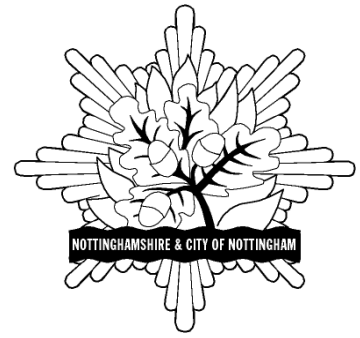


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## Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority - Human Resources Committee

**Date:** Friday, 19 April 2024      **Time:** 10.00 am

**Venue:** Sherwood Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PP

**Members are requested to attend the above meeting to be held at the time, place and date mentioned to transact the following business**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. J. [unclear]". The signature is written in a cursive style.

**Clerk to the Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority**

<b>Agenda</b>	<b><u>Pages</u></b>
<b>1 Apologies for Absence</b>	
<b>2 Declarations of Interests</b>	
<b>3 Minutes</b> Minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2023, for confirmation	3 - 10
<b>4 Human Resources Update</b> Report of the Chief Fire Officer	11 - 24
<b>5 Wholetime Recruitment Process 23-24</b> Report of the Chief Fire Officer	25 - 30
<b>6 HMICFRS Values and Culture Spotlight Report Update</b> Report of the Chief Fire Officer	31 - 44

**Any councillor who is unable to attend the meeting and wishes to submit apologies should do so via the Executive Assistant to the Chief Fire Officer on 0115 8388900**

**If you need advice on declaring an interest in any item on the agenda, please contact the Governance Officer shown below before the day of the meeting, if possible**

Governance Officer: *Catherine Ziane-Pryor, Governance Officer*  
*0115 8764468*  
*catherine.pryor@nottinghamcity.gov.uk*

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<https://committee.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=217&Year=0>

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## **Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority Human Resources Committee**

**Minutes of the meeting held at Joint Fire / Police HQ, Sherwood Lodge, Arnold,  
Nottingham, NG5 8PP on 10 November 2023 from 10.00 am - 10.56 am**

### **Membership**

#### **Present**

Councillor Nick Raine (Chair)  
Councillor Robert Corden  
Councillor Tom Hollis  
Councillor Patience Uloma Ifediora  
Councillor Gul Nawaz Khan  
Councillor John Lee

#### **Absent**

### **Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:**

Candida Brudenell - Assistant Chief Fire Officer  
Tracy Crump - Head of People and Organisational Development  
Matt Sismey - Organisational Development and Inclusion Manager  
Catherine Ziane-Pryor – Governance Officer

### **7 Apologies for Absence**

None.

### **8 Declarations of Interests**

None.

### **9 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2023 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

### **10 Human Resources Update**

Tracy Crump, Head of People and Organisational Development, presented the report which provides an overview of key human resources metrics for the period 1 July to 30 September 2023, whilst absence data is for the period 1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023, and equalities monitoring data for the period 1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023.

The following points were highlighted and members' questions responded to:

- a) Due to a later agenda item on workforce planning, staffing numbers will be considered in further detail later in the meeting;
- b) In addition to the commentary, the appendix to the report provides helpful charts illustrating sickness absence trends and attributes, individually across Whole-Time, On-Call, and non-uniform staff, and combined. In addition, absence performance data of this Service is compared against the other Fire and Rescue Services nationally;
- c) In quarter 1, sickness absence significantly decreased, and then increased in quarter 2;
- d) Absences due to covid are still tracked, and whilst much lower at 4.6% in quarter one and 5.8% in quarter two, there is an upward trend, so tracking will continue;
- e) The Service provides flu vaccinations to staff via vouchers;
- f) Long-term absences in quarter one accounted for 57.3% of sickness absence and 59.1% in quarter 2. This includes employees with significant health conditions;
- g) Work-related sickness absence, including mental health and stress, has accounted for 13.5% of all sickness absence in Q1 and 14.7% of sickness absence in quarter 2;
- h) The Service has a robust support system in place to help staff return to work, which includes regular contact, referrals to occupational health, and reasonable adjustments. With regard to some longer-term serious health conditions, some members of staff have now retired;
- i) There were no dismissals or tribunal cases lodged during this reporting period;
- j) Equality monitoring is reported every six months and so data is for the period 1 April to 30 September 2023;
- k) The report provides a breakdown of equalities data across the Service including female, Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME), Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual (LGB), and disabled, with Service statistics compared to population statistics for each grouping;
- l) The increase in the number of employees declaring themselves LGB+ is welcomed as a reflection of employees' confidence in the environment and culture of the Service, and is welcomed as a positive result of a lot of work promoting equalities. This now needs to be duplicated for other groupings;
- m) A further breakdown of male and female within the BAME grouping can be provided to members following the meeting, along with the grading of roles occupied;

- n) Identifying protected characteristics of the workforce supports cultural change;
- o) Since disability was defined in the Equality Act 2010, the Service is very proactive in encouraging staff to consider, and where appropriate, declare non-visible disability and neuro diversity. Some staff may not consider themselves disabled, but the broadened definition of the Act may include their conditions. The methods of how disability can be declared have been revised and are much improved;
- p) There are frustrations that work in addressing the gender pay gap is not progressing as quickly as hoped. However, incremental changes are being made and a new piece of work seeks to accelerate the change in the make up of the workforce, including deprivation, type of roles citizens apply for, and localised community reflection of the workforce. Proposals will be submitted to the Strategic Inclusion Board, but will require further investment and resources;
- q) The Service actively encourages and facilitates staff development to management roles, but there needs to be a critical mass of BAME employees for take-up of the opportunities to reflect the broader local BAME population in management roles;
- r) Service diversity is much improved, but further investment is required to progress diversity in management roles and work continues in targeted recruitment of diverse communities in an effort to increase the diversity of the Service to proportionally reflect that of the population.

Members of the Committee commented:

- s) As the BAME population is smaller in the County than the City, consideration should be given to more intensive BAME targeted recruitment in the City;
- t) It would be interesting to know if there are any Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) identifying employees in the Service as this too is a protected characteristic and there is a notable population in the Newark area;
- u) It needs to be acknowledged that not everybody wants to declare their heritage/culture/sexuality, and so it's important to include the 'other' option when requesting information;
- v) It's a concern that currently there are no senior managers identifying as BAME, and so additional support should be considered to help BAME staff engage for promotion;
- w) The Service still has work to do but has increased the diversity of the workforce with very good recruiting campaigns which appeal to the broader community, for which officers should be proud.

**Resolved to note the report.**

## 11 Gender Pay Gap 2023

Candida Brudenell, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the annual report which provides an update on the progress in addressing the gender pay gap, including the methodology applied, using data for the year ending 31 March 2023.

The following points were highlighted, and members' questions responded to:

- a) Whilst there has been a slight improvement in narrowing the gender pay gap in the Service, it is noted that it will be very difficult to eradicate it as there are fewer women in the Service as a whole, and fewer women in the higher paid roles. However, the Service does offer support to female employees to develop their skills to advance their careers into the higher paid roles, if that is what they choose;
- b) The Women's Network is valuable in providing a reference group for the development of strategies. Some actions stated are effective but need further impetus, as will be elaborated on in the strategic proposals report to the Strategic Equalities Board;
- c) Although the way in which the Service has to report some elements is set nationally, members are assured that the Service does pay the living wage. This will be clarified in future reports;

Members of the Committee commented as follows:

- d) The establishment of the Service's Women's Network is welcomed;
- e) Excellent equalities work has been achieved so far, but more women still need to be recruited to entry level posts;
- f) The Service needs to provide support in addressing some of the key issues which are preventing women from applying for the Service, but also further expand and promote the support available to women wanting to progress their careers;
- g) Higher level male colleagues can mentor women in areas where there is currently a lack of female representation;
- h) More involvement in project work could be a good way to expand the experience, confidence and visibility of women wanting to progress.

**Resolved to note the outcomes from the report and support the action points set out within Paragraph 2.21 of the report, to maintain and enhance the career advancement of, and support provided to, women within the Service.**

## 12 Review of Workforce Plan 2022-24

Tracy Crump, Head of People and Organisational Development, presented the report which provides an update on the workforce plan.

The following points were highlighted, and members' questions responded to:

- a) the report provides a breakdown of how the Workforce Plan monitors and calculates projections of workforce elements which are then responded to in ensuring workforce resilience, including the workforce numbers and skill bases required;
- b) Whole-time workforce numbers fell below those set out in the workforce plan as a result of the pause in recruitment due to the budget uncertainty. However, this is now being addressed through recruitment;
- c) 27 new Firefighters have been recruited, mostly into apprentice Firefighter roles and although mostly starting training in April, they are due to be placed on stations during December;
- d) 3 additional Firefighters have been recruited into the Fire Prevention Team as apprentices, but with time first spent on stations, which has proved valuable;
- e) During this reporting period, 16 members of the workforce left the Service, mostly due to retirement, but generally approximately 9 leave for other reasons. These numbers align with the plan turnover predictions;
- f) National advert for existing firefighters, specifically those with specialist skills, has been successful with 15 operational roles filled at different levels;
- g) The current recruitment programme is three quarters completed, with a lot of positive action, including selection days on stations in evenings and at weekends;
- h) It was decided to change the order of the selection process by holding fitness testing at an early stage and providing additional support to help candidates achieve the required level of fitness, which is set nationally for firefighters and the same for male and female candidates. Candidates who only just fail the fitness test now have the opportunity to take the test again in a different way after further fitness work. This approach will be evaluated;
- i) 370 applicants are to be externally telephone screened, and if successful at that stage then they will be job related tested, with successful candidates progressing to the assessment centre in January. It is anticipated that up to 32 new Firefighters could be in post over next year;
- j) The Service does provide a lot of support to applicants in advance of fitness testing to help them build their fitness to the required standard. This includes working with a fitness advisor, which has been particularly beneficial approach for some female candidates as historically this was the stage at which most failed. More information on the fitness test and what it involved can be found on the Service's website;
- k) Resourcing to risk has identified different approaches to ridership which resulted in the release of 4 operational posts. Work is ongoing to determine where these posts should now be placed;

- l) Promotions are set out in the report across every level as part of succession planning;
- m) As agreed by the Authority, Ashfield Fire Station is due to return to full time crewing as of 30 November 2023;
- n) 13 new On-Call Trainee appointments have just started. During this reporting period the Service has not experienced the usual anticipated level of turnover of On-Call Firefighters, which is welcomed;
- o) Support Staff turnover has slowed significantly from the 24% of the post-covid period, with 10 leavers and 14 starters in the past 6 months;
- p) The pay settlement has now been agreed as a flat sum of £1,925, which will also help with recruitment and retention of staff;
- q) The Futures25 efficiency programme is reviewing Prevention activities. It is anticipated that there will be workforce implications, with a report submitted to members towards the end of the year;
- r) The Service works hard to provide an outstanding Employee Wellbeing Service and support. A recently introduced scheme to enable an advance of up to £1,000 to purchase white goods, with repayment over several months as a deduction from wages, has been put in place to support employees manage their finances in difficult times.

**Resolved to note the report.**

### **13 Confidential Reporting of Employee Concerns**

Candida Brudenell, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which sets out the process for confidential reporting and the reporting data for the period 31 March 2022 to 31 March 2023, as required following the findings of the Independent Cultural Review of London Fire Brigade, and concerns raised nationally by HMICFR.

The following points were highlighted, and members' questions responded to:

- a) Members are assured that there is now a new confidential reporting route via the independent organisation 'Say So';
- b) The report sets out:
  - i. how 'Say So' has been procured;
  - ii. the service it provides;
  - iii. staff accessibility;
  - iv. how it has been promoted to staff;
  - v. how the information provided is gathered and forwarded to senior officers;
  - vi. the response requirements/agreement of senior officers;
  - vii. the monitoring and reporting of themes, trends and take-up;



- c) It is noted that existing routes for reporting concerns are still available, including as detailed in the Whistleblowing Policy, through line managers, through the Human Resources Team, or to trade union representatives.

Members welcomed the progress and assured the workforce that members were not complacent in addressing any issues identified.

**Resolved to note the report.**

#### **14 Candida Brudenell**

As this was Assistant Chief Fire Officer Candida Brudenell's last meeting prior to her retirement, the Chair thanked Candida for her work with the Service and wished her well in her retirement.

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**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**  
**Fire & Rescue Service**  
*Creating Safer Communities*

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham  
Fire and Rescue Authority  
Human Resources Committee

# HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

**Date:** 19 April 2024

**Purpose of Report:**

To update Members on key human resources metrics for the period 1 October to 31 December 2023.

**Recommendations:**

That Members note the contents of this report.

## CONTACT OFFICER

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## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 As part of its remit, the Human Resources Committee of Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority receives regular updates on human resources (HR) issues within the Service. This includes issues such as sickness absence, formal discipline, grievance, employment tribunal cases and staffing numbers. These issues are collectively referred to as HR metrics.
- 1.2 Reports are on a quarterly basis and allow the Human Resources Committee to keep informed of ongoing issues and offer their guidance and scrutiny.

## 2. REPORT

### STAFFING NUMBERS

- 2.1 During the period 1 October 2023 to 31 December 2023, 12 employees commenced employment. Establishment levels as of 31 December 2023 are highlighted below:

	Approved	Actual	Variance
<b>Wholetime</b>	431	414 (413.6fte)	-17 (-17.4fte)
<b>On-Call</b>	192 units	237 persons (127 units) (includes 70 dual contracts)	-65 units
<b>Support</b>	163 (157.32 fte)	165 (152.1fte)	+2 (-5.22 fte)

- 2.2 There have been 20 leavers and 12 starters since the last report. This has resulted in an actual workforce figure of 816 (this includes 70 dual contractors). Leavers are broken down as follows: 8 wholetime, 8 on-call and 4 support roles.
- 2.3 In order to address the gaps in the wholetime establishment, the Service has undertaken a national transfer process, which has resulted in 15 competent firefighters appointed to operational positions (11 firefighters, 2 crew managers, 2 watch managers). Of these, 4 commenced employment during the review period, and 11 will commence in early 2024.
- 2.4 In addition, the Service commenced a wholetime apprentice firefighter recruitment campaign in August 2023, with final interviews held throughout January 2024. This has resulted in 34 appointments, which will be factored in during 2024-25 to address projected turnover figures. Further details of this selection process are contained within the "Wholetime Recruitment Outcomes" report on the agenda.

- 2.5 As at 31 December 2023, wholetime strength stood at 414 operational (413.6 fte) employees against an establishment of 431 posts.
- 2.6 During the period, the Service has appointed to 5 wholetime, and 7 support roles.

### **SICKNESS ABSENCE – Quarter 3**

2.7 The review period covers the three-month period between 1 October and 31 December 2023.

2.8 Target absence figures for 2023/24 are:

Wholetime:	9.05 days per person
Support:	9.35 days per person
On-Call Workforce:	13.2 days per person

(The average is affected by the numbers of employees in each work group.)

2.9 For the purposes of reporting, on-call absence analysis is shown separately to other workgroups due to the nature of their working arrangements. Absence related to Covid has been included in the total absence figures.

### **Workforce (excluding on-call)**

2.10 Total absence across the workforce (excluding on-call) increased by 299.5 days (+19.5%) compared to the previous quarter, at an average of 3.2 days lost per employee. This increase may relate to seasonal factors as sickness absence figures historically are higher during Q3 (October to December) than Q2 (July to September).

2.11 This represents an increase compared to the same quarter of 2022-23 of 192 days (+11.7%).

2.12 Absence related to Covid accounted for 65 working days lost, or 3.5% of total absence.

2.13 Long-term absence equated to 57.4% of sickness absence. This breaks down to 47.9% for the operational workforce and 70.7% for support employees.

2.14 Absence due to work related injury accounted for 219 days, or 12% of all sickness absence. The main reason for absence related to work was mental health issues.

2.15 Absence trends across the last three years are shown in the table set out in Appendix A.

### **On-Call Workforce**

2.16 Absence figures increased by 122 days (+11.9%) during the review period compared to the previous quarter, at an average of 4.8 days per employee.

- 2.17 This represents a decrease compared to the same quarter of 2022-23 of 39 days (-3.3%).
- 2.18 Absence related to Covid accounted for 77 working days lost, or 6.7% of total absence.
- 2.19 Long-term absence equated to 58.6% of total sickness absence.
- 2.20 A summary of the reasons for absence by workgroup are attached at Appendix C.

## **NATIONAL ABSENCE TRENDS**

- 2.21 The Service contributes to the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) sickness absence survey, which is undertaken quarterly and allows for comparison between contributing fire and rescue services.
- 2.22 Reasons for sickness absence at Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) broadly mirror the national trends with musculo-skeletal and mental health related absences featuring significantly in all workgroups.
- 2.23 Appendix B reflects the national absence trends for Quarter 3. The three charts reflect wholetime, support staff (green book) and on-call the average of duty days/shifts lost per person for those fire and rescue services who contribute to the survey.
- 2.24 For wholetime staff, NFRS has an average of 6.91 days lost per employee which ranks the Service as 16 out of the 35 Services included in the survey. This figure is below the sector sickness average of 8.58 days per employee. The lowest average was 2.97 days and the highest 14.78 days.
- 2.25 For on-call staff, NFRS has an average of 12.25 days lost per employee which ranks the Service as 16 out of 22 Services included in the survey. This figure is above the sector sickness average of 11.82 days per employee. The lowest average was 0.14 days and the highest 24.99 days.
- 2.26 For support staff (green book) the Service has an average of 11.87 days lost per employee which ranks as 34 out of the 35 Services included in the survey. This figure is above the sector sickness average of 7.72 days per employee. The lowest average was 2.86 days and the highest 13.10 days.

## **OTHER WORKFORCE METRICS**

- 2.27 This section reviews the following activities: disciplinary cases, grievances raised, harassment cases raised, dismissals, appeals and active employment tribunal cases.
- 2.28 During the review period, one disciplinary hearing resulted in a dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct, and no further disciplinary investigations have been undertaken. One grievance was raised and not upheld. Four employees did not pass their probationary assessment and were dismissed on capability grounds – these related to 3 on-call trainees and 1 firefighter apprentice. No employment tribunal cases were lodged.

## EQUALITIES MONITORING

2.29 A review of key equalities metrics is undertaken twice yearly to establish any patterns or changes. Due to the timing of the meeting, the following equalities monitoring information is provided for the period of 1 October 2023 – 31 March 2024.

### Workforce Profile

2.30 The table below sets out a snapshot of key equalities metrics:

<b>Workforce</b>	<b>Female firefighters (Wholetime and On-Call)</b>	<b>Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employees (whole workforce)</b>	<b>BAME employees in wholetime roles</b>	<b>Lesbian, gay or bisexual (whole workforce)</b>	<b>Disabled (whole workforce)</b>
<b>31 March 2024 Headcount 830</b>	10.4% (42 out of 405 roles)	5.8% (48)	6.2% (26)	3.9% (32)	4.6% (38)
<b>30 September 2023 Headcount 824</b>	10.6% (44 out of 414 roles)	5.6% (46)	6.2% (26)	4.13% (34)	4.4 % (36)

2.31 When considered by workgroup, the monitoring data shows that:

### Whole Workforce

- Women currently constitute 16.9% (140) of the total workforce. Of these, 39.5% (55) women are employed in operational roles . Women represent 8.5% of operational roles undertaken and 4.5% (10 of 218) of supervisory managers and 3.4% (1) of middle operational managers are women. There are four women in strategic operational roles (Area Manager and Assistant Chief Fire Officer) and who are members of the Strategic Leadership Team.
- Employees from BAME backgrounds constitute 5.8% (48) of the workforce. Current census figures show the BAME population of Nottinghamshire as 14.64%.
- Employees who identify as being Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual (LGB) constitute 3.9% (32) of the workforce. Current census figures demonstrate an LGB population of Nottinghamshire of 2.68% (however the prefer not to say level was 6% within the last census, suggesting Nottinghamshire’s LGB population could be higher).

- Disability declaration is at 4.6% (38) of the workforce. However, this increases to 10.1% (17) of employees in support roles. Census data shows 20% of the population of Nottinghamshire identify as having a disability.

### Operational Roles

- For wholetime roles, women are employed in 10.3% (43) of operational roles. Of these, 5.6% (8 out of 144) are supervisory roles (Crew or Watch Manager) and 3.4% (1 out of 29) are middle manager roles (Station or Group manager). 22.2% (2 out of 9) women in a strategic operational role (Brigade Manager).
- Employees from BAME backgrounds represent 6.2% (26) of wholetime operational roles. Of these, 5.6% (8 of 144) are supervisory roles (Crew or Watch Manager). There are no BAME employees in middle or senior manager roles.

### On-Call Roles

- For On-Call roles, women are employed in 5% (12) of operational roles. Of these, 2.6% (2 out of 78) are employed in supervisory roles.
- Employees from BAME backgrounds represent 2.5% (6) of operational roles. Of these, 1.3% (1 out of 78) are employed in supervisory roles.

### Support Roles

- For support roles, women are employed in 50.2% (85) of roles. Of these, 49.4% (43 out of 87) are employed in supervisory roles and 44.4% (8 out of 18) are employed in senior or strategic roles.
- Employees from BAME backgrounds represent 9.5% (16) of roles. Of these, 11.5% (10) are employed in supervisory roles and 5.6% (1) in senior roles.
- The table below, shows the breakdown of the support workforce by protected characteristic and grade.

Support Employees	Men	Women	Disability	BAME	LGB
Grades 1-4 (plus Apprentice)	30	34	7	5	7
Grades 5-7	44	43	10	10	3
Grades 8-SLSM	10	8		1	
<b>Total</b>	84	85	17	16	10

### STARTERS AND LEAVERS

2.32 There have been 38 starters and 41 leavers during the review period. The table below shows details of these starters and leavers by protected characteristic:



	Starters			Leavers		
	On-Call	Wholetime	Support	On-Call	Wholetime	Support
<b>Women</b>	1 (3)	0(8)	10 (15)	1 (2)	2 (3)	6 (14)
<b>Men</b>	11 (22)	12 (31)	4 (14)	14 (22)	13 (27)	5 (8)
<b>BAME</b>	0 (1)	0 (1)	1 (1)	0 (1)	1 (2)	2 (2)
<b>LGB</b>	1 (4)	0 (7)	1 (2)	3 (5)	1 (1)	0 (0)
<b>Disability</b>	0	2 (3)	(1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (1)

Figures in brackets denote whole year

2.33 Of the 38 starters, 28.9% (11) were women. The high number of male appointees reflects outcomes from the recent transferee process, which saw ten male appointees to operational roles. One woman took part in the On-Call trainee firefighters course held in January. However, 7 women had taken part in earlier firefighter trainee/apprenticeship courses during 2023. Whilst the number of women applying for firefighter careers has seen an increase in female recruits over recent years, it does represent an ongoing national challenge, and this is particularly the case for On-Call roles. It is worth noting that 10 (71.4%) of successful applicants for support roles were women.

## RECRUITMENT

### Wholetime

2.34 The Wholetime Apprentice Firefighter recruitment process, which commenced in August, concluded in January with 160 candidates interviewed. This had been preceded by positive action to encourage a diverse range of candidates to apply. The first cohort of 20 recruits will commence their apprenticeship in April. Further details of this selection process are contained within the “Wholetime Recruitment Outcomes” report on the agenda.

### On-Call

2.35 There have been no On-Call recruitment campaigns within the period of this report. However, a trainee firefighter course commenced in January 2024, with 12 trainees appointed, including 1 female recruit.

### Support Roles

2.36 In the review period the Service received 93 applicants in total for 7 vacancies. It should be noted that three of these vacancies were not filled within the review period. The breakdown of applicants, those shortlisted for interview and appointed are shown in the table below:

	Female	Male	BAME	Disabled	LGBT
<b>Applicants</b>	35 (37.6%)	56 (60.2%)	61 (65.6%)	4 (4.3%)	6 (6.5%)
<b>Shortlisted</b>	15 (51.7%)	14 (48.2%)*	15 (51.7%)	2 (6.9%)	3 (10.3%)
<b>Appointed</b>	3 (75%)	1 (25%)	2 (25%)	0	1 (25%)

Please note that two applicants did not declare their gender

- 2.37 It can be observed that there were more male (60.2%) than female (37.6%) applicants and the number of applications from under-represented groups was high (this was linked to a particular job role). The representation of successful applicants with protected characteristics is also high.

## CONCLUSION

- 2.38 The monitoring data shows that the workforce profile is not representative of the local population in terms of employees from BAME backgrounds, Disability and people who identify as LGBT. This is particular marked in operational roles.
- 2.39 The Service continues to use positive action to promote the fire service as a career during firefighter recruitment campaigns both wholetime and On-Call, it does also promote support staff vacancies through targeted advertising. It should be noted most vacancies are for On-Call roles, and these are specific to location, which can reduce the impact on diversity.
- 2.40 Using a range of awareness events, mentoring and fitness/strength development activities prior to wholetime recruitment has helped to lead to positive diversity figures.
- 2.41 From the data presented above, it can be noted workforce is becoming gradually more representative.

## 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The Authority's pay budgets cover the cost of the workforce, and these include budgets for overtime to cover sickness absence where operational cover is affected. The actual numbers of employees in post compared to the establishment can cause budgetary variances and these are reported to the Finance and Resources Committee.
- 3.2 Any increase in absence has a direct impact upon the Service's operational pay budget as gaps in the ridership can lead to an increase in overtime pay to cover for long-term absence.

#### **4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS**

The human resources and learning and development implications are set out in the report.

#### **5. EQUALITIES AND ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 As this review does not impact upon policy or service delivery, no equality impact assessment has been undertaken. However, the report contains equalities monitoring information for the period October to December 2023 which provides an overview of progress in terms of increasing the diversity of the workforce.

5.2 There are no ethical implications arising from this report.

#### **6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no environmental or sustainability implications arising from this report.

#### **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

#### **8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

A regular reporting system on the management of human resources ensures that the Service and the Authority are aware of any developing workforce issues.

#### **9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS**

There are no collaboration implications arising from this report.

#### **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

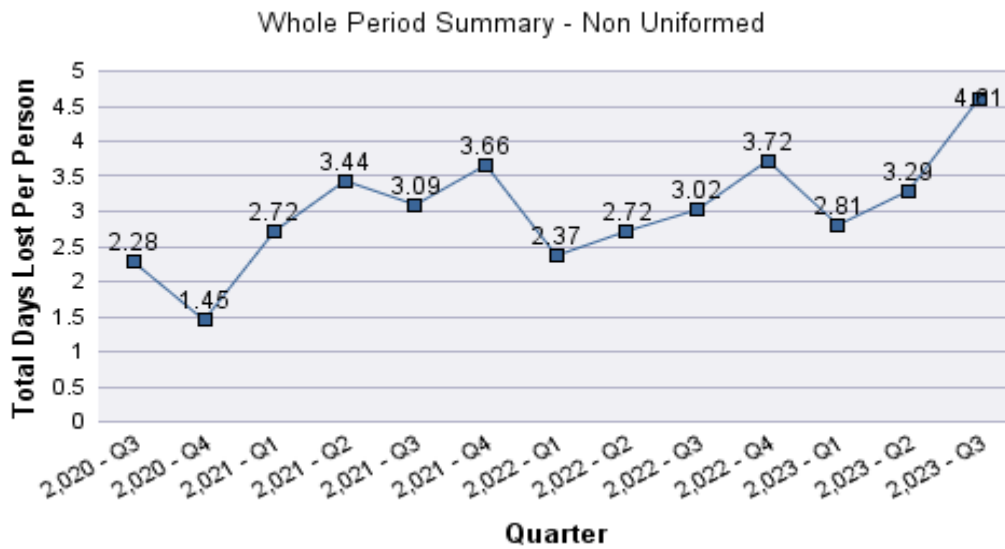
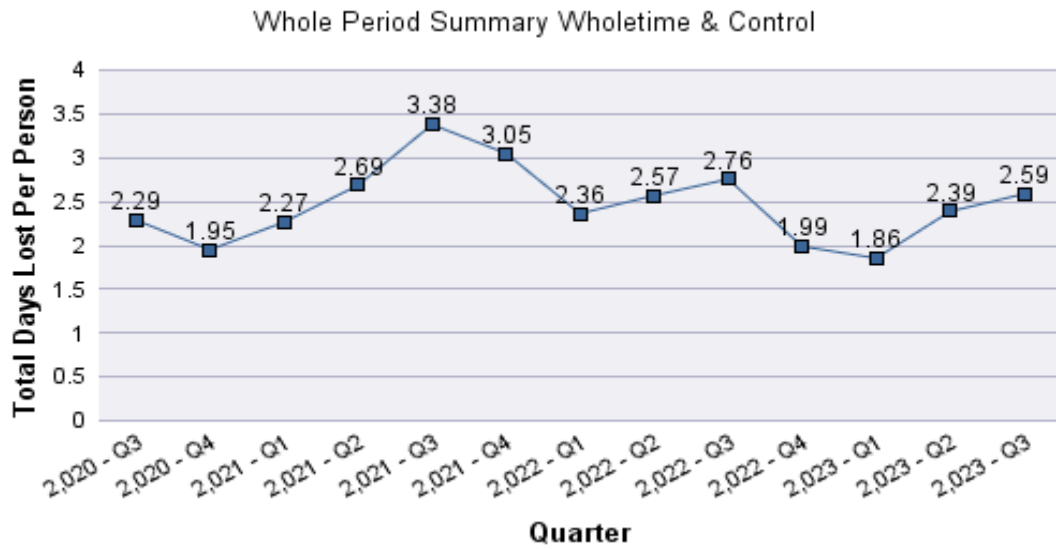
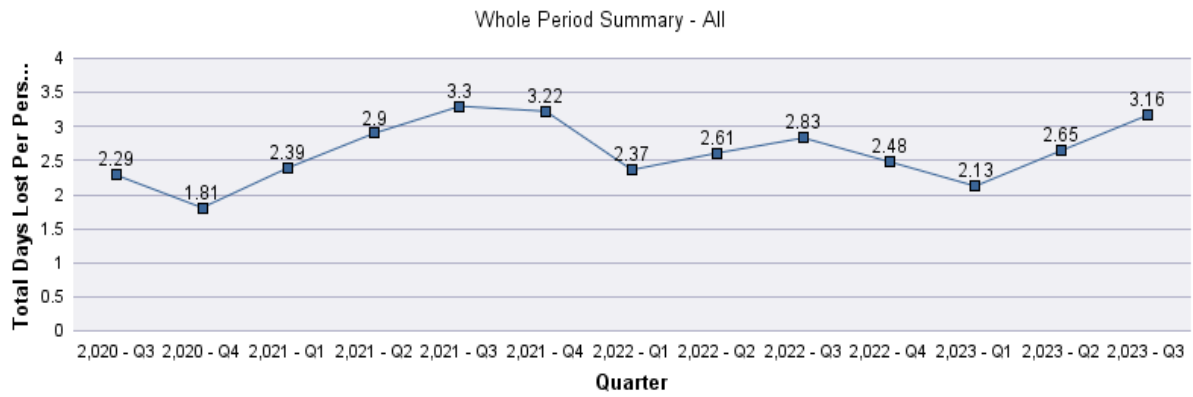
That Members note the contents of this report.

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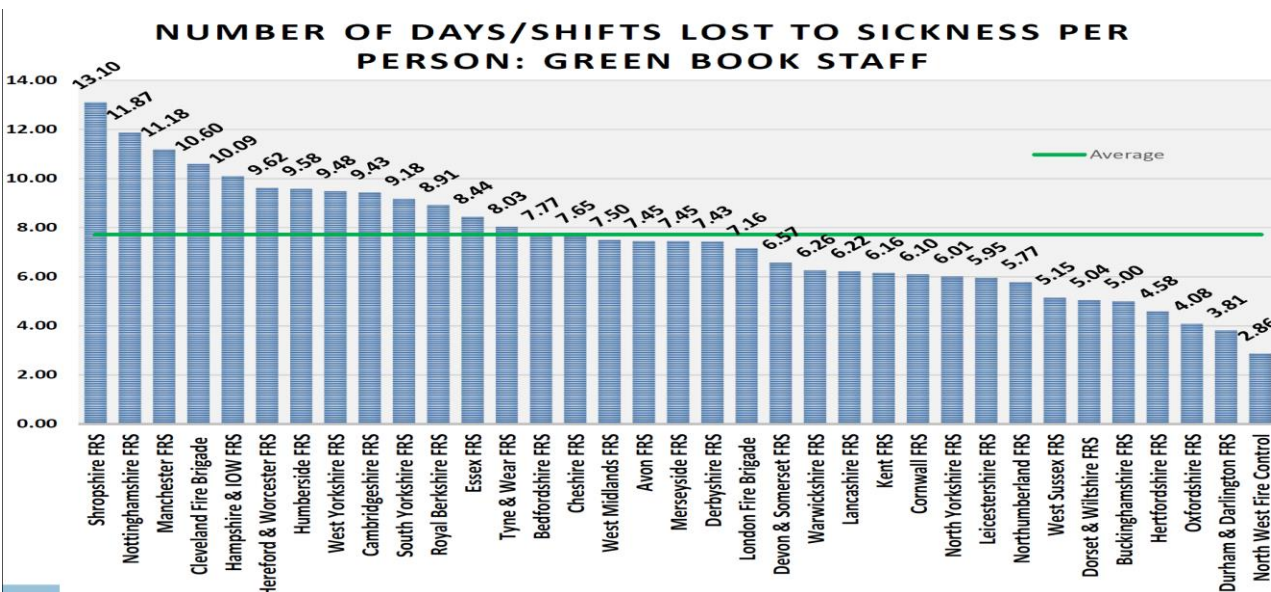
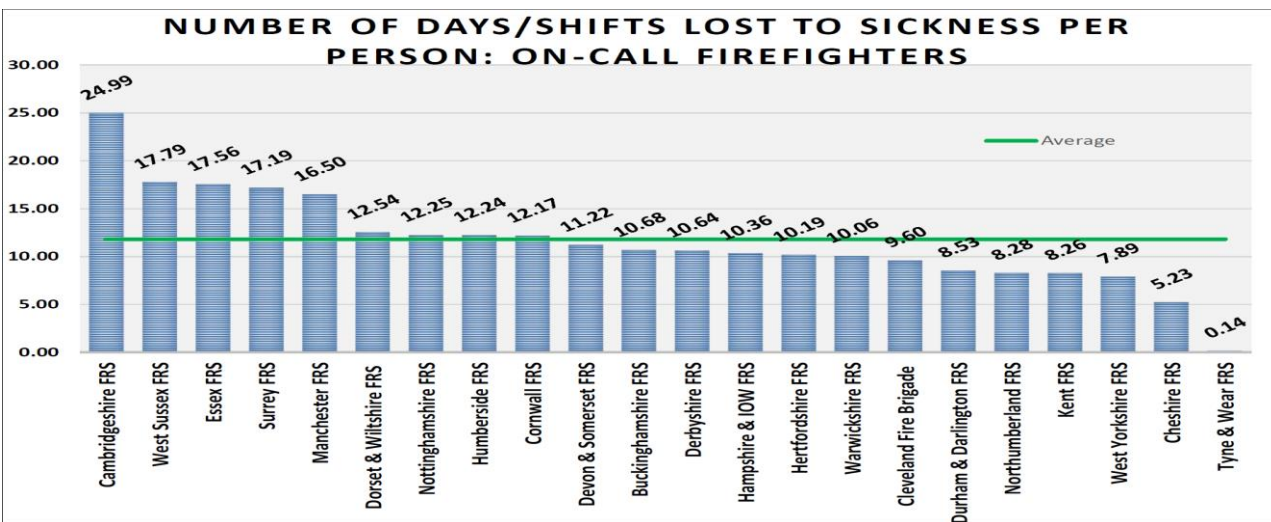
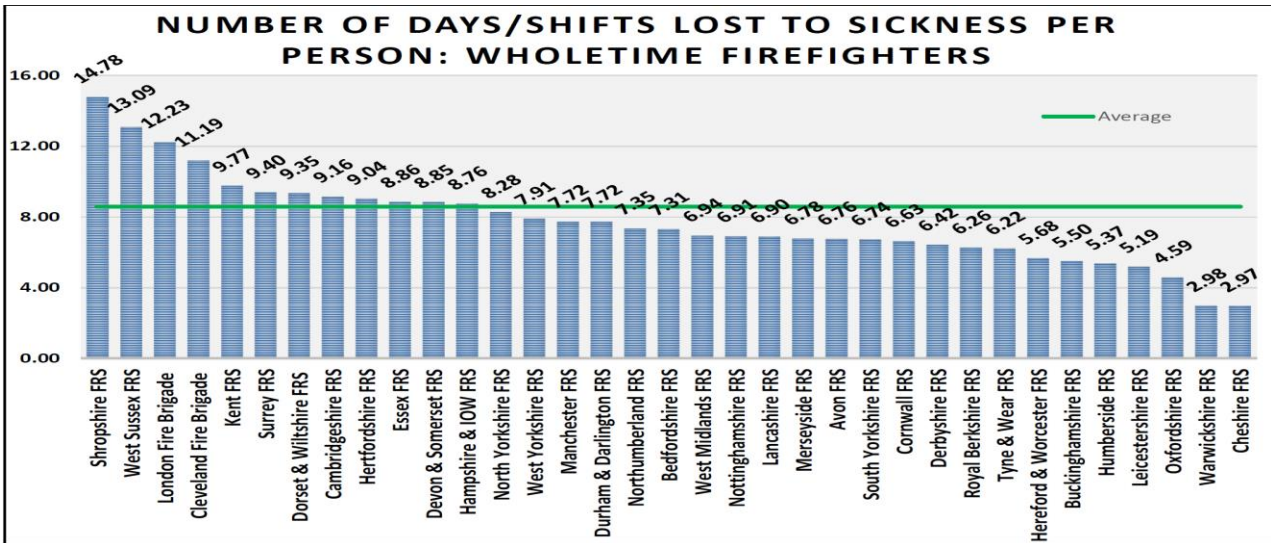
None

Craig Parkin  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**

**APPENDIX A**



National Absence Survey



**Wholetime Absence****Q3**

Absence Reason - Grouped	Unique Absence Count	Days Lost
Musculo Skeletal	33	315
Mental Health	6	159
Gastro-Intestinal	27	116
Respiratory - Cold/Cough/Influenza (COVID related)	27	105
Hospital/Post Operative	9	72
Heart, Cardiac and Circulatory Problems	1	56
COVID-19 Isolating - Tested Positive	17	55
Cancer and Tumours	1	48
Virus/Infectious Diseases	12	48
Ear, Nose, Throat	8	31

**On-Call Absence****Q3**

Absence Reason - Grouped	Unique Absence Count	Days Lost
Musculo Skeletal	12	411
Mental Health	8	397
Respiratory - Cold/Cough/Influenza (COVID related)	13	93
COVID-19 Isolating - Tested Positive	12	77
Gastro-Intestinal	5	59
Hospital/Post Operative	4	35
Skin Condition	1	18
Genitourinary/Gynaecological/Reproductive	1	14
Virus/Infectious Diseases	4	12
Headache/Migraine/Neurological	1	9

## **Support Staff Absence**

### **Q3**

<b>Absence Reason - Grouped</b>	<b>Unique Absence Count</b>	<b>Days Lost</b>
Mental Health	5	190
Hospital/Post Operative	5	120
Respiratory - Cold/Cough/Influenza (COVID related)	27	111
Musculo Skeletal	4	79
Headache/Migraine/Neurological	6	74.5
Cancer and Tumours	1	65
Respiratory - Chest Infection	2	38
Mental Health - Other	1	30
Genitourinary/Gynaecological/Reproductive	1	26
COVID-19 Isolating - Tested Positive	3	10
Gastro-Intestinal	6	10

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**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**  
**Fire & Rescue Service**  
*Creating Safer Communities*

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham  
Fire and Rescue Authority  
Human Resources Committee

# WHOLETIME RECRUITMENT PROCESS 23-24

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

**Date:** 19 April 2024

**Purpose of Report:**

To inform Members of the outcomes from the recent wholetime firefighter selection process and success rates arising from the positive action programme undertaken between April and August 2023.

**Recommendations:**

That Members note the contents of this report.

## CONTACT OFFICER

<b>Name:</b>	Leila Berry Assistant Chief Fire Officer
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## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Service Workforce Plan 2023-25 identified that the Service might need to replace up to 43 operational roles in response to the projected number of retirements and turnover during 2023-24.
- 1.2 Positive action took place between April and August 2023, and focused on increasing the number of applications from those under-represented in the operational workforce, namely women and those from Black, Asian and minority ethnic candidates. The selection process commenced in August 2023 and ran for three months.
- 1.3 The report sets out the outcomes from the selection process and reviews the impact of the positive action measures put in place.

## **2. REPORT**

- 2.1 In preparation for the wholetime selection campaign and to actively seek to encourage applications from a diverse range of applicants, the Service undertook a programme of positive action events and applicant engagement.
- 2.2 Activities were promoted through communications team via social media, posters and leaflets and active engagement with targeted groups within the community – 182 participants signed up to participate in the group and activities. Activities included:
  - Weekly fitness sessions aimed at women but open to all;
  - Awareness days on stations, with greater emphasis on the city due to the diverse demographic of potential applicants;
  - Targeted posters and leaflet drops aimed at city centre sites and gyms;
  - Use of social media;
  - Radio adverts to promote the recruitment process to harder to reach groups (Dawn FM, Kemet FM, Radio Faza). This included adverts to promote awareness days, and studio interviews;
  - Attendance at community events.
- 2.3 Of the 182 who engaged with positive action, 52 were women and 73 from a Black, Asian or minority ethnic background. Of these, 102 continued to the application stage.

### **SELECTION OUTCOMES**

- 2.4 The assessment process itself comprised of:
  - Application;
  - Telephone sifting undertaken by the Futures Group (part of Nottingham Jobs);

- Fitness test;
- Job related tests;
- Assessment centre – presentation and interview.

2.5 The numbers successful at each stage are set out below:

Stage	All Applicants	Female Applicants	BAME Applicants
Fitness Test Stage	461	52	73
Total Applicant Numbers	317	24	37
Telephone Sift	270	18	26
Job Related Tests	175	15	26
Assessment Centre	160	15	26
Successful	34	5	8
Pass Rate	10.7%	20.8%	21.6%

2.6 Of those who were successful in the process, 15 had attended or engaged with positive action (52%), this included three out of the four (75%) successful external female applicants and seven out of the eight (87.5%) successful Black, Asian and minority ethnic applicants.

2.7 It can be seen that a high number of female and BAME candidates were successful in the process compared to the overall success rate, which is a positive outcome from the campaign.

2.8 It should be noted that five current on-call firefighters were also appointed through the process and will migrate to the wholetime establishment to provide immediate resilience to the ridership.

2.9 Additionally 19 (6%) of applications were from LGBT+ applicants, of which five (26%) were successful in the process.

2.10 Of the successful applicants, 14.7% were women, 23.6% were from Black, Asian or minority ethnic background and 14.7% defined themselves as LGBT+.

2.11 The first course of apprentice firefighters will commence in April 2024, with a second course scheduled for January 2025.

### 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

#### **4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Human resources implications are set out within the report. The next stage will be to successfully on-board the new recruits and support them whilst they become established in their new roles. This includes the provision of 'off-station' support by a network of volunteers who are available to advise and support new recruits during their first months with the Service.
- 4.2 A review of the recruitment process and outcomes from positive action will be undertaken prior to planning for the next recruitment campaign, to identify any improvement to the current process and applicant experience.

#### **5. EQUALITIES AND ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 An equality impact assessment was undertaken as part of the planning process for wholetime recruitment. The aim of the positive action initiatives is to increase the number of applications from under-represented candidates, with a longer-term aim of improving the diversity of the operational workforce, which is under-represented in terms of women, Black, Asian and minority ethnic and LGBT+ employees.
- 5.2 The figures set out in the report reflect some success in increasing the numbers of women (14.7% of recruits), Black, Asian and minority ethnic applicants (23.6% of recruits) and LGBT+ applicants (14.7% of recruits) within the wholetime workforce.
- 5.3 The commitment to improve the diversity of the workforce through positive engagement with potential applicants who are under-represented within the workforce, and reflecting more closely the communities of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, aligns with the principle of promoting equality, diversity and inclusion within the Core Code of Ethics.

#### **6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no environmental and sustainability implications arising from this report.

#### **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

#### **8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

The recruitment process supports the commitments set out within the Service's Community Risk Management Plan to (i) ensure that the Service has the optimum number of employees to deliver its services, (ii) continue with the programme of positive action to encourage those who are under-represented in the workforce to

apply for roles with the Service and (iii) be a more diverse Service and more reflective of the communities of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

## **9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS**

There are no collaboration implications arising from this report.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Members note the contents of this report.

## **11. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)**

None.

Craig Parkin  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**

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**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**  
**Fire & Rescue Service**  
*Creating Safer Communities*

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham  
Fire and Rescue Authority  
Human Resources Committee

# **HMICFRS VALUES AND CULTURE SPOTLIGHT REPORT UPDATE**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

**Date:** 19 April 2024

**Purpose of Report:**

To provide Members with an update on the Service's progress against the recommendations made within the spotlight review of the values and culture in fire and rescue services published by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services in March 2023.

**Recommendations:**

That Members note the progress made against the national recommendations and agree to receive future updates.

## **CONTACT OFFICER**

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Assistant Chief Fire Officer

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**Email:** leila.berry@notts-fire.gov.uk

**Media Enquiries  
Contact:** Corporate Communications Team  
0115 8388100 corporatecomms@notts-fire.gov.uk

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Following reports of misconduct, and the findings of the Independent Cultural Review of London Fire Brigade, the Minister of State for Crime, Policing and Fire published a spotlight report into the values and culture of the fire and rescue service in March 2023. A paper outlining the report was then presented to Human Resources Committee the following month.
- 1.2 His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) considered the specific themes of values and culture (including bullying, harassment, and discrimination); training and skills; fairness and diversity; and leadership.
- 1.3 A focus on the evidence gathered during the second round of inspections of fire and rescue services was used by HMICFRS, as well as a range of other sources of information, to form the basis of the findings and recommendations for the report.
- 1.4 Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) recognises the impact that reports of this nature can have on the levels of trust within the workforce and in the community itself and is working hard to ensure that the Service's excellent reputation is maintained.

## **2. REPORT**

- 2.1 The Service has taken the opportunity to use the spotlight report to further drive improvement in a range of areas relating to culture, values and workforce diversity. Strategic Goal 4 of the Service's Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2022-25 outlines the commitment 'to continue to support and develop our workforce and promote an inclusive Service.'
- 2.2 Within the spotlight report, there are 35 recommendations, 20 of which are owned by Chief Fire Officers. Whilst some of the timescales have lapsed on these recommendations, 12 have been completed, with work well underway on the remaining eight recommendations. All recommendations made within the report can be found at Appendix A.
- 2.3 The Service has taken the following actions in response to the recommendations:
  - Supplemented existing reporting lines such as whistleblowing and complaints procedures with "Say So", a confidential reporting line, allowing anonymous reporting of issues.
  - Relunched the staff suggestion scheme 'Little Acorns' and provided strategic and financial support to staff networks which act as a key route for



peer support, identification and escalation of issues and amplifying employee voices outside of more traditional routes.

- Reviewed the policy framework covering this area, including replacing the Service's Harassment and Bullying Policy with a Dignity at Work Policy, which encompasses several policy recommendations from the report including enhancing welfare support for individuals raising concerns.
- NFRS has notified HMICFRS of relevant harassment and bullying cases and acted decisively to resolve these.
- 360-degree feedback has been in place in the Service for several years for middle managers and above. The Service is currently piloting the use of strengths based diagnostic tools for the next cohort of aspiring leaders (first line managers).
- Opportunities for staff feedback are in place via several routes, including the biennial staff survey, Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) visits, staff networks and staff conferences. Further work to develop a cultural dashboard is planned as part of Community Risk Management Plan 2025-28 performance reporting.
- The equality impact assessment (EIA) process has been in place for several years and the Service has adopted the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) template as part of a review. The process has been enhanced further to provide enhanced assurance around recommendations and embed EIA into project and policy development.
- Staff are actively engaged as part of recruitment and selection stakeholder panels for senior appointments in the Service. In addition, end user involvement in projects and procurements for new equipment effectively improves delivery.
- Implementation of fire standards, including leading and developing people, is monitored via SLT on a regular basis. A dedicated project to embed the Core Code of Ethics is in place.
- Consultation is currently underway to enhance DBS-check provision for certain staff groups beyond the basic check which all staff currently undergo at pre-employment.
- Talent pipelines in Fire Protection and other career-graded green book roles were already in place. The Service is enhancing progression pathways for green book staff as part of Futures 25 functional reviews.

2.4 The Service has made significant progress against the recommendations within the report whilst progressing a range of other workstreams relating to the Service's culture, diversity and inclusion aims and objectives.

- 2.5 Significant capital investment has enabled the Service to improve the accessibility and inclusion of the estate with work currently underway at Service Development Centre as well as at four fire stations. Investment has also been made to improve uniform provision for all staff through the uniform review project.
- 2.6 The Service continues to invest in the workforce, including rolling out inclusive leadership training to all middle and senior leaders. The prevention review will see enhanced dedicated resources being available for community engagement (including positive action activities) to support workforce diversity. This will be supported by the development of a 10 year workforce diversity plan which will set out ambitions over the longer-term.
- 2.7 The Service continues to invest in workforce and community engagement, via staff networks, the community advisory group and the community befriending scheme, which has seen all wholtime watches befriending a community group during the financial year 2023/24. This will be further expanded to on-call stations during the next financial years.

**3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

**4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are a range of human resources implications associated with the recommendations within the spotlight report which aims to enhance employee experience and workplace culture, particularly for staff from under-represented groups.
- 4.2 Enhancement of DBS check arrangements will require a change to the terms and conditions for staff.

**5. EQUALITIES AND ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 An EIA has not been undertaken because this is not a new or changed policy, function, service or project.
- 5.2 The nature of this report and the work it has recommended has helped the Service to continue its journey to embed the National Core Code of Ethics and promote an inclusive workplace and Service.

**6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no environmental and sustainability implications arising from this report.

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

## **8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Negative reporting of culture and values presents a risk to the Service, both from public and staff perception, trust and confidence.
- 8.2 Implementation of the recommendations helps to build a positive workplace culture, mitigating the risk of negative behaviours impacting on communities and staff.

## **9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS**

There are no collaboration implications arising from this report.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Members note the progress made against the national recommendations and agree to receive future updates.

## **11. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)**

None.

Craig Parkin  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**

EXTRACT FROM PAGES 9-16 OF  
HMICFRS VALUES AND CULTURE IN FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES REPORT

[Values and culture in fire and rescue services - His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/values-and-culture-in-fire-and-rescue-services-report/)

Published 30 March 2023

## OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

### Raising concerns

#### Recommendation 1

By 1 October 2023, chief fire officers should make sure their services provide a confidential way for staff to raise concerns and that staff are aware of whistleblowing processes.

#### Recommendation 2

By 1 October 2023, National Employers, the [Local Government Association](#) and the [National Fire Chiefs Council](#) should review any current independent arrangements whereby staff can raise concerns outside their FRS. They should then ensure that all FRS staff have access to an independent reporting line that can be used as a confidential way to raise concerns outside their own FRS.

#### Recommendation 3

By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should review the support available for those who have raised concerns and take any action needed to make sure these provisions are suitable.

#### Recommendation 4

By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should assure themselves that updates on how concerns are being handled are shared with those who have raised them. The updates should be given in an accessible way that encourages trust and confidence in the service response. Consideration should be given to creating a professional standards function to handle conduct concerns in service (or from an external service) to have oversight of cases, to make sure they are conducted in a fair and transparent way and to act as a point of contact for all staff involved.

### **Recommendation 5**

By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should make sure they provide accessible information for all staff and members of the public on how they can raise concerns and access confidential support (including through external agencies). Chief fire officers should also make sure accessible information is provided on how concerns and allegations will be investigated in a way that ensures confidentiality and is independent of the alleged perpetrator.

## **Background checks**

### **Recommendation 6**

By 1 January 2024, the Home Office, working with the Ministry of Justice, should make sure that the Government incorporates fire and rescue authority employees within the [Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 \(Exceptions\) Order 1975](#) so that they are eligible for the appropriate DBS checks.

### **Recommendation 7**

By 1 May 2024, the Home Office, working with the fire and rescue sector, should make sure that the [Police Act 1997 \(Criminal Records\) Regulations 2002](#), or a similar appropriate legislatively enabled solution, makes detailed provisions for fire and rescue services.

### **Recommendation 8**

By 1 December 2023, the [Fire Standards Board](#), in liaison with the [National Fire Chiefs Council](#), should review the existing relevant standard(s) and underpinning guidance. It should:

- clearly state the requirements for background checks undertaken by services;
- clarify the minimum requirements (including levels of DBS checks) for all roles, particularly roles where staff have access to vulnerable members of the public;
- define the standards required to embed a culture across fire and rescue services that empowers all members of staff and local communities to report concerns; and
- be subject to review following any legislative change.

### **Recommendation 9**

By 1 January 2024, chief fire officers should:

- immediately review their current background checks arrangements, and make sure that suitable and sufficient background checks are in place to [safeguard](#) their staff and communities they serve; and
- make sure that appropriate DBS check requests have been submitted for all existing, new staff, and volunteers, according to their roles as identified by the [Fire Standards Board](#).

### **Recommendation 10**

By 1 September 2023, chief constables should make sure they are appropriately using their Common Law Police Disclosure powers in circumstances involving employees of fire and rescue services.

## **Misconduct handling**

### **Recommendation 11**

By 1 December 2023, the [Fire Standards Board](#), in liaison with the [National Fire Chiefs Council](#), should review the existing relevant standard(s) and supporting guidance to clearly state how services should handle staff disclosures, complaints and grievances.

### **Recommendation 12**

By 1 March 2024, chief fire officers should provide assurances to HMICFRS that they have implemented the standard on staff disclosure, complaint and grievance handling.

### **Recommendation 13**

By 1 December 2023, the [Fire Standards Board](#), in liaison with the [National Fire Chiefs Council](#), should review the existing relevant standard(s) and supporting guidance to clearly state how services should handle misconduct and safeguarding-related allegations and outcomes. These should include requirements to:

- conduct and complete investigations, whether or not the staff member under investigation leaves;
- consider whether the incident requires immediate dismissal;
- provide training for staff who are carrying out investigations; and
- ensure the diversity/neutrality of the investigation panel/person.

### **Recommendation 14**

By 1 March 2024, chief fire officers should provide assurances to HMICFRS that they have implemented the standard on misconduct allegations and outcomes handling.

### **Recommendation 15**

By 1 October 2023, the Home Office should work with the [National Fire Chiefs Council](#) and fire and rescue service employers to make sure there is a process to handle misconduct allegations against chief fire officers. The Home Office should immediately notify HMICFRS of any allegations and outcomes that it is aware of.

### **Recommendation 16**

By 1 October 2023, the [National Fire Chiefs Council](#) should develop and manage a national barred list that holds details of staff who have been dismissed for gross misconduct (including staff who have already left services). It should ensure that this list is referred to in all appointment processes to prevent those who are barred from rejoining another service. After the College of Fire and Rescue has been established (see recommendation 25), it should take responsibility for managing the list.

### **Recommendation 17**

With immediate effect, chief fire officers should notify HMICFRS of any allegation that have the potential to constitute staff gross misconduct that:

- involve allegations of a criminal nature that have the potential to affect public confidence in FRSs;
- are of a serious nature; or
- relate to assistant chief fire officers or those at equivalent or higher grades.

### **Recommendation 18**

By 1 August 2023, chief fire officers should provide assurances to HMICFRS that all parties are supported in relation to ongoing investigations.

### **Recommendation 19**

By 1 July 2023, the Home Office should examine whether any appeal processes for fire and rescue misconduct cases are appropriate.

## **Leadership**

### **Recommendation 20**

By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should have plans in place to ensure they meet the [Fire Standards Board's leading the service standard](#) and its [leading and developing people standard](#).

### **Recommendation 21**

By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should make sure there is a full, 360-degree feedback process in place for all senior leaders and managers (assistant chief fire officer equivalent and above) in service.

### **Recommendation 22**

By 1 September 2023, chief fire officers should make sure there is a full, 360-degree feedback process in place for all other leaders and managers in service. The process should include gathering feedback from a wide range of sources including colleagues and direct reports.



### **Recommendation 23**

By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should seek regular feedback from staff about values, culture, fairness and diversity, with due regard to the [leading and developing people standard](#). They should show how they act on this feedback.

### **Recommendation 24**

By 1 October 2023, chief fire officers should put plans in place to monitor, including through the gathering and analysis of staff feedback, [watch](#) and team cultures and provide prompt remedial action for any issues they identify.

## **Management and leadership training and development**

### **Recommendation 25**

By 1 January 2025, the Government should establish a College of Fire and Rescue, as proposed by the [White Paper Reforming our Fire and Rescue Service](#). There should be no further delay to its implementation.

### **Recommendation 26**

By 1 October 2023, as a precursor to the development of the College of Fire and Rescue, chief fire officers and the [National Fire Chiefs Council](#) should work with the Home Office to consider how they can improve the training and support they offer to staff in management and leadership development. This should include authority members in respect of their assurance leadership roles and should ensure that opportunities are offered fairly across all staff groups.

## **Diversity data**

### **Recommendation 27**

By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should make sure their equality impact assessments are fit for purpose and, as a minimum, meet the requirements of the [National Fire Chiefs Council equality impact assessment toolkit](#).

### **Recommendation 28**

By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should review how they gather and use equality and diversity data to improve their understanding of their staff demographics, including applying and meeting the requirements of the [National Fire Chiefs Council equality, diversity and inclusion data toolkit](#).

### **Recommendation 29**

By 1 December 2023, the Home Office should publish greater detail on the protected characteristic data it collects about FRS staff, including joiners and leavers, by rank and role.

### **Recommendation 30**

By 30 December 2024, the Home Office should align the data it collects on protected characteristics with the [Office for National Statistics harmonised standard](#) and publish this data.

### **Recommendation 31**

By 1 December 2024, the Home Office should collect and publish experimental statistics on public complaints and conduct matters in relation to FRS staff, similar to that which it currently publishes on police forces in England and Wales.

## **Improving diversity**

### **Recommendation 32**

By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should, as a priority, specify in succession plans how they intend to improve diversity across all levels of the service. This should include offering increased direct-entry opportunities.

### **Recommendation 33**

By 1 August 2023, chief fire officers should develop plans to promote progression paths for existing staff in non-operational roles and put plans in place to reduce any inequalities of opportunity.

## The Core Code of Ethics

### Recommendation 34

With immediate effect, chief fire officers should review their implementation of the [Core Code of Ethics](#) and make sure it is being applied across their services.

## The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England

### Recommendation 35

By the end of this Parliament, the Government should consider the findings and recommendations in this report when refreshing the [Fire and Rescue National Framework for England](#).

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