

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	SCRUTINY		
DATE:	30 OCTOBER 2018	REPORT NO:	CFO/064/18
PRESENTING OFFICER	CHIEF FIRE OFFICER		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	CFO	REPORT AUTHOR:	NICK MERNOCK
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	WENDY KENYON EQUALITY MANAGER		
TITLE OF REPORT:	FUTURE PEOPLE IMPLICATIONS OF WORKFORCE AND EMPLOYMENT DATA REPORT		

APPENDICES:	APPENDIX A: EQUALITY ANALYSIS OF WORKFORCE AND EMPLOYMENT DATA AS AT 31.3.18
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Purpose of Report

1. To provide Members with a breakdown of the Authority's workforce (people) data produced in order to meet the Equality Act 2010, Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and in order to allow scrutiny of the service in relation to the PSED. Attached to this report at Appendix A.
2. To provide members with an overview of the current and planned work that is in place to address the key areas of results contained within the Workforce and Employment Data Report

Recommendation

3. That Members note and approve the Equality Analysis of Workforce and Employment Data Report for publishing on the Authority website in order to demonstrate our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and to meet its Public Sector Equality Duties.
4. That members endorse the strategic approaches to addressing the key areas of the Workforce data, and accept that further updates will be provided through the future scrutiny of the recently endorsed People Strategy

Introduction and Background

5. The purpose of the completion of the Workforce and Equality Data report is to demonstrate MFRA's compliance with the Equality Act 2010 general duty across our employment functions and to update stakeholders on the key outcomes delivered in the year with regards to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
6. The Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty (s.149) states that in the exercise of their functions, public authorities must have **due regard** to the need to:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
7. In order for public authorities to demonstrate they are meeting the PSED there is a number of specific duties which require public bodies including MF&RA to carry out :
 - a. Publish information to show their compliance with the Equality Duty, at least annually;
 - b. Set and publish equality objectives, at least every four years.
8. The PSED states that all information above must be published in a way which makes it easy for people to access it. We will publish the reports as previous years on our Intranet and Website and copies will be available for request in braille, large font and different languages on request.
9. The Equality analysis of workforce report also includes our second gender pay gap report which is also required by all Public Sector Bodies employing over 250 employees – by March 2019.
10. The detail below provides for members an update on the work that is currently ongoing as well as future planned work contained within the recently approved People Strategy.
11. Changes in Employment numbers
12. The report captures that the total number of employees within Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service has fallen from 1045 to 999 which is a 4% reduction in overall staffing.
13. Specific reductions have occurred in Firefighter and Watch Manager. This has been anticipated by the Authority and external recruitment has taken place in respect to Watch Management roles. However a number of other unplanned

retirements have impacted on the Authorities planning assumptions and this is being monitored monthly via the Workforce Planning Group, as such strategies are in place to manage staffing fluctuations.

14. The Service has been monitoring these potential reductions in Operational staff and been making plans to address this through its Workforce Development Group and People Strategy. This has led to a large scale recruitment programme dedicated to filling the positions as they become vacant with high quality professional firefighters.
15. This has seen a current recruitment programme taking an initial 1,600 applications and processing them through the various recruitment stages to attain 60 new firefighters in the next year
16. This process is also scheduled to continue over the next two years to ensure a constant through flow of Operational personnel
17. The process is also supplemented with a programme of external transfer ins taking qualified staff from other services
18. The Service is also progressing the reintroduction of Crew Manager positions, which will support staff development, and also ensure that managerial succession planning is successful within the timescales we have identified
19. Gender Workforce balance
20. Whilst more work is required the organisation continues to improve the gender workforce balance on a year by year basis now the restrictions on recruitment have been lifted and large numbers are recruited into the organisation.
21. Overall females make up 24.8% of the total staffing at Merseyside FRA an increase from 22.2% in 2015/16
22. Operationally females make up 7.9% of the workforce which is higher than the UK Fire service female Firefighter average of 5%
23. From a Non Uniformed perspective there are 50.4% females to 49.6% males
24. A refocused positive action strategy and approach has fully contributed to these figures and will continue to do so.
25. The Authority now not only carries out attraction strategies prior to application, but provides 'have a go days' and personal support to applicants who may not achieve the entry standards first time, and helping them with development so they can reapply in a stronger position next time around.
26. This has included support with Physical training, application form completion, interview skills, as well as basic Maths and English support for online tests.

27. All this has seen a very high number of reapplications, and subsequently an increase in training course diversity. Indeed the last training course had a 45% make up of applicants from under represented backgrounds
28. Gender pay differentials
29. In relation to Operational staff, this has been a challenge faced on a national scale impacted by previous gender heavy recruitment, lack of turnover and previously limited numbers of female entrants into the Fire Service
30. Much of this has been addressed previously within this report, along with the future scope to vastly improve its diversity
31. The Authority now has to continue to address the continued lack of females in operational managerial positions, and improvements will be made through a number of approaches such as the reintroduction of Crew Manager Roles, Coaching and Mentoring.
32. The Authority has rewritten its Succession planning Strategy to fully identify this challenge within its People Strategy and the approaches required
33. It has a Gateway procedure for promotion that supports individual development against a persons Appraisal, and their own aspiration to progress. This will be supplemented with personal development programmes, a Leadership Strategy and an Authority Fast Track promotion procedure
34. Work will continue with specific under represented work groups to identify barriers and remove them, to begin a process of broader recruitment and progression through rank
35. In relation to Non-operational staff the Authority in conjunction with Unison adopted the national Job evaluation process that is ratified by them and consequently grades all posts according to the role not the person. These posts are then recruited into in an open and transparent process.
36. The challenge for gender pay in non-operational positions has a number of facets that the organisation continues to address.
37. In some cases a legacy issue where key positions have been heavily male dominated by a previous approach to re engagement for key skills. this has been identified but will take a period of time to address through vacancy management
38. The previously identified small turnover limits vacancies and potential for immediate change to diversity within role.
39. A need to again look at succession planning and the potential for fast track development for non-uniformed employees in conjunction with Appraisal outcomes

40. Ageing workforce

41. The report identifies that the majority of staff within the Authority belong to the age group 46 to 55, with more employees above the age of 46 than below it.
42. 58.2 of operational personnel are aged between 46 – 55
43. For support staff 25.4 are in the age bracket 46-55
44. Again this is an area where the organisation has been patently aware of the future age profile challenge. To some degree the profile is a reflection on the employee satisfaction within role with the organisation having a low turnover of staff. The Operational role remains one of the few potential jobs for life and continuity of employment is high. This is also reflected within the non-operational roles, with turnover again a low factor.
45. The situation will be addressed with the recruitment challenge that the Authority faces. The organisation will be required to recruit up to 300 new operational personnel over the next five years, and it is expected that that recruitment process will dramatically address the age profile of the workforce and see a considerable reduction in the proportion of employees

Equality and Diversity Implications

46. The Equality Analysis of Workforce and Employment Data report provides specific equality impact analysis in relation to our MF&RA staff workforce, youth programmes and volunteers.

Staff Implications

47. Staff have been integral to the creation of this report through a number of processes including attending the Diversity Action Group forum, meetings with the Diversity and Consultation Manager and providing regular written communication updates. The data contained in the reports will be useful to officers carrying out future Equality Impact assessments of their decisions, changes to services or development of employment and service delivery policies.

Legal Implications

48. The reports demonstrates the work that is being conducted to meet the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty requirements

Financial Implications & Value for Money

49. There will be no financial implications this year as it has been decided that both reports will be published in their current format on the Authority website and will not be professionally designed and printed externally.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

50. There are no risk management, health & Safety or environmental implications arising from this report.

Contribution to Our	<i>Safer Stronger Communities – Safe Effective Firefighters</i>
Mission:	

51. The production of these reports demonstrates how MFRA are delivering services in a way that meets the Authorities legal duties to of the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty requirements, and how best practice is essential for a public sector organisation.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

GLOSSARY OF TERMS
