

Our Equality and Diversity Strategy 2010-13

Our Equality and Diversity Strategy 2010-2013 was designed and developed with the Service staff and our partners and service user support and as such it enabled us to ensure that all of our practices were inclusive of equality and diversity.

In preparing our Equality and Diversity Strategy we undertook a number of activities to enable us to fully understand not only what sort of organisation our staff wanted to be part of, but also what our staff and communities wanted Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service to stand for. Furthermore, we wanted both our staff and communities to identify what our organisation should look and feel like at the end of the period for which the Strategy applies.

We felt that staff feedback was essential to the creation of our Strategy and whilst preparing for our Single Equality Scheme (SES), which runs concurrently, we underwent a comprehensive consultation process with the support of an Equality and Diversity Focus Group. This consultation process also acted as an education program for staff about what a SES is, and encouraged staff to work with a questionnaire which sought their thoughts on the SES and how they were hoping to get benefit from it. Our Equality and Diversity Strategy and our Single Equality Scheme are integral tools enabling us to support our Leadership Message and Cultural Framework.

The approach we took, we believe, was a major driver in 'mainstreaming the quality agenda' into a cohesive purpose and function in the Service and the way we do our business. Last but not least it was a pivot tool which resulted in us achieving the Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework Excellent Level in February 2013 of which we are very proud.

Our Equality and Inclusion Strategy 2014-17

Our current Equality and Inclusion Strategy 2014- 2017 complements our Corporate Safety Plan 2014-2017 (CSP) and as such equality, diversity and inclusion principals are embedded within the overarching Service Plan; as well as having a distinct identity to deliver specific equality, diversity and inclusion outcomes.

The Strategy sets out an overview of the current position with regard to the wider equality and inclusion agenda. The Strategy considers how an equality and inclusion agenda will support our objectives in terms of employees and our community safety delivery. It outlines how we will meet our legal responsibility to publish equality data and how our Service objectives will demonstrate due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duties (PSED) to

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

- Foster good relationships between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The Strategy makes links between practice and outcome to recognise those at most risk of fire, and other incidents in the home and on the roads, how to better understand these needs and gain access to the public in the most effective way. 'One size fits all' does not apply when delivering messages to those most vulnerable to risk. Not unlike the Services overarching direction the Strategy draws links between ourselves, as a service provider, and how we work with our partners particularly in health and social care. Equally, as an employer, we need to understand that staff have varying communication styles and needs, and that managers need a selection of tools and styles to get the most out of a diverse workforce.

Supporting the Strategy is an action plan, which is inclusive of wellbeing and culture, to carry forward our equality objectives within our CSP and ensure due regard is implicit within all associated strategies and work plans. The data in the document will also support the foundation for those objectives. We will aim to maintain the Excellent Level of the Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework, ensure legal compliance, support and understand appropriate service delivery to the community and support our staff because it is the right thing to do and because is the most effective and efficient way to run the Services.