

## CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF: PERFORMANCE & OVERVIEW COMMITTEE  
DATE: 05 SEPTEMBER 2018  
REPORT OF: DIRECTOR OF TRANSFORMATION  
AUTHOR: MELANIE HOCKENHULL

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SUBJECT: ANNUAL EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY  
REPORT

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### Purpose of this Report

1. As part of the Service's commitment and compliance with the Equality Act 2010, a report is published on an annual basis which contains comprehensive equality monitoring information – see *Appendix A*. In addition to the information found within the report, this covering report seeks to provide Members with a summary of progress and the key achievements and progress during the year relating to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI).

### Recommended: that

- [1] That Members review the content of the Equality Monitoring Report 2017-2018 and approve for publication.
- [2] That Members note the content of this summary report.

### Background

2. In addition to the production of the annual monitoring report, equality monitoring information is gathered on a quarterly basis both internally in respect of employment practices and externally in relation to community engagement initiatives. This information once analysed is presented to the Equality Steering Group (ESG) for scrutiny and discussion.
3. Where trends are identified whether positive or adverse, appropriate interventions are discussed which can range from further analysis to get a better understanding of the issues, direct action to mitigate any negative impact or the development of initiatives to capitalise on areas of success and/or strength.
4. The end of year monitoring report attached at *Appendix A* was reviewed and discussed at the July meeting of the ESG.

### Summary of Key Achievements, Progress and Results during 2017/18

5. An early decision made during 2017/18 was to retain the EDI portfolio within the newly formed CFRS Transformation team. This was in

preference to keeping it within the scope for transfer to one of the Joint Corporate Service teams within Cheshire Constabulary as part of the blue light collaboration.

6. This decision was underpinned by Service's desire to ensure that the EDI agenda remained a key priority for the Service. It also maintained the profile of EDI and provided direct access to Senior Officers who could ensure the appropriate investment in time and resources. The new Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive has endorsed this and shown personal commitment by assuming the role of chair of the ESG.

### **Key achievements during 2017/18 include:**

- Moving from 8<sup>th</sup> place in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index in 2017 to 4<sup>th</sup> place during 2018. This showcased Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service as the most inclusive UK emergency service in respect of LGBT and also as the top employer in the North West of England.
- Re-accreditation as a Disability Confident Employer.
- Introduction of an exemplary maternity and adoption policy which is currently the best in class across the fire sector.
- Establishment of a positive action working group to ensure a more focused approach to improving the Service's ability to attract a diverse workforce.

Initiatives to promote diversity in recruitment arising out of this group have included attending female specific community events such as Race for Life; visiting local mosques and Gurdwaras; holding taster days on station; creation of video diaries and blogs; and promoting buddying and fitness training opportunities to potential recruits. The recent success of these initiatives will be measured upon conclusion of the 2018/19 wholetime recruitment campaign.

- Delivery of specific training in conjunction with Stonewall on LGBT awareness seminar to Prince's Trust staff and apprentices to improve confidence and support towards LGBT young people.

### **Progress and Analysis – Key Headlines**

7. The Equality Monitoring report is divided into two sections: Internal Employment (including recruitment monitoring) and Service Delivery which covers the monitoring and analysis of external service users who either interact with the service in respect of prevention and protection activities or have been affected by community risks and incidents.

8. In relation to the 2017-2018 Monitoring Report key areas of interest in the two sections include the following.

### Employment

Area	Commentary
Staff Profile	The Service employs 895 staff, the majority of which are white British males, aged between 35 and 44. This trend is similar to that reported in previous years.
Gender Profile	In 2017/18 there was a net increase of 2 female staff in operational roles as a result of the 2017 whole time recruitment campaign in addition to a further 2 female apprentices. Although this did not change the overall % of women across the service in operational roles which remained at 6%, it did provide positive reinforcement and highlight the value of the work around positive action.
Volunteers	There are currently 195 volunteers, the majority of whom are aged between 17 and 24, male and white British. However, during 2017/18 the percentage of female volunteers increased by 7% which is encouraging.
Leavers	There were 52 more leavers in 2017/18 than in 2016/17, with a 6% increase in the number of female leavers and a 3% increase in the number of LGBT leavers. This was impacted by the initial tranches of support staff transferring to Cheshire Constabulary under blue light collaboration.

### Recruitment

Area	Commentary
Green book recruitment (excluding apprentices)	55% of green book applicants were women, most commonly aged 25-35 and 93% white British. Typically green book posts attract female applicants but in this instance there was an increase in the number of LGBT candidates who represented 4.5% of new starters.
Grey book recruitment (excluding on-call and wholetime recruitment)	5% of grey book applicants were women, most commonly aged between 36 and 45 and 93% White British. 1% of applicants identified as LGBT. This category includes operational staff engaged as a result of on call migration and inter brigade transfer processes.
Apprentices	12 apprentices were recruited in 2017/18 in addition to the 11 apprentices that were recruited the year previously. The 2017/18 intake increased the representation of female apprentices to 26%. 16%

	in the second cohort identified as LGBT which was a further increase.
Wholetime	14 candidates were recruited as wholetime firefighters in 2017/18. Of those who were successful, 7% were from a BAME background, 14% were women and 29% identified as LGBT. 7% declared a disability. The LGBT result represented a 5% increase over the previous year's intake.
On call recruitment	19 new on-call firefighters were recruited during 2017/18, with 16% being female, 5% from a BAME background and 5% identifying as LGBT.

## Community Engagement

Area	Commentary
Safe and well delivery	Research shows that personal fire-risk increases with age, thus the majority of Safe and Well Assessments are delivered to residents aged over 65. The makeup of residents receiving a safe and well visit was in line with this targeted risk methodology. Twelve residents (1.3%) identified as trans, suggesting that, based on a national average of 1%, Cheshire has a higher older trans community.
Safe and well resident satisfaction surveys	12% of responders to Safe and Well Resident Satisfaction surveys identified as Hindu, which we anticipate is an error due to the format of the report. Currently the census figures for Cheshire identify only 1% of the population as Hindu. The format of the report is in the process of being addressed to prevent further mistaken entries.
Youth Engagement Activities	There is encouraging diversity within the young people taking part in youth engagement activities. Typically aged between 15 and 17, females represent 33%.
Business premises audits	The number of outcomes following business premises audits against people of Chinese origin has decreased from 2016/17 but by contrast have increased against people of Asian origin (although numbers are small and inspections are predicated on risk, not ethnicity).
Injuries and fatalities as a result of fire	The age of those who have suffered injuries and fatalities as a result of fire was much younger in 2017/18 than 2016/17. Most injuries were suffered by those aged between 17 and 24 and proportionally most serious injuries occurred to those aged between 45 and 54. However, numbers are

	relatively small to make definite conclusions and prevention work will have impacted on the number of injuries to those aged over 65. This trend will be fed into performance reporting.
Injuries and fatalities occurring as a result of accidental fires in the home	Those aged between 45 and 54 suffered the most number of serious injuries and most injuries in general. The numbers are too small to make definite conclusions and prevention work will have impacted on the number of injuries to those aged over 65. This trend will be fed into performance reporting.

## Challenges and ongoing priorities for 2018/19

9. **Recruitment** – There is both a local and a national focus on the need to recruit a more diverse cohort of operational staff. In particular, this is focused on recruiting more women and members of the BAME and LGBT communities into the Fire and Rescue Service. Whilst the Service has invested a significant amount of time into positive action, and has successfully recruited more under-represented groups into the operational roles in recent times, diversifying the workforce remains a key priority for the Service. In 2018/19, the Service intends to put in place a high profile positive action campaign that demonstrates a genuine aspiration to develop a workforce that is reflective of the community it serves i.e. 50/50 in terms of gender.
10. **Staff profile** – The Service is similarly committed to ensuring that it retains a diverse workforce once staff are in post and that staff from under-represented groups have access to development and promotion opportunities. Therefore, any campaigns developed and referred to above will also aspire to ensure that the Service retains a more diverse workforce and offers appropriate development and promotion opportunities.
11. **Leavers** – As referred to above, we know that the transfer of staff under Blue Light Collaboration impacted on workforce diversity during 2017/18 as a significant number of employees who worked in support departments were female. Further analysis is underway to determine the extent of impact on workforce diversity in respect of the remaining tranches of staff who transferred to the Constabulary during 2018/19. The results will be presented to the Equality Steering Group in October.
12. **Stonewall Workplace Equality Index** – Work is continuing to strengthen the Service’s commitment and reputation for LGBT inclusion. During 2018/19 the Service has committed to signing up to be a launch partner in respect of Stonewall’s trans awareness training. There is also a strong appetite to work more closely with older LGBT community groups to support them and reduce vulnerabilities. The service has also started to work alongside private sector employers to expand its

knowledge and understanding of LGBT issues and to arrange joint events.

13. **Safe and Well visits** – Given the higher than expected number of trans people receiving safe and well visits, the Service’s prevention teams need to be equipped to support the older LGBT community. As such, the Service has engaged Opening Doors London, an LGBT Charity focused on supporting older LGBT people, to provide training to its prevention teams. This training will focus on how prevention teams can best support the needs of older LGBT people when carrying out safe and well visits.
14. **Youth Engagement Schemes** – The Service’s youth engagement schemes attract more diverse participants than compared to its workforce. As such, the Service intends to explore how its youth engagement schemes can act as a talent pipeline for its workforce.
15. **Business Premises Audits** – Business protection outcomes are decided on the basis of a risk matrix, under which ethnicity is not a risk factor. However, previous reports highlighted high levels of enforcement, action plans and advisory outcomes being issued against people of Chinese origin following business premises audits due to the types of businesses such as takeaways being operated (not because of ethnicity). This year’s report has shown a reduction in these outcomes, but increases in the percentage of enforcements and action plans against businesses of Asian origin (for the same reasons explained). Therefore focused engagement work will again be carried out throughout the year.

## **Financial Implications**

16. There may be limited costs associated with some of the actions needed to ensure that the Service is addressing the trends identified within the report, mainly associated with holding events and courses. These costs will be factored into budgets of the relevant department or met from within the Equalities Budget.

## **Legal Implications**

17. Production of the Annual Equality Monitoring Report ensures that the Authority complies with its statutory responsibilities and is compliant with the Equality Act 2010.

## **Equality and Diversity**

18. The Annual Equality Monitoring Report is produced to reinforce the Service’s commitment to the EDI agenda and to remove any barriers or adverse impacts to our employment policies/practices and service delivery.

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS : None**

**Appendix A - Annual Equality Monitoring Report 2017-18**