



**Shropshire**  
Fire and Rescue Service

# PEOPLE STRATEGY

2025-28

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**Shropshire**  
Fire and Rescue Service

## OUR 9 HIGH LEVEL OBJECTIVES.



Developing  
Leadership  
Capacity



Organisational  
Development &  
Engagement



Resourcing the  
Service



Equality,  
Diversity and  
Inclusion



Health, Safety,  
Wellbeing and  
Fitness



Skills,  
Education and  
Training



New Ways of  
Working



Monitoring  
Evaluation



Measuring  
Effectiveness

# FOREWORD.

**The People Strategy sets out how Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) will support and develop all our people throughout their time with the Service.**

To achieve this, we will use innovative solutions to attract, recruit and retain individuals, to promote diversity and inclusion in all that we do.

There is work to do within the Service, however, our approach of putting our people at the centre of everything we do will support organisational development and continuous improvement.

We are fully committed to valuing each member of our team and want SFRS to be recognised as a great place to work.

Our aim is to have a skilled workforce, that are agile and adaptable to change and able to capitalise on improvement opportunities that will assist with personal, team and organisational development, whilst remaining resilient and with a focus on the health and wellbeing of all our people. This approach will support the Service vision of 'Making Shropshire Safer'.

Culture is our greatest asset, but can also be our biggest weakness, and it is recognised that the way we lead, manage performance and behave are fundamental elements of creating the culture of the Service.

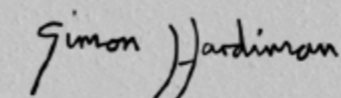
This is represented within our values and the behaviours set out within the Workplace Charter, which has been created by our staff for our staff.

The Service and the wider fire sector are in a state of constant change and reform, and the pace and depth of change is likely to increase into the future. The People Strategy will support the Service and our people to adapt, evolve and respond effectively to a changing landscape, which can be difficult for all.

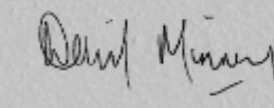
Our People Plan to support the strategy will set out our policies and will be guided by the priorities, declarations and critical success factors set out within this document.

It is important that the contents of this strategy are communicated to all staff, and all our people have opportunity to engage and feedback their views, as this will support reviewing and amending existing policies and processes collaboratively.

# OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM.



**Simon Hardiman**  
Chief Fire Officer



**David Minnery**  
Chair of Fire Authority

# OUR VISION AND STRATEGIC INTENT.

## The quality of our people is the key driver to our success.

At SFRS we strive to create an environment in which our people can grow and develop in their work to deliver an outstanding service to the public and our communities. We operate within a defined set of values and behaviours which drive our business practices.

Our vision 'Making Shropshire Safer' can only be achieved with the appropriate numbers of motivated and skilled staff.

SFRS are committed to developing the organisation to achieve excellence in people and performance management, working collaboratively to deliver an efficient service.

We actively focus on employee engagement, using our Staff Survey results to develop strategies and increase engagement. We have built a shared sense of purpose and give people a meaningful voice on matters that affect their working lives.

At SFRS we encourage learning and innovation to motivate employees to reach their full potential. Our staff are engaged and empowered to make a difference on their own.

We will work with and support our leaders to encourage a culture of trust, people development and wellbeing to enable all our staff to be their very best at work.

We seek out innovative ways to substantiate our commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion by removing barriers and celebrating differences, to include all in the workplace to share in our success.

# OUR STRATEGIC GOALS.

## SERVICE DELIVERY GOALS

### Response

We will respond quickly, safely and effectively to emergency incidents with competent, prepared and well-informed teams.

### Prevention

We will help the community to stay safe by making fire safety advice available to all and targeting our interventions at those most vulnerable.

### Protection

We will support businesses to protect people from harm and when necessary, use enforcement to keep communities and our firefighters safe.

## ENABLING/CORPORATE SERVICES GOALS

### People

Our culture will be purposefully diverse, collaborative and inclusive, building confidence in our values and performance.

We will nurture the talent of our staff and leaders, providing them with the right range of skills, to enable change for the next generation

### Data and Digital

Data is readily used and relied upon to inform decision making.

We will provide new systems capabilities to support increased automation of processes.

We will stay protected from emerging and sophisticated cyber threats and attacks.

### Environment

We will reduce our carbon footprint, adapt to the changing climate and protect the environment.

### Finance and Resources

We will provide a value for money service to the communities of Shropshire, through the most effective use of resources.

# OUR PURPOSE.

**The purpose of our People Strategy is to support all that we do to attract, recruit, develop, retain, support and reward our employees to meet our future goals and aspirations.**

This document offers a response to the significant changes in service provision by reframing what we want from our people over the next three years.

The People Strategy allows us to plan and facilitate the evolving demands of the wider workforce.

Employees are looking for meaningful work, flexible working options, personal development opportunities and a working environment that facilitates upskilling and training.

Our People Strategy provides a framework to support the aims and objectives of the Service as outlined in the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). This strategy details how the Service intends to achieve this by:

- 1. Developing leadership capacity**
- 2. Organisational development and engagement**
- 3. Resourcing the Service**
- 4. Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)**
- 5. Health, safety, wellbeing and fitness**
- 6. Skills, training and education**
- 7. New ways of working**

# OUR VALUES & BEHAVIOURS.

**Through defined core values, SFRS sets out what is expected of employees. We also fully support the national fire and rescue core values of:**

## 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.

## Valuing all our people

We value all our employees by practicing and promoting.

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

## Valuing diversity in the Service and the Community

We value diversity in the service and community by.

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

## Valuing improvement at all levels

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.

# WORKPLACE CHARTER.

**The Workplace Charter is a commitment to changing the way we all think and act in the workplace. It seeks to promote higher standards of behaviour throughout the workplace.**

The Workplace Charter is supported by the vision statement and the core values and while many positive behaviours are already regularly demonstrated across the Service, this charter provides specific guidance, setting a standard of behaviour and conduct for people ensuring everyone feels valued and respected.

The charter captures what staff themselves feel is appropriate and reflects the National Fire Chiefs Council's (NFCC) Leadership Framework and Core Code of Ethics.

The Workplace Charter behaviours are a condensed set of statements that have come from the NFCC Leadership Framework which outline behaviours that employees are expected to demonstrate in a modern fire and rescue service.



The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England sets out the Government's priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities. This provides the overall strategic direction to authorities which includes the driving forward of workforce reform.

Where practicable Shropshire & Wrekin Fire Authority supports the achievement of national strategies applicable to the Fire and Rescue Service whilst balancing this with a focus on providing a service that makes Shropshire Safer.

**To that end, the following strategies and frameworks have informed the development of our People Strategy:**

- NFCC People, Leadership and Culture Programme
- Fire and Rescue Service National Framework for England: 2023 progress report
- Community Risk Management Plan 2025 - 2028
- Local Government Association – Fire Vision 2024
- State of Fire and Rescue - The Annual Assessment in England 2023
- NFCC Leadership Framework
- NFCC Core Code of Ethics
- NFCC Culture Action Plan
- Leading the Service Fire Standard
- Leading and Developing People Fire Standards
- HMICFRS Values and culture in fire and rescue services
- HMICFRS Standards of Behaviour – The handling of misconduct in fire and rescue services

**This strategy doesn't stand alone and is supported and contributed to by other plans derived from, or informed by these include the:**

- Health and Wellbeing Plan
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan
- Workforce & Resourcing Plan
- Organisational Development Plan
- Training Needs Analysis

These plans are reviewed annually and support the overall delivery of the People Strategy and provide clear goals, time scales, and measures of success.

More detailed planning and activities to support the achievement of our organisational strategy can be found in the human resources and corporate support plan, the training and development departmental plan and the Digital and Data and the Communication strategies.

# WORKPLACE CHARTER.

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service have created the Workplace Charter which incorporates the core code of ethics for Fire and Rescue Services in England. It sets out the standards of behaviour expected in the workplace and is supported by the representative bodies.

## ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS



We will explore and embrace alternative ways of working, to achieve our common purpose using the benefits of technology

We will listen to our colleagues and the public and communicate information to them that is lawful, relevant and timely

We understand how our roles contribute to the aims of the Service

We are responsible for the health, safety and wellbeing, of ourselves and others

## OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP



We will create an inclusive environment where people can be the best they can be, supporting each other through encouragement and motivation

We will recognise and challenge inappropriate behaviour, providing support to those who do raise it

We are open to giving and receiving constructive feedback

We will be visible, accessible, honest and transparent in order to build trust

We are accountable for our actions and behaviours

## SERVICE DELIVERY



We will share our ideas to create improvement and development opportunities

We will share responsibility to work together to solve problems effectively

We are committed to, and understand, our responsibility towards safeguarding

We will provide an efficient and productive service considering the needs of our colleagues and our communities

## PERSONAL IMPACT



We consider the impacts of our actions on others and always welcome alternative views and feedback

We contribute to an inclusive culture remaining respectful of any differences we may have

We will remain professional at all times and act with integrity

We will encourage discussion to improve our wider understanding of health and wellbeing

We will take care of, and protect, our personal data

We are responsible for our own development and that of others



# INTERNAL DRIVERS FOR CHANGE.

**Nationally there is a clear focus on the need to improve culture and inclusion across the fire sector.**

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service has this same challenge and recognises that change will only come from effective leadership, embedding the right behaviours, enabling diversity and inclusive ways of working to ensure all our people can contribute to change. By achieving this we can create an environment where the health and wellbeing of our staff is supported, nurturing talent for the future.

Our staff are our greatest asset and are professionals in the work they do. We understand from internal reviews, staff surveys and cultural work that there is more for us to achieve in creating a truly inclusive workplace where staff feel confident and positive behaviours are expected and displayed.

Our most recent HMICFRS (His Majesty's Inspectorate for Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services) Inspection has identified areas for improvement which demonstrate some of the current challenges we face in recruiting, developing and engaging a diverse workforce.

The priorities set out in this People Strategy highlight some of our internal drivers for change:

- Our aspirations in engaging a workforce that is representative of the communities we serve. Increase female and BAME representation across uniformed roles
- Enable Female and BAME progression. Identify through workforce planning how we support an ageing workforce and we mitigate this through ongoing recruitment
- Enable a more diverse pool of recruitment for senior leaders.
- How we continue to develop our workforce despite public sector funding pressures.
- How Changes in new technology will help us to maximise productivity and enable flexibility.



## DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP CAPACITY

Our intention is that our leaders will have the ability to lead, inspire, coach and develop others in the organisation.

They will be visible, demonstrate strong leadership skills, showcasing accountability, honesty, openness, and transparency in their decision making. Leaders will be effective in performance management of their employees.

Our developmental culture enables us to recognise that our success hinges on the capabilities of our people. Therefore, we will support our leaders to grow and invest in their personal and professional development.

## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT.

### We will:

Review, evaluate and refresh leadership and management programmes ensuring they reflect the core values, the Workplace Charter, Core Code of Ethics, and strategic direction.

Develop our leaders to ensure operational and non-operational leadership capacity is in place to manage the organisation into the future.

Work in accordance with the NFCC Leadership Framework, Core Code of Ethics and other NFCC People, Culture and Leadership products to develop leaders who are both professionally and operationally competent and who have the ability to inspire and motivate others.

Ensure that all leaders and managers have access to appropriate development and training which supports the Service's strategic outcomes and corporate priorities.

Ensure that senior managers are visible and demonstrate service values through their behaviours

Review our performance management practices to ensure our leaders and managers can effectively manage staff performance.



## COACHING AND MENTORING.

### We will:

Continue to embed coaching and mentoring to support performance improvement and the demonstration of desired values and behaviours.

Continue to encourage the use of coaching and mentoring to support the Individual Performance and Development Review (IPDR) process.

Promote the NFCC Coaching and Mentoring portal and encourage all to access to support continuous improvement.

## CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS.

Increase completion rates in leadership development programmes and activities both internally and externally in line with the agreed framework.

Increased levels of operational competence for our leaders.

Managers and leaders demonstrate increased visibility, knowledge and understanding of people management activities and behaviours as outlined in staff survey through being open, approachable and effectively manage performance.

Percentage increase in evidence of senior managers adhering to SFRS's values as indicated in the Staff Survey.

Increased levels of staff obtaining successful Career Progression Gateway passes.

Increased use of external coaches.

Increased use of the performance management procedures resulting in improved performance levels.

## ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT & ENGAGEMENT

Organisational development helps us focus on how we can maximise the value gained from our resources.

HR activity can be redesigned to bring about change that the Service needs, and it helps create better alignment with the organisation's goals and activities. If employees feel engaged, we expect our workforce to be healthier, more fulfilled, and more motivated.

If we allow our employees a voice and to bring ideas to the table this will enable individuals to contribute to innovation at work.

## STAFF ENGAGEMENT.

### We will:

Continue to undertake the Staff Survey at regular intervals, analysing the results and keeping our people updated regularly on progress. We are committed to listening to and acting on what our staff tell us and want to encourage openness and honesty in communication.

Work to maintain effective employment relations with employees and representative bodies and we will engage with staff to ascertain and improve levels of satisfaction and motivation.

Ensure employees are empowered and that they have the autonomy, flexibility and accountability to make a positive difference in their day-to-day environment.

Managers will be expected to proactively engage with Service wide people management processes to support effective service delivery and personal/professional development/career progression.

Review the Workplace Charter/introduce Core Code of Ethics as a standalone entity

Implement and embed all elements of the Cultural Action Plan

## REWARD AND RECOGNITION.

### We will:

Support improvements in staff physical and mental wellbeing to offer a holistic work life balance for our people therefore becoming an employer of choice.

We are committed to ensuring staff feel valued and recognised, we will continue to recognise the importance of praise via annual awards events and long service awards.

Support the development of the national pay arrangements which recognise the contribution of all employees.

Continue to support and monitor performance management and identify high potential through the IPDR process.

Continue to seek suggestions and improvements from our staff in all areas of the Service.

Work with staff and their representatives to further consider opportunities to recognise and reward those who innovate and go above and beyond their roles to deliver excellence and support the Service's values.

Continue to monitor and report on complaints and compliments.

## CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS.

Improved staff satisfaction, engagement score and number of respondents from the Staff Survey.

Increased number of staff respondents to HMICFRS surveys.

Increased number of staff suggestions and active participation in Service and community events

More staff being recognised for their individual and team achievements.

Improved percentage of staff feeling valued and recognised for the work they do as outlined through the Staff Survey.

Improved numbers of compliments received by the Service.

Implementation and embedding of all recommendations within the Cultural Action Plan



# RESOURCING THE SERVICE

Resourcing is about attracting and selecting people for the right role, at the right time, with the right skills and capacity, and at the right cost in order to successfully manage change and risk.

Our resourcing activities will be focused on understanding the employee experience, designing effective assessment and selection processes, and making effective recruitment decisions.

Our workforce planning data will inform our decision making and succession planning. By managing talent strategically our organisation can build a high-performance workplace, encourage continuous learning, and create meaningful work and growth opportunities for employees.

# WORKFORCE PLANNING.

The Workforce Plan sets out how the Service will meet both current and future workforce demands in line with the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).

## We will:

Continue to use appropriate performance management data to inform workforce and succession plans and to mitigate any potential risks of inadequate staffing numbers.

Continue to analyse current and future workforce needs and identify deficiencies in the current Workforce Plan and its alignment with the CRMP

We will maximise resilience through a proactive and supportive approach to attendance management with a focus on employee wellbeing.

Review non-operational resources to improve capacity to bring about sustainable change

We will review and ensure our promotion processes are fit for purpose, accessible, and inclusive for all employees.

# RECRUITMENT AND ATTRACTION.

## We will:

Attract, recruit, select, and retain talent with critical skills needed to deliver the service while adapting to significant changes in workforce needs.

Work with managers to ensure effective recruitment, retention, and progression. We will use proven modern methods of recruitment, making the best use of technology and marketing techniques to ensure robust systems are in place across the Service.

Identify ways to make jobs more flexible/agile to improve work life balance by enabling staff to have greater flexibility over where, when and the hours they work.

Identify and overcome barriers to equal opportunity, so the workforce better represents its community.

Analyse recruitment equality data and use this data to inform future recruitment processes eg positive action.

# TALENT MANAGEMENT AND SUCCESSION PLANNING.

## We will:

Seek to attract, identify, develop, engage, retain, and deploy individuals, taking into account areas of single points of failure.

Support the development of our organisation to improve productivity and manage performance through the Individual Performance and Development Review (IPDR) process and use of the NFCC People Culture and Leadership products.

Review the current IPDR process and support managers to effectively complete IPDRs recognising and nurturing our people's potential and any identified career aspirations.

Create an open and fair process to identify, develop and support high potential staff and aspiring leaders.

## WIDENING PARTICIPATION.

### We will:

Seek to give opportunities to individuals who have the ability and desire, to enter into a fire service career.

Create opportunities and identify career pathways for young people and other talented members of the community to enter into the Service.

Look to increase the number of apprentices and provide additional opportunities for work experience, working with local partners, schools and agencies.



## CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS.

Increased capacity in resources to bring about sustainable change

Workforce shortages/gaps are minimal, and risks including single points of failure are managed.

Improved confidence in promotion processes that are timely, fair and transparent.

Reduction in the percentage turnover rate of all staff groups.

Improved attendance levels across all absence categories.

Improved use of modern methods of recruitment techniques and technology.

Increased number of applicants for roles from under-represented groups.

Reduction in the use of agency staff.

Reduction in turnover rates across all groups. Increase in the number of completed IPDRs.

Future talent and supporting succession plans in place, aligned to workforce needs.

Increase number of apprentices and opportunities for work experience.

Increase the number of flexible/agile working requests to include different contract types, shift patterns and working practices.

Increased access to the NFCC Interactive Career Pathways (ICP) (due for launch in March 2025) to encourage recruitment into the sector and also provide information around career pathways for existing fire and rescue sector employees.

Increased understanding, application and completion of IPDRs.

# EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION.

SFRS wants to create a culture where everyone feels welcomed, accepted, valued, and can bring their whole self to work. Equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) are three principles that help to create a fair society where everyone gets equal opportunities.

Equality is about equal opportunities and protecting people from being discriminated against while diversity is about recognising, respecting and valuing differences in people. Meanwhile, inclusion refers to an individual's experience within the workplace and in a wider society, and the extent to which they feel valued and included.

## We will:

Promote equality, diversity and inclusion within the workforce and value the benefits this brings.

Strengthen our ability to provide an excellent service by welcoming a diverse workforce, promoting inclusion, and creating a fair and equal place to work.

Review and continue to deliver positive action programmes to attract, retain and develop under-represented groups.

Engage and maintain connections with community groups as part of the Service's positive action programme

Use demographic data and community knowledge to assist with providing equality of access to services and employment for specific protected characteristics.

Improve employee equality monitoring data

Review policy and ensure managers understand the importance of completing Equality Impact Assessments and the value this will bring the Service and our communities.

Review the Equality Impact Process

Ensure under-represented groups are heard and have influence.

Ensure our recruitment processes are appropriate, transparent, and inclusive.

Review current training packages and promote opportunities for further EDI training

# CULTURE AND VALUES.

## We will:

Promote cultural values and behaviours which make the Fire and Rescue Service a great place to work for all our people.

Promote a culture of dignity and respect with both the public and our workforce so engagement may flourish, making us more flexible, innovative and create environments where people feel valued and are able to bring their true self to work.

Listen to our staff, use their feedback to grow the ideal workplace environment.

Not tolerate bullying, harassment or discrimination in the workplace

Strengthen the anti-harassment and bullying policies, procedures and support

Support staff that report bullying and investigate cases quickly and fairly.

Ensure staff are aware of, and follow the Core Code of Ethics, including through all policies and procedures

Review and strengthen the misconduct and grievance policies, procedures and welfare support

# CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS.

Members of staff understand and act in accordance with our values and standards of behaviour, this will be reflected in a variety of ways including the results of our staff survey, numbers, and types of disciplinary and grievances.

Further engagement and effective use of the Voices groups throughout the Service.

Increase workforce diversity at all levels and number of applicants for roles from under-represented groups.

Increased number and quality of Equality Impact Assessments, the creation of positive action events targeted at specific groups based on demographic data and see a reduction in the Gender Pay Gap.

Increase in positive feedback in our Staff Survey regarding support for employees going through harassment or bullying cases

Increase in the number of employees declaring their monitoring data, increased awareness and understanding of the Core Code of Ethics and increased confidence, knowledge, understanding and effective management of misconduct and grievance procedures

# HEALTH AND SAFETY.

The Health and Safety section of the People Strategy is fundamental to the Authority's, the Chief Fire Officer's and the Service's commitment to protecting its people, ensuring operational excellence, and fostering public trust.

To do this effectively, we adopt the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance to ensure a cohesive, legally compliant, and high-quality approach to managing health and safety.

## Core Guidance:

- Managing for Health and Safety (HSG65): A structured 'plan-do-check-act' model for risk management.
- Leading Health and Safety at Work (INDG417): Emphasises leadership's role in driving health and safety culture and standards.



## Key Actions:

### 1. Plan:

- Establish clear policies integrating health and safety into our vision, objectives, and activities.
- Conduct gap analyses to identify risks and align with legal and sector standards.
- Develop scalable systems for continuous improvement without duplication.

### 2. Do:

- Prioritise risks by identifying significant hazards and mitigation strategies.
- Cultivate a safety culture through leadership, training, clear communication, and active engagement.
- Ensure adequate resources and competency development at all levels.

### 3. Check:

- Monitor performance with active (proactive inspections) and reactive (incident analysis) methods.
- Implement robust systems for regular audits and evaluations.

### 4. Act:

- Review performance regularly and after major incidents.
- Celebrate successes and address shortcomings to maintain effective systems.

## We will:

**Adopt Best Practices:** Implement the HSE's Managing for Health and Safety (HSG65) and Leading Health and Safety at Work (INDG417) frameworks to ensure a systematic, compliant approach to health and safety management.

**Maintain and Develop Clear Policies:** Establish health and safety policies integrated into our vision and values, outlining responsibilities at all levels.

**Enhance Risk Management:** Regularly assess and prioritise risks, ensuring effective mitigation strategies and resources are in place.

**Foster a Safety Culture:** Strengthen leadership accountability, communication, and workforce engagement to embed a proactive and inclusive health and safety culture.

**Deliver Effective Training:** Provide comprehensive training programs tailored to roles and operational requirements, ensuring competency across all levels.

**Monitor and Improve:** Implement robust monitoring and audit systems to evaluate performance, identify areas for improvement, and ensure continuous development.

**Leverage Collaboration:** Partner with external organisations and stakeholders to align with best practices and enhance health and safety outcomes.

**Recognise Success:** Celebrate achievements and innovations that advance health and safety standards across the organisation.

## CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS.

- Health and safety practices are aligned with HSE guidance, legal requirements, and national standards across the organisation.
- Senior Leadership Team visibly drives health and safety as a core priority, demonstrating accountability and active engagement.
- Health and safety policies are seamlessly embedded into all organisational activities, supporting a consistent and practical approach to managing risks.
- A robust approach to risk management is in place, resulting in fewer incidents and greater confidence in safety measures.
- An engaged and informed workforce takes shared responsibility for health and safety, actively contributing to a safer working environment.
- A trained and competent workforce maintains safety standards and responds effectively to emerging risks.
- Monitoring and auditing systems drive consistent improvement, adapting swiftly to new challenges and ensuring ongoing effectiveness.
- Strong partnerships with external stakeholders enhance health and safety outcomes through innovation, shared learning, and joint initiatives.
- Efficient and integrated systems track health and safety performance, providing reliable data for informed decision-making.
- A Health and Safety culture that recognises achievement, learns from incidents, and showcases improvements across the organisation, reinforcing the importance of health and safety.

# HEALTH, WELLBEING AND FITNESS.

Fostering employee health, wellbeing and fitness in the organisation can help prevent stress and create positive working environments where individuals can flourish.

Healthy workplaces help people to thrive and reach their full potential. Our intention is to continue to invest in employee wellbeing to increase resilience, reduce and prevent sickness absence and in turn increase productivity and performance.

## We will:

Continue to develop and offer a range of wellbeing initiatives to support the mental and physical wellbeing of staff.

Continue to provide timely access to occupational health, fitness, physiotherapy and counselling service, ensuring early interventions to prevent sickness absence or support those already absent.

Develop managers' skills to raise awareness of achieving staff wellbeing and train them to recognise the signs and symptoms of mental health issues to support their teams.

Continue to develop employees' awareness and training opportunities for suicide prevention.

Use HR data to inform policy and planning.

Continue to monitor and support changes to the firefighter fitness testing programme and provide additional support to staff to ensure they remain physically fit for their roles.

Review and implement the NFCC Health and Wellbeing strategy.

Ensure we have an effective Occupational Health provision in place through an external provider

Proactively monitor working hours (including overtime) to improve staff wellbeing

## CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS.

Reduction in all absences

Increase in the number of flexible working requests to manage work life balance.

Percentage increase in staff believing SFRS do enough to support their mental and physical health at work as outlined in the Staff Survey.

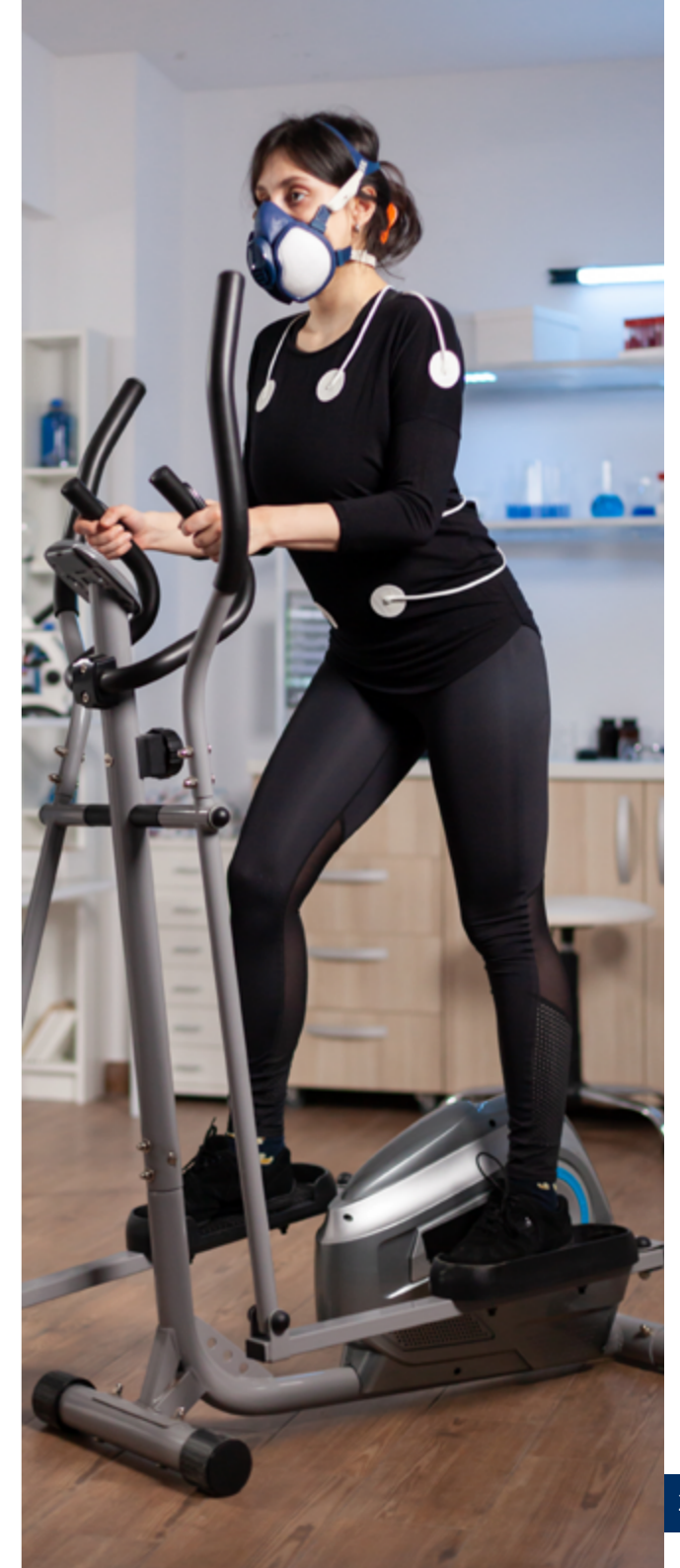
Increased numbers of mental health (MH) First Aiders/MH Awareness Training/TRIM (min. 10% of the workforce).

Increased number of our people trained in Suicide Awareness; Suicide First Aid Lite for operational colleagues.

A clear supportive fitness testing programme is in place and an increase in fitness levels across operational teams.

Smooth transition from one Occupational Health provider to another, ensuring staff have access to services that support both their mental and physical wellbeing.

Staff aren't working excessive hours on dual contracts.





# SKILLS, TRAINING AND EDUCATION.

Driven by the Service Vision, we prioritise Operational Excellence through high standards in training and development, fostering a unified culture of respect, integrity, and inclusivity.

Guided by the risks identified within the CRMP and the objectives of the People Strategy, we target our training to address operational demands and enhance preparedness.

Emphasising professionalism, continuous improvement, and accountability, we leverage innovation and collaboration to ensure our teams are trained and developed to meet evolving challenges and deliver exceptional service.

## Learning and Education

### We will:

Prioritise a digital approach and streamline training and development data reporting systems, offering a blend of online, practical, classroom based, and remote learning opportunities to increase accessibility and flexibility.

Establish clear career pathways where opportunities exist, outlining education, training, and technical requirements for all roles, ensuring clarity of progression for staff.

Explore opportunities to innovate and improve Training and Development paper-based activities and processes to reflect a more efficient and accurate modern method of recording personnel information enabling accurate auditing, reporting and trend analytics to better understand strengths and areas for improvement.

Host a range of teaching delivery, demonstration and assessment methods to accommodate the spectrum of learners ensuring not to disadvantage those with any neuro diversity.

Create opportunities for lateral development, including secondments and collaborative development initiatives, to broaden skills and experience.

Promote opportunities for further education and training, providing funding for role-specific academic studies to enhance professional development.

Develop and implement a three-year phased approach to training, beginning with a digital-first strategy to roll out online platforms, followed by localised training, and concluding with facility-based training at Telford to ensure operational readiness.

Establish clear career pathways outlining education, training, and technical requirements for all roles.

## Mandatory Role Based Training

### We will :

Improve and enhance training facilities by implementing a three-year program to refurbish operational training centres, beginning with securing budgetary provisions and developing a detailed refurbishment plan in the first year.

Develop safe and realistic training programs that respond to and provide standardised, relevant, effective and realistic learning and development opportunities in a safe environment that meets the demands of each role map and best practice guidance for our sector.

Maintain sector relevance for new and emerging risks assuring review of equipment, guidance, procedures, techniques, policy and training keeps pace with the change in demand.

Provide opportunities and support for the training, development, and maintenance of professional skills for all staff.

Provide robust quality assurance mechanisms to uphold the delivery standards of all training and development activities.

Strengthen competency recording and assurance processes by introducing simplified, scalable tools for tracking development and activity for all personnel across the Service particularly for on-call colleagues.

Ensure an appropriately sized and trained internal quality assurance (IQA) cadre, capable of conducting regular assurance visits to validate training effectiveness, address learning gaps, and ensure continuous improvement.

Collaborate with strategic partners and external training providers to enhance the quality and diversity of training opportunities.

# CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS.

Alignment with training and operational standards that comply with legislative requirements, National Joint Council national operational standards, national operational guidance, fire standards and accredited awarding bodies.

Improved and modernised training facilities, providing realistic, relevant, and safe environments for staff and instructors.

A Developed program for competence maintenance across all roles and specialist functions ensuring the best possible operational standards for safety of our teams and wider community

Streamlined training and development administration and data intelligence, improving efficiency and accessibility for all staff.

Closer alignment and enhanced collaboration with bordering FRSs and external partners, providing increased frequency of multi-agency training events, fostering inter-agency coordination.

Clarity regarding career pathways for both Grey and Green Book staff, supporting professional growth and progression, providing transparent routes that support professional development, growth, and progression where relevant.

Further development of career pathways for Grey and Green Book staff.

## NEW WAYS OF WORKING.

Technology, processes, and the existing talent pool are considerations in the implementation of the People Strategy.

Technology not only influences the work employees carry out but can also change the full working environment by facilitating more agile working.

Our approach to transformation is an ongoing process for continuous improvement. Our leaders will actively create the right environment for change to happen and we will engage early with staff to motivate staff to overcome their frustrations and challenges.

Learning and adapting the new ways of working takes energy to maintain a continual business momentum.

## MANAGING CHANGE.

### We will:

When initiating major change programmes, review the risks and the composition of our workforce and adapt to affect these changes.

Consider opportunities for workforce redesign and transformation following the introduction of new technologies and different ways of working.

Review organisational systems, processes, and procedures to identify efficiencies and productivity savings and enable staff to work innovatively and responsively to the changing environment.

Use HR data to understand the nature of our workforce and support our decision making.

Create more flexible and adaptive services by shifting emphasis from fixed duty systems to contract types which help create a more flexible response.

Continue to work with the National Joint Council and Trade Union representatives to ensure reform and changes are introduced effectively.

Continue to support the Local Pension Board to monitor the provision of pensions to existing employees and retired members and ensure we have an effective pensions provision in place through the external scheme administrator and the pensions officer.

## INFORMATION SYSTEMS.

### We will:

Work with colleagues to continue to develop and realise the benefits from computerised systems such as the HR dashboard and Resource Link.

Increasingly simplify processes through digital transformation, continually moving towards 'paperless' processes.

## ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE METRICS.

### We will:

Continue to use the dashboards to improve HR, Training and Development, LEO and Health and Safety metrics to support HMICFRS data collection.

Develop a set of Corporate Health Indicators.

## CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS.

Provide HR polices that facilitate innovative workforce change.

Duty systems will be flexible to meet the needs of the Service.

Increased usage of technology to provide useful workforce data to aid decision making.

Further development of computerised systems to reduce reliance on paper-based processes and improve efficiency.

Introduction of a range of focussed and relevant HR Corporate Health indicators to further develop benchmarking of HR performance.

Adoption of a national set of professional standards.

Percentage increase in the number of staff showing an understanding for change at SFRS given the challenges faced by the Service as outlined in the Staff Survey.

# MONITORING AND EVALUATION.

The HR, EDI and Training and Development teams will work with managers to influence and contribute to Service strategy ensuring that the workforce agenda is appropriately considered.

The team will regularly engage with relevant stakeholders, internally and externally to ensure workforce issues are addressed.

Our team will continually develop to ensure a progressive, professional and competent approach to the delivery of all HR systems, processes and practices.

Heads of departments and line managers are responsible and accountable for the effective management of their staff and teams and will be held to account for the delivery of effective HR performance in their areas of responsibility.

Delivery and actions will be monitored through the workforce plan and monthly people management meetings.

This will inform the annual business planning cycle and corporate objective setting process which will encompass all elements of the workforce team's delivery areas.

All departmental plans are monitored by the Service Management team through exception reporting.

An annual report on the People Strategy will be considered by the Strategy and Resources Committee.

The plans that underpin this strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis taking into account any major organisational changes, providing the Service with the most relevant workforce today and in the future. Critical success factors will be reviewed annually to ensure that they remain fit for purpose and will be updated accordingly.

The People Strategy is available to all staff and will be published on the Portal and on our website at [www.shropshirefire.gov.uk](http://www.shropshirefire.gov.uk)

There will be ongoing consultation with the Representative Bodies regarding the implementation of specific elements within the strategy through annual plans. Any supporting plans to the strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

# MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS.

**WE WILL KNOW OUR STRATEGY HAS BEEN EFFECTIVE IF WE FIND:**

**WE ARE ACHIEVING  
AGAINST THE CRITICAL  
SUCCESS FACTORS.**

**OVERALL STAFF ENGAGEMENT SHOWN  
THROUGH THE STAFF SURVEY IS GOOD AGAINST  
BENCHMARKS AND CONTINUES TO IMPROVE.**

**SICKNESS ABSENCE LEVELS, INCLUDING STRESS-  
RELATED ABSENCE ARE LOW COMPARED TO  
BENCHMARK ORGANISATIONS.**

**OPERATIONAL RESPONSE  
AND PERFORMANCE  
TARGETS ARE MET.**

# PEOPLE STRATEGY

2025-28



**Shropshire**  
Fire and Rescue Service