



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

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

UPDATED EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI) STATEMENTS AND REVIEW

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Date: 28 January 2022

Purpose of Report:

To seek endorsement of the updates to the 'Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion' and 'Joint Commitment on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity' statements included in this report as appendices and to inform members of the EDI review which has taken place.

Recommendations:

That Members support the endorsement of the updates to the Service's Equalities Statement and Joint Commitment on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity.

CONTACT OFFICER

Name: Craig Parkin
Deputy Chief Fire Officer

Tel: 0115 8388900

Email: craig.parkin@notts-fire.gov.uk

Media Enquiries Contact: Corporate Communications Team
(0115) 967 0880 corporatecomms@notts-fire.gov.uk

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 As part of the Service's strong commitment to Equality, an 'Equalities statement' and 'Joint Commitment on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity' was developed and approved. Since this time, the Service has made significant progress in the area of equality, has developed its culture, values, and practices and therefore these statements have been updated to reflect the Service's current practice and terminology.
- 1.2 The Service has commissioned a review of its performance on EDI during 2021, using the expertise of an independent equalities' consultant. The review has referenced elements of the Fire Service Equality Framework.

2. REPORT

COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY STATEMENTS

- 2.1 The Service's updated 'Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion' (Appendix A) and Joint Commitment on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity' (Appendix B) were originally developed by the organisation as policy statements, demonstrating the Service's commitment to promoting equality.
- 2.2 These documents also act as policy statements for external suppliers and to fulfil requests for the Service's equality policy.
- 2.3 The update to 'Our Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion' document specifically now reflects the Service's values, latest terminology, community engagement work and related documents.
- 2.4 Similarly, the updated Joint Commitment on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity' now reflects the Service's current resources in this area, LGBT+ staff network, latest terminology, incorporating service delivery commitments and links to related documents.

WORKFORCE SUPPORT

- 2.5 The Service's workforce representatives all signed up to the original statements. Equality and LGBT+ representatives have all been approached to inform and support these documents and to communicate this commitment to those they represent and wider workforce.
- 2.6 These statements help the Service to demonstrate its commitment to being an employer of choice by seeking to attract, recruit and retain talent from all communities and under-represented groups.
- 2.7 A relaunch of the statements will be used to ensure employees are aware of the updates made to these documents. Printed copies will be distributed to work locations as well as electronic versions being visible through the NFRS intranet and internet.

- 2.8 These statements were discussed at the member-led Strategic Inclusion Board on 17 December, and members of the group supported the endorsement of these statements subject to Fire Authority approval.

EDI REVIEW

- 2.9 Since its inception in 2008, the Service has used the Fire Service Equality Framework to benchmark its performance on equality, diversity and inclusion. In previous years the Service has undertaken 'Peer Challenges' with the Local Government Association and the Chief Fire Officers' Association (now National Fire Chiefs Council).
- 2.10 In order to ensure that the Service is meeting statutory and best practice equality standards, an independent external consultant was commissioned to undertake a review of its EDI and leadership practices using criteria within the Fire Service Equality Framework.
- 2.11 The process has included an analysis of key HR and EDI policies and other major documents including staff survey results and a series of focus groups with representation from staff from across the service and community stakeholders. A draft report has been received by the Service with the findings of the review and these will be communicated to members in a future report.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The EDI review outlined in this report was delivered within existing budgets.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

The workforce will be made aware of the updates to the 'Commitment to EDI' and 'Joint Commitment on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity' through the relaunch of these statements, and new starters will be made aware of the statements through an Introduction to Equality training delivered to all new starters.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The EDI review and policy statement items within this report demonstrate a positive commitment to establishing and furthering equality issues across the service.
- 5.2 The EDI review has been undertaken as part of the Service's continued commitment to Equality, and its outcomes will help the Service to continue to develop positive equality impacts.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

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

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The EDI Review will enable the Service to ensure that the Service continues to meet its commitment to the Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act, 2010).

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS

There are no collaboration implications arising from this report.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members support the endorsement of the updates to the Service's Equalities Statement and Joint Commitment on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity.

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

None.

John Buckley
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

Our Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)



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Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service is committed to providing excellent services and becoming an employer of choice by ensuring that equality and inclusion are at the heart of everything it does.

The Service will work to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations with the communities it serves. We will engage with our service users to ensure that we provide services which meet their needs, and that they have equal access to them.

We will also ensure that our employees work in an environment where difference is valued, where all employees are comfortable to be their authentic selves and discrimination of any sort has no place in our Service. We have developed a values based culture and expect staff to demonstrate the Services four [values](#) of; value and respect, professionalism, openness to change and working as one team. We will provide our employees, managers and elected members with access to excellent learning and development opportunities enabling them to understand and meet the demands of changing, diverse and emerging communities, in addition to meeting our obligations under the [Equality Act](#).

The Service will promote employment opportunities to encourage applicants from across all communities, particularly where they are under-represented in the current workforce. We will create a workplace where all our employees feel valued, not in spite of who they are, but because of who they are. We will work collaboratively with trade union representatives in order to improve workforce policy and practice in these areas.

The Service will also use its spending power to encourage its suppliers of goods and services to apply similar values to their own business to share good practice and encourage an ethical, inclusive supply chain.

It is only by adopting such an approach that we can truly provide equal access to services and employment to people across Nottinghamshire.

This statement has been endorsed by the Chief Fire Officer, the Combined Fire Authority and all Representative Bodies

You may also be interested in:

- [NFRS Joint Commitment on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity](#)
- [Equality at NFRS](#) and [NFRS Equality Duty](#) (web pages)
- [Working with NFRS document – \(sent to suppliers\)](#)
- [Joint Commitment on Workforce Diversity](#)
- [Code of Ethics](#)

Joint Commitment on Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity Equality



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The Service and unions have decided, a written, agreed document should be produced stating commitment to this area of work. This will help to promote equality for lesbian, gay, bi, trans and non-binary (LGBT+) employees, applicants and members of the public. The Service's commitments are outlined below:

As an employer, we have a duty to ensure that our lesbian, gay, bi and trans staff feel able to be themselves at work. This might include gay employees feeling able to confidently and openly take part in the normal everyday conversations we have at work about partners, family or what we did at the weekend. As part of this commitment the Service has a range of employment guidance documents and delivers a range of EDI training to its staff, features LGBT+ staff within its role models booklet and has resources aimed to support LGBT+ employees available through its intranet. The Service also has an LGBT+ and Proud Friends (allies) network.

The Service is committed to providing an environment of dignity and respect for all in the workplace and in the delivery of services. We therefore have a zero tolerance approach to discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying and will take seriously and investigate any complaints of discrimination or harassment internally or within service delivery using agreed procedures as outlined in the Bullying and Harassment policy or [Complaints procedure](#) (in the instance of incidents within service delivery).

The Service recognises the experiences of LGBT+ people and will take action to ensure equal opportunities are provided within its practices. We will make clear to contracting companies and external agencies they are expected to demonstrate compliance with our equalities policies to ensure our [values](#) are put into practice.

NFRS has very few people who are 'out' at work, the service has worked hard to create a supportive environment for all staff in recent years and will continue to do so with the aim of increasing declaration levels. The Service understands some LGBT+ community members may find it difficult to engage with the Service and will strive to ensure its services are accessible to all communities within Nottinghamshire through targeted communications and delivery of training to those delivering services. We will also ensure our values are communicated and shared with suppliers to provide a consistent and high-quality service to all communities within Nottinghamshire.

This statement has been endorsed by the Chief Fire Officer, the Combined Fire Authority and all Representative Bodies

You may also be interested in:

- *NFRS EDI statement*
- [Equality at NFRS](#) and [NFRS Equality duty](#) (web pages)
- [Working with NFRS document – \(sent to suppliers\)](#)
- [Code of Ethics](#)