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

Date: Friday, 29 April 2022 **Time:** 10.00 am

Venue: Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters - Bestwood
Lodge Drive, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PD

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

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

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8 Exclusion of the Public

To consider excluding the public from the meeting during consideration of the remaining item in accordance with Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, under Schedule 12A, Part 1, on the basis that, having regard to all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining an exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

9 Regrading of Posts

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

63 - 66

Any councillor who is unable to attend the meeting and wishes to submit apologies should do so via the Personal Assistant to the Chief Fire Officer at Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters on 0115 8388900.

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

Governance Officer:

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The agenda, reports and minutes for all Human Resources meetings can be viewed online at: <https://committee.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CIId=217&Year=0>.

If you would like British Sign Language interpretation at the meeting, please contact the Service at least two weeks in advance to book this, either by emailing enquiries@notts-fire.gov.uk or by text on SMS: 0115 824 0400.



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

**Minutes of the meeting held at Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service
Headquarters, Bestwood Lodge Drive, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PD on Friday 28
January 2022 from 10:00am to 10:56am**

Membership

Present

Councillor Patience Uloma Ifediora (Chair)
Councillor Bethan Eddy
Councillor Roger Jackson
Councillor Gul Nawaz Khan
Councillor Toby Neal

Absent

Councillor Tom Hollis

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance

Tracy Crump - Head of People and Organisational Development
Adrian Mann - Governance Officer, Nottingham City Council
Craig Parkin - Deputy Chief Fire Officer

22 Apologies for Absence

None.

23 Declarations of Interests

None.

24 Minutes

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2021 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

25 Human Resources Update

Tracy Crump, Head of People and Organisational Development, presented a report on the key Human Resources metrics for the period of 1 October 2021 to 31 December 2021. The following points were discussed:

- (a) the number of whole-time firefighters is above the approved establishment level currently, due primarily to trainees having started their training now so that they are ready to fill upcoming vacancies in the whole-time establishment, as set out in the Workforce Plan. On-call staffing (which is measured in units of time, rather than on a full-time equivalent

basis) is below target, and this represents a significant challenge at both the local and national level;

- (b) positive action for recruitment is being carried out in all areas. The Service is a relatively small organisation, so it is vital that the offer to staff is competitive and encourages them to stay in the sector, within the context of the nationally-set terms and conditions of employment. An updated staff benefits package is in place, and an agile working policy has been adopted;
- (c) it is also important that staff have access to relevant development and progression opportunities, wherever possible. A training needs matrix is in place to support staff in their broader development. The Service works hard to retain the people that it trains, with significant investment in continuing professional development, including the offer of bursary schemes;
- (d) absence levels have risen in comparison to both the previous quarter this year and the same quarter last year, and are being monitored closely. However, the current absence figures do now reflect sickness levels pre-Covid. Members of staff having to self-isolate due to Coronavirus is not recorded as a sickness absence, though a sick note from a doctor will be required for more than seven days' absence. Coronavirus accounted for around 34% of absences at its height, but this figure is now decreasing. Both Covid and winter pressures are affecting absence levels, so a full assessment of the trends will be carried out in the spring. Unfortunately, there is not a standardised measure of absence across the sector, so it is not always possible to compare performance directly with other Fire and Rescue Services;
- (e) long-term absence due to musculo-skeletal injury remains a significant challenge. Appropriate care support is in place, including a dedicated Occupational Health team. As much communications work is carried out as possible to ensure that all staff are aware of the full support offer, which also includes mental health provision. The Service works to provide early assistance to staff in as proactive a way as possible, to seek to address physical and mental health issues before they develop into more significant problems requiring long-term sickness absence. A 'return to work' support process is also in place, including assistance in rebuilding fitness levels;
- (f) most staff injuries do not occur at work, and there is a very close focus on preventing injuries in the workplace. Many issues leading to long-term sickness can also arise through personal circumstances, so managers should seek to be aware of any problems that might affect a member of staff's work life and provide support where needed. Due to teams being relatively small, long-term absence can have a significant work impact on colleagues, so all reasonable steps are taken to provide early support to prevent sickness absence. Absence amongst firefighters on dual contracts can present particular challenges in covering the affected shifts;
- (g) the process of moving staff to the new Joint Headquarters is now starting. There are some anxieties amongst staff regarding this change, and the return to an office space in light of the Coronavirus pandemic. Managers are working hard to ensure that effective occupational support is provided, and a policy for agile working has been introduced to enable as much flexibility for the workforce as possible. It is important that staff continue to be kept fully informed about the move to the Joint Headquarters, and there is a desire to return to a more 'normal' way of working – though to a slightly different structure to that

pre-Covid. It is vital that the Service resumes its face-to-face engagement work with communities as soon as possible, and tailored risk assessments are carried out for those staff who have particular concerns so that they can carry out their work safely;

- (h) there has been one dismissal due to capability and ill health issues. In these cases, support work is carried out with the individual for a long period of time before a dismissal process is considered. An employment tribunal case has now been completed where the Service was successful in defending a claim. The case did attract media coverage, and an appropriate communications was put in place;
- (i) the Committee considered that it is important to set out how workforce productivity is measured, in order to be able to identify when productivity has returned to normal levels following the Coronavirus pandemic – particularly in the context of face-to-face community engagement work, such as 'safe and well' visits. It noted that it will also be important to monitor how staff respond to the return to a more 'normal' way of working, and how they are affected by new working structures.

The Committee noted the report.

26 Updated Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statements and Review

Craig Parkin, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, presented a report on the updates made to the Service's Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and the Joint Commitment on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity statements. The following points were discussed:

- (a) a great deal of progress is being made to bring about organisational cultural change through EDI activity, with a range of staff networks now established and more conversations taking place to make sure that everyone's voice is heard. It is vital that effective communications work is carried out to ensure that staff are aware of and understand the associated policy documents, and embed inclusion in everything that they do. It is important that staff are not just trained in EDI, but also enact it in their work;
- (b) an external evaluation has been carried out for the Service's EDI framework. A draft report has been produced and a paper on the actions arising from it will be presented to the members of the Authority in due course. The strategic leadership team is working hard to define what EDI means for the organisation, and that the Service listens effectively to the voices of under-represented groups;
- (c) the Service has a commitment to understanding all of the communities that it serves and to learn about them, to identify effectively where the greatest risks are. Positive action is carried out as part of all recruitment, and it is important to give people from all groups the confidence that a role in the Service is something that they could do. This has resulted in trainees coming into the Service from a wider range of backgrounds and groups. However, EDI must be embedded in everything that the Service does, and so needs to be resourced in a sustainable way, going forward;
- (d) a disability and neuro-divergency network is in place, and it has a strategic champion. The Service has encouraged more people to come forward for support with issues in this area, which can often be hidden, and is providing assistance in areas such as literacy and numeracy. The Committee requested that more information on the work being carried out in this area is brought to a future meeting, for discussion.

Resolved to endorse the updates to the Service’s Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and the Joint Commitment on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity statements.

27 Apprenticeship Update

Craig Parkin, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, presented a report on the apprenticeships available within the Service. The following points were discussed:

- (a) there are 27 apprentice firefighters progressing through the two-year programme, for which the Service is drawing down funding from the national apprenticeship levy. There are no fixed age requirements for becoming a firefighter apprentice. Currently, the apprenticeship scheme is for whole-time firefighters, and does not extend to on-call roles;
- (b) the Service also has 5 current apprenticeships in support roles, which are primarily focused towards younger people seeking to gain starting vocational qualifications through a two-year course. In the current period, 14% of all new starters were apprentices, making up 2% of the total staffing. Ultimately, apprenticeships are a good means of introducing more people to the Service and managers are being encouraged to consider apprenticeships for entry-level roles;
- (c) apprentices carry out an end-point assessment and are being successful in passing their courses. The Service’s apprenticeship provision has also been inspected by Ofsted, which returned a good report. Although there is a good gender balance for apprenticeships in support roles, there are more male apprentice firefighters than female – primarily due to there being more male applicants. As such, more work is required to engage with women to build their confidence in applying for a role as a firefighter.

The Committee noted the report.

28 Exclusion of the Public

The Committee resolved to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the remaining items in accordance with Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, under Schedule 12A, Part 1, Paragraphs 1 and 3, on the basis that, having regard to all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining an exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

29 Exempt Minutes

The Committee confirmed the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2021 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.



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: 29 April 2022

Purpose of Report:

To update Members on key human resources metrics for the period 1 January to 31 March 2022.

Recommendations:

That Members note the contents of the report.

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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 January 2022 to 31 March 2022, nine employees commenced employment. Establishment levels at 31 March 2022 are highlighted below:

	Approved	Actual	Variance
Wholetime	431 (431 FTE)	427 (424.3 FTE)	-4 (-6.7 FTE)
On-Call	192 Units	241 persons (includes 71 Dual Contracts)	-54.5 units (Please refer to Para 2.6)
Support	152 (149.05 FTE)	174 (163.6 FTE)	+22 (+14.55fte)

- 2.2 There have been 23 leavers and 9 starters since the last report. This has resulted in an actual workforce figure of 842 (this includes 71 dual contractors). Leavers are broken down as follows: 10 x Wholetime, 6 x On-call and 7 x Support roles.
- 2.3 As at 31 March 20221 Wholetime strength stood at 427 operational personnel (424.3 FTE) employees against an establishment of 431 posts.
- 2.4 During the period, the Service has appointed to 5 On-call and 4 support roles.
- 2.5 Overall, the number of leavers for Wholetime employees is within planning forecasts. However, turnover rates for On-call (+5) and support roles (+16 – this does not include completion of fixed term contracts) are higher than predicted. As reported in the previous review, this reflects the national picture of turnover where employment vacancy rates have increased significantly during 2021-22. This has been identified as a potential area of concern for the

Service and is referenced in the Service's risk register. During 2021-22, there have been 18 new starters to permanent support roles and 13 to On-call roles.

2.6 The recent introduction of the On-call trial at Bingham and Stapleford fire stations, whereby available hours are calculated as opposed to units of cover, has affected the variance figure set out in the table at 2.1. This now reflects the position of the fourteen stations not involved in the trial period.

SICKNESS ABSENCE

2.7 The review period covers Q4 (Jan-Mar 2022).

2.8 Target absence figures for 2021/22 are:

Wholetime:	6 days per person
Non-Uniformed:	7 days per person
Whole Workforce:	6.25 days per person

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

2.9 Summary Table: Due to the impact of Covid related absence on sickness figures, absence **excluding Covid** is shown in brackets:

Absence	Period 4 Jan – March	Compared with previous quarter	Total days lost for 21/22	Average over last 12 months
Total workforce (236 employees have been absent on 270 occasions during Q4, excluding On-call *)	1916 days lost (1381 excluding covid) 3.23 days per employee (2.32 excluding covid)	2009.64 days lost (1318.5 days excluding covid) 3.32 days per employee (2.18 days excluding covid) 4.66% decrease (-93.64 days)	7075.42 days lost (5391 days excluding covid)	11.99 days per employee (9.18 days per employee excluding covid) (target 6.25 days)

(*Due to the on-call nature of the On-call Duty System, On-call absence is not reflected in the figures. These are shown separately at Appendix C).

- 2.10 Absence across the workforce, excluding On-call employees, decreased by 93.64 days (4.66%) in Quarter Four compared to the previous quarter.
- 2.11 Excluding Covid related absence, this represents a 65% increase (+545 days) compared to the same quarter of the previous year (2020-21). It should be noted that absence during 20-21 saw an overall reduction of 25.7% compared to the previous year (2019-20), which may account for the comparatively high increase. If compared to pre-Covid absence levels (2019-20), this shows a 2.4% increase (+133 days).
- 2.12 For On-call staff, absence figures (excluding covid absence) decreased by 3.1% (23 days) compared to the same quarter of 20-21.
- 2.13 Absence related to Covid represents 547 working days lost in Q4, which accounts for 28.37% of total absence in this period. In addition, 387 days (34.74%) were lost due to covid absence for On-call personnel.
- 2.14 The trends across quarters is shown in the table set out at Appendix A.
- 2.15 A full period commentary by employment group is set out in Appendix C.
- 2.16 Long term absence equated to 49.08% of the total absence during the review period.

WHOLE YEAR ABSENCE REVIEW

- 2.17 Non Covid related sickness absence for wholetime and support employees during the financial year 2021-22, accounted for 5391 days, at an average of 9.18 days per employee. This means that the Service did not achieve its target of 6.25 days per employee. Of this, 69.5% was long term in nature i.e. absence of more than 28 days supported by a medical fit note.
- 2.18 Non Covid related sickness absence for On-call employees accounted for 3460 days, at an average of 14.12 days. This means that the Service did not achieve its target of 11 days per On-call employee. Of this, 79.6% was long term in nature.
- 2.19 Absence due to Covid related reasons accounted for an additional 1647 days for wholetime (1163 days) and support (484 days) employees and, 1079 days for On-call employees during the year. In total, Covid absence accounting for 23% of sickness absence.
- 2.20 It is very hard to draw direct comparison with absence figures for 2020-21 due to the impact of Covid. Comparison has therefore been made with the pre-Covid period of 2019-20 which has seen an overall increase of 2.54% for wholetime and support absence and 0.93% for On-call absence.
- 2.21 The Service provides significant support to employees through its Occupational and Health and Fitness team, Employee Assistance Programme and membership of the BUPA Cash-Back scheme, both to promote well-being and therefore to prevent sickness or injury arising, and to support employees during any period of sickness or injury. This includes a focus on mental health and musculo-skeletal injury, which are the two primary

reasons for sickness absence. This support includes access to counselling, physiotherapy, fitness advisor, an Occupational Health Physician and on-site gyms.

- 2.22 Work will be undertaken during 2022-23 to reduce the levels of sickness absence across all work groups.

NATIONAL ABSENCE TRENDS

- 2.23 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.
- 2.24 Reasons for sickness absence at NFRS broadly mirror the national trends with musculo-skeletal and mental health related absences featuring significantly in all workgroups.
- 2.25 Appendix B reflects the national absence trends for Quarter 3. Quarter 4 figures have not yet been published. 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.
- 2.26 For Wholetime personnel NFRS has an average of 8.48 days lost per employee which ranks the Service as 30th out of the 38 Services included in the survey. This figure is above the sector sickness average of 8.10 days per employee. The lowest average was 4.06 and the highest 13.5.
- 2.27 For On-call staff, NFRS has an average of 13.92 days lost per employee which ranks the Service 20 out of the 24 Services included in the survey. This figure is above the sector sickness average of 10.18 days per employee. The lowest average was 3.68 and the highest 22.97.
- 2.28 For Support Staff (Green Book) the Service has an average of 9.17 days lost per employee which ranks the Service 35 out of the 39 Services included in the survey. This figure is above the sector sickness average of 6.72 days per employee. The lowest average was 0.93 days and the highest 12.22 days.

OTHER WORKFORCE METRICS

- 2.29 This section reviews the following activities: disciplinary cases, grievances raised, harassment cases raised, dismissals, appeals and active employment tribunal cases.
- 2.30 Over the period, one grievance has been heard. This related to a management decision.

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

- 4.1 A review of sickness absence will be undertaken as a priority with the aim of reducing both short- and long-term sickness levels. This review will be overseen by the Head of People and Organisational Development.
- 4.2 An updated Workforce Plan will be developed to support the delivery of the Community Risk Management Plan (Our People) for the period 2022-23 and will be reported to a future meeting.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

As this review does not impact upon policy or service delivery, no equality impact assessment has been undertaken.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

There are no crime and disorder 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 the report.

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

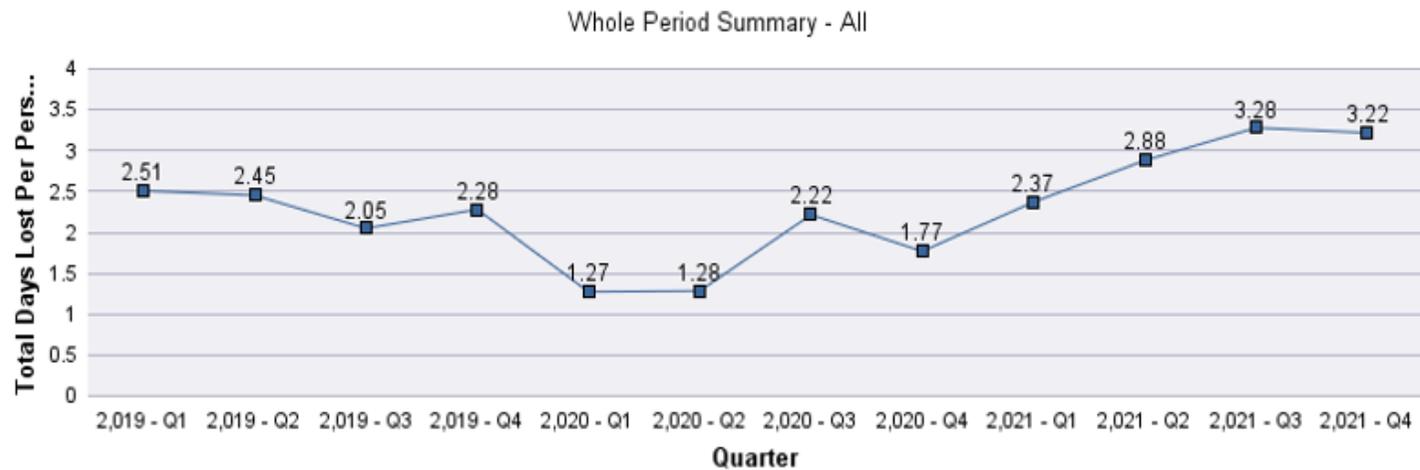
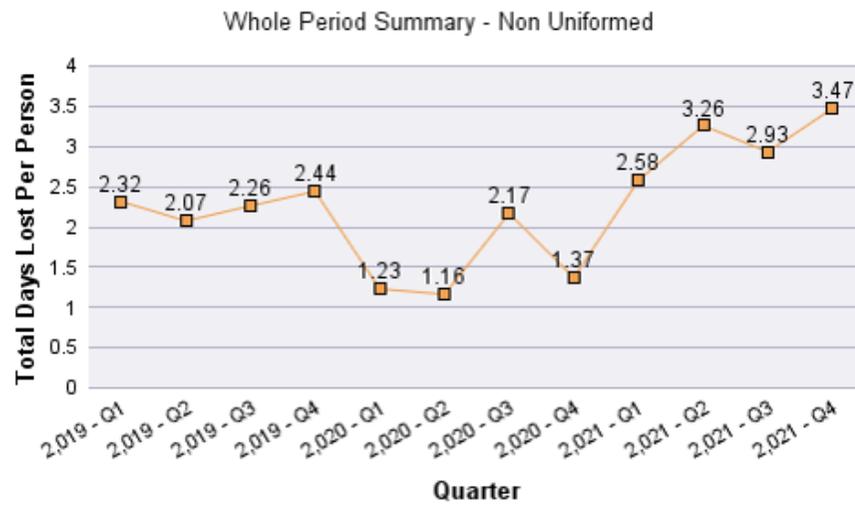
None.

Craig Parkin
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

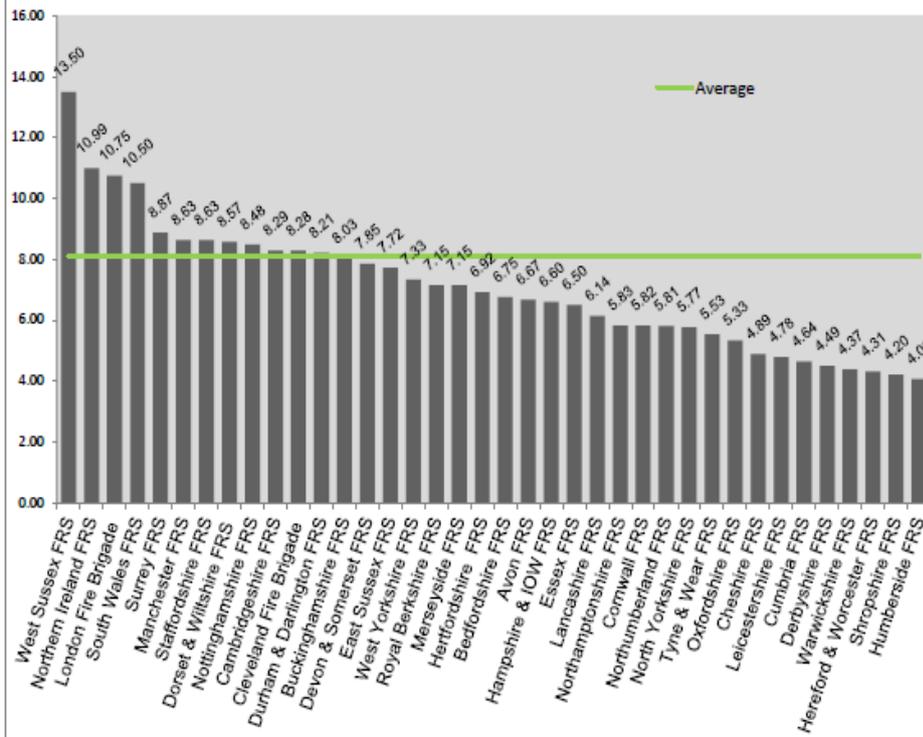
APPENDIX A

Appendix - Reporting Period: 01/04/2019 to 31/03/2022

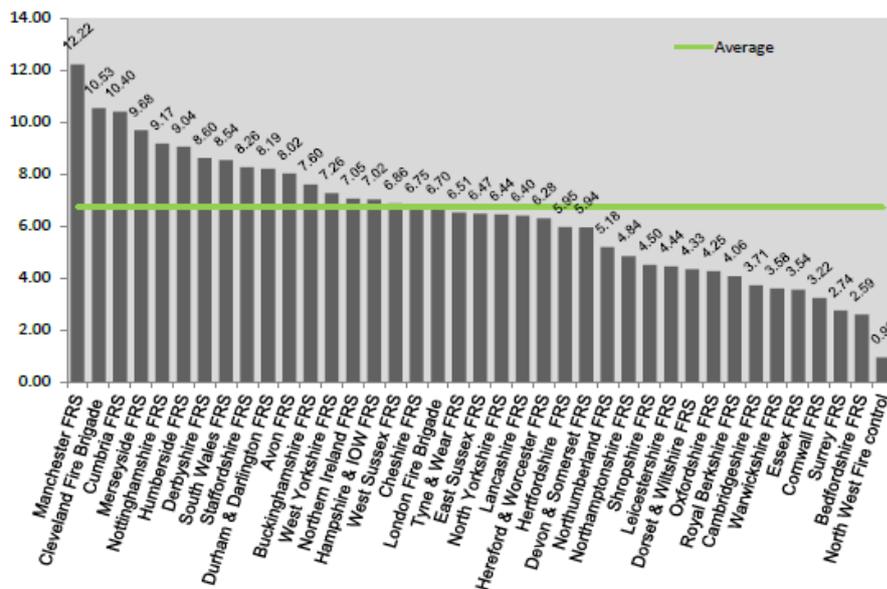
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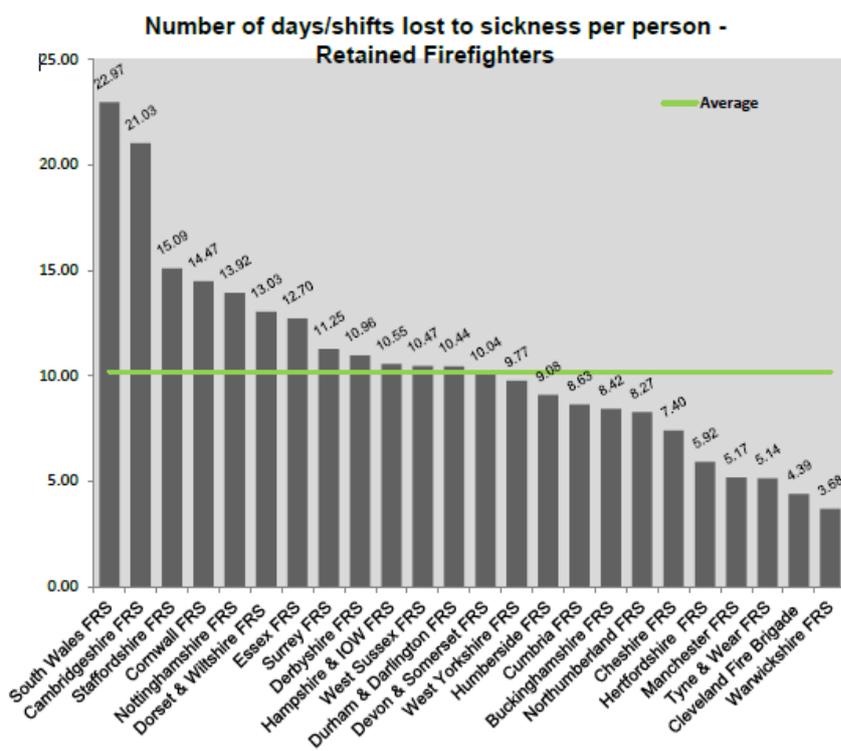


Number of days/shifts lost to sickness per person -
Wholetime Firefighters



Number of days/shifts lost to sickness per person
Green Book staff





Please note that not all FRS in the survey have reported covid related absence.

Q4 2021/22 – WHOLETIME

In total 1323.7 working days were lost due to sickness during this quarter. Of this, 644 days were lost to long-term absence (28+ calendar days absent) and 679.7 days were lost due to short term absence. This represents an overall decrease of 164.3 days (11.04%) on the previous quarter. The average absence per employee was 3.08 days lost, which is above the target figure of 1.6 days lost per quarter per employee.

48.65% of sickness absence in this quarter was due to long term absence. There were 62 periods of absence covered by a Medical Certificate (i.e. absence longer than 8 days in duration), 20 of which were classified as long-term sickness. At the end of the period 46 employees had returned to work with 16 still absent.

Reasons for Absence

Main reasons for sickness absence for the Wholetime are Covid-19 Tested Positive (88 instances, 377 days) and Musculo Skeletal (33 instances, 377 days). The main long-term absence reasons were Musculo Skeletal (8 instances, 276 days) For short term absences was Covid-19 Tested Positive (88 instances, 370 days).

Wholetime

			<u>Short Term Absences</u>			<u>Long Term Absences</u>		
Absence Reason - Grouped	Unique Absence Count	Days Lost	Absence Reason - Grouped	Unique Absence Count	Days Lost	Absence Reason - Grouped	Unique Absen	Days Lost
Musculo Skeletal	33	377	COVID-19 Isolating - Tested Positive	88	370	Musculo Skeletal	8	276
COVID-19 Isolating - Tested Positive	88	370	Musculo Skeletal	25	101	Mental Health	6	191
Mental Health	7	199	Hospital/Post Operative	6	39	Mental Health - Other	2	71
Respiratory - Cold/Cough/Influenza	15	83	Gastro-Intestinal	12	31	Respiratory - Cold/Cough/Influenza	1	53
Mental Health - Other	5	79	Respiratory - Cold/Cough/Influenza	14	30	Hospital/Post Operative	1	30
Hospital/Post Operative	7	69	Respiratory - Chest Infection	7	25	Cancer and Tumours	1	15
Gastro-Intestinal	12	31	Ear, Nose, Throat	3	19	Heart, Cardiac and Circulatory Problems	1	8
Respiratory - Chest Infection	7	25	Other known causes (not specified in list)	3	17			
Ear, Nose, Throat	3	19	Unknown causes, not specified	3	11			
Other known causes (not specified in list)	3	17	Mental Health	1	8			
			Mental Health - Other	4	8			

NON-UNIFORMED

In total 592.3 working days were lost due to sickness during this quarter. Of this, 296.38 days were lost to long-term absence (28+ calendar days absent) and 295.93 days were lost due to short term absence. This represents an overall increase of 70.67 days (13.55%) on the previous quarter. The average absence per employee was 3.6 days lost, which is above the target figure of 1.6 days lost per quarter per employee.

50.04% of sickness absence in this quarter was due to long term absence. There were 20 periods of absence covered by a Medical Certificate (i.e. absence longer than 8 days in duration), 6 of which were classified as long-term sickness. At the end of the period 15 employees had returned to work with 5 still absent.

Reasons for Absence

Main reasons for sickness absence for the Non-Uniformed are Covid-19 Tested Positive (31 instances, 162 days) and Mental Health (4 instances, 114 days). The main long-term absence reason was Mental Health (2 instances, 80 days) For short term absences was Covid-19 Tested Positive (31 instances, 162 days).

Non Uniformed			Short Term Absences			Long Term Absences		
Absence Reason - Grouped	Unique Absence Count	Days Lost	Absence Reason - Grouped	Unique Absence Count	Days Lost	Absence Reason - Grouped	Unique Absence Count	Days Lost
COVID-19 Isolating - Tested Positive	31	162	COVID-19 Isolating - Tested Positive	31	162	Mental Health	2	80
Mental Health	4	114	Mental Health	2	34	Cancer and Tumours	1	64
Musculo Skeletal	6	85	Respiratory - Cold/Cough/Influenza	12	30	Musculo Skeletal	1	64
Cancer and Tumours	1	64	Musculo Skeletal	5	21	Hospital/Post Operative	1	49
Hospital/Post Operative	2	54	Mental Health - Other	1	19	Other known causes (not specified in list)	1	38
Other known causes (not specified in list)	2	41	Gastro-Intestinal	5	12			
Respiratory - Cold/Cough/Influenza	12	30	COVID-19 Isolating Symptoms Self	3	11			
Mental Health - Other	1	19	Respiratory - Chest Infection	2	7			
Gastro-Intestinal	5	12	Hospital/Post Operative	1	5			
COVID-19 Isolating Symptoms Self	3	11	Ear, Nose, Throat	2	3			
			Other known causes (not specified in list)	1	3			

ON CALL ABSENCE

Attendance for on-call fire-fighters does not reflect shifts lost as they do not have standard working hours, instead it reflects calendar days lost e.g. availability to attend incidents or training periods and absence is predicated over a 7-day availability pattern (compared to 4 day shift traditionally for whole-time employees). In Q4, 1114 days were unavailable due to sickness, broken down into 528 days of long-term absence (28+ days) and 586 days of short-term absence. This equates to an average of 4.62 “days” of unavailability per employee. Compared to Q3, when 1333 days were lost to sickness absence, this reflects a decrease of 219 available days lost to sickness (-16.43%).

There were 37 periods of absence covered by a Medical Certificate (i.e. absence longer than 8 days in duration), 7 of which were classified as long-term sickness. At the end of the period 30 employees had returned to work with 7 still absent.

Reasons for Absence

Main reasons for sickness absence for On-Call are Covid-19 Tested Positive (47 instances, 382 days) and Musculo Skeletal (12 instances, 179 days). The main long-term absence reason was Mental Health (2 instances, 155 days) For short term absences was Covid-19 Tested Positive (47 instances, 382 days).

Retained			Short Term Absences			Long Term Absences		
Absence Reason - Grouped	Unique Absence Count	Days Lost	Absence Reason - Grouped	Unique Absence Count	Days Lost	Absence Reason - Grouped	Unique Absence Count	Days Lost
COVID-19 Isolating - Tested Positive	47	382	COVID-19 Isolating - Tested Positive	47	382	Mental Health - Other	2	155
Musculo Skeletal	12	179	Musculo Skeletal	11	89	Mental Health	2	123
Mental Health - Other	3	162	Hospital/Post Operative	2	49	Musculo Skeletal	1	90
Mental Health	2	123	Gastro-Intestinal	8	27	Respiratory - Other	1	90
Hospital/Post Operative	3	91	Other known causes (not specified in list)	2	15	Hospital/Post Operative	1	42
Respiratory - Other	1	90	Respiratory - Cold/Cough/Influenza	4	15			
Gastro-Intestinal	8	27	Eye Problems	3	12			
Other known causes (not specified in list)	2	15	Ear, Nose, Throat	2	7			
Respiratory - Cold/Cough/Influenza	4	15	Mental Health - Other	1	7			
Eye Problems	3	12	COVID-19 Isolating Symptoms Self	2	5			



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

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

EQUALITIES MONITORING

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Date: 29 April 2022

Purpose of Report:

To provide Members with an update on the breakdown of the workforce and applicant analysis by protected characteristic for the period 1 October to 31 March 2022.

Recommendations:

That Members note the content of the report and support the Service's continued commitment to attracting, recruiting and retaining a more diverse workforce.

CONTACT OFFICER

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 As part of Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service's (NFRS) commitment to promoting equality and diversity, the Human Resources (HR) Committee considers updates on the breakdown of the workforce and the work being done to address under-representation by protected characteristic.
- 1.2 This report constitutes a six-month period from 01 October – 31 March 22. Please note the reporting periods have changed from previous reports to be in line with the financial year.

2. REPORT

WORKFORCE PROFILE

- 2.1 Workforce profile information is analysed by work group (Wholetime, On-call, Support). Breaking down the workforce in this way allows for the identification of specific issues by distinct employee groups. Each have differences in job type, conditions of service and workforce composition. The charts below provide a snapshot of under-represented groups in the Service and how they have changed over a 4-year period. The data from which these charts have been created can be found at Appendix A. With the exception of disability, all groups show an increase of under-represented groups across the workforce.

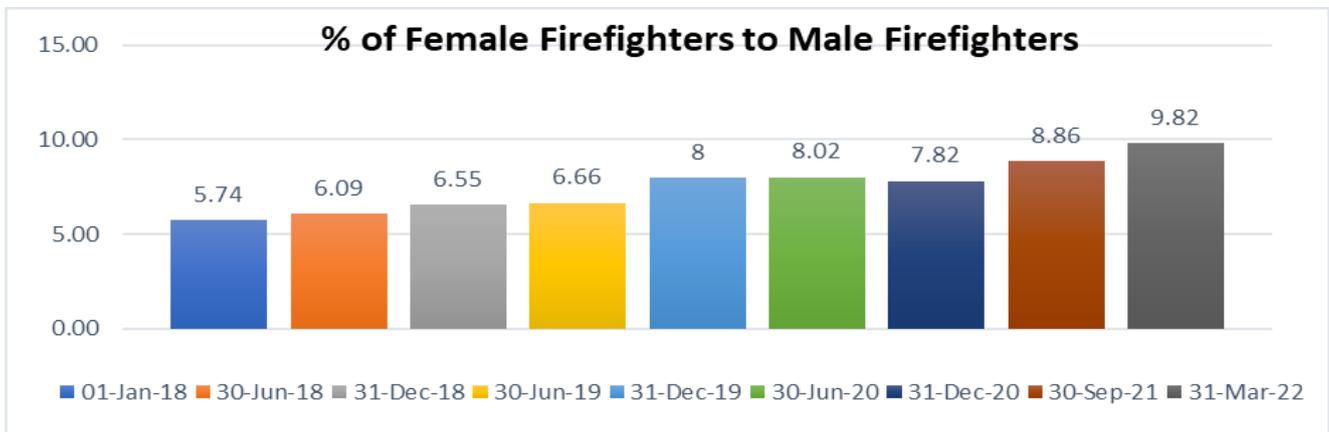


Table 1 – of all firefighters (wholetime and on-call) does not include Crew or Watch Managers

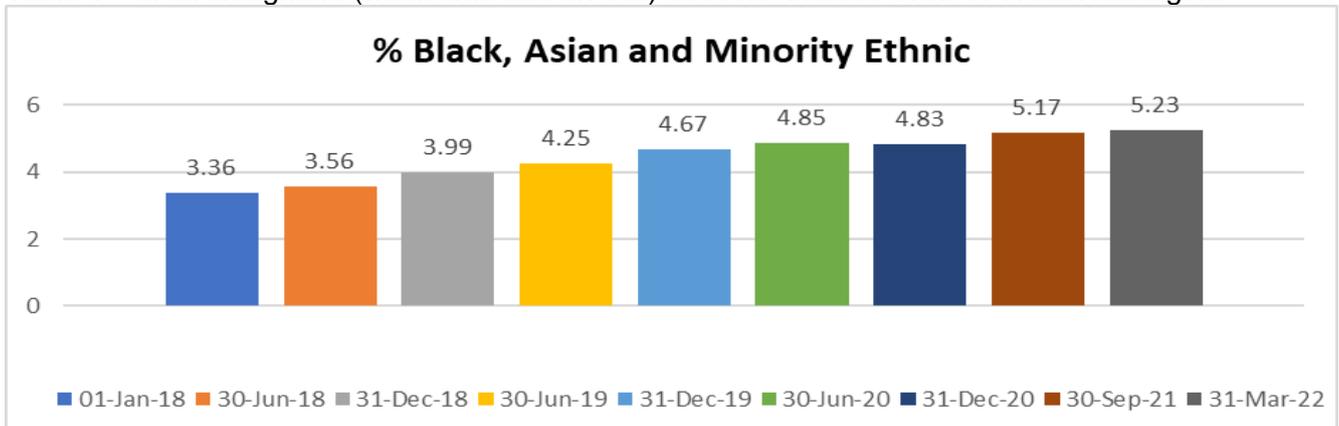


Table 2 – of all employees

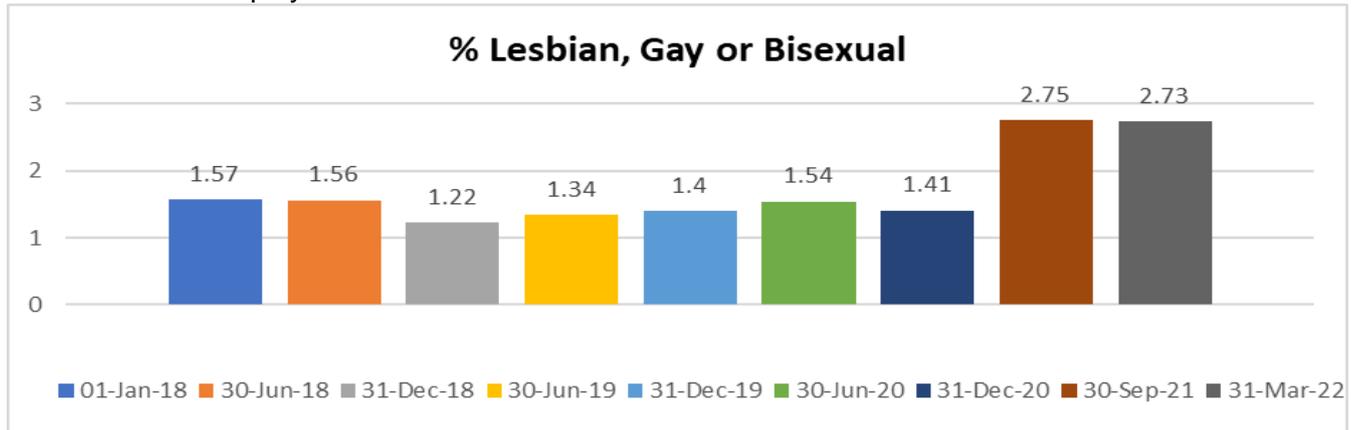


Table 3 – of all employees

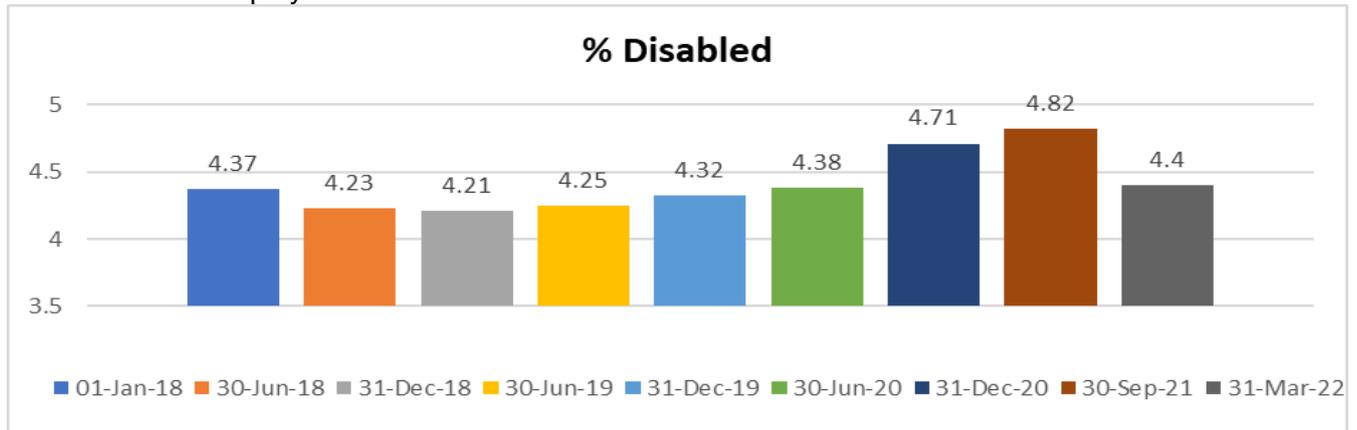


Table 4 – of all employees

GENDER

- 2.2 Women currently constitute 17% (143) of the total workforce. Of these, 35.57% (48) women are employed in operational roles (including management roles), which represents 7.20% of operational roles undertaken.
- 2.3 At a senior level, four members of the Strategic Leadership Team are women (33.33%) – and seven (38.88%) hold senior management support roles at Grade 8 and above, it should be noted there is currently one vacancy within the Service’s senior leadership team.
- 2.4 The recent Watch (WM) and Crew Manager (CM) processes which have taken place within the last six months, have seen 17 substantive CM appointments made up of 5.88% (1) female and 94.12% (16) male, 8 WM appointments, 12.5% (1) female and 87.5% (7) male.
- 2.5 The Service supports career progression through its Aspiring Leaders and Look Ahead programmes for those considering a step up to supervisory or middle manager roles, which are open to all employees, and sponsors applications to the local Future Leaders programme for women.
- 2.6 Within the support workforce there continues to be more women (98) than men employed (79). However, it should be noted that men occupy higher numbers of senior organisational positions (61.11%) than women (38.88%).

Support Employees	Men	Women	BAME	LGB
Grades 1-4 (plus Apprentice)	24	41	5	6
Grades 5-7	44	47	9	2
Grades 8-SLSM	11	7		

Table B in Appendix A shows the workforce profile by gender.

ETHNIC ORIGIN

- 2.7 Employees from BAME backgrounds constitute 5.23% (44) of the workforce (excluding employees who defined themselves as Irish and White Other). Of these, 3.56% (30) are employed in operational roles.
- 2.8 To provide some context to these figures, BAME communities constitute 11.2% of Nottinghamshire's population based on the 2011 census. This demonstrates that the organisation still faces a challenge to attract and recruit applicants from different ethnic backgrounds to fire service roles and better reflect the communities it serves.
- 2.9 Since September 2021 there has been a slight decrease in the number of BAME staff, from 5.23% (45) to 5.17% (44). Table C in Appendix A shows the workforce profile by ethnic origin. It can be noted there has been 8.19% (5) leavers from BAME backgrounds of the 61 leavers within the last six months and 21.05% (4) starters from BAME backgrounds of the 19 starters.
- 2.10 The Service supports career progression through its Aspiring Leaders and Look Ahead programmes for those considering a step up to supervisory or middle manager roles, which are open to all employees, and sponsors applications to the local Future Leaders programme for BAME employees. This has been successful in seeing 75% of participants moving into higher level roles.
- 2.11 The Service continues to undertake positive action, particularly for firefighter roles which traditionally have received low levels of applications from BAME candidates.

POSITIVE ACTION

- 2.12 The Service is currently undertaking a range of positive action measures to address under-representation for the wholetime firefighter recruitment campaign taking place in Summer 2022. Over 300 individuals have responded to social media and other advertising. A range of events are being run to develop a greater interest in and understanding of the role, as well as addressing some of the barriers that some people may face when applying to become a firefighter. This work includes bespoke mentoring and support regarding the recruitment process, awareness of the role, fitness sessions and events in the community and on fire stations. A firefighter has been seconded to the People and Organisational Development Department to co-ordinate this work.

DISABILITY, REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS AND NEURODIVERSITY

- 2.13 The declaration rate of disability is 4.40% (37) of the total workforce. It can be noted this has decreased from 4.80% (44) when compared with 30th September 2021, there have been 7 disabled staff leave within the six-month period of this report, 2 Wholetime, 1 On-call and 4 Support staff. In addition, there have been 2 disabled starters within the six months of 1October 2021 – 31March 2022.
- 2.14 The declaration rate amongst support employees is at 10.34% (18) which is in line with the working age population in the UK that is disabled, which is approximately 10%. However, when operational employees are included, this figure reduces to 4.40% of the workforce.
- 2.15 The reduction relates directly to the fitness, strength and other medical requirements, such as sight and hearing, which ensure that prospective candidates are fit for role.
- 2.16 Whilst disability declaration rates remain relatively low, the Service continues to raise awareness of disability issues, such as dyslexia and mental health, to support employees to undertake their role and will consider reasonable adjustments wherever possible to allow them to continue in their role.
- 2.17 It is worth noting the Service has a commitment to making its work environment accessible for disabled employees including those who are neurodiverse. The Service has made Read and Write Gold software (designed to assist those who show traits of dyslexia and related conditions) available on all its devices since 2018 and has a Dyslexia Policy in place to provide a commitment of proactive support to employees and applicants who may need it. NFRS also works closely with a dyslexia consultant to ensure that appropriate reasonable adjustments are in place.
- 2.18 Employees also act as Dyslexia champions – sharing their experience and knowledge with others. Additionally, the Service has reasonable adjustments guidance (with a Reasonable Adjustments ‘Passport’ in development) and a disability equality policy for its employees and managers. Disability awareness and dyslexia awareness training courses are also available for staff.
- 2.19 The Service’s efforts to actively create employee networks have been detailed in recent reports. A disability network incorporating neurodiversity and accessibility was advertised late last year and held its first meeting in January this year, where its role and terms of reference were established. The initial meeting was well attended, members shared experiences/ideas and voted to call the network ‘Disability Matters’.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

- 2.20 The number of employees identifying as lesbian, gay or bisexual is 2.73% (23) of the workforce as of the 31 March 2022. This is against an expected national LGB population of 5 - 7% (quoted by Stonewall).

- 2.21 The Service has worked hard to maintain LGBT+ equality within its workforce and engage with its LGBT+ communities. This hard work has been rewarded with a Top 100 place in the 2022 Stonewall Workplace Equality Index with a ranking of 86th with a Gold award.
- 2.22 An LGBT+ and Proud Friends employee network has become established during 2021 and has undertaken a number of initiatives to raise understanding of LGBT+ issues within the workforce.
- 2.23 The most recent Wholetime firefighter campaign showed an increase in people who identify as LGBT+ choosing to apply for firefighter roles. This is an encouraging indicator and suggests that the Service's commitment to LGBT+ equality is resonating with applicants, and NFRS aspires to build upon this trend.

AGE

- 2.24 Table D of Appendix A sets out the numbers of employees by age and work group. These are grouped in ten-year intervals. The figures show that the largest single group are those people aged between 36 – 45 years old who make up 32.46% (273) of the workforce.
- 2.25 However, if employees aged over 45 are grouped together, this represents 41.97% (353) of the workforce – of these, 49.29% (174) undertake wholetime roles and 23.51% (83) undertake On-Call roles. As the typical retirement age for operational personnel is between 50 and 60, this has implications for projected turnover over the next ten years, and the associated loss of experience and knowledge to the service. At the other end of the age scale, 4.28% (36) of all employees are aged 16-25.
- 2.26 The annual Workforce Plan ensures that the Service has effective succession planning in place to mitigate against this anticipated turnover.

RELIGION

- 2.27 Table E of Appendix A sets out the numbers of employees by religion/faith. 43.16% (363) of the workforce state that they have no religion and 12.72% (107) chose not to specify. The highest number of employees specify their religion as Christian 41.38% (348).
- 2.28 The Service has been delivering Faith training online to wholetime crews since May 2021 which provides an interactive overview of the different religions in Nottinghamshire, this is complemented by religion and belief e-learning which has been developed and is currently being promoted to all staff.
- 2.29 Faith podcasts are also being produced to raise levels of understanding of particular religions as a resource for staff to refer back to, to date a podcast on Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism have been delivered, and future podcasts are planned to raise awareness of other faiths.

GENDER IDENTITY

2.30 In July 2018, the Service started to monitor gender identity and gender reassignment. Declaration is voluntary and, to date, 22.94% (193) of employees have provided gender reassignment data and 34.37% (289) have provided gender identity data.

RECRUITMENT

SUBSTANTIVE PROMOTIONS

2.31 During the six-month period from 1 October – 31 March 2022, a crew and watch manager promotion process took place. Some detail of the results of these processes can be found below:

	Watch Manager				Crew Manager			
	Female	Male	BAME	LGBT	Female	Male	BAME	LGB
Applicants	2 – 7.69%	24 – 92.31%	2 – 7.68%	1 – 3.85%	1 - 3.03%	32 – 96.97%	2 – 6.06%	0
Interview	2 - 8%	23 – 92%	2 – 8%	1 – 4%	1 – 3.03%	31 – 3.03%	2 – 6.06%	0
Appointed	1 – 12.5%	7 – 87.50%	0	1 – 1.11%	1 – 5.88%	16 – 94.12%	2– 11.76%	0

2.32 While representation of female, LGBT and BAME applicants remains low within both processes it is positive to see success of one female Watch Manager and one Watch Manager identifying as LGBT, one female Crew Manager and two BAME Crew Managers. Those unsuccessful within these processes will be provided with feedback and in many cases are given temporary posts to develop their experience.

SUPPORT STAFF RECRUITMENT

2.33 Between 1 October 2021 – 01 March 2022 the Service received 54 applicants in total for 13 vacancies. It should be noted that 4 of these vacancies were not filled within the review period. The breakdown of applicants, those shortlisted for interview and appointed was as follows:

	Female	Male	BAME	Disabled	LGBT
Applicants	19	35	6	9	6
Shortlisted	11	22	1	7	4
Appointed	3	6	0	3	1

2.34 The highest number of applications 31.48% (17) were from applicants within the age range of 26 - 35.

2.35 To extend the range of recruitment adverts for vacancies the Service utilises social media messaging, national and local recruitment platforms and shares

vacancy information with organisations representing under-represented groups to try to increase the diversity of applicants, wherever possible.

- 2.36 It is worth noting that the Service guarantees applicants with a disability an interview providing they meet the essential criteria if they opt into being assessed under the guaranteed interview scheme. All applicants are interviewed and appointed according to merit.

ON-CALL RECRUITMENT

- 2.37 The Service received 39 applications for one recruitment campaign for On-call firefighters.
- 2.38 Of the 39 applicants, 15.38% (6) of applicants were female, 1 failed at the location and application stage and the remaining five were not successful at the job-related tests stage, this equates to 31.25% of those rejected at this stage. 1 of these applicants has reapplied and after working on their fitness from a structured training program provided by the Service, they have been successful and will be start on the April course. The other five female applicants have been contacted with feedback and are encouraged to reapply.
- 2.39 5.12% (2) applications were received from BAME applicants, but they were not successful at the application and location sift. The Service will be investing further in On-Call positive action to address the low levels of diversity entering the on-call workforce.
- 2.40 However, applications are restricted to a specific location due to the nature of the On-call system, and this can adversely impact upon the number of applications from BAME candidates.
- 2.41 The Service is undertaking a range of activities to make On-call firefighting more appealing to underrepresented groups, measures include introducing a range of contracts specifying differing levels of hour commitments, breaking the training up so trainees don't have to complete it all at once and it can be more flexible around other commitments and better engagement with target groups via 'have a go sessions' prior to on-call recruitment.

WHOLE YEAR WORKFORCE REVIEW

- 2.42 On 1 April 2021 the total of the workforce was 847 on 31 March it was 841, whilst the difference in the headcount of the organisation is marginal, the changes within the diversity of the workforce can be noted from the figures below.

	1st April 2021	31st March 2022
Female firefighters	8.83% (37 out of 419)	9.82 % (39 out of 397)
Women employed in operational roles	6.72% (45 out of 669)	7.20 (48 out of 667)
Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME)	4.72% (40)	5.23% (44)

Lesbian, gay or bisexual	1.77% (15)	2.73% (23)
Disabled	5.19% (44)	4.40% (37)

2.43 Improvements can be noted in the numbers of female firefighters, BAME staff and LGB staff, however a reduction in disabled staff can also be noted.

STARTERS AND LEAVERS

2.44 There have been 64 starters and 87 leavers, please note leavers may still be counted within the headcount due to the report date. The table below shows details of these starters and leavers.

	Starters			Leavers		
	On-call	Wholetime	Support	On-call	Wholetime	Support
Women	0	14.29% (4)	34.78% (8)	0	0	38.46% (15)
Men	100% (13)	85.71% (24)	65.22% (15)	100% (22)	100% (26)	64.54% (24)
BAME	0	21.43% (6)	17.39% (4)	9.09% (2)	7.69% (2)	7.69% (3)
LGB	0	21.43% (6)	17.39% (4)	4.55% (1)	3.85% (1)	0

2.45 Whilst the Service did not recruit any On-call firefighters from underrepresented groups, it does continue to develop positive action measures to develop a more diverse workforce. It is really positive to see the diversity of starters from the 2020 wholetime recruitment campaign. While it can be noted more men have commenced employment with the Service in support roles, BAME and LGBT figures are very positive and are greater than the proportion of the local community according to census data.

2.46 The figures for both On-call and Wholetime leavers are not unusual and are a result of resignations, retirements, end of fixed term contracts etc. It can be noted there have been 39 leavers within the support workforce, this is higher than usual, there isn't evidence to suggest any particular factors relating to protected characteristics.

ON-CALL RECRUITMENT AND SUPPORT STAFF RECRUITMENT

2.47 Two on-call recruitment campaigns have taken place over the last financial year, attracting 97 applicants between them. Of the 97 applicants 14 were female but none were appointed. 3 of the 97 applicants were from BAME backgrounds but were unsuccessful in the process. The Service continues to invest in how it can attract more applicants to on call roles from underrepresented groups and work with those applicants from underrepresented backgrounds who were unsuccessful to develop their skills/strength were eligible to apply.

2.48 Within support staff recruitment 214 applications were received for 34 roles, however it should be noted 11 of these roles were not appointed to. The table below shows the demographics of these applicants.

	Application	Interview	Appointed
Female	39.25% (84)	34.61% (36)	43.47% (10)
Male	60.75% (130)	65.38% (68)	56.52 (13)
LGB	20.09% (43)	11.53% (12)	17.39% (4)
Disability	13.55% (29)	18.27% (19)	26.09% (6)
BAME	8.41% (18)	10.58% (11)	17.39% (4)

2.49 Of the support staff applications and appointments, there have been a diverse range of applicants and it is really positive to be able to evidence.

CONCLUSION

2.50 The above data represents some gradual improvements in the diversity of the Service’s workforce overall and shows that the workforce profile is becoming more representative of the local population in terms of employees from BAME backgrounds. However, further work is required to improve upon this.

2.51 Women represent 17% of the NFRS workforce, and accounts for 7.2% of the operational workforce and 54.6% of those undertaking non-operational support roles. Achieving an increase in women undertaking operational roles is an objective within the People Strategy.

2.52 The Service is in the process of planning its next Wholetime recruitment campaign which has been delayed but is expected to take place during the Summer of this year. The Service will be using a range of positive action measures as part of its recruitment strategy to encourage more applications from both women and BAME candidates.

2.53 The Service continues to provide targeted development opportunities for women and other underrepresented groups within the Service’s workforce. Within the last six months, the Service received interest from nine women in attending the women in the fire service weekend with a focus on career development and was very pleased to fund all nine requests. The Service has recently launched a Women’s Network, which works with the national Women in the Fire Service group to promote support for female staff and address equality issues.

2.54 In addition to the Disability and Women’s network, the Service has also established an Ethnic Minority Alliance and a LGBT+ and Proud Friends Network. All networks within the Service have an SLT strategic sponsor and report into Inclusion Steering Group. The networks have an important role in maintaining an inclusive work environment and providing support to staff from minority groups. As networks develop, it is envisaged development opportunities can be shared and may help those from minority groups to access support in considering career development opportunities.

- 2.55 In terms of declaration levels, 'Not Stated' or 'Prefer not to Say' remain an area in need of improvement in religion/belief (12.72%) and sexual orientation (10.58%), although a reduction in levels of 'prefer not to say' has been achieved over recent years, a data verification communication was used late last year which has had an impact and will be undertaken annually.
- 2.56 As part of a wider review of the workforce structure, there is an aspiration to address resourcing requirements to take forward the inclusion and diversity agenda.

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 addressed throughout the report. The monitoring shows that there is still an under-representation of women in operational roles, and of employees from BAME backgrounds or who define themselves as LGBT, or who declare a disability across the workforce.
- 4.2 Whilst measures have been put in place to address the issues leading to under-representation, the Service continues to commit to further improve both the applicant and appointment rates from under-represented groups. This includes the continued requirement for targeted positive action measures and support through the provision of appropriate resources.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken because this is not a policy, function or service. However, it should be noted that this information is used to analyse equality outcomes and inform changes to practices and positive action.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The advancement of equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it is a key element of the Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010).

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

A failure to represent the community being served can impact upon trust and confidence in public services. Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service is cognisant of this as a risk to its reputation and ability to engage with its communities and service users.

9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS

The Service attends community engagement events in collaboration with Nottinghamshire Police and works as a key stakeholder on the Future Leaders of Nottingham steering group. The Service also holds events in partnerships with public services covering a range of protected characteristics in order to promote equality of opportunity.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members note the content of the report and support the Service's continued commitment to attracting, recruiting and retaining a more diverse workforce.

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

None.

Craig Parkin
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

**APPENDIX A
TABLE A**

	1 Jan 2018	30 June 2018	31 Dec 2018	30 June 2019	31 Dec 2019	30 June 2020	31 Dec 2020	30 Sept 2021	31 st Mar 2022
Total	893	899	902	894	856	845	849	871	841
Female firefighters No. of posts	5.74 % (26 of 453)	6.09 % (28 of 460)	6.55 % (31 of 473)	6.66 % (31 of 465)	8% (36 of 450)	8.02 % (35 of 436)	7.82 % (33 of 422)	8.86 % (39 out of 440)	9.82 % (39 out of 397)
Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME)	3.36 % (30)	3.56 % (32)	3.99 % (36)	4.25 % (38)	4.67 % (40)	4.85 % (41)	4.83 % (41)	5.17 % (45)	5.23 % (44)
Lesbian, gay or bisexual	1.57 % (14)	1.56 % (14)	1.22 % (11)	1.34 % (12)	1.4% (12)	1.54 % (13)	1.41 % (12)	2.75 % (24)	2.73 % (23)
Disabled	4.37 % (39)	4.23 % (38)	4.21 % (38)	4.25 % (38)	4.32 (37)	4.38 % (37)	4.71 % (40)	4.82 % (42)	4.40 % (37)

TABLE B

Workforce by Gender

Gender	Wholetime	On-call	Support	Total	%
Male	391	228	79	698	83.00%
Female	35	13	95	143	17.00%
Total	426	241	174	841	

TABLE C

Workforce by Ethnic Origin

Ethnic Origin	Wholetime	On-Call	Support	Total	%
BAME	24	6	14	44	5.23%
Not declared	21	7	7	35	4.16%
White British	360	216	146	722	85.85%
White Irish / White Other	21	12	7	40	4.76%
Total	426	241	174	841	

Please note – to protect the identity of those in minority ethnic groups, a classification of BAME has been used to denote employees defining their ethnic origin as Asian British, Indian, Pakistani, Asian Other, Black, Black British, Black Caribbean, Black Other, Chinese, Mixed White Asian, White Black British, Mixed Other, Other Ethnic group.

TABLE D

Workforce Profile by Age

	Wholetime	On-call	Support	Total	%
16-25	6	15	15	36	4.28%
26-35	87	69	23	179	21.28%
36-45	159	74	40	273	32.46%
46-55	151	61	49	261	31.03%
56-65	23	22	44	89	10.58%
+65			3	3	0.36%
Total	426	241	174	841	

Workforce by Religious Belief

TABLE E

Religion	Total Number	% Total
Any other Religion	5	0.59%
Buddhist	3	0.36%
Christian (all denominations)	348	41.38%
Hindu	2	0.24%
Muslim	3	0.36%
No Religion	363	43.16%
Not Specified	107	12.72%
Other	8	0.95%
Sikh	2	0.24%
Total	841	

TABLE F

Starters by gender ethnic origin and sexual orientation

	Wholetime	On-call	Support	Total	%
Female			5	5	26.32%
Male	1	5	8	14	73.68%
Total	1	5	13	19	
BAME			4	4	21.05
Not disclosed			1	1	5.26
White British	1	5	8	14	73.68%
	1	5	13	19	
Age					
17-25		4	2	6	31.58%
26-35			2	2	10.53%
36-45	1	1	3	5	26.32%
46+			6	6	31.58%
Total	1	5	13	19	

Bisexual			1	1	5.26%
Declined to specify	0	0	0	0	
Gay/lesbian	0	0	00	0	
Straight/Heterosexual	1	5	12	18	94.74%
Total	1	5	13	19	

Please note – to protect the identity of those in small ethnic groups, a classification of BAME has been used to denote employees defining their ethnic origin as Asian British, Indian, Pakistani, Asian Other, Black, Black British, Black Caribbean, Black Other, Chinese, Mixed White Asian, White Black British, Mixed Other, Other Ethnic group.

TABLE G

Reasons for leaving by gender, ethnic origin and age

	Resignation	Retirement	Fixed Term	Other	Total	%
By Gender						
Female	10	1	1	1	13	21.31%
Male	22	17	7	2	48	78.69%
Total	32	18	8	3	61	
By ethnic origin						
BAME	3		1	1	5	8.20
White British	24	18	4	2	48	78.68
White Irish/ White Other	2		1		3	4.92
Not disclosed	5				5	8.20
Total	34	18	6	3	61	
By Age						
<25	5	0	2	0	7	10.93
26-35	5	0	2	2	9	14.75
36-45	12	0	0	0	12	19.67
46+	12	18	2	1	33	54.10
Total	34	18	6	3	61	
By sexual orientation						
Straight heterosexual	23	16	5	3	47	77.05
LGB	2				2	3.27
Prefer not to specify	9	2	1	0	12	19.67
Total	34	18	6	3	61	

Please note – to protect the identity of those in small ethnic groups, a classification of BME has been used to denote employees defining their ethnic origin as Asian British, Indian, Pakistani, Asian Other, Black, Black British, Black Caribbean, Black Other, Chinese, Mixed White Asian, White Black British, Mixed Other, Other Ethnic group.

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NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

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

PEOPLE STRATEGY

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Date: 29 April 2022

Purpose of Report:

To inform Members of progress against the People Strategy 2020-22.

Recommendations:

That Members note the report and progress made against the objectives of the People Strategy 2020-22.

CONTACT OFFICER

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The People Strategy was refreshed in April 2020 to align with the Strategic Plan 2019-22. The Strategy sought to set out how workforce issues would be prioritised and progressed to meet the Service's strategic aims and objectives. A summary of objectives is set out at Appendix A.
- 1.2 Many of the commitments set out within the Strategy built upon progress made within the previous People Strategy 2017-20, which were reported to this Committee in January 2021, and subsequent updates have been provided during the course of the review period.
- 1.3 The adoption of a three-year Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2022-2025 will require a revision of the Strategy, which will form part of wider corporate planning to support delivery of the CRMP. These are included as Strategic Goal 4: We will continue to support and develop our workforce and promote an inclusive service.
- 1.4 This report summarises progress against the People Strategy 2020-22 and seeks to provide an overview of key workforce developments over the last two years.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 The key priorities within the People Strategy are:
 - **Delivering our services:** ensuring that the organisation has the optimum number of personnel to deliver effective and quality services to communities;
 - **Shaping our workforce:** considering ways in which the Service can adapt its ways of working to create efficiencies and improve services;
 - **Inclusion:** creating a workplace based on respect for individuals, acceptance of differences and where no one feels marginalised or excluded. understanding our diverse communities and developing positive relationships with all our service users;
 - **Outstanding leadership:** Enhancing leadership skills and planning for future leaders through succession planning;
 - **Workforce development:** Ensuring that the Service has the operational skills and competence to ensure a safe and effective operational response and that learning resources are available to all employees to make learning accessible and to encourage personal and professional development;
 - **Workforce engagement:** having effective communication with the workforce, to inform and seek active engagement to improve

understanding about issues and priorities and providing effective channels for feedback;

- **Positive workplace and culture:** creating a workplace where people feel accepted, included and valued;
- **Employee well-being:** retaining and promoting a healthy, productive and engaged workforce with support for physical, emotional and mental wellbeing.

- 2.2 During the period of review, the Service has delivered or made progress against all the above priorities despite the Covid restrictions. Whilst the past two years have been challenging, they have also accelerated the pace of change and use of technology, which has required a different approach to the way we deliver some of our internal services. This has included more virtual working, for instance for delivery of recruitment or learning and development, and a move to more flexible agile working arrangements for those working in support roles
- 2.3 In terms of **Delivering our Services**, the Service has used annual workforce planning to ensure that it has the resources to meet its Strategic Plan commitments. The workforce plan provides a two-year lookahead which reviews projected turnover, succession planning, workforce requirements and any anticipated changes which may require the development of new skills or creation of new roles. The latest Plan for 2021-23 was considered by the HR committee in July 2021. This ensured that the Service has the number of employees required for optimum service provision with the skills needed to deliver high quality services to our communities.
- 2.4 The Service has recruited to 76 operational roles (42 Wholetime and 33 On-call roles). Forty-nine support staff were recruited during the period, of which thirty-two have been fixed term appointments to provide short-term expertise and project support.
- 2.5 The Service undertook wholetime recruitment to Firefighter Apprenticeship roles during 2020 and employed 25 new recruits and three transferees from other services, who are now in development and form part of the operational ridership. A new recruitment campaign is underway, for courses commencing in April 2023 to address projected turnover levels in 2022-23. This is being supported by a comprehensive positive action campaign to promote the Service within our communities and to encourage a greater diversity of applicants.
- 2.6 On-call recruitment is continuous throughout the year and the recruitment and retention of On-call staff remains a national challenge for the sector. The Service recruited 33 On-call trainees during the period, and a further twenty-one have been successful in recent selection processes and will commence their training in April and July. Whilst this will maintain current numbers, it has proved difficult to increase On-call numbers due to the requirements of cover arrangements. A dedicated On-call team promote On-call continuously promote the Service to prospective applicants within local districts and trials

are ongoing to make the time demands more flexible – further details are set out in Paragraph 2.6.

- 2.7 A demand on the Service during the period was the provision of Covid support to our communities and partners, which saw up to fifty employees seconded to partner agencies to assist with vaccinations, establishing testing centres, supporting the NHS through the Local Resilience Forum and also providing community support through food parcels, medication deliveries and befriending calls. The efforts made by fire service employees has been recognised by our partners and reflects positively on the flexibility of our workforce and the transferable skills that they deployed. This was recognised in the review of Covid support undertaken by the HMICFRS in 2020.
- 2.8 A number of changes to ways of working (**Shaping Our Workforce**) have taken place since 2020 to create efficiencies and service improvements. These include the agreement of a revised Rostering Collective Agreement to improve efficiency and more effectively utilise the annualised hours arrangement in place for whole-time shifts, which will be applied from April 2022. This has also seen a review of Mixed crewing arrangements, which have been in place at Ashfield and Retford stations since April 2019, which provides an alternative crewing model providing Wholetime day crewing and On-call night cover.
- 2.9 As referenced in paragraph 2.3, the recruitment and retention of On-call fire-fighters remains a major challenge due to the demands and logistics of providing a 24/7 response and the demographics of On-call stations. An On-call Pay and Contracts pilot scheme was introduced during 2021, with the aim of reviewing the ways that hours of availability are managed to make On-call employment more accessible and attractive to potential candidates and to enhance retention of existing employees. This project is due to be reviewed in August 2022 to determine whether the revised contractual arrangements can be rolled-out to other On-call stations.
- 2.10 One of the most significant changes to ways of working has been the move to the Joint Headquarters (JHQ) with Nottinghamshire Police at Sherwood Lodge from January 2022. This has seen all employees working from Fire Headquarters at Bestwood Lodge transfer to share office accommodation with the Police. Whilst the move has not yet been completed, the response has been largely positive and has been managed through a cross-departmental programme board chaired by Candida Brudenell, Assistant Chief Fire Officer. Employee engagement has been a key priority to ensure that those affected feel informed, involved, and able to raise issues throughout the process via regular virtual updates. A joint employee forum has also helped to draft welcome packs and act as a focal point for providing feedback.
- 2.11 The move to the JHQ is one aspect of working more collaboratively with our partners and there are numerous examples of joint working arrangements with Nottinghamshire Police and other agencies for the benefit of our communities and to deliver efficiencies in the way that services are provided.

Such opportunities will continue to be explored where there are benefits to be delivered.

- 2.12 An aspect of the move to the JHQ and from lessons learned from the adaptations to the Covid restrictions has seen a change in working practices and the adoption of an agile working policy for office-based employees. This aligns with the aim of making the workplace more flexible and enhancing employee well-being, as well as supporting a green agenda. The policy allows employees to work from different work locations, including from home, for up to two days per week where this can be supported.
- 2.13 A particular priority within the People Strategy are **Inclusion** and **Creating a Positive Workplace**. A significant amount of work has been undertaken to identify and address workplace and service inequalities and this has led to the development of an Inclusion Plan and Community Engagement Strategy and the refreshing of a 'Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion' and Joint Commitment on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity' which were reported to Members in January. A number of Equality Impact Assessments have also been undertaken to ensure that our policies and practices reflect different requirements of our service users, including for safe and well visits, Prevention and Protection activities and business engagement. An independent review of equality has also been undertaken during 2021.
- 2.14 A number of engagement forums have been developed during the last two years, including a BAME Community Advisory Group to act in an advisory and sounding board capacity, with the aim of developing stronger relations and improving service delivery to minority communities. A series of Podcasts on different faiths have also been developed and are available on the MyNet site, to promote greater understanding of our diverse communities.
- 2.15 Internally, employees have helped to develop networks to progress understanding of BAME, LGBT+ and Women's issues and support the Service to improve in these areas. A disability and neurodiversity network is currently under development with the Police. The Service is proud to have recently received recognition as a Stonewall Index Top 100 employer.
- 2.16 Further information on the profile of our workforce and monitoring data are contained within the more detailed Equalities Monitoring report.
- 2.17 Work on promoting the Service values, creating a positive and inclusive workplace have seen a refresh of the core values through the development and promotion of a Behavioural Framework. This has recently been linked to the NFCC national Code of Ethics, which sets out the conduct expected of those working within the Fire and Rescue Service.
- 2.18 Whilst evaluating success in embedding a positive and inclusive culture is complex, the last employee survey undertaken in 2020 saw 96% of respondents report that they understood our values, 86% believed that colleagues demonstrated these values and 88% felt respected at work. 81% stated that NFRS is an inclusive and welcoming place to work. Whilst there are still improvements to be made, this suggests that our values have

become more embedded as part of our workplace culture. The Service undertakes a two-yearly employee survey through an independent provider and seeks feedback across a range of issues. The last survey saw a 62% response rate and the next survey will be issued later this year and it will be used to benchmark Service progress over the last two years.

- 2.19 Part of the work undertaken to create a positive workplace centres on **employee engagement**. The Service has a pro-active communications team, using numerous channels to inform and encourage feedback from the workforce – this includes a monthly newsletter, weekly Informative update, Facebook and Twitter messaging, briefing papers and MyNet news items. Additionally, the Chief Fire Officer holds regular virtual staff briefings, open and accessible for all employees, and SLT members visit each team. Quarterly Middle Manager and Watch Manager briefings also form part of the engagement strategy.
- 2.20 On a more formal level, regular meetings with trade union representatives take place to share and discuss workforce issues, including consultation on proposed changes and policy. The Service has pro-actively fostered good relations with all its workforce representative, which is reflected in a positive relationship at all levels, and an open channel for communication.
- 2.21 In terms of **employee development**, the Service has continued to deliver core skills development and revalidation and to adapt this to reflect Covid restrictions through the introduction of virtual workshops and e-learning. This blended learning approach ensures that development opportunities can reach a wider audience and reduces time away from the workplace.
- 2.22 The Firefighter Apprenticeship programme passed an Ofsted inspection in 2021, which provides assurance of the standards operated by the training and assessment team. This ensures that the Service can continue to act as an accredited training provider and draw down from the apprenticeship levy. The Service also supports five support staff apprenticeships across a range of subjects, including ICT, design, finance, and administration.
- 2.23 As part of its succession planning to ensure that the Service is developing **outstanding leaders**, the Leadership framework has been refreshed to set out a programme for aspiring, newly promoted and existing managers. This is centred on accredited programmes at Level 3 (supervisory) and Level 5 (middle manager) and is provided by an external provider on a virtual basis. Recently, the Service has joined a local initiative developed by the Nottingham City Council to provide a bespoke leadership programme at Level 7 (strategic manager) with Nottingham Trent University. The initial programme commences in April and will run for eight months.
- 2.24 The Service adopted a **Well-Being** strategy in 2020 which reflects our commitment to supporting the physical, emotional and mental health of our workforce. In the last two years, the Occupational Health and Fitness team have developed a number of initiatives to support mental health such as a mobile app (Back Up Buddy) and other readily available on-line information,

as well as employing a temporary mental health nurse to advise on policy and links to counselling support from Relate.

- 2.25 A new strength and conditioning programme will be rolled out on a trial basis later in the year by the Service Fitness Advisor to support operational fitness and reduce the potential for Musculo skeletal injury. This work has been recognised at a national level and supplements the provision of physiotherapy support and access to workplace gyms and rehabilitation programmes which are available to all employees. The Service Fitness Advisor has recently been appointed as Deputy Vice Chair of Firefit, which supports development of sector health, well being and fitness at a national level.
- 2.26 In the last year, the Service has renewed its BUPA cash-back scheme membership and appointed a new Employee Assistance Provider with access to a 24/7 advice line including telephone counselling. Overall, providing a high-level well-being programme for service employees.
- 2.27 Whilst this report summarises the ways in which the Service has delivered against the People Strategy, there are many improvements in progress and, as with all workforce policy and practice, it is process of continued evolution to the way we plan, manage and deliver our services and support our workforce. These developments will continue as part of the next Community Risk Management Plan 2022-25.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications arising from the report.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

Human resources implications are set out within the report.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken because this review does not represent a change to service delivery or policy. However, aspects of the strategy are intended to have a positive impact upon inclusion and equality issues, and these are set out within the report.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from the report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising from the report. However, a range of the activities above demonstrate continued fulfilment of the Public Sector Equality Duty

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The development and implementation of a People Strategy forms part of a suite of strategies which underpin the effective leadership and governance arrangements of the Service, establishing a clear direction and priorities for workforce development.

9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS

Collaboration implications are set out within the body of the report.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members note the report and progress made against the objectives of the People Strategy 2020-22.

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

None.

Craig Parkin
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

2022 - What does success look like?

Creating safer communities Engaged and Motivated Quality Services
Workforce

Focus	Action points (How)	Outcomes	
Delivering our services			
Developing an annual workforce plan to project a leaver profile to maintain operational service delivery and keep this under review to make timely decisions on recruitment.	Undertake recruitment to wholetime firefighter roles during 2020 to maintain ridership numbers. Revise workforce plan projections annually, and review at regular intervals.	Deliver operational emergency response when needed (whether this need is local, regional or national), and meet our commitment to create safer communities.	Head of POD
Acquisition and development of knowledge and skills to ensure effective succession planning.	Develop individual and role-based development plans.	Develop a pool of employees with the skills and ability to step up to their next role or undertake a specialist role.	Heads of Department
Increase recruitment to On-Call roles. Implement retention of existing On-Call staff.	Aim to recruit a minimum of 30 new On-Call firefighters per year and enhance job satisfaction, development opportunities and earnings potential for existing OnCall staff, linking into the NFCC national and regional review	Increased rates of recruitment and retention to On-Call roles.	AM Response
Increasing the number and impact of Safe and Well visits. Making every contact count.	Providing support and training to operational crews to engage in low risk S&W visits within their local communities.	Meet our aim of increasing the number of Safe and Well visits to 12,000 visits by 2022, and making every contact count, as set out in our Safer	AM Prevention and Protection

		Communities strategy.	
Extending fire safety knowledge and implementing outcomes from national guidance to meet national standards and enhance our fire protection expertise.	Create a development pathway for Fire Safety Officers to gain accreditation in line with the NFCC Fire Safety Competency Framework. To provide support and training to operational crews to engage in fire safety audits within their local communities.	Meet our aim of extending the number of fire safety audits and implementing improvements to fire safety training and regulation arising from the Grenfell and Hackett enquiries, as set out in our Safer Communities Strategy.	AM Prevention and Protection
Focus on “Looking After Your Service” priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have an engaged and motivated workforce. • Promote our core values. • Improve the diversity of our workforce. • Provide access to health and wellbeing support so that our employees maintain good physical, emotional and mental health. • Support employee development. • Support a good work-life balance. 	Prioritising these aspirations in policy development, working practices and behaviours. Undertaking impact assessments to ensure that People priorities are met and evaluating their success. Checking our progress in employee satisfaction rates via the employee survey and seeking feedback from employees, employee representatives and employee networks.	Deliver our strategic plan commitments.	SLT
Focus	Action points (How)	Outcomes	

Shaping our Workforce			
Undertake a review of roles, business design, skills and processes to achieve more streamlined delivery of services.	Reviews have already commenced in (i) Corporate Support to improve performance, corporate administration, corporate communications and programme/project management (ii) Resources and Procurement equipment team. Future reviews including ICT, Learning & Development and Risk and Assurance and Organisational Development. The use of transformational funding to support changes needed to improve systems and performance management.	Implement an organisational structure which will support the priorities of the Strategic Plan and in which roles, functional relationships (which cut across departmental lines) and the skills needed to deliver our priorities are aligned, to support efficient and effective working.	SLT
Undertake an analysis of risk through the fire cover review to inform decisions about deployment of resources, assets and personnel – including alternative delivery models.	Implementation of recommended changes to delivery models and deployment of personnel.	Our resources are best placed to meet changing requirements and risk, optimising the resources that we have and providing further flexible working options for our employees.	AM Corporate
Improving the way we do things by being innovative and being open to change.	Establish mechanisms for identifying and progressing change and improvement, i.e. Little Acorns, team engagement, debriefs, lessons learned logs.	By continuously trying to improve the way we do things we will be more effective and improve outcomes for our communities.	Head of POD

Actively engaging with other partners in a collaborative way to improve outcomes for our communities.	Providing the skills to Identify and build effective partnership arrangements.	Implementation of collaborative working arrangements that have a positive impact on efficiency, effectiveness, and result in better delivery of services to our communities	Heads of Departments.
Ensuring that the transition to the new Joint Headquarters goes smoothly, and those affected are kept informed and engaged in the process.	Planning and resourcing transition to ensure effective communication and engagement with staff to minimise anxiety about the move. Build effective relationships with police colleagues at team and individual level. Prioritise the welfare and wellbeing of staff.	The move to the Joint Headquarters is achieved, with effective working arrangement in place. This will be reflected in low attrition, absence, and employee satisfaction rates.	ACFO/Head of POD/AM Corporate/Head of Procurement and Resources.
Developing different working models to create more agile and flexible ways of working.	Review options and implement feasible alternatives to support flexible working arrangements.	Improved efficiencies, and choice for our employees to create a better work-life balance.	Head of POD

Focus	Action points (How)	Outcomes	
Inclusion			

<p>Promoting understanding of our different communities and service users to enhance the services we provide and make Nottinghamshire a safer place to live and work for all our residents.</p>	<p>Raise awareness of our different communities and service users through education and training, to facilitate a better understanding of their priorities, needs and how we can make them safer through our prevention and protection activities and be more empathetic in our response.</p>	<p>Linking in with our Safer Communities Strategy to engage with our diverse service users to better understand how we can target our services and messages more effectively and make them more accessible to all our service users.</p>	<p>Head of POD/AM Prevention and Protection/AM Response</p>
<p>Promoting a positive workplace culture in which inclusion is central to our approach to service delivery, working within the community and in our everyday interactions.</p>	<p>Undertake equality/people impact assessments on new or changing ways of working and/or policy development. Taking account of the views and potential benefits and negative impacts on those who are affected by them, and adjusting our approach where feasible to address such impacts.</p>	<p>Be proactive in seeking to identify and address issues around service delivery or impact on people to anticipate and address any negative impacts from the way we deliver our services or implement our policies.</p>	<p>Heads of Department</p>
<p>Seeking to reflect the diversity of our society in our workforce</p>	<p>Use community engagement to raise the profile of the service as a career. Engage with employees and organisations that represent those who are under-represented in our workforce to seek ways to encourage applications from those who might not otherwise view the service as a potential employer.</p>	<p>Respecting and valuing different perspectives, ideas, experiences and culture within our workforce and using positive action measures to promote the service as an inclusive employer with the aim of increasing the diversity of the workforce.</p>	<p>Head of POD</p>

Creating a workplace which is welcoming, accepting, supportive in difficult times, and a good place to work.	Raise awareness and understanding about issues which impact on the day to day lives of all, or some, of our employees - such as ethnicity, belief, sexual orientation, disability, mental health, gender - in order to better understand and support people at work. Build this into our induction and development programmes.	Creating a workplace culture that is supportive and empathetic to the needs and challenges of all employees, with the aim of enhancing engagement and motivation within our workforce.	Head of POD
Developing a culture which rejects discriminatory or inappropriate language or conduct	Be clear about expectations of behaviour in the workplace and in our interactions with others, and challenge comments, views, conduct and language which undermine our commitment to our core value to respect and value others.	Ensuring that discriminatory or inappropriate behaviour, views and language are challenged, with the aim that such issues no longer arise within our workplace.	SLT

Focus	Action points (How)	Outcomes	
Outstanding Leadership			
Developing effective leaders at all levels, to ensure delivery of our corporate priorities.	Establish and Implement development objectives and expectations for leadership roles via development pathways. This will link into the professional standards being developed by the NFCC.	Leaders at all levels understand the requirements of their role to effectively deliver high quality services, and have the personal qualities and people skills to manage and develop others.	Head of POD

Provide a development programme which provides personal, professional and management skills from supervisory to strategic manager level	Provide support for those new in role, and for existing leaders to promote continuous professional development. Monitor individual and role development via i-Trent and through the PDR process.	To ensure that managers at all levels can continue to develop their skills to meet existing and future challenges.	Head of POD
Providing support to those aspiring to progress to managerial roles or with the ability to progress to more senior roles.	Identify and mentor those with potential to develop into a more senior or specialist role by offering access to development opportunities (aspiring leadership programmes), promoting self awareness (360 degree feedback) and exponential learning.	Implement effective succession planning to meet future leadership and specialist skills requirements.	Head of POD
Providing guidance and expectations via a new behavioural framework to all our employees, including those in managerial roles.	Establish a values based behavioural expectation framework which underpins our core values, recruitment, progression and management processes.	Embed a culture that is supportive of all our employees and based on the highest principles of public service and ethical standards.	Head of POD
Promoting a coaching and mentoring approach.	Further developing coaching and mentoring as an essential management skill inherent within our leadership framework.	Support for self-development, and building of problem solving capabilities.	Head of POD

Focus	Action points (How)	Outcomes	
Workforce Development			

Providing the resources and training required to maintain a professional, safe and highly skilled workforce	Identify role related training needs across the service and building this into i-Trent performance management modules for review during PDR meetings. Develop competency frameworks for support roles.	Employees and managers have a clear understanding of mandatory training requirements to build and maintain competency in role.	Head of POD/ Head of Risk, Assurance and Operational Training
Ensuring that operational training is continuously reviewed and based on the latest National Operational Guidance.	Review our Operational Training plan to ensure that it delivers high quality training, based on the latest National Operational Guidance. Leading development and implementation of National Operational standards through engagement at a regional level. Establish clear links between the operational assurance team and learning and development to capture learning and translate it into training outcomes.	Acquisition, maintenance and revalidation of core operational skills are delivered to national standards to ensure competent and safe service delivery.	Head of Risk, Assurance and Operational Training
As part of our succession planning approach, encourage individual and role development.	Support individual development and maintenance of role competence through access to CPD via internal programmes, external courses/conference and bursary funding.	Broadening of the organisation's skills base to enable our employees to deal with change and new challenges.	Head of POD
Alignment to relevant apprenticeship frameworks	Increase the number of employees aligned to appropriate apprenticeship frameworks.	Establishing national transferable vocational qualifications	Head of POD/Head of Risk, Assurance and Operational Training

Development of ICT skills across our workforce	Provide easily accessible guidance and e-learning modules to support internal systems and develop generic IT skills	Employees have the knowledge and skills to support delivery of our Digital Strategy .	Head of Digital Transformation
Develop flexible learning resources to make continuous learning more accessible and flexible.	Increase the use of remote learning tools such as e-learning packages, webinars, on-line learning and virtual classrooms.	Employees can access learning through various sources to reduce classroom time, and at a time and pace to suit individual learning styles	Head of POD/Head of Risk, Assurance and Operational Training

Focus	Action points (How)	Outcomes	
Positive Workplace and Culture			
Promotion of our core values to drive cultural change	Continually promote our core values to ensure that they are understood and embedded across the service through induction of new employees, policy development, service delivery, development programmes and are reflected our leadership approach.	Our core values are understood and embedded across the workforce. This will be reflected in the decisions we make, the way we interact with each other, our service users and partners.	SLT
Setting out our expectations about positive behaviours	Implement a values-based Behavioural Framework and embed this into our recruitment and promotion processes, development programmes, code of conduct and our NFRS leadership style.	Our employees understand and adhere to expectations of behaviour in the workplace.	SLT

Creating a culture in which individuals have the confidence to challenge or report inappropriate language when it arises	Work with employee representatives through the Service Inclusion Forum to establish ways in which inappropriate behaviour can be tackled constructively and effectively.	Develop an environment where our employees have confidence that they can challenge unacceptable behaviour and it will be dealt with appropriately.	SLT
Dealing effectively with allegations of harassment and bullying, with the aim of addressing and resolving issues at an early stage.	Provide training to managers in dealing with difficult employment issues at an early stage. Support resolution through workplace mediation wherever possible.	Allegations of harassment and bullying and are dealt with effectively, with the aim of reducing and, ultimately, eliminating this in the workplace.	Head of POD

Focus	Action points (How)	Outcomes	
Employee Engagement			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Using different channels to keep our workforce up-to-date and informed about current issues and priorities. 	Use of a variety of methods to establish effective information sharing channels to ensure broad engagement. Share positive news about how we are making our communities safer.	Employee are kept up to date on current issues and priorities in a way which engages them, and highlights the good work being undertaken within our communities.	Corporate Comms

Finding ways to channel back ideas about service improvements, and employee views about the service, to senior managers to influence decision making.	Establish and embed ways for employees to feed back their views and ideas about service improvements. Undertake two-yearly employee surveys to establish views about the service as an employer and identify areas for development	Employees have an opportunity to feed back their views and make a positive contribution to service development.	Head of POD
Establish a culture of trust between employee representatives and managers so that views can be expressed in an open and honest way	Use formal and informal opportunities to consult with employee representatives to establish effective channels for communication and understanding	Building effective channels for discussion of key issues will reduce areas of potential conflict and build trust and confidence.	SLT
Supporting the creation of employee groups and networks to enhance equality and inclusion.	Develop and embed employee groups/networks to encourage under-represented groups within the workforce to provide mutual support, encourage discussion, and to provide feedback for improvement	To encourage discussion of issues which may affect particular areas of the workforce in order to effect change in policy/practice and create a more inclusive workplace	Head of POD

Focus	Action points (How)	Outcomes	
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Well Being			
Implementation of our Well Being approach to sustain and improve the physical, mental and emotional health of our workforce.	<p>Deliver the key aspects of the Well Being Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Wellness • Fitness for Role • Communication • Healthy Lifestyle 	Implement a culture of sustainable well-being to ensure that our employees can perform at their best.	Head of POD
Providing guidance and support to pro-actively manage health and fitness to ensure fitness for role	Promote healthy lifestyle choices, and implement a network of on-the-job and external support to maintain fitness, such as workplace gyms, fitness Instructors, access to fitness programmes and health benefit plans.	Maintain a healthy workforce. Reduce short and long-term sickness absence rates and ill health retirements.	Head of POD
Prevent ill health arising or escalating, particularly those relating to musculo-skeletal conditions	Provide OH interventions such as screening, workplace adjustments, rehabilitation, and specialist support to ensure that employees can undertake their role effectively.	Reduce the number of musculoskeletal injuries and improve recovery times.	Head of POD
Ensuring that age related conditions are effectively managed and supported	Address the potential impact of age related health issues through effective screening, guidance, workplace adjustments and welfare support measures.	Employees are supported to deal with the physical and lifestyle effects of the natural ageing process so that they can remain well and productive through to their chosen retirement age.	Head of POD

<p>Raising awareness, understanding and support of mental health issues</p>	<p>Implement regular engagement with staff on mental health issues and support campaigns such as Time to Change to widen understanding. Provide access to a range of support to those experiencing mental and emotional health issues. Implement measures to recognise and address work related stress through effective managerial intervention and risk assessment.</p>	<p>Employees are supported to recognise and deal with the potential impacts of mental and emotional issues on health.</p>	<p>Head of POD</p>
<p>Providing a range of support to enable employees to deal with personal issues which may be impacting on their well-being.</p>	<p>Provide access to independent support via agencies such as Relate, Employee Assistance Programme, and peer support. Develop and enhance policy to support the welfare and wellbeing of staff.</p>	<p>Employees are supported to manage issues which are causing them distress or anxiety.</p>	<p>Head of POD</p>

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NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

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

CHANGE TO PERMANENT ESTABLISHMENT

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Date: 29 April 2022

Purpose of Report:

To propose the creation of new roles of: Fire Investigation Dog Handler, Equipment and Fire Hydrant Technicians, Rostering Manager and Pensions Officer and (ii) to amend the role and grade of a Human Resources Business Partner role.

Recommendations:

That Members support changes to the permanent establishment, subject to Fire Authority approval:

- The creation of a new role of Fire Investigation Dog Handler;
- The creation of two Equipment and Fire Hydrant Technician roles;
- The creation of a Rostering Manager role;
- The creation of a Pensions Officer role;
- The dis-establishment of a HR Business Partner role and creation of an HR Officer as a career-graded post.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Human Resources Committee considers and recommends approval to the Fire Authority of any proposals for permanent change to the workforce establishment.
- 1.2 The following change proposals have been submitted for consideration:
 - Fire Investigation Dog Handler;
 - Engineering Technicians x 2;
 - Rostering Manager;
 - Pensions Officer;
 - HR Officer.
- 1.3 As part of the annual budget setting process, which supports the delivery of the Community Risk Management Plan, funding for a number of these new roles has been approved at the Finance and Resources Committee subject to approval of permanent establishment changes.

2. REPORT

CREATION OF A NEW ROLE OF FIRE INVESTIGATION DOG HANDLER

- 2.1 The Regional Fire Investigation Dog Unit plays a vital part to support the joint working between Police and Fire and Rescue Services in detecting the use of hydrocarbons at the scene of fires of suspicious origin.
- 2.2 Since 2004 this role has been funded regionally and been based within the Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service (DFRS). However, the current post-holder will be retiring and DFRS will no longer be hosting the dog unit. Therefore, Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) indicated a willingness to host the regional dog unit within its Fire Protection and Arson Reduction team.
- 2.3 It is proposed that a new role will be created as a Grade 6 support role Fire Investigation Dog Handler with responsibility for a Hydrocarbon Detection Dog. The funding for this role to be split between Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Lincolnshire and Leicestershire fire and rescue services. The role would report to the Fire Investigation Team Manager.

CREATION OF EQUIPMENT AND FIRE HYDRANT TECHNICIAN ROLES X2

- 2.4 NFRS has a statutory duty to ensure there is adequate water for firefighting, fulfilling part of this duty by ensuring approximately 17,000 fire hydrants in Nottinghamshire are serviceable and fit for purpose. To assure this, the Service, through its equipment section, must undertake a risk-based inspection programme to each hydrant every 1– 5 years.

- 2.5 The Engineering Section has two posts which undertake both equipment maintenance and hydrant maintenance, however it has become apparent that this capacity is insufficient to meet Service demand.
- 2.6 A benchmarking exercise has been undertaken into this provision, against other local fire and rescue services providing hydrant maintenance and this has supported the view that additional resources are required. It is therefore proposed that a further two roles are created within the Engineering Section to support this work and ensure the Service can meet its statutory duty.
- 2.7 Funding for these additional roles has been secured within the budget setting process.

CREATION OF PENSIONS OFFICER ROLE

- 2.8 The Service administers the Firefighter Pension Scheme and Local Government Pension Scheme through the role of Head of Finance, with support from the Human Resources Manager. However, the level and complexity of changes to pension regulations, particularly those applying to the Firefighter Pension Scheme, over recent years has meant that managing the scheme and implementing the regulations has become a highly specialist area, to the extent that it has been identified as a high risk on the Services' risk register.
- 2.9 In order to support the Head of Finance, and to ensure that the Service remains compliant with changing pension requirements, it is proposed that a Pensions Officer role is created as a part-time Grade 6 role (subject to job evaluation).
- 2.10 This specialist role will support the implementation of the remedying legislation resulting from the McCloud age discrimination case and also respond to the Matthews and O'Brien case which has resulted in on-call firefighters employed before 1 July 2000 being able to elect to become a special member of the pension scheme from the start of their employment. These are cases which were brought before an employment tribunal at a national level and are being progressed through the Local Government Association and will result in a significant workload for the Finance and Human Resources teams.
- 2.11 Funding for this role has been secured within the budget setting process.

CREATION OF ROSTERING MANAGER ROLE

- 2.12 The implementation of a new rostering system is a key Community Risk Management Plan commitment. The project is within its final stages, with delivery expected by April 2023 and is supported by a crewing team of two, one of whom is on a fixed-term contract.
- 2.13 In order to maintain this specialist project support and in recognition of the resources that will be needed to maintain the rostering system for 650 employees, once it is fully implemented, it is proposed that a Rostering

Manager role is created at a Grade 5 level to lead the rostering team and manage system maintenance and development.

2.14 Funding for this role has been secured within the budget setting process.

AMENDMENT TO ESTABLISHMENT – HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER

2.15 Due to the recent retirement of a Human Resources Business Partner, a review of existing human resources (HR) professional support has been undertaken. This has considered the changing requirements and a commitment to develop career pathways for support roles.

2.16 Currently, three HR Business Partners roles provide comprehensive professional support to the Service and work with departmental managers across a range of HR functions including recruitment and promotions, contractual issues, absence management, performance, advising on grievance and disciplinary issues. Two of the HR Business Partner (HRBP) roles work within geographical districts (north and south) aligned to Wholetime and On-call stations and the third supports those engaged in support roles. All the HRBPs are professionally qualified with the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD).

2.17 In order to better align Service demands, it is proposed that the vacant HRBP role focuses specifically on recruitment activity and policy development, rather than departmental support, to release capacity for the other HRBP roles to provide more dedicated support to managers and employees. This also provides an opportunity to recruit and develop a CIPD student at Grade 4 and to provide a career pathway to progress to a qualified status (Grade 6).

2.18 This will be a career graded role encompassing Grades 4, 5 and 6 and the HR Officer will progress across the grading bands in accordance with attaining their CIPD qualification and the level of work undertaken. Their professional development will be overseen by the HR Manager.

2.19 This proposal will lead to savings in the salary budget.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 As the funding for the proposed Fire Investigation Dog Handler role will be shared within a regional cost-sharing agreement, there are no additional costs to the Service, and this can be contained within existing salary budgets.

3.2 The 2 Equipment and Fire Hydrant roles (Grade 4) will result in a cost ranging from £65,104 to £70,696 (incl. on costs) depending on the spinal point on appointment.

3.3 The Pensions Officer role (Grade 6 subject to JE) will result in a cost ranging from £42,399 to £47,168 (incl. on costs) depending on the spinal point on appointment.

- 3.4 Rostering Manager role (Grade 5) will result in a cost ranging from £35,348 to £39,979 (incl. on costs) depending on the spinal point on appointment.
- 3.5 The proposed career grading of the HR Officer role will result in a saving ranging from £16,213 to £18,786 (incl. on costs) depending on the spinal point on appointment at Grade 4 and a sustained saving ranging from £6,366 to £6,966 (incl. on costs), when the post-holder attains full professional status at Grade 6.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The new roles will be advertised internally and externally in accordance with the Service's recruitment policy to widen the pool of potential candidates.
- 4.2 The HR Officer role will be supported to complete a CIPD qualification as part of their development pathway. This will be funded by the Service as per current arrangements.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken as this does not represent a change to service policy or service delivery.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

There are no additional crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The funding of these additional posts will help the Service to meet its statutory and regulatory responsibilities.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Effective fire investigations can result in the conviction of individuals for deliberate fire setting. It is therefore imperative that investigations are undertaken as thoroughly as possible to reduce the risk of failed convictions. The creation of a Fire Investigation Dog Handler post will support the investigation and prosecution of incidents, deliver specialist training for regional fire and rescue services, and support community activities which assist in reducing instances of deliberate fire setting.
- 8.2 The proposed new roles of Equipment and Hydrant Maintenance Technicians, Senior Pensions Officer and Rostering Manager will support

delivery against statutory requirements and contribute to the delivery of key strategic commitments within the Community Risk Management Plan.

- 8.3 The re-alignment of human resources support will ensure that the Service can deliver on its workforce planning commitments and more effectively utilise the resources available to provide a professional and comprehensive HR service.

9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS

The employment of a Fire Investigation Dog Handler role forms part of a regional collaboration with Derbyshire, Lincolnshire and Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Services.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members support changes to the permanent establishment, subject to Fire Authority approval:

- The creation of a new role of Fire Investigation Dog Handler;
- The creation of two Equipment and Fire Hydrant Technician roles;
- The creation of a Rostering Manager role;
- The creation of a Pensions Officer role;
- The dis-establishment of a HR Business Partner role and creation of an HR Officer as a career-graded post.

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

None.

Craig Parkin
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

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