



# Equalities & Inclusion Action Plan

2014 - 2016



## **Equalities and Inclusion Action Plan**

The Equalities and Inclusion Action Plan is a timetabled action plan which fulfils Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service's equality and inclusion commitments. It pulls together the objectives and actions contained within the Corporate Equalities and Inclusion Strategy and the National Equality Framework for Fire and Rescue Service's to ensure its success. The Plan sets out the actions, targets and timescales required to meet the objectives in the strategy.

The Plan is fundamental to ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusivity issues continue to be mainstreamed into the Service's day to day activities so that there are improved outcomes for all residents and employees.

The success of the Equalities and Inclusion Action Plan will be measured as part of our performance management framework and reported in our Annual Corporate Diversity Report.

This Plan will:

- ▶ Provide a systematic framework for addressing equality and diversity issues and improving performance over time.
- ▶ Be performance managed to ensure the effective delivery of outcomes on equality and diversity issues. Actions under the plan will be integrated into the performance management processes and will have named officers and properly allocated roles and responsibilities at every level.
- ▶ Reaffirm our commitment to continually progress the equalities and diversity agenda.
- ▶ Provide all staff and councillors, our partners, stakeholders and residents with a clear statement of the Service's strategic direction to embed and promote equality and diversity.
- ▶ Clarify CFRS's commitments in fulfilling its legal obligations to achieve equality of opportunity in the areas of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership and gender reassignment.
- ▶ Enable all departments in the Service to see how they contribute to our equality objectives.
- ▶ Ensure that our equality objectives are consistently applied throughout the whole Service.
- ▶ Set out equality priorities for the next two years and how we aim to achieve it.

The commitments contained within our Corporate Equalities and Inclusion Strategy are:

- to understand and meet the needs of all the communities we serve
- to work in partnership with all communities and other local service providers and partners to protect the people it serves
- to fully engage employees and the community in the development and delivery of services and functions
- to encourage talented people from all parts of the community to join the Service and achieve their potential
- to recognise the talents of those within the Service and encourage them to achieve their full potential
- to create an inclusive culture in which everyone treats all colleagues and the public with equal dignity and respect
- to ensure all its policies, processes and practices are open and transparent and have undergone robust equality impact assessments
- to value and support a diverse workforce through fair and transparent recruitment and employment policies, practices and processes.

### **Responsibility for the Plan**

Responsibility for overseeing the Plan rests with the Service's Equality Task Group and Service Management Team.

The Equality and Diversity Officer will co-ordinate the management of equalities across the Service and oversee performance of action plans at departmental level. The Equality Task Group will monitor progress against objectives set in the Equalities Plan, and oversee appropriate action where monitoring indicates it to be necessary. All Heads of Department and Unitary Performance Areas will be responsible for ensuring overall progress against their respective plans, and for ensuring they support the Service's Corporate Equalities Strategy.

<b>Knowing your Communities</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Lead Responsible</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
CFP department to work with the Equalities team and BME support organisations to raise awareness of the issues that officers have been coming across in take away premises during enforcements and prohibitions	A reduction in the number of BME businesses who are receiving enforcement/prohibition notices. Increase in partnership working to improve business owners / responsible persons knowledge of their responsibilities under the appropriate legislation	Community Fire Protection	April 2016
To report progress in regards to the work of the Dementia Advocate	Report progress of referrals to the Fire Authority. Produce case studies that highlight the work of the advocate	Community Safety	Ongoing
To produce and publish generic EIAs for station activities to support the CAP process	Generic EIAs produced and populated by stations with relevant information. More effectively targeted local initiatives	Equality and Diversity	April 2014
Work with relevant managers to ensure that CAPs are meaningful in terms of equality information used when engaging with diverse communities	CAPs are relevant and appropriate to station areas and local communities. Improved targeting of initiatives	Planning, Performance and Communication / Service Delivery	April 2014 April 2015
Undertake an analysis to understand the most appropriate disability awareness training to be delivered to youth engagement staff	Relevant training delivered to the Service's youth engagement staff	Youth Engagement /	April 2016
Raise awareness of the importance of equality monitoring internally	Improved disclosure rates. Clearer understanding as to why equality monitoring questions are asked both internally and externally	Equality and Diversity / Protected Characteristics Representatives	July 2014

<b>Leadership, vision and communities</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Lead Responsible</b>	<b>Completion date</b>
Identify information gap in IRS and research appropriate mechanisms for capturing data to further support the Service's detailed knowledge of the community and the impact of our home safety work	Evidence to monitor the outcomes of the work undertaken with vulnerable groups	Planning, Performance and Communication	April 2016
Maintain position within Stonewall Top 100 Workplace Employers Index	Equality Index submission completed and submitted. Results received.	LGBT Champion / Equality and Diversity	September 2014/15/16
Provide training to the equality Impact assessment champions	Refresh and refresher training of EIA champions. Champions meeting quarterly to review completed EIAs	Equality and Diversity	December 2015
Equality Training for new elected Members of the Fire Authority	New members are aware of Equality Act and its implications for the Service and them as elected members	Equality and Diversity / Legal	Ongoing
To evaluate accreditation for the Service's commitment to equality and diversity	The Service has an external review of its position in relation to equality and diversity. The Service continues to be seen as an excellent authority by its customers and partners.	Equality and Diversity	September 2014
To ensure that the procurement process takes account of the legal requirements of the Social Value Act 2012	Procurement process reviewed and the relevant sections of the Act applied.	Procurement	April 2015
Report progress twice yearly to the Performance and Overview Committee	Reports presented and approved by the Fire Authority	Equality and Diversity	Ongoing

<b>Community engagement and satisfaction</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Lead Responsible</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
Review the information that is collected for the equality analysis	Complete review of equality information collected complete. Training for Equality Impact Assessment Champions completed covering the findings and recommendations of the review	Planning, Performance and Communications / Equality and Diversity	January 2016
Ensure that young people are encouraged to take part in future consultation events to improve response rates	Response rates for younger people improved in the next round of consultation	Planning Performance and Communication	Ongoing
To produce quarterly articles highlighting the equality work that is being undertaken	Employees and Partners are informed of the equality work being undertaken by the Service	All	Ongoing
To continue to take part in community based activities that allow the Service to raise awareness of key safety messages	Attendance at events specifically targeted at underrepresented groups	All	Ongoing

<b>A skilled and committed workforce</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Lead Responsible</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
Produce a DVD demonstrating the physical tests for the recruitment process, giving particular that highlights the physical tests giving particular attention to the overhead lift.	DVD produced and published on the Service's website	Human Resources / Equality and Diversity	March 2014
Continue to undertake positive action to improve the workforce diversity in relation to On Call recruitment	Improved diversity of the On Call workforce. Analysis from completed pilots for On Call open days used to inform future events	Human Resources / Service Delivery / Equality and Diversity	On going
Ensure sexual orientation is added to the overall headcount figures in the employment section of the quarterly and Annual Equality Monitoring Report	Sexual orientation is added into all the appropriate sections of reports presented to the Equality Task Group	Human Resources	January 2014
Exit interview statistics to be collected and reported quarterly to the Equality Task Group	Statistics produced and scrutinised at the Equality Task Group meetings	Human Resources	January 2014
Focus on retention issues for firefighters who are under-represented within the Service. Arrange relevant focus group to over topics such as; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Career progression</li> <li>• Culture and environment</li> <li>• Key issues</li> <li>• Barriers</li> </ul>	Focus groups completed and information gathered reported to the Equality Task Group and used to inform future actions, where appropriate	Equality and Diversity Officer	December 2015
To produce a dyslexia guide for staff	Production of the guide and a greater understanding of the Service's approach and process for dyslexia screening	Equality and Diversity / Disability Representative	June 2014

To produce a guide on dyslexia for managers	Production of the guide which acts as a support for managers, both to understand relevant traits of dyslexia and also how to manage the situation effectively and who to contact if support is needed.	Equality and Diversity / Disability Representative	November 2014
To source and provide training to employees on hidden and visual disabilities	Training sourced and delivered	Learning and Development / Equality and Diversity	December 2015
Raise awareness of 'keeping in touch days' for individuals maternity/adoption leave. Roles and responsibilities	A clear process established for the management of keeping in touch days	Human Resources	April 2014
To continue to raise awareness of the Straight Allies programme and implement the specific training package	Increased number of Straight Allies one at each location across the Service who have received the bespoke training.	LGBT Champion Equality and Diversity	Ongoing
Refresh the equality monitoring information held for the Service's volunteers	Complete refresh of equality monitoring data for volunteers. Up to date records held	Community Safety	January 2015
To ensure new build premises/refurbishments take account of employee needs	The Service's new builds are fit for purpose and meet the needs of our employees.	Facilities / Protected Characteristic Representatives	Ongoing

**CHESHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE'S CORPORATE EQUALITIES  
ACTION PLAN**

If you need a copy of the Services Corporate Equalities Action Plan in another language or format, please complete the form below. Fill in your name and address at the bottom of this page, and post this form to:

**Corporate Communications Department**

**Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service**

**Headquarters**

**Sadler Road, Winsford**

**CW7 2FQ**

Please state here which language you require:

Please tick one of the boxes below if you need the information in another format:

In Braille

In large print

On audio tape

Your name and address (please use capital letters):

**Response form – Help Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service to Make a Difference**

Our Corporate Equalities Action Plan will be subject to reviews in light of consultation and feedback from voluntary and community groups, partner organisations and individual members of the public. If you have any comments or suggestions about the Strategy or the Plan, please complete the form below and return it to:

**Corporate Communications Department  
Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service  
Headquarters  
Sadler Road, Winsford  
CW7 2FQ**

Your Name

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Your Address

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Contact Phone Number

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E mail address

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Please fill in the box with your comments or suggestions