

Introduction of Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority Single Equality Scheme

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

For further information about this report please contact Paul Raymond, Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260203 or Jonathan Hyams, Equality and Diversity Officer, on 01743 260236.

1 Purpose of Report

To ask the Human Resources Committee to consider the proposed new Single Equality Scheme (attached as an Appendix to this report) and recommend to the Fire Authority that it be approved

2 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

- a) Consider the Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2010 - 2013; and
- b) Recommend to the Fire Authority that it approve the proposed new Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan.

3 Background

At its meeting on 3 September 2009 the Committee approved the development of a Single Equality Scheme incorporating the seven diversity strands of age, disability, gender, transgender, religion and belief, race, and sexual orientation. The Committee also agreed that the Equality and Diversity Steering Group should oversee its development.

4 Current Situation

A draft Scheme has been developed and consultation is now complete. The proposed Scheme is presented to the Committee for consideration.

The Scheme contains:

Section 1	Introduction and Framework
Section 2	Performance and Targets
Section 3	Our Community and Employees
Section 4	Leadership and structures
Section 5	Responsive Services and Improvements
Section 6	Review and complaints
Section 7	Action Plan 2010 (January) – 2013 (January)
Appendix 1	Glossary
Appendix 2	Definitions

A report on the progress of the Single Equality Scheme action plan will be brought to the Committee on an annual basis.

5 Financial Implications

Officers have consulted with the Principal Accountant and are confident that any costs associated with the proposed new Single Equality Scheme can be met from within existing budgets.

6 Legal Comment

There is a legal requirement on all public authorities when carrying out their functions to pay due regard to the general and specific duties set out in equalities legislation. The Single Equality Scheme will bring together the statutory equality duties into a consistent and coherent framework, making it easier to understand obligations and to act upon them.

7 Equality Impact Assessment

This Scheme and Action Plan contains information on how Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service will make equality improvements for its staff and service users, and for the wider community in Shropshire. It widens the scope of equality and diversity within the Service by:

- Bringing together under one Scheme the previously separate equality strands of Disability, Gender and Race
- Introducing new equality strands covering Age, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation and Transgender

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and is attached.

8 Appendix

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan
January 2010 – January 2013

9 Background Papers

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority

Human Resources Committee 3 September 2009

Report 13 - New Single Equality Scheme, and non-exempt minutes

Implications of all of the following have been considered and, where they are significant (i.e. marked with an asterisk); the implications are detailed within the report itself.

Balanced Score Card		Integrated Risk Management Planning	
Business Continuity Planning		Legal	*
Capacity		Member Involvement	
Civil Contingencies Act		National Framework	
Comprehensive Performance Assessment		Operational Assurance	
Efficiency Savings		Retained	
Environmental		Risk and Insurance	
Financial	*	Staff	*
Fire Control/Fire Link		Strategic Planning	
Information Communications and Technology		West Midlands Regional Management Board	
Freedom of Information / Data Protection / Environmental Information		Equality Impact Assessment	*



Directorate	HR, Training and Development	Department/Section	HR
Name of officers completing (minimum of 2)	Natalie Hill Lisa Vickers	Job title	Equality and Diversity Officer HR Manager
Name of Policy/Service/Activity to be assessed	Single Equality Scheme	Date of assessment	24 July 2009
New or existing policy	New		

1) Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy/service/activity (referred to as policy in document) and also consider the following:

- What are the key performance indicators?
- Who is intended to benefit or be affected by it? (is this positive or negative)
- What outcomes do you want to achieve from this policy?

The purpose of a Single Equality Scheme is to have one Scheme instead of 3 separate schemes to improve service delivery and employment and to integrate all 7 strands of diversity into this new Scheme.

This will support our Fire Service Core Values, our Equality and Diversity Strategic aims and Corporate Objectives, the National Equality and Diversity Strategy and Equality Framework.

The purpose of this single equality scheme is to have one document which looks at addressing equality issues in service delivery and employment across the 7 strands for the whole organisation.

Employees and the public will benefit from this completed scheme as it is their suggestions that will help to create the actions in this policy which in turn will improve organisational effectiveness to all people.

1 a) Who implements this policy? The Single Equality Scheme is created through consultation and is monitored by the Equality and Diversity Officer, the Action Plan is implemented by all Directorates and managers as appropriate to their individual areas.

2) How does your current policy meet the needs around age, disability, race, religion/belief, gender, sexual orientation and caring responsibilities?

Current policy meets our current legislative requirements, which is for race, disability and gender, however this new scheme will be far broader and more inclusive than the previous one.

Are there any obvious barriers to accessing the service? E.g. physical or other.

The scheme will be accessible to all when completed and will be published on the internet.

2a) Where do you think improvements could be made?

The creation of the scheme will create improvement areas.

2b) Have issues of equality been identified in this area of service delivery by SFRS?	No	
3) Have we had any specific feedback or complaints on this area? Is there evidence that this has come from any of these specific groups: race, gender, disability, religion/belief, age, sexual orientation, caring responsibilities?	No We are currently carrying out involvement sessions with the public, employees and stakeholders so that they can help to create this new scheme. Questionnaires have also been sent to specific equality groups and have been given to members of the public and on our website for people to complete.	
3a) Do we have any feedback from managers or frontline staff on this policy?	As above	
3b) Is there any feedback from voluntary/community organisations?	As above	
3c) Is there any research / models of practice that may inform SFRS view?	SFRS are working with Shropshire Council and Shropshire PCT on the involvement events and have looked at other single equality schemes.	
4) Detail the Actions / Improvement areas you have identified, or the need for further research. (These must be put onto the Action and Improvements Form FB 367 for consideration by Steering Group) If you have found considerable actions or research this will require you to proceed to a full assessment.	None to date - this is the creation of a new scheme and research is currently being undertaken to create this.	
5) Should the policy now proceed to a full impact assessment?		The process of involvement sessions will involve all members of the public and specific groups and communities.

I am satisfied that this policy has been successfully impact assessed. I understand the Impact Assessment of this policy is a statutory obligation and that, as owners of this policy, we take responsibility for the completion and quality of this process.

Line Manager	Lisa Vickers	Date	10/08/09
Please note that this impact assessment will be scrutinised by the Equality and Diversity Officer.			

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan January 2010 – January 2013



Somali:

Dokumentigan waxaa ku qoran wargelin ku saabsan sida uu Adeegga Dab-Demiska iyo Badbaadinta ee Shropshire uu u sii hagaajinayo wax u sinaanta dadka oo idil loogu talloagalay. Haddii aad jeclaan laheyd dokumentigan oo luqad ama qaab kale ku baxa sida farta waaweyn ama maqal, fadlan nalaga soo xiriir 01743 260200 ama email-ka ah enquiries@shropshirefire.gov.uk.

Urdu:

اس دستاویز میں شراپشائر فائر اینڈ ریسکیو سروس کس طرح تمام لوگوں کے لیے مساویانہ تجدیدی افعال انجام دے رہی ہے اس بات کی معلومات دی گئی ہے۔ اگر آپ اس دستاویز کو کسی متبارل زبان میں یا کسی دیگر شکل میں جیسے بڑے الفاظ میں یا آڈیو پر چاہتے ہیں تب برائے کرم ہمیں 01743 260200 پر فون کریں یا enquiries@shropshirefire.gov.uk پر بذریعہ ای میل ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

Welsh:

Mae'r ddogfen hon yn cynnwys gwybodaeth ar sut mae Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub Swydd Amwythig yn gwneud gwelliannau cydraddoldeb ar gyfer pawb. Os hoffech gael y ddogfen hon mewn iaith arall neu fformat arall fel print bras neu sain, cysylltwch â ni ar 01743 260200 neu anfonwch e-bost: enquiries@shropshirefire.gov.uk.

For any further information or queries on this scheme, please contact:
The Equality and Diversity Officer, Brigade Headquarters, St Michael's St, Shrewsbury, SY1 2HJ. Telephone: 01743 260236 Email: info@shropshirefire.gov.uk

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Foreword by Paul Raymond, Chief Fire Officer Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service

Photo of Paul

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service is committed to achieving equality both in how we treat each other and how we deliver our Service: indeed we have already achieved a great deal in ensuring our service is accessible equitably.

The Service has a legal obligation to produce an equality scheme for Gender, Race and Disability, but this integrated single equality scheme takes us a step further in ensuring that many more people's view and needs have been taken into consideration. As a forward thinking organisation we want to ensure that the people of Shropshire receive the service they need from us. The way this scheme has been developed supports this ethos. I also hope that by having a single scheme it will be more comprehensive and accessible to both our employees and our communities.

The culture of this organisation shows that we are committed to equality and diversity and this scheme will ensure that everyone understands our commitment, direction and ultimately the benefits of diversity for all individuals inside and outside the Service.

Councillor Stuart West, Chair Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority

Photo of Stuart

This scheme provides guidance to the Service and to employees on how to promote equality throughout all and parts of the Service and activities. We took the decision to focus more broadly than the statutory requirements so that this scheme is inclusive for all people. By adopting this document throughout the Service and in everything that we do, it will continue the work that we have already carried out and progress equality throughout the organisation and in the communities we serve.

The Action Plan set out in this scheme will enable us not only to achieve our legal duties, but also to ensure that these actions continue to be part of our everyday activities. As this Action Plan has been created with the help of people whom it directly affects, the outcomes should give us tangible results that will be visible throughout the organisation and allow us to see improvements for all..

Statement of intent

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority is committed to ensuring equality for all who use our services. We will endeavour to do this through implementing our Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan, along with other documents which work towards our equality objectives.

To do this the Authority will ensure that the organisation understands its responsibilities and that there is clear communication within the Service and with the communities we serve so that our intentions are clear and understood. We will continue to involve and consult with our communities on this Scheme and on any other relevant plans in the future.

We have set clear targets which we will monitor and review on a regular basis. This will ensure that they remain relevant to our overall aims, and we will be flexible in our approach so that these aims can be changed if necessary. We will amend our equality and diversity aims, objectives and actions to keep pace with the changing environment and to sustain our progress.

Vision

The vision of the Fire Authority is:

A Safer Shropshire

Mission

Saving life, protecting property and the environment and reducing risk within the community

Motto

The vision and mission are identifiable through its motto:



Section 1: Introduction and Framework

1 Historical context

All fire services are established under the provisions of the Fire Services Act 2004 and have further statutory responsibilities, as laid down in the Fire Precautions Act 1971 and the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997, as amended.

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority (SWFA), formed as a combined fire authority in 1998 after local government reorganisation, provides a fire and rescue service for the nearly half a million people of Shropshire Council and the Borough of Telford & Wrekin.

The Authority is a single service local authority and falls into the category of organisations that must produce a Race, Disability and Gender equality scheme. SFRS has decided that in addition to this they wanted to expand these three areas to incorporate the forthcoming new Equality Bill legislation to cover:

- Age
- Religion and belief
- Sexual Orientation
- Transgender

2. What is a Single Equality Scheme?

A Single Equality Scheme is a strategic document and action plan, which details how the Service is going to approach its duties under the legislative requirements and in this particular Scheme, goes further to cover additional strands. It sets timescales for achieving the objectives that are set out in the Action Plan. This Scheme will encourage and push forward the equality agenda and give practical improvements to the organisation, which will ensure we are meeting our duties and making a real difference for the people of Shropshire.

The aim of this Scheme is to promote equality of opportunity and to eliminate discrimination both as a service provider and as an employer. It will promote positive attitudes and participation for all the areas detailed above.

3. Legislation

The Single Equality Bill is likely to be introduced as an Act in 2010. Its purpose is to consolidate earlier equality legislation and the current equality duties on race, gender and disability. It will expand these equality duties to include age, gender reassignment, religion or belief and sexual orientation. It will also make specific changes to some of the earlier legislation and makes the legislation easier for people to

Other aims are to increase transparency and to ensure that all public authorities report and monitor the different areas of equality to secure real progress. Increasing the number of strands will reduce inequalities across a wider area of services and employment.

4. General and Specific duties on local authorities

Under this Scheme the equality duties imposed by existing legislation will still govern SFRS. The Scheme has been written so that we meet all of our statutory duties for all of the equality strands under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Equality Act 2006.

The arrangements local authorities are required to put in place are:

General Duties

These state that as an authority we must when carrying out our functions:

- Promote equality of opportunity (gender, disability, race)
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment (gender, disability, race)
- Be proactive in eliminating discrimination and harassment (gender)
- Be proactive in promoting equality of opportunity (gender, disability)
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons (disability)
- Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life (disability)
- Involve disabled people in the development of the scheme (disability)
- Take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons* (disability)
- Promote good relations between people of different racial groups (race)

Specific Duties

These state that as an authority we must:

- Publish an equality scheme and report on it (gender, race & disability)
- The equality scheme must specifically state:
 - How it meets the general and specific duties
 - How people should be involved in the development of the scheme
 - Methods for impact assessment of policies and practices and publishing the results
 - Steps the Authority will take towards fulfilling its general duty – setting out its objectives in the action plan
 - The way information will be gathered on employment and functions
 - The way information is to be used
 - Steps to be taken within 3 years set out in an action plan
 - Training planned for staff in connection with the Race Relations Act (Race)
- Produce an annual report containing a summary of the steps taken under the action plan and review the scheme every 3 years – Corporate Equality Action Plan.
- Monitor the following (race):
 - Staff in post
 - Applicants for employment, training and promotion
 - Receive training
 - Benefit or suffer detriment as a result of its performance assessment procedures;
 - Those that are subject to grievance and/or disciplinary procedures;
 - Cease employment

* This general duty is only relevant to disability

5. The Scheme and legal duties

In this Scheme these general and specific duties will be met for all of the seven strands, where they are applicable and achievable.

Age

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 cover employment and vocational training, and make it unlawful directly or indirectly to discriminate, harass or victimise a person on the grounds of their age. This applies both to younger and older people, and covers anyone who is discriminated against because of their age.

This legislation has had an impact on harmonising the normal retirement age for men and women at 65, extending employment rights beyond the age of 65, and requiring organisations to look at long service-related rewards.

Disability

Models of Disability

There are two models of disability: the social model and the medical model.

The **medical model** explains disability as being caused by a person's impairment, illness, disease or condition, and assumes that their disability prevents them from interacting or functioning on the same level as the rest of society.

The **social model** focuses on the barriers and attitudes faced by disabled people, which prevent them from participating as equal citizens in wider society. The poverty, disadvantage and social exclusion experienced by many disabled people are not the result of their impairments or medical conditions, but are created by attitudinal and environmental barriers. The social model of disability is the basis for the successful implementation of the duty to promote disability equality. (Disability Rights Commission code of practice)

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service continues to use the social model of disability as the best way to tackle the barriers disabled people face, creating a more inclusive environment.

We also use the definition in the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) [DDA], given in Appendix 2.

In 2004 the DDA was amended to include operational employees in its provisions. If somebody is disabled SFRS must consider making reasonable adjustments to their rôle, during the recruitment process and while they are in employment. Discrimination law now covers all activities in the public sector, and has removed the requirement that mental illness must be 'clinically well recognised'.

The 1975 Act (as amended by the DDA 2005) requires SFRS to publish a Disability Equality Scheme. The legislation makes it unlawful to discriminate against, harass or victimise a person because of their disability. The DDA 1995 prohibits discrimination in employment, and in the provision of goods, facilities, services, premises and education.

Gender

SFRS must implement the specific and general duties of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, as amended by the Equality Act 2006. We are also required to publish a Gender Equality Scheme. The legislation makes it unlawful to discriminate against, harass or victimise a person on the grounds of their gender either in employment, training or in the provision of goods and services. SFRS are also bound by the Equal Pay Act 1970, requiring that men and women must be paid the same rate if they are performing work of equal value.

Race

The Race Relations Act (RRA) 1976 (as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000) makes it unlawful directly or indirectly to discriminate against, harass or victimise a person because of their race, and states that we must implement the specific and general duties of this legislation, and are required to publish a Race Equality Scheme.

Religion or Belief

The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 came into force on 2nd December 2003 and make it unlawful directly or indirectly to discriminate against, harass or victimise anybody in employment and training based on their religion or similar beliefs, or based on their lack of such a belief. The Equality Act 2006 extended this protection to cover the provision of services, rented accommodation, schools and public authority plans.

Sexual Orientation

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 make it unlawful directly or indirectly to discriminate against, harass or victimise a person in employment and training because of their sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation. They protect lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and heterosexuals. The Equality Act 2006 extended this protection to cover the provision of goods, facilities and services.

Transgender

The Sex Discrimination Act (Gender Reassignment Regulations) 1999 and the Equality Act 2006 protect people in employment and training who intend to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment. The Sex Discrimination Act was extended in December 2007 to include goods, facilities and services, and the disposal or management of premises.

The Gender Recognition Act 2004 provides transgender people with legal recognition of their acquired gender.

Section 2: Performance and Targets

6. The history of equality reporting

Her Majesty's Fire Inspectorate undertook a thematic review of Equality and Fairness in the Fire Service in 1999, which examined fire services' equality and fairness policies, practices and performance. 2000 saw the publication of a Home Office equalities action plan entitled Towards Diversity, which dealt with all of the issues raised in the thematic review and contained recommendations for cultural change and embracing diversity. Recognising the importance of leadership, responsibility in individual Brigades for all equality matters was subsequently placed in the hands of Chief Fire Officers.

In December 2001 the Home Office published Towards Diversity II, which contained further recommendations, actions and advice. This document, together with the Equality Standard for Local Government, was used to review Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority's equality action plan; 'Quality Means Equality'.

7. The Equality Standard for Local Government

SFRS have been working to this Standard for many years and were externally verified as reaching Level 3 in March 2008. This standard originally had five levels, and in March 2009 we became one of a few Fire Services to achieve Level 4. This framework has since been amended to become the Equality Framework for Local Government, which has three levels. A specific Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework is currently being introduced.

8. The Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework

The Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework will be launched in December 2009 and SFRS will be adopting it to measure and improve equality across the Service. The new framework contains five performance areas which have been linked to the corresponding areas in the National Equality and Diversity Strategy:

- Leadership and promoting inclusion
- Accountability
- Effective Service Delivery and Community Engagement
- Employment and Training
- Evaluation and Good practice

This framework has been streamlined into three levels:

1. Developing
2. Achieving
- ➔ ('Moving towards excellent' for those at the current level 4)
3. Excellent

As SFRS achieved Level 4 of the previous standard, we are at the 'moving towards excellent' level.

9. The National Equality and Diversity Strategy 2008-18

In 2008 the first bespoke Fire and Rescue Service National Equality and Diversity Strategy was introduced. Communities and Local Government (CLG) set SFRS a target within the National Equality and Diversity Strategy of 15% of new operational recruits to be women and 7% of new recruits to be from a minority ethnic background, along with other targets which relate to both employment and service delivery.

10. Best Value Performance Indicators

Best value performance indicators are a series of national measures of local authority performance set by central Government, which have been in place for many years. Although they are no longer a statutory requirement, SFRS have continued to monitor ourselves against them to measure our progress:

- BVPI 2 (a) The level of the Equality Standard for Local Government to which we conform
- BVPI 2 (b) The duty to promote race equality
- BVPI 11 The percentage of the top 5% of staff who have a disability
- BVPI 11 (a) The percentage of the top 5% of earners that are women
- BVPI 11 (b) The percentage of the top 5% of earners from black and minority ethnic communities
- BVPI 16 (a) The percentage of employees with a disability
 - i) Wholetime and retained duty system employees with a disability
 - ii) Control and non uniformed employees with a disability
- BVPI 16 (b) The percentage of economically active people who have a disability
- BVPI 17 (a) The percentage of employees from ethnic minority communities
- BVPI 17 (b) The percentage of economically active (persons ages 18-65) population from ethnic minority communities in the local brigade area
- BVPI 21 The percentage of women firefighters

11. How we are meeting our duties

We have already introduced many examples of good practice to overcome inequalities within the Service. This includes holding 'taster sessions' to encourage under-represented groups to apply for posts. The Authority aims to be recognised as an equal opportunities employer. It has policies to help achieve this, covering all aspects of employment including advertising vacancies, selection, recruitment, training, positive action, conditions of service, and people's reasons for leaving our employment.

We will continue our long-established practice of monitoring the composition of our workforce and potential employees. We ensure that this information is used effectively to review our policies and identify any patterns of concern. For this sole purpose the Authority maintains records of employees' and applicants' equality monitoring data. Ongoing monitoring and regular analysis of these records provide the basis for appropriate action to eliminate discrimination, and to promote equality of opportunity.

In line with Government target setting, the Authority's long-term aim is to ensure that the composition of the workforce reflects that of the Shropshire's wider community. Where necessary, we may take lawful steps to encourage and assist under-represented groups to compete for jobs.

Our equality and diversity policies and action plans have been written with advice from a range of relevant bodies, and in consultation with appropriate representative bodies.

12. Benefits to the organisation

Promoting equality across all the strands improves our service delivery, the organisation and the way it works. Some examples of these improvements are:

- better targeted policies
- clearer understanding of the needs of our service users
- better quality services which meet diverse community needs
- improvements in how our services are seen, and more satisfaction with them
- better involvement and more participation by our service users
- better targeted information
- better representation of a diverse range of people throughout the Service

It also brings advantages in the employment of staff:

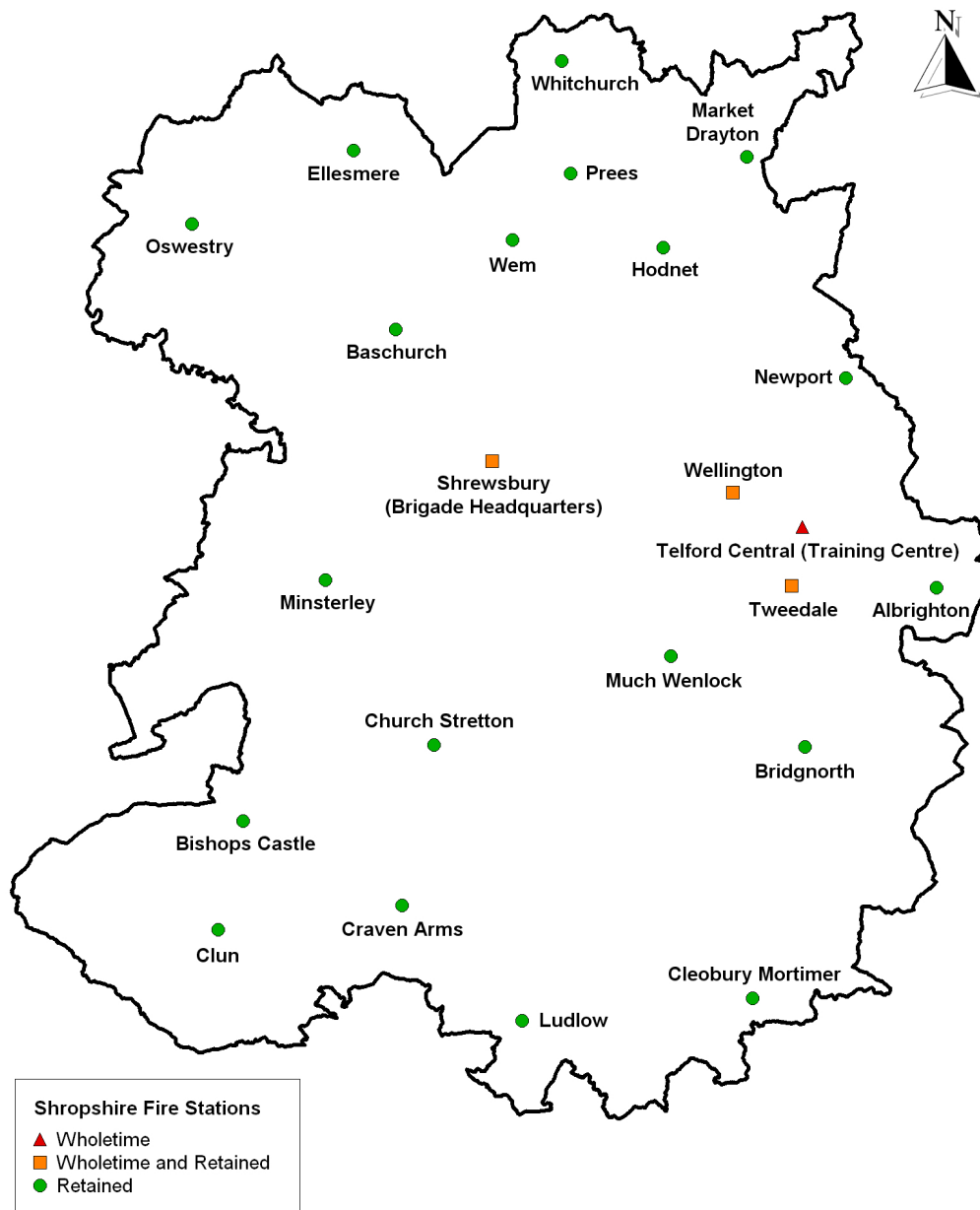
- a more representative workforce
- avoiding loss or undervaluing of staff
- improved staff morale and productivity
- identifying and developing good practice
- more effective use of talent in our workforce

Section 3: Our Employees and Communities

13. Map showing location of stations and employees

The Service has four wholetime operational stations, One (Shrewsbury) also houses our head-quarters, and another (Telford Central) houses our training department.

There are twenty two retained stations throughout the County which are heavily relied upon to provide an emergency response service to our rural areas.



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14. **Employees - equality monitoring data within the Service (as at 30th November 2009)**

	Gender					Disability		Age				
	Total Number	Men	%	Women	%	No.	%	Women		Men		
								Age Range	No	% dept	No.	% dept
Fire control	21					1	4.8	16 – 25	0	-	0	-
								26 – 35	3	17.0	1	5.0
								36 – 45	8	42.0	0	-
								46 – 55	1	5.0	4	21.0
								56 +	1	5.0	1	5.0
Non uniformed	82	35	43	47	57	5	6.1	16 – 25	2	3.0	2	3.0
								26 – 35	9	13.0	7	9.0
								36 – 45	20	27.0	8	11.0
								46 – 55	5	7.0	3	4.0
								56 +	7	9.0	10	14.0
Retained staff	322	320	99	2	1	2	0.6	16 – 25	2	0.7	39	11.0
								26 – 35	0	-	98	29.0
								36 – 45	1	0.3	120	36.0
								46 – 55	0	-	66	19.0
								56 +	0	-	14	4.0
Wholetime staff	228	219	96	9	4	4	1.8	16 – 25	0	-	5	2.0
								26 – 35	7	3.0	57	26.0
								36 – 45	2	1.0	39	42.0
								46 – 55	0	-	52	24.0
								56 +	0	-	3	2.0
TOTALS	653	582	89	71	11	12	1.8					

Sexual Orientation*	No.	%	Race*	No.	%	Religion*	No.	%
Gay Men			Irish	0	0.00	None	97	15.0
Straight men & women			Asian	1	0.02	Buddhist	3	0.05
Lesbians			Black / Black British	2	0.03	Christian	262	40.6
Bisexual men and women	4	0.06	Chinese or Other	0	0.00	Hindu	1	0.02
			White	545	84.0	Jewish	0	0.00
			Mixed	3	0.05	Muslim	1	0.02
			Not specified	98	15.1	Sikh	0	0.00
						Other religion	5	0.08
						Not specified/ unknown	276	42.8
<i>N.B. Figures may not total 100% due to rounding. There is no current report available on transgender numbers or percentages</i>								

* Where there are low numbers or to ensure confidentiality, these figures are not broken down by employment category

- 7.14% (1 in 15) of the top 5% of SFRS earners are women. 69% of the part-time staff are women.
- The Service employs a wide range of people, including in Administrative staff, Control Operators, Community Fire Safety, Finance, Firefighters, Human Resources, IT, Mechanics, Performance Team, Procurement and Training. Operational staff spend approximately 10% of their time on operational duties, such as fighting fires, attending road traffic collisions flooding and chemical incidents among many others. The rest of their time is spent on other duties, such as training, undertaking inspections in the community, fire safety and awareness raising

15. **Profile of the communities we serve**

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service covers the whole of Shropshire, which comprises the two administrative areas of Shropshire Council and the Borough of Telford and Wrekin.

The area's population is made up as follows:

Population figures

Area	Total	Women	%	Men	%
Shropshire Council	292,847	148,257	50.63	144,590	49.37
Borough of Telford & Wrekin	164,600	82,300	50.78	79,800	49.22
Fire Authority area	453,000	229,500	50.67	223,500	49.33

Source: Office of National Statistics Crown Copyright © 2009

Age distribution

Mid Year Population Estimates 2008 - Shropshire Population by Age in 2008

Age Group	Telford & Wrekin	Shropshire	SFRS Area
0- 10	21,996	32,873	54,869
11 - 20	19,187	31,460	50,647
21 – 30	18,704	26,747	45,451
31 – 40	23,075	37,213	60,288
41 – 50	19,253	34,158	53,411
51 – 60	17,346	25,884	53,230
61 – 70	11,339	26,558	37,897
71 – 79	6,887	18,243	25,130
80 +	2,102	6,211	8,313

Source: Office of National Statistics Crown Copyright © 2009

Disability

Population having a limited long term illness (2001 Census)

Area	Population with Limiting Long Term Illness	Percentage of total population
Telford & Wrekin	28,446	17.97
Shropshire	50,793	17.95

Ethnic composition of Shropshire's people

Shropshire Council has a very small black and ethnic minority population, with only 2.64% of people from ethnic minorities. The black and ethnic minority population of the Borough of Telford & Wrekin for is 5.2%, The combined ethnic minority population across both areas is 4.2% of the total population. (2001 Census data).

The table below shows the breakdown of these figures based on updated 2001 census figures:

People defining themselves as:	Telford and Wrekin	Shropshire	Total
White	150,014	279,742	429,756
• White: British	147,314	275,545	422,859
• White: Irish	1,061	1,432	1,432
• Other White	1,639	2,765	2,765
Mixed	1,728	1,170	2,898
• Mixed: White and Black Caribbean	935	404	1339
• Mixed: White and Black African	108	76	184
• Mixed: White and Asian	452	363	815
• Other Mixed	233	327	560
Asian or Asian British	4,586	839	5,425
• Asian or Asian British: Indian	2,623	429	3,052
• Asian or Asian British: Pakistani	1,598	143	1,741
• Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi	98	144	242
• Asian or Asian British: Other Asian	267	123	390
Black or Black British	928	343	1271
• Black or Black British: Caribbean	567	134	701
• Black or Black British: African	263	151	414
• Black or Black British: Other Black	98	58	156
Chinese or Other Ethnic Group	1,069	1,079	2,148
• Chinese	542	737	1279
• Other Ethnic Group	527	342	869

Source: Office of National Statistics Crown Copyright © 2009

Religions of Shropshire's people (based on 2001 census)

Religion given as:	Telford and Wrekin	Shropshire
Christian	117,573	226,351
Buddhist	418	447
Hindu	641	192
Jewish	64	117
Muslim	2,030	589
Sikh	1,831	153
Any other religion	349	630
No religion	23,866	34,650
Religion not stated	11,553	20,044

Source: Office of National Statistics Crown Copyright © 2009

Sexual Orientation

Estimates of the percentage of lesbian, gay and bisexual people in the general population vary, with 10% being a commonly-used figure. In 2005 the Department Of Trade and Industry, trying to assess the impact of the New Civil Partnership Act, and reviewing various surveys, estimated that 6% of the general population could reliably be identified as gay. On this basis, there are some 27,500 lesbian, gay and bisexual people in the Authority area.

Transgender

Transgender is an umbrella term for people whose gender identity, expression or behaviour is different from those typically associated with their assigned sex at birth. Meaningful statistics about the number of transgender people in the general population are very difficult to obtain, because transgender people are frequently reluctant to self-identify.

Economic activity

The number of economically active people in Shropshire County is 219,331, 55.56% (121,860) of whom are men and 44.44% (97,471) women (Office of National Statistics, March 2007)

Section 4: Leadership and structures

16. The Organisation's Directorates

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service is managed within five organisational directorates:

- Community Safety
- The Executive Department
- Human Resources, Training and Development
- Performance Improvement and
- Resources

The Community Safety Teams include all operational fire and rescue teams, community fire safety teams and business fire safety professionals. They deliver a number of key outcomes, many of which are shared with other organisations working with and serving the people of Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin. Indeed we can only deliver our Purpose by collaborating with other public and private organisations, and with the active support of the people we serve. They are supported in delivering of their services by all the other directorates.

The Executive Team is lead by the Chief Fire Officer. This team supports the elected Members of Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority in their governance of the organisation, and leads the strategic direction of the Service.

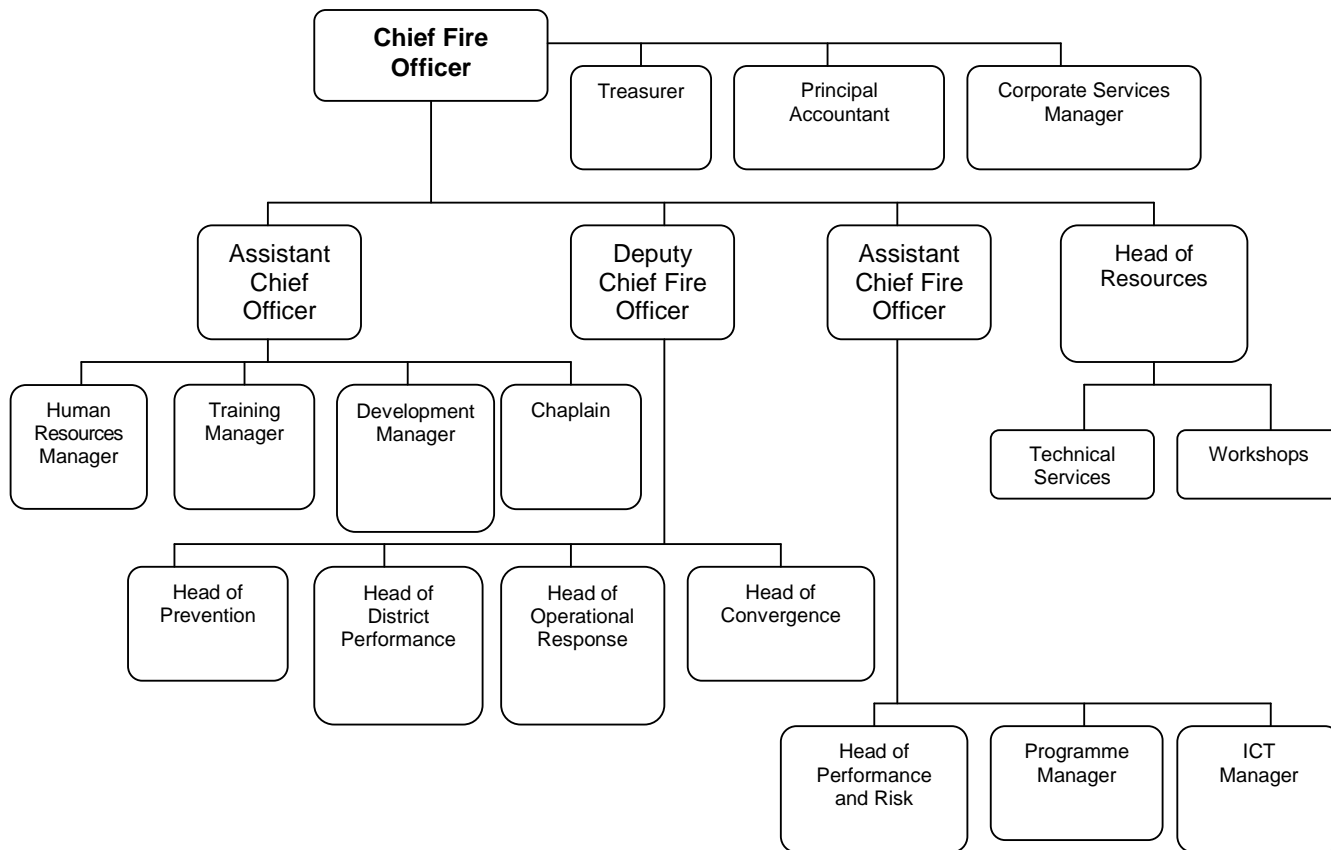
The Human Resources, Training and Development Team ensures that all staff are managed effectively and are competent to carry out their roles.

The Performance Improvement Team ensures that all functions operate effectively and measures our progress and co-ordinates projects.

The Resources Team ensures that all the equipment and buildings needed to operate the Service are safe and adequately maintained. They are also responsible fro procurement and the management of our suppliers, and for environmental management (AK).

Communities and Local Government and the Regional Management Board also provide direction to the Service

17. Organisation Chart



The Chief Fire Officer carries ultimate responsibility for meeting our legal duties. However, all managers and employees are responsible for the day-to-day management of the Scheme.

18. Committees

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority is responsible for the overall corporate governance of the Service, including its strategic direction, setting its budget, establishing goals for management and monitoring the achievement of those goals. The Authority's Members are elected councillors appointed by Shropshire Council and the Borough of Telford & Wrekin. The Fire Authority meets six times a year and has four standing committees which meet regularly to assist in its work:

- Strategy and Resources Committee
- Audit and Performance Management Committee
- Human Resources Committee
- Standards Committee

The Authority also has three committees which meet as and when there is business to consider:

- Appeals Committee
- Brigade Managers' Employment Panel
- Urgency Committee

The public may attend almost all meetings. The papers relating to each meeting appear on the Service's website at: <http://www.shropshirefire.gov.uk/engine/managing-the-service/fire-authority.htm>

19. Our Vision for the Future Community Safety Service

- A service widely regarded as a leader in the provision of fire and rescue services, and being seen as providing assured professional emergency response to meet the needs of our communities
- A service seen as excellent for our performance over successive years in reducing deaths and injuries from fire and other emergencies. Risk management will have become embedded as the basis for our decision making about the deployment of resources.
- A service that has been successful in adapting to a changing world and the threats that this brings, whether that is as a consequence of climate change, a terrorist threat or other phenomena. All major incidents attended will be considered as having been dealt with professionally and effectively and the reputation of Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service enhanced.
- We will be seen to be a learning service, learning new tactics, approaches, using new equipment and facilities to provide the best emergency response service possible. We will also be a service that has a wide range of specialist skills and services provided through local, regional and national collaboration strategies that maximise the availability of a cost effective service.
- We will be a 'mainstream' player in community safety in the widest context through social inclusion, cohesion and sustainability agendas.
- A service that, although collaborating on the wider stage, will be clearly distinguished by our local communities as 'Their Fire and Rescue Service'

We believe that the **key outcomes** of the work we do are:

- **A Safe Shropshire** – where all residents and visitors to our County are safe from fire, fire-related anti-social behaviours and other hazards, while at home, work, study, during leisure activities, travelling through our County or being cared for by others.
- **A Prosperous Shropshire** – where all of our wealth creating organisations are safe from the dangers of fire and other emergencies and where the wealth creators of the future, our children, have an education undisrupted by fires in schools and colleges.
- **An Attractive Shropshire** – where the environment is sustainable, healthy, clean and attractive to both residents and visitors, and where the rich natural and built heritage within the County is protected from fire and other emergencies.
- **A Cohesive Shropshire** – where all people work together at a neighbourhood or local level to improve and maintain a tolerant and diverse society, where we all respect the freedom of the individual and accept the responsibility of living in a free society. Where social exclusion is reduced and the most vulnerable people are supported and protected.

20. **Core Values**

The Service has always practiced and been praised for its open and supportive culture and we are eager to adopt the Government's Core Values for the Fire and Rescue Service, seeing them as an opportunity further to improve civility and respect across the Service. These Core Values are:

Service to the Community

We value service to the community by ...

- Working with all groups to reduce risk
- Treating everyone fairly and with respect
- Being answerable to those we serve
- Striving for excellence in all we do

People

We value all our employees by practising and promoting ...

- Fairness and respect
- Recognition of merit
- Honesty, integrity and mutual trust
- Personal development
- Co-operative and inclusive working

Diversity

We value diversity in the service and in the community by ...

- Treating everyone fairly and with respect
- Providing varying solution for different needs and expectations
- Promoting equal opportunities in employment and progression within the Service
- Challenging prejudice and discrimination

Improvement

We value improvement at all levels of the service by ...

- Accepting responsibility for our performance
- Being open-minded
- Considering criticism thoughtfully
- Learning from our experience
- Consulting others

21. **Strategic Aims**

In order to assist in carrying out its functions efficiently and effectively, the Authority has set five Strategic Aims (with twenty Corporate Objectives), as detailed in its annual Performance Plan.

These Aims are:

1. Reduce the risk to life and material loss from fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies in the community
2. Protect life, property and the environment from fire and other emergencies
3. Secure the highest level of safety and welfare/wellbeing for all staff and Authority Members
4. Provide a service that demonstrates quality and best value in service provision
5. Provide a service committed to the highest level of Equality and Diversity

The Corporate Objectives linked to Strategic Aim number five and therefore the most relevant to our duties under the Equality Act 2006 are as follows:

18. Provide and promote an equitable service to the communities of Shropshire and other stakeholders
19. Provide a just and dignified place of work environment for all employees, Members and visitors
20. Recruit, promote and retain a workforce representative of the community we serve

These Strategic Aims and Corporate objectives underpin Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service's performance and business plans.

Section 5: Responsive Services and Improvements

22. Working in Partnership

The Service works closely with partners in service delivery through links with public agencies and local authorities, for example through Local Area Agreements and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships. We also work in partnership with other local organisations, groups and authorities; for example on fire safety referrals, positive action events and Hate Crime campaigns.

We work on regional projects with other fire services through the Regional Management Board (RMB). One of these projects is specifically about equalities issues. As well as Shropshire Fire & Rescue Service, the region contains the following Fire Services:

- Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service
- Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Warwickshire Fire and Rescue service
- West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service

We have strong links with a range of community organisations and support local diversity and anti-discrimination events, including the annual Shrewsbury Cultural Diversity Day and Rock Against Racism concert, and Telford's Gay Pride event.

We are a member of the Shropshire Partnership Equality and Diversity Forum and the Telford Race, Equality and Diversity Partnership, both of which help us become further involved with local communities

This joint approach is one that is developing nationally, and is seen as a way forward for delivering projects and results.

23. Some Achievements

Age Concern

SFRS works with Age Concern on many partnerships, including their 'Help At Home Service' where support workers help clients at home. They offer a Home Fire Risk Assessment and fit smoke alarms on behalf of SFRS. We have created our own campaign; 'Keep Warm, Keep Well' and we distribute campaign literature.

Adopt a School and Youth Quiz

Each wholtime watch works with their own schools, which they regularly visit and work with to develop the children's understanding of fire and river dangers. They also cover bullying, drugs and alcohol, and avoiding peer pressure to smoke. The children see the same firefighters over time, and develop trust and learning relationships. We have ensured that schools for students with special needs form an integral part of this scheme.

The Shropshire Fire Youth Quiz is enormously successful and is open to all schools in Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin. The topics cover issues beyond fire safety, and include bullying, solvent and alcohol abuse, fear of violence and abuse at home, and how to get help and support through agencies such as Connexions.

Assistive listening devices

Two conversors (neck loops with radio microphones) have been purchased to assist those who use a hearing aid, which can be used during meetings or when working in the community.

Bilingual Community Fire Safety Advocate

We have employed a Bilingual Community Fire Safety Advocate, to work with people in and around Wellington who would not otherwise have gained access to our services. This rôle has been successful in engaging with groups that had limited contact with the Service because of cultural, language or religious factors.

Buildings improvement programme

There is ongoing work to ensure that all areas of equality are taken into consideration at all of our sites and buildings.

Child Car Seats

Working with Mothercare, station personnel have been involved in arranging awareness days focusing on changes in the law about the use of child car seats.

Community Outreach Vehicle

SFRS purchased this vehicle in 2007 and it has been an outstanding success in reaching many parts of the community that had previously been unvisited. This is particularly true in rural areas, which often have no appropriate venues. The Outreach Vehicle contains everything it needs to engage directly with public: it is fully accessible, with facilities which include a ramp and a hearing induction system.

Community fire safety information

We have produced a video for deaf and hard of hearing people, which has been widely distributed. A video featuring fire safety training for people with learning difficulties has been produced in partnership with Telford College of Arts and Technology and the Borough of Telford & Wrekin. We have audio tapes available containing fire safety information for people who are blind or have visual impairments.

Cultural Audit

In 2007 the Service took part in the British Fire and Rescue Services Cultural Audit of staff. A working group consulted with our representative bodies on the results and compiled a draft action plan. We were pleased to see that our overall ranking was third out of nineteen Services, and that in most areas SFRS responses were above average.

Cycle Training

We have trained a number individuals to new standards in educating young children in safe cycling. This allows us to provide cycling proficiency training in support of the Local Authorities. We particularly concentrate on rural areas where vulnerable young people cannot access training by any other means.

Disability

We work in partnership with the Sensory Impairment teams at Shropshire Council and the Borough of Telford & Wrekin. We complete referral forms for members of the public, enabling them to contact these teams directly. The Fire Prevention team have held specific events with people with learning difficulties and used pictorial information to aid understanding.

Diversity training

We have recently carried out diversity training for all of our retained duty system staff and wholetime operational employees, which covered six strands of diversity

Doctors' Surgeries

The Service has run events at surgeries and made arrangements for a referral postcard to be put in with each prescription.

Documents available in different formats

All our documents are available in a variety of formats on request. This has been communicated on our website and in the documents themselves.

Drive to Survive

A number of programmes has been completed with our partners to inform young people (16-25) of potential dangers while driving. The day-long presentation shows exactly how the emergency services deal with road traffic collisions in a graphic and realistic manner, linked to a hard-hitting presentation of the causes and consequences of collisions.

Equality and Diversity Steering Group

In order to ensure that Equality and Diversity continues to be led from the very top of the organisation, the Chief Fire Officer has taken on the rôle of chairing this group, which was formed to coordinate and drive forward Equality and Diversity improvements. The Steering Group consists of all the most senior managers of the Service and the Equality and the Authority's Diversity Member Champion,, supported by Equality and Diversity staff. The Steering Group has adopted clear terms of reference and meets regularly. In addition to the high level Group permanent membership, other people are invited as appropriate, including middle managers and representative bodies.

Fire Setters Intervention

SFRS was one of the first Services to introduce a Fire Setter Intervention team. We visit the homes of children and young people who have been identified as engaging in inappropriate fire behaviour. A high proportion of our referrals are for children living in socially disadvantaged areas, and we also respond to their social needs and problems. We work closely with the social care agencies to ensure a holistic approach to children's welfare.

Fire Service Emergency Cover (FSEC) Toolkit

This allows us to identify people at higher risk from fire. Two factors affecting risk levels are disability and long-term limiting illness. We use information about these factors to help us target our community fire safety work .

Membership of Stonewall

SFRS became a member of Stonewall in 2009, and is working with them to make improvements for those staff that identify as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual.

Membership of the Gender Advisory Bureau

The Bureau provides advice and guidance on transgender issues and have provided training for our staff.

Membership of Networking Women in the Fire Service

We are a corporate affiliate member of this group, which provides support and training and holds annual networking events for women across the Fire Service.

Migrant Workers Campaign

A high number of migrant workers has come into the county over the past few years, living in rented accommodation, and often with many people sharing a room. They also live in some of the most socially deprived areas, and are therefore among the most at-risk groups. The majority of migrant workers have found employment in specific sectors, including meat manufacturing. The

Service found that the best way of identifying these groups was to approach their employers. We have worked with employers to supply literature and visit workplaces to give advice to these people, whom they may not have been able to contact otherwise.

Partnership working

We have undertaken work with the National Farmers Union, special education needs schools, youth clubs, sheltered housing, mothers groups, drug misusers, foster carers, the Red Cross, housing associations, Connexions, NACRO (crime reduction charity) and Pathfinder.

Personnel database

This is currently being used to provide high-quality management information, particularly for equality monitoring. A data cleanse exercise was undertaken to ensure that our data is up to date.

Positive Action events

SFRS are committed to employing a diverse workforce and have arranged or attended events to promote the Service to people who are currently under-represented. These events have included.

- Attendance at Birmingham Pride, Telford Gay Pride
- Running 'taster sessions' for women and minority ethnic people for our operational posts
- Joint recruitment awareness event with the Police and Ambulance Service at Telford College or Arts and Technology.
- Attending rural colleges with information on our vacancies.

Two Ticks Symbol

For many years we have been accredited with the 'Two Ticks' Symbol by Jobcentre Plus. It is given as recognition to employers who have agreed to meet five commitments on recruitment, employment, retention and career development of disabled people.

Vulnerable Persons Officers

Through careful analysis the Service identified certain groups, communities and individuals as being at greater risk from fire than others. These posts work on forging links with agencies that support these people to ensure those at risk are adequately protected within their homes.

Partnership working forms a key element of this rôle and to date the Vulnerable Persons Officers have worked with Community Mental Health Teams, Substance Misuse Teams, various Support Workers, and members of the Polish communities.

Women and Families Event

This event was for Asian women and their families living in three areas of Telford. It targeted Muslim women and families, focusing on health issues and families, but was open to all women. We also attended events to promote the Service to minority groups, such as a Polish and English Cultural Awareness evening in Craven Arms.

Section 5: Responsive Services and Improvements

24. Involving People

Equality legislation requires the organisation not only to consult on the final version of our Single Equality Scheme, but also to involve people in its development.

In order to do this all employees and representative bodies were invited to participate through workshops. Information was placed on our internal newsletter asking people to be involved, and each department, station and watch was sent a form to return giving their views on where improvements could be made in each of the strands

In partnership with Shropshire Council and Shropshire Primary Care Trust several public involvement sessions were held in different parts of the county to gain community involvement and views. In addition the members of both the Equality and Diversity Forum and the Telford Race, Equality and Diversity Partnership were sent an invitation to take part in the development of this Scheme and Action Plan, either through the workshops or through questionnaires. A general invitation was also placed on our website along with a questionnaire that people could complete and return and other local events such as the Shrewsbury Flower Show and Telford Gay Pride were used to collect feedback from the public.

The draft Scheme was sent for comments to other fire and rescue services in our region and was put on our intranet for consultation.

The views and feedback from all of these groups and individuals has been taken into consideration wherever possible and incorporated into this final SES. These views have allowed us to create and prioritise our equality work for the next three years.

25. Equality Impact Assessments

We have already completed an audit of all of our current policies/functions to ascertain which of these should be high, medium or low priority, and has created a three year action plan to complete these, this plan is currently in year two, 2009/10, and is available as part of the Corporate Equality Action Plan.

Each current and new policy or function will have an initial equality impact assessment to identify any areas of equality improvement. These already take into consideration all the strands of diversity, and any identified need is put into an action plan which can then be monitored. If required, a full equality impact assessment will be undertaken. Appropriate training has been given to all staff with responsibility for undertaking equality impact assessments. Please follow the hyperlink to access our policy on this <http://www.shropshirefire.gov.uk/webimages/brigadeorders/humanresources/pdf-36.pdf>

The purpose of undertaking these impact assessments is to ensure that all proposed and current policies do not disadvantage people, and to identify where they might better promote equality of opportunity. We also use them to record good practice.

26. **Gathering information**

The Equality Act 2006 requires us to gather information in several areas of the organization, which allows us to make decisions based on the information obtained.

The Service gathers information on:

- Service delivery
- Employment – recruitment, development and retention

This information is available from monitoring forms, personal development reviews and exit interviews as well as those detailed below.

Service Delivery

- Equality Impact Assessments
- Customer satisfaction surveys
- Complaints
- Partnership groups

Employees

- Equality Impact Assessments
- Cultural audit of employees
- Monitoring forms / data cleanse exercise
- Personal development reviews
- Exit interviews
- Equality and Diversity Steering Group

It is important to gather both qualitative and quantitative data. This information should help to identify whether the actions we have developed in the Action Plan are delivering greater equality across all of the strands.

27. **Using Information**

This information will help us to prepare subsequent schemes, and to identify if the actions have been effective. Information gathered through surveys will be analysed and the results used to inform future action planning.

28. **Reporting**

We will produce a report on an annual basis containing a summary of:

- The steps the Service has taken to fulfill its legislative requirements (within the Action Plan)
- Results of information gathering, and what this indicates
- What the Service has done with the information gathered, and any actions as a result

29. Consultation

The Service is committed to consulting as widely as possible on this Scheme and to using comments to amend the Scheme. Consultation is already widely used within the Service.

The way in which the Service consults with communities and stakeholder groups will be through several methods and using various groups/organisations both internally and externally.

The information obtained from these groups will be used to inform and improve the Authority's policies and service delivery. We will use the following groups for consultation:

Internal

- All recognised representative bodies
- Human Resources Committee
- Policy Group
- Employees through the internet or 'Pink' newsletter

External

- Individual and community groups on our current partnership list
- Fire and Rescue Services in the West Midlands Region and our family group
- Shropshire Council
- Borough of Telford & Wrekin
- Telford Race, Equality and Diversity Partnership and groups from the Borough of Telford & Wrekin area
- Shropshire Partnership's Equality and Diversity Forum and groups from the Shropshire Council area

It is important to ensure that the most appropriate type of consultation is used for each individual element or function. We will use the most appropriate methods of consultation depending on the differing circumstances. These may include some or all of the following:

- Internet
- Surveys and questionnaires
- Focus groups
- Consultation meetings
- Working groups
- Conferences
- Market research

The Audit Commission's Fire and Rescue National Report (January 2006) Comprehensive Performance Assessment cites Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority as an example of good practice for effective community engagement, with our regular use of scrutiny panels, focus groups, public meetings and internet communication to inform improvement priorities.

30. **Arrangements for Monitoring Policies for Adverse Impact**

Monitoring specific areas and service delivery can give us information on whether people from different backgrounds are experiencing the same or different levels and quality of service, thereby allowing us to identify areas for improvement and to establish:

- Levels of use - whether different groups are over or under represented as service users
- Levels of satisfaction – whether all backgrounds are satisfied
- Levels of relevance – do policies and services meet the needs of communities?
- Levels of appropriateness – whether policies and services are culturally sensitive

Statistical information on employment issues, operational matters, fire prevention and fire safety inspections is gathered regularly. Targets set out in the National Equality and Diversity Strategy for recruitment, promotion and retention will be monitored and reported on.

Responses from the public, complaints and comments will also be analysed to detect any adverse impact on any particular group. The Authority will continue to send out 'After the Incident' evaluation forms to people who have used our services, to enable monitoring of our service delivery and identification of trends

The Authority is also subject to scrutiny by the Audit Commission under the Comprehensive Performance Assessment process. This gives an overall rating and feedback on performance throughout the organisation on equality and diversity issues.

Public opinion and cultural surveys are undertaken through an external organisation. These results are analysed for disparities between service users and appropriate action will be taken in response.

31. **Publishing Information**

The Single Equality Scheme will be published in paper format and be available on request. It will also be placed on our website: www.shropshirefire.gov.uk.

A summary of the Scheme will be published and distributed to every employee and Authority Member. This summary will also be available to the public on request.

The results of the monitoring will be published annually and will be available on the website.

32. **Accessing Information**

Reports will be available to the public on request and will be available at the Service HQ in Shrewsbury and on our website. Any requests for further information should be directed to the Equality and Diversity Officer or via the internet.

Internally, the Single Equality Scheme and any associated reports and Action Plans will be circulated in paper form and via the intranet to Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service employees.

The Scheme will also be made available on request in alternative formats, such as large print, audio tape and alternative languages.

33. Arrangements for Training Staff

The Authority has already delivered staff training on equality and diversity, cultural awareness and harassment and bullying. This training is ongoing and provided to all new Service employees during their induction programme and periodically during their employment.

Publishing this Scheme to employees will help to reinforce the organisation's commitment to equality, and will improve their knowledge and awareness in this area for both service delivery and employment.

The Authority uses a partnership approach to training where appropriate and has recently undertaken shared Strategic Managers Equality and Diversity Training and Equality Auditor Training.

Wholetime and Retained duty system personnel have all been given equality and diversity training on all strands of diversity. The training given to staff will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure its relevance and effectiveness.

The Equality and Diversity Officer is responsible for overseeing diversity training and has undergone appropriate training. The organisation also uses external organisations within their programmes who are experienced in delivering equalities training, such as within our Leadership and Management Development programmes.

Section 6: Review and complaints

34. Review of the Scheme

The Scheme will be reviewed every three years by the Equality and Diversity Officer with the managers responsible for completing actions in the Action Plan.

The Action Plan will be amended annually and made available on request, with summaries sent to appropriate managers/employees.

35. Complaints Procedure

Internal

Employees are able to use the Grievance or Whistle-blowing Brigade Orders, which are available on the internet or from Human Resources.

External

The Service has a corporate complaints procedure, which allows service users to make complaints, comments or compliments on any aspect of the Service. Details of this procedure are set out in our 'A guide to complaints and/or comments' form, which is widely publicised.

A complaint can be made in person by telephone, in writing or online at <http://www.shropshirefire.gov.uk/engine/customer-charter/complaints-feedback-form.htm>

By telephone contact 01743 260285/260232

By post to Brigade Complaints Officer
Shropshire Fire & Rescue Service
Brigade Headquarters
Shrewsbury
SY1 2HJ

Section 7: Action Plan

36. Single Equality Scheme Action Plan 2010 (Jan) – 2013 (Jan)

Abbreviations:

Equality Strand	A = Age, D = Disability, G = Gender, R = Race, R & B = Religion and Belief, SO = Sexual Orientation, T = Transgender	
Areas	EF = Fire Service Equality Framework EDS = Fire and Rescue Service Equality and Diversity Strategy 2008-2018	
Reference key		
ACFO = Assistant Chief Fire Officer ACO = Assistant Chief Officer ADOs = Assistant Divisional Officers CFO = Chief Fire Officer	EDO = Equality & Diversity Officer ESG = Equality Steering Group DM = Development Manager HOR = Head of Resources	HRM = Human Resources Manager SWFA = Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority
Other references		
CFS = Community Fire Safety EQIA = Equality Impact Assessment HOR = Head of Resources HR = Human Resources	IRMP = Integrated Risk Management Planning P = Performance PID = Performance Improvement Department RS = Resources	SFRS = Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service T&D = Training and Development

2009

Number	Equality Strand / area	Action	Outcome	Directorate / department	Responsible officer/s	Date
1.	SO / EF / EDS	Provide access for our employees to Shropshire LGB Network	To support our LGB/T employees	HR	EDO	2009
2.	R / EF / EDS	Review of induction cultural awareness training to include Chinese and Gypsy & Traveller awareness	Increase general awareness and to identify any improvement areas in service delivery	HR	EDO	2009
3.	G / R / RB / EF / EDS	Undertake positive action events for under-represented groups	Remove any social preconceptions and views for under-represented groups	HR, T&D / CFS	EDO / CFS	2009 →
4.	All / EF / EDS	Equality Impact Assessment Training for appropriate employees	To ensure that all people understand and can complete	HR, T&D	EDO	2009 → Annually as

Number	Equality Strand / area	Action	Outcome	Directorate / department	Responsible officer/s	Date
			impact assessments			required
5.	All / EF / EDS	Complete the Stress Audit Action Plan	To ensure that any effect of stress is reduced within the Service	All - as appropriate	All - as appropriate	2009 - 2010
6.	All / EF / EDS	Complete the Equality Impact Assessment 3 year Action Plan	All people are receiving an equitable service and there is no adverse impact	All	All	2009 (year 2) 2010 (year 2 / 3) 2011 (year 3)

2010

Number	Equality Strand / area	Action	Outcome	Directorate / department	Responsible officer/s	Date
7.	All / EF / EDS	Train equality auditor	Participation in Regional equality audits; additional monitoring and evaluation resource for SFRS	HR	EDO	2010/11
8.	All / EF / EDS	Undertaken a programme of positive action events for under-represented groups at retained duty system stations	To increase the representative diversity of our RDS employees	HR	EDO	March 2010 and ongoing
9.	All	Electronic employment application form available	Recruitment process more accessible to all groups	HR / PID	Web Officer	March 2010
10.	All / EF / EDS	Investigate the introduction of Corporate Wear	Assess whether will eliminate barriers and promote a consistent image to the public	ESG	ESG	2010
11.	D / EF	Introduce Disability Brigade Order	Allow transparency of process and to support employees	HR	EDO	May 2010
12.	EDS	Analysis of effectiveness of procedures for dealing with bullying, harassment, unfair discrimination and unacceptable behaviours	To ensure compliance with the National E&D Strategy	HR	HRM / EDO	June 2010

Number	Equality Strand / area	Action	Outcome	Directorate / department	Responsible officer/s	Date
13.	All / EF / EDS	Review the flexi-time scheme for non-uniformed staff	More family friendly scheme	HR	EDO	August 2010
14.	EDS	Report to go to CFA in September for approval before going to CLG on improvements to service delivery and employment practice	Meeting statutory obligations	ESG	ESG / EDO	September 2010
15.	All / EF / EDS	Consider whether to undertake the cultural audit or other staff survey	Decision and rationale for an audit or a survey, and guidance on content and method	SG, HR, T&D	HRM/ EDO	November 2010
16.	All	Succession / Replacement Plan	To ensure continuity of Service delivery within E & D good practice	HR	HRM / DM	December 2010
17.	All / EF / EDS	Undertake equality and diversity workshops for Authority Members	To increase awareness of Equality and Diversity so that all E&D issues are considered in all parts of the Service	HR, T&D	ACO / EDO	2010
18.	SO / EF / EDS	Create an action plan for LGB issues following results of the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index application	To support our LBG employees and to make improvements to LBG equality	HR	EDO	2010
19.	D / EF / EDS	Review the possibility of training a selection of employees in sign language	To increase communication	CFS / HR	CFS / EDO	2010
20.	All	Review the Recruitment Application and Equality Monitoring Form	Ensure that our recruitment process and monitoring is robust	HR	HRO / EDO	2010
21.	G / R / RB / EF / EDS	Use rôle models in publicity and training materials to challenge stereotypical images	To promote the service to a diverse range of people	ALL	ALL / EDO	2010

Number	Equality Strand / area	Action	Outcome	Directorate / department	Responsible officer/s	Date
22.	A / D / EF / EDS	Review the Crucial Crew presentations to make them more engaging and interactive with different versions for those with varying abilities	To ensure that all age ranges and abilities ranges actively participate and that those	CFS	CFS	2010
23.	A / D / R / EF / EDS	Encourage the use of plain English, shorter documents or easy read documents throughout the Service	Better communications with employees and service users	All	All	2010
24.	D / EF	Increase communication and understanding about disability requirements for operational posts	Reduced myths about operational posts and increased awareness of disability genuine occupational requirements in the Service	HR, T&D	EDO	2010
25.	All / EF / EDS	Review Brigade order on Harassment & Bullying	Ensure comprehensive and accessible for all employees	HR	EDO	2010
26.	EDS	Collect and submit evidence to CLG qualitative and quantitative evidence of service delivery improvements and employment practice for the E&D Report	To ensure compliance with the National E&D Strategy	ESG	ESG / EDO	2010 → annually in July / August for September CLG report
27.	EDS	Analysis of current employment diversity data.	Up-to-date diversity data on our employees and ensure compliance with the National E&D Strategy	HR	EDO	2010 → Annually in August
28.	R / EF / EDS	Transgender awareness training	Increase general awareness for appropriate employees and to identify any improvement areas in service delivery	HR	EDO	2010

Number	Equality Strand / area	Action	Outcome	Directorate / department	Responsible officer/s	Date
29.	RB	Proactive attendance at local religious events	To promote the Service to a wide range of communities	CFS / E & D	CFS / EDO	2010
30.	All / EF / EDS	Equality and Diversity Champions for each of the 7 Strands	To ensure that progress is being made in relation to all equality strands	ESG	ESG	2010
31.	All / EF / EDS	Create a consultation and communication strategy	Best practice on SFRS consultation processes	P	PID	2010
32.	All / EF / EDS	Undertake Equality and Diversity Training for all members of staff	To increase awareness of equality and diversity so that all equality and diversity issues are considered in all parts of the Service	HR,	ACO / EDO	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2010 – non uniformed and uniformed at Telford and HQ 				2010
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2011 - 12 Operational employees 				2011 – 12
33.	All / EF / EDS	Review the Single Equality Scheme for 2013	To ensure we are complying with our legal obligations	HR	EDO	End of 2012
34.	All / EF / EDS	Undertake the Cultural Audit	To benchmark against other Services and to see if our score has changed since the last one.	HR	EDO	2010-2011
35.	All / EF / EDS	All Business / Station / Department plans include Equality and Diversity objectives	To ensure that all people understand the relevance of equality and that all service areas are improving equality where necessary	All	All	2010
36.	All / EF / EDS	Provide the Human Resources Committee with an annual update on implementation of the action plan	To ensure that the HR committee are happy with overall progress of the single equality scheme / corporate equality action plan	HR	EDO	2010 2011 2012 et subs

2011

Number	Equality Strand / area	Action	Outcome	Directorate / department	Responsible officer/s	Date
36.	All/	Review the mediation process	Assessment of effectiveness. Necessary amendments or renegotiation of contract	HR	EDO	January 2011
37.	T / EF	Create SFRS Transgender guidance	Assist managers with any employee going through gender reassignment	HR	EDO	June 2011
38.	D / EF / EDS	Arrange Dyslexia Awareness training for key staff	To ensure that employees are supported appropriate	HR, T&D	EDO	August 2011
39.	All / EF / EDS	Review whether the uniform inhibits access for undertaking fire safety visits	Recommendations to improve accessibility of CFS safety visits	CFS	CFS	2011
40.	A / D / EF	Review of accessibility at TC / WL and HQ	Ensure access for all people at these sites	RS	HOR	2011
41.	All / EF / EDS	Review the need for more specialist CFS advocates	Ensure that all sections of the community are receiving an equitable service	CFS	CFS	2011
42.	R / EF / EDS	Review language barriers for school presentations and business fire safety information	Ensure that all sections of the community are receiving an equitable service	CFS	CFS	2011
43.	EDS	Work with Shropshire's Consultation group to ensure quality of service to all sections of the community	Ensure best quality and breadth of SFRS consultations	P	EDO / PID	2011
44.	All / EF / EDS	Actions from the EQIA of the new HQ build to be implemented	To ensure that all equality improvements have been assessed and implemented	P / RS	P / RS	2011 – in line with HQ new build

2012

Number	Equality Strand / area	Action	Outcome	Directorate / department	Responsible officer/s	Date
45.	EDS	Undertake peer review every 3 years either through regional working / peer assessment of Fire Service Equality Framework	Ensure SFRS meets requirements of Fire Service Equality Framework	ESG	E&D STG / EDO	2012

Ongoing/ tbc

Number	Equality Strand / area	Action	Outcome	Directorate / department	Responsible officer/s	Date
46.	CFS / E & D	Share planning and participation in public cultural diversity and inclusion events such as Shrewsbury Cultural Diversity Day and Rock against Racism, Telford and Birmingham Pride, etc	Higher public awareness of cultural diversity and social inclusion; higher SFRS profile on E & D issues	CFS / HR	CFS / EDO	Annual
47.	All / EF / EDS	Provide the Audit and Performance Management Committee with quarterly update on the action plan	To ensure that the Service is making progress on the actions contained in the single equality scheme / corporate equality action plan	HR	EDO	Quarterly – to coincide with committee dates
48.	All / EF / EDS	Produce an annual report on equality monitoring statistics	To understand the profile of the organisation	HR	EDO	Annual
49.	All / EF / EDS	Undertaken an EQIA of the Performance Plan	To ensure that the content and plan has no negative impact on any person	P	P	Annually in line with the plan
50.	All / EF / EDS	Undertake an EQIA of the IRMP proposals	To ensure that there are no adverse effects on any people	P	P	As they are created
51.	All/ EF/ EDS	Collect and submit qualitative and quantitative evidence of service delivery improvements and employment practice to CLG for the E&D Report	Meeting statutory obligations. Provide ongoing monitoring and evaluation information on E & D implementation and effectiveness	ESG	ESG / EDO / CFO	Annually in August for September CLG report

Number	Equality Strand / area	Action	Outcome	Directorate / department	Responsible officer/s	Date
52.	All / EF / EDS	Plan to undertake an equal pay review in accordance with the EHRC code of practice on equal pay / equalities bill	To ensure that pay is equitable	HR	ACO / HRM	tbc
53.	EDS	Review the monitoring process for IPDRS	Meeting statutory obligations	ESG	ESG / EDO	tbc
54.	EDS	IRMP team to investigate how to demonstrate compliance with employment and equalities legislation and specifically the public duties for gender, race and disability and review progress in the IRMP	Meeting statutory obligations	ESG	ESG / EDO	tbc
55.	All / EDS / EF	Review of the effectiveness of procedures for dealing with bullying, harassment, unfair discrimination and unacceptable behaviours		HR	tbc	tbc
56.	All / EDS	Consider management training on dealing with issues such as bullying & harassment, discrimination and unacceptable behaviours.	Decision and rationale for possible training programme: impact on reporting, mediation, disciplinary action	STG / HR	DM/EDO	tbc
57.	All / EDS / EF	Undertake peer review every 3 years either through regional working / peer assessment of ESLG	Assessment of SFRS equality policy and practice, progress and impact	STG	STG	tbc
58.	All / EDS / EF	Work with Shropshire's Consultation group to ensure quality of service to all sections of the community	Improved feedback on equality & diversity performance with service users and local communities	HR / Perf	EDO / Perf	tbc

Number	Equality Strand / area	Action	Outcome	Directorate / department	Responsible officer/s	Date
59.	All / EDS / EF	Local participation on LAA to identify and take account of needs of all communities	Improved analysis of local community needs and appropriate strategies to meet them	CS	CS	tbc
60.	All / EDS / EF	EQIAs to be completed on all aspects of the Integrated Risk Management Plan and ensure that consultation has taken place	Equality and diversity impact implications of all aspects of IRMP considered, and measures in place to eliminate or reduce negative impacts	Perf	Perf	tbc
61.	All / EDS / EF	Through access to Pviews, communicate and raise staff awareness and understanding of local community issues and actions to address them	Improved staff awareness of local equality and diversity issues which impact on fire safety and prevention	Perf	Perf	tbc
62.	All / EDS	Exit interview information process to be reviewed and information analysed for patterns	Exit interview process encourages discussion of equality and diversity issues and impacts. Any equality and diversity patterns identified from interview information	HR	HR	tbc
63.	D / EDS / EF	Consider Disability Brigade Order	Decision and rationale for preparing a Disability Brigade Order, and possible content and structure.	HR	EDO	tbc
64.	All / EDS	Disciplinary and grievance refresher training to be considered	Decision and rationale for planning and running disciplinary and grievance refresher training, with particular reference to bullying, harassment and mediation issues.	HR	DM/HRM	tbc

Number	Equality Strand / area	Action	Outcome	Directorate / department	Responsible officer/s	Date
65.	All / EDS / EF	Executives' visits to staff to include raising awareness of Equality & Diversity issues, actions to address these and progress made	Raised staff awareness and prioritising of equality and diversity issues within their work	Execs	Execs	tbc
66.	All / EDS / EF	Consider resources for dealing with the investigation of disciplinary and grievances, and whether a dedicated officer is required on a rolling programme	Decision on resources needed and source.	STG	STG	tbc
67.	All / EDS / EF	Analysis to be undertaken on current employment diversity data.	Improved depth and spread of employment diversity data.	HR	HR / EDO	tbc

Appendix 1 - Glossary of terms

Direct discrimination

Less favourable treatment of a person on ... (age, disability, gender, race, religion/belief, sexual orientation, transgender)... grounds compared with the treatment or likely treatment of a person from another group in the same or similar circumstances

Harassment

Unwanted behaviour that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creates a degrading, humiliating, intimidating or offensive working environment.

Indirect discrimination

The use of an apparently non discriminatory, 'provision, criterion or practice' that puts people from a particular group at a particular disadvantage compared with others. Or a requirement that can only be met by a considerably smaller proportion of people for a particular group

Victimisation

Less favourable treatment of a person because they have brought legal proceedings under one of the specific pieces of legislation, or because they have alleged that a person has committed an act, or because they given evidence or information

Appendix 2 - Definitions

Definition of Disability - Part I of the Disability Discrimination Act (1995)

..... a person has a disability for the purposes of this Act if he² has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Definition of a racist incident - Stephen Lawrence Inquiry recommendations

12. That the definition should be:

"A racist incident is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person".

13. That the term "racist incident" must be understood to include crimes and non-crimes in policing terms. Both must be reported, recorded and investigated with equal commitment.

14. That this definition should be universally adopted by the Police, local Government and other relevant agencies.

Definition of a homophobic incident – Association of Chief Police Officers

Any incident which appears to the victim, reporting officer or any other person to be motivated by homophobia; that is animosity towards lesbians and gay men.

² In Acts of Parliament 'he' and 'his' is used to denote both sexes.

Appendix 3 - Acknowledgements

We would like to thank everyone who has helped to develop the first Single Equality Scheme for Shropshire Fire & Rescue Service. Listed below are some of those who have helped to develop our first single equality scheme:

Name		Organisation
Gareth	Adams	Mediation Works Gareth.adams@mediation-works.co.uk
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Angela	French	Shropshire Council – Landlord Services Housing Services Manager
Linda	Gladman	Shropshire Council – HR &D
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Judith	Jamieson	Jobcentre Plus
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Pam	Larney	Senior Citizens Forum
John	McArdle	Shropshire Council
Janet	Millward	West Midlands Consortium Service for Travelling Children, Schools & Families
John	Mustafa	Shropshire Bangladeshi Welfare Association
Kal	Parkash	Shropshire Council – Diversity Officer
Rico	Paris	Gender Advisory Bureau
Richard	Phillips	South Shropshire Access Group
Trevor	Price	Organisers – VISS – Sign Language Interpretation Service
George	Rook	British Red Cross
Peter	Roscoe	LGBT Network
Enid	Smith	Impact Alcohol Advisory Service
Niki	Talbot	Shropshire Housing Group
Jackie	Taylor	Shropshire Primary Care Trust
Lyn	Turnball	Bromford Housing group
Ben	Walker	Community Regeneration
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