

Dorset & Wiltshire Culture Report Recommendations	SYFR Analysis as at 30/11/23	Timescale	RAG Rating
Recommendation 1:			
Develop the range of positive action initiatives to encourage greater levels of recruitment and promotion of all under-represented groups, particularly women.	The Service has been developing and delivering positive action initiatives since 2016 when wholetime firefighter recruitment recommenced. The initiatives have grown year on year as more staff are engaged in delivering these. The Service now has a positive action strategy and action plan and a toolkit for managers and staff. We are also recruiting to a new fixed-term Positive Action Engagement Officer and if we can evidence the impact and value of this role, we will seek via workforce planning processes to make this an ongoing post. Our positive action has had varying degrees of success in all areas of the service and this is detailed in our annual EDI reports.		
Recommendation 2:			
Establish goals to significantly increase female representation at both the wholetime and on-call firefighter level while ensuring the selection procedures are fair and transparent.	The Service has not agreed, to date, to establish goals for representation for identified roles. This will be something we have considered and will consider again in 2024 via the EDI committee and the People and Culture board. However, female representation has been a key focus of our positive action work in firefighter recruitment (and other areas of the service e.g. Business Fire Safety team) and we have seen an increase in the % of female staff in both wholetime and on-call roles, without any impact on the fairness of the process or reduction in entry requirement standards.	2024	
Recommendation 3:			
Identify barriers to women and other under-represented groups from being attracted to joining and being successful in the selection process to become a firefighter. Any identified barriers should be removed from the process whilst ensuring no dilution of the robustness of the selection criteria.	The Service has been engaging with representatives from local under-represented groups for a number of years to understand the barriers to applying for and being successful in the selection process to become a firefighter. We also gather feedback from potential applicants and those commencing the application process who withdraw or are unsuccessful to understand barriers. This has informed our positive action initiatives and enabled us to target our limited resources to maximum benefit. We offer 'have a go' days, fitness training sessions, support for different elements of the selection process and maintain regular contact with interested applicants to encourage and support. The positive action work is to 'level the playing field' so that we can maintain standards and robustness of the selection process.		
Recommendation 4:			
Maintain corporate Women in the Fire Service membership and avail of the many opportunities for female progression.	The Service maintains corporate membership of the Women in the Fire Service organisation (WFS) and funds at least 6 places per year for staff to attend the annual WFS women's development weekend held at Fire Service college. We engage with and support the WFS on many occasions and many of our staff also have individual membership.		

Recommendation 5:			
Continue an ongoing and regular engagement programme to provide visibility of and accessibility to SLT. Articulate the responsibility of each leader for visibility, including when they have responsibility for staff at numerous locations.	The SLT have a formal programme of watch and team visits at least twice each year, alongside numerous informal visits and meetings throughout the year. Formal and informal meetings are also held with different ranks with different members of SLT. A middle manager engagement day is held every six weeks which SLT attend. Each member of SLT is an EDI 'strategic influencer' and provides support to one of the service staff groups. A key element of the recruitment/promotion process is understanding the responsibility of managers and leaders to be visible and inclusive and this is reinforced in management and leadership development programmes.		
Recommendation 6:			
Review the suite of procedures pertaining to conduct, performance and capability to ensure that they meet the needs of a modern workforce. This should include accurate and central recording to enable the service to identify trends and take appropriate action.	Relevant policies are reviewed at least every two years or when legislative and/or good practice updates are required. All people policies go to the Joint Consultation Forum with all Trade Unions for full consultation. All information relating to the application of these policies is retained confidentially on the Service's HR system and from this we are able to produce confidential reports and statistics. These are shared at the People and Culture board (anonymised) so that any trends/issues can be identified and appropriate action taken. This information is also discussed at the Executive Team meetings.		
Recommendation 7:			
Create a new 'Dignity at Work' framework to deal specifically with unacceptable behaviour relating to bullying and harassment or EDI issues.	The Service has had a Dignity at Work policy and framework for many years and this is reviewed every 2 years and consulted upon at the Joint Consultation Forum with all Trade Unions.		
Recommendation 8:			
Implement an EDI policy statement that includes the NFCC position published in July 2023 on embedding EDI in the workplace.	The Service has had an EDI policy statement for many years and this is regularly reviewed and updated. The latest version includes actions also contained within the NFCC culture action plan. We also publish an annual EDI report with details of all the positive action work we have undertaken within service and within our communities. We also publish an annual workforce profile report.		
Recommendation 9:			
Develop an appropriate way to provide greater levels of transparency regarding the outcome of processes, to provide closure and support for all victims.	The Service is exploring options for sharing information regarding casework that does not breach data protection. There are very few organisations that share information like this so we recognise the challenges and will take appropriate legal advice.	Spring 2024	

Recommendation 10:			
Strengthen reporting to the FRA on the number and type of discipline/grievances and the type of sanctions delivered on a quarterly basis, with sufficient detail to reassure that any inappropriate behaviours are being dealt with robustly and trends recognised.	The FRA receive a quarterly report from the Service's People and Culture board which includes reference to the review of casework and any potential trends and issues. As identified in recommendation 9 above, if it is agreed that we can publish more information, this will also be included in the quarterly report to the FRA.		
Recommendation 11:			
Provide relevant training for all managers who are required to carry out investigations to give them the confidence and support to deal with disciplinary and grievance matters.	The Service procures and provides training to managers who may potentially carry out investigations into discipline and grievance issues. This training is supplemented by support from People Partners who form part of the investigation team and provide specialist advice to managers.		
Recommendation 12:			
Provide regular updates to those involved in HR-related investigations to ensure transparency and to help build trust and confidence.	Managers and People Partners undertaking investigations ensure that those involved in the process are kept regularly informed on progress. Welfare Officers are also allocated to all parties involved to provide wellbeing support and to signpost to specialist support where required.		
Recommendation 13:			
Consider establishing a central group who role is to assess and monitor all disciplinary, grievance and bullying / harassment cases. The group would assess risk, ensure the correct procedure is being applied and ensure consistency of procedure and monitor progress.	The Service's People Relations Manager meets monthly with People Partners to assess and monitor all casework. They check that procedures are being followed correctly and that consistency and fairness is applied. The People Relations Manager provides a monthly update on cases to the Director of People and Culture, who also checks that procedures are followed correctly, that consistency and fairness is applied and assesses risk. Identified risks are escalated by the Director to Executive Team colleagues. All managers involved in casework are invited to provide feedback on the process to the People Relations Manager or Director of People and Culture so that improvements can be made.		
Recommendation 14			
Review the current HR provision to ensure there is sufficient capacity to support and develop line managers in managing people.	Under normal circumstances there is sufficient capacity within the people function to support managers in managing our staff. The spotlight on culture across the sector nationally has resulted in a significant increase in casework for a period of time. The Service is funding an additional People Partner for 12 months to assist with this and the Service will seek external support to undertake investigations if we have exhausted manager capacity.		

Recommendation 15:			
Review the exit interview process to enable the service to learn from employee experiences and improve policies and systems accordingly.	The Service implemented a robust exit process a few years ago. This includes an opportunity to have an interview with the CFO or another member of SLT and / or to complete a comprehensive questionnaire. Information from both is used to learn from employee experiences and make improvements as necessary. This builds on the feedback processes that are available to all staff so that issues can be raised during employment so that issues do not come as a surprise.		
Recommendation 16:			
Set out the expected standards of behaviour and how failure to comply will be dealt with robustly. This should be clearly aligned with the national Core Code of Ethics.	The Service's values and behaviour are well established since the introduction of 'Our Story' in 2018. This aligns very closely to the national Core Code of Ethics and both are based on the Nolan Principles of public life. The values and behaviours are a fundamental part of all our policies and ways of working and the consequences of failing to comply are made clear and regularly communicated, particularly with the current focus on culture.		
Recommendation 17:			
If required, issue communication regarding the appropriate use of WC facilities.	This has not been a particular issue within SYFR but staff have been reminded (particularly on stations) of the importance of respecting gender-specific facilities.		
Recommendation 18:			
Undertake a full survey of all buildings and facilities and prioritise improvements.	The Estates team have undertaken a survey of all SYFR premises and have a clear plan for improvements and updates. EDI forms a key part of these decisions and all plans have equality impact assessments.		
Recommendation 19:			
Ensure a consistent approach to welfare and WC facilities at operational incidents. This should include regular audits to ensure the request and use of such facilities.	The Service has significantly improved welfare and WC facilities at operational incidents with new facilities available within the service and in collaboration with the British Red Cross. All incident commanders have the ability to arrange/purchase additional welfare facilities where required.		
Recommendation 20:			
Actively support initiatives around bystander challenge.	Throughout 2023, the Corporate Communications team have delivered a campaign to support the Service's culture work which included key themes of allyship and being an active bystander, which will continue to be a key part of our ongoing culture improvement.		
Recommendation 21:			
Consider the impact of maternity and menopause procedures and processes and ensure that they are as inclusive and supportive as possible.	The Service significantly improved maternity pay provision in 2021 which means we are now comparable with many other public sector organisations. We have improved our uniform availability for pregnant operational staff. We have a very active Pregnancy and Parenting staff group that are assisting the service in bringing about further		

	improvements. Menopause has been a key feature of our wellbeing work in the past few years. Again, we have introduced new menopause uniform for operational staff and we regularly provide training and information/awareness raising across the Service for staff and managers.		
Recommendation 22:			
Dealing with pregnancy, maternity leave and menopause should be key features in EDI training programmes.	These areas all feature significantly in our EDI and wellbeing training and awareness raising.		
Recommendation 23:			
The Dignity at Work framework policy should include a clear position on social media and its acceptable use and should make it clear that unacceptable use will result in disciplinary action.	The Service has a separate Social Media policy but also references use of social media in other policies such as Discipline and Dignity at Work policies and it is made clear that unacceptable use will result in disciplinary action.		
Recommendation 24:			
Implement formal mandatory face to face training on EDI to all staff. Ensure this is recorded to show completion rates.	Formal mandatory face to face training on EDI is provided to all staff. We are currently in a programme of refresher training on this. All training is recorded on individual's training records as well as on HR systems so that we are always aware of completion rates and can ensure those that haven't do so as soon as possible. In addition to this, we provide mandatory and voluntary LearnPro modules to all staff and to managers.		
Recommendation 25:			
Incoming managers into temporary promotions should be fully briefed and have continual mentoring in their role. The service should constantly review the impact of numerous temporary promotions on stability.	Staff moving into new management roles are fully briefed and are supported in their new role by more senior managers, experienced peers, People Partners and others. We are currently reviewing our formal processes for the development of aspiring and new managers as part of our Leadership and Development Pathways projects. We are also reviewing and looking to extend our formal coaching and mentoring offer to staff and this will be a priority in 2024. Through our workforce planning processes and governance arrangements we constantly review the impact of having a number of temporary positions, which are often created by internal development opportunities.	2024	
Recommendation 26:			
Develop a coaching programme to support senior leaders and managers in generating culture change.	Whilst we don't currently have a formal coaching programme for this, the work that we are doing under the services Culture Programme is providing all managers and leaders with information / support / awareness on culture and how to manage this effectively. They also work closely with People Partners who are HR professionals able to support on all aspects of culture change.	2024	

Recommendation 27:			
Strengthen leadership development, with a particular focus on supervisory and middle managers. Ensure high-quality leadership training with EDI running through it.	Leadership development is one of the key priorities of the Service Plan this year and this will continue into next year, with work being delivered through our leadership projects. We are currently reviewing options for additional leadership EDI training.	2024	