completion in 2018/19	In progress for completion in 2017/18	In progress for completion in 2017/18	In progress for completion in 2017/18
Please indicate the improvement you expect will result and by when. Improvements in sections i – iv will be measured via the cultural survey to be delivered in 2018/19.	Review of promotion process in place. Introduction of IFE examinations will add an element of transparency and ownership to the process.	Mentoring programme in development. Framework and templates being developed for use. Training delivered to a group of cross service volunteers. All apprentices now being	Job shadowing in place and open to all staff, this can either be within the service or external with the Police. Career progression model being developed covering both vertical and lateral	The service is supporting the 'dying to work' campaign and developing a 'carers leave' procedure.

		<p>mentored. Offer to be extended to trainees once initial training is complete.</p> <p>Consideration is being given for this to be included in the revised leadership programme either through a qualification or other means.</p> <p>Mentoring will be encouraged through the through all revised career progression procedures.</p>	<p>development and opportunities to broaden the skills base.</p> <p>Secondment procedures under review. Looking to offer secondments into other FRS within our region, HR secondment already in place.</p>	
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Retention

(i) Introduction of a national media campaign as set out under 'recruitment' should ensure that recruits are fully aware of the work of the service and the part they will play in that. Therefore they should not become disappointed or disengaged as they progress in their career. Note: This recommendation is included here for completeness. However it is recognised that this is something to largely be progressed on a national level initially. Therefore the questions under (i) below have been amended accordingly.

(ii) Fire and Rescue Services should ensure that expectations around fitness levels are clearly explained, and support provided, including the potential impact of female only issues such as maternity or the menopause.

(iii) As with recruitment and progression, Fire and Rescue Services should explore greater use of flexible working arrangements

(iv) Where Fire and Rescue Services do not already conduct exit interviews they should now do so. The outcomes from such interviews should be recorded and monitored to ensure early identification of any themes which can then be resolved for the future.

(v) Fire and Rescue Services should consider how best to maintain the interest and commitment of employees through the variety of the work undertaken within the role.

	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)
Will be taken forward (Y/N)	Support? Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

If taking this area forward, please indicate the timescale within which you expect to do so.	N/A	In progress for completion in 2017/18	In progress for completion in 2017/18	In progress for completion in 2017/18	In progress for completion in 2017/18
<p>Please indicate the improvement you expect will result and by when.</p> <p><i>Improvements in sections ii – v will be measured via fitness monitoring and attendance management procedures on an ongoing basis.</i></p>	<p>Please indicate just the improvement you would expect to see at local level, if introduced nationally.</p> <p>Increased awareness of the role of a modern firefighter and modern fire and rescue service (FRS) to dispel myths and increase the recruitment and retention appeal to all groups.</p> <p>Development of a standardised and professional package to aid FRS to drive recruitment.</p>	<p>Fitness policy and procedure embedded within the service with annual fitness testing in place. However, current policy and procedure is being reviewed to incorporate the use of the fire ground fitness test.</p> <p>Health and fitness advisor employed by the service to provide support, development and testing individually for all staff.</p> <p>Gyms provided on all stations, HQ and training centre.</p> <p>Functional fitness equipment purchased to increase the diversity of training available to operational staff.</p>	<p>The service has several work-life balance procedures in place which provide flexible working options such as job share, other leave, flexible working, enhanced maternity / paternity / adoption and shared parental leave, career break, flexible retirement and union leave.</p> <p>The service is supporting the 'dying to work' campaign and developing a 'carers leave' procedure.</p>	<p>Exit procedures in development with HR BPs undertaking independent exit interviews. Data to be collated on smart survey and fed back through Corporate Wellbeing Group.</p> <p>Employees also offered exit discussion with CFO which are recorded with any notable items fed back to Workforce Development.</p>	<p>Career progression model being developed covering both vertical and lateral development and opportunities to broaden the skills base.</p> <p>Job shadowing in place and open to all staff.</p> <p>Recognition and reward procedure in place.</p>

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