

# LINCOLNSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE

## EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION EDI STRATEGY



Lincolnshire  
COUNTY COUNCIL  
*Working for a better future*





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# Introduction

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This Diversity and Inclusion Strategy outlines our approach to equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) up to 2024 in detail and complements the corporate commitment in the Service Order. It details the continuing work towards embedding EDI throughout the Service and all our activities. And provides the recognition that EDI runs through every aspect of the Service and it is of utmost importance in both our outward and inward facing responsibilities.

This strategy aims to guarantee our compliance with legislative requirements with regards to equalities and ensure we continue to develop and improve; complementing and adding further details to our 'Ambitions' outlined in our People Framework. It will build on our reputation of being a respected organisation, an employer of choice with regards to recruitment, retention and advancement. It will also aid in providing evidence for assessment against the Equality Framework for Fire and Rescue Services, and against the NFCC Core values.

The strategy will provide direction to our Service Delivery activities, ensuring that we direct resources on a risk based intelligence led basis to the most vulnerable and in need within our community without prejudice or bias.

It will ensure that we are full and active partners in delivering health and wellbeing strategies and in dealing with poverty, health inequalities, social deprivation and social exclusion helping to build stronger, safer and more resilient communities. The details in this document allow cross cutting themes to be identified within our suite of Framework documents.

This document focuses attention on details of the EDI related 'Ambitions' for the Service as committed to in our People Framework.

The aim of the EDI Diversity and Inclusion strategy is to allow us to offer in detail how we will work towards achieving our ambitions as outlined in our People Framework:

- We aim to create a positive and inclusive culture that will enable our people to thrive during their time with LFR in a safe environment, which encourages openness.
- We aim to enable all employees to have a voice (either through representative bodies, employee groups or as individuals).
- We aim to be an Employer of Choice which represents the diversity of our community, by welcoming and attracting under-represented groups (BAME, women, LGBTQ+).
- We aim to ensure all our staff have good mental and physical wellbeing and know where to get help.
- We aim to provide all our people with opportunities to reach their full potential within their careers.
- We aim to give our people the skills required to deliver their roles to the best of their abilities.

We will achieve by integrating EDI work into the following three main areas:

- Service Delivery – delivering services that are accessible, responsible and meet the needs of all communities based on risk
- People and culture – building a diverse, inclusive and supportive working environment that encourages the development, progression and retention of our people
- Organisational processes – embedding inclusion into organisational processes and the management of performance

# Identity, Focus and Service Values

## IDENTITY

Our duty under the Fire and Rescue Services Act is to provide fire and rescue services to the people who live, work and travel in the County of Lincolnshire. It is important that whilst we have a statutory duty, we maintain our 'identity; and we are clear on our purpose and 'why we are here'. This translates directly into our agreed identity of:

**'We Help Keep Lincolnshire Safe and Well'**

How we maintain and deliver on our identity is described in detail in our Service Plan, a copy of which can be found on the **LFR website**. Our identity and intent is to be widely and prominently displayed on Fire and Rescue premises across the County.

## FOCUS

While our identity and intent is about 'keeping Lincolnshire Safe and Well' our focus is all about 'how do we get there' now and in the future. This is outlined in a number of statements:

- We will all be clear on what is required of us and what we can expect from the service
- We will take ownership of our actions to continually improve
- We will listen to the people of Lincolnshire to understand their needs.
- We will make best use of our resources to meet the needs of the people of Lincolnshire.

## VALUES

There are 4 County Council Values:

- **Professional**
- **Respectful**
- **Resourceful**
- **Reflective**



We support these Values through our 6 Lincolnshire Fire & Rescue behaviours, represented by our THRIVE model:

### Our Behaviours

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>Trust</b>   | We trust the people we work with and they trust us         |
| <b>Help</b>    | We help our communities and our colleagues                 |
| <b>Respect</b> | We show that we have respect for each other                |
| <b>Include</b> | Everyone is comfortable being themselves at work           |
| <b>Value</b>   | We listen and value the things each of us has to offer     |
| <b>Empower</b> | Everyone can contribute to shape the future of our service |

# Responsibilities and Monitoring

Anyone associated with Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue including employees, communities and stakeholders are expected to act upon the principles within this strategy.

A number of individuals and groups have additional responsibilities:

## Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) and LFR

- LFR is a directorate of Lincolnshire County Council
- Responsible for monitoring and constructively challenging evidence and performance progress against the objectives in this strategy and associated policies and plan

## Senior Management Board

- This group consists of the Senior Leadership Team within LFR

## EDI Groups (Tactical group, Operational Task and Finish Group and Employee Networks)

- Tactical group to manage and agree the action plan and objectives
- Operational group to complete items on the action plan and feed into the Tactical Group
- Employee Networks to support underrepresented groups within LFR workforce

## Wellbeing and Inclusion (WBI) group

- This group consists of senior managers, Councillors, and champions for each pillar of the group.
- The People Framework is designed to support delivery of the WBI vision 'a healthy, happy and resilient workforce'

## Service Delivery Board

- This is made up of Group managers and heads of departments

To support our community and our employees we aim to manage, review and govern our commitment to equalities, diversity and inclusion through the following forums



# Diversity and Inclusion Objectives

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Using the Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework, we have identified key inclusion and equality objectives that address equality gaps identified and will continue to analyse and monitor through both data analysis and consultation with internal and external stakeholders.

Full details of the actions to be undertaken under each objective are included in the EDI Action Plan. These will be updated each year.

- Leadership, partnership and organisational commitment
- Community knowledge and engagement
- Effective service delivery
- Employment conditions, health and wellbeing
- Recruitment, training and progression

## **Leadership, partnership and organisational commitment**

Political and managerial leaders demonstrate personal commitment to and leadership on, reducing inequality, challenging discrimination and delivering services that are inclusive and accessible to diverse communities.

We will demonstrate that strategic decisions are influenced by local equality priorities and that the service will build on a reputation within the community and with partners for achieving equality outcomes.

We will ensure our leadership will establish robust and ongoing processes to enable all staff to understand the principles of EDI.

We will continue to formalise structures for Senior Managers to set and monitor progress of equality related strategies and initiatives ensuring appropriate upwards and downwards interaction with the workforce, service users and key stakeholders.

We will seek independent validation of its progress on equality by HMICFRS, peer challenge, Stonewall, Disability confident scheme, mind blue campaign, mindful employer, time to change, etc

We will ensure corporate policies consistently promote equality for all staff, and equality analysis is evident and leading to positive outcomes for under-represented or disadvantaged groups.

## **Community Knowledge and engagement**

*To develop a framework to collect, analyse and use information to understand the local community and their changing needs; engage effectively with all communities and ascertain customer satisfaction*

We will understand the communities we serve through information collected and analysed and by sharing information with partners. We will achieve this by having effective engagement structures in place to allow informal and formal interactions with our diverse communities and partners.

## **Effective Service Delivery**

*To ensure services are accessible and responsive to the needs of people in the community and procurement and commissioning considers the local community.*

We will do this by ensuring front line services are pro-actively accessible and plans are informed by knowledge of the local community and engagement with the community and its diverse groups.

Commissioned and procured services will consider local employment and business data and priorities, to help us achieve our equality priorities



## **Employment conditions, Health and Wellbeing**

***To ensure workforce strategies, policies and processes support an inclusive working environment.***

We will do this through the People framework and inclusive policies that support employment rights, performance, health and wellbeing of all employees.

Monitoring will be in place to ensure policies and procedures for employees are fair.

We will promote and demonstrate, at all levels, the Service's core values and behaviours expected from employees and effectively challenge poor behaviour.

We will continue to look for new and innovative ways to ensure we are engaging with all our staff and ensure staff are engaged in decisions about networks, change programmes or any other major changes.

## **Recruitment, training and progression**

***To ensure we have a diverse, skilled and motivated workforce.***

We will actively promote the Service as an employer of choice for all sections of the community and engage with under-represented groups.

Recruitment, selection, retention and progression will be monitored to ensure equality and fairness across the diverse groups.

Learning and development opportunities will be available to promote a diverse workforce and tailored equalities awareness and learning will be provided.



# Strategy Development

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## Consultation and Involvement

*To enable us to promote EDI as a service provider and employer we will actively encourage employees and community members to participate in the development of EDI initiatives. On-going consultation is important to continue to develop the strategy and action plan.*

Key Stakeholders will be consulted and included through:

- Employee Network Groups
- Employee Survey
- Trade Union Meetings
- Community engagement groups and partnerships
- Customer Satisfaction Surveys

The Service will also maintain links with and build on engagement through a number of networks which enable the sharing of best practice and provide guidance and support across all equality areas. These include:

- East Midlands Fire & Rescue Equalities Group
- National Fire Chiefs council (NFCC) EDI Group and associated working groups
- Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA)
- Women in the Fire Service (WFS)
- Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion (ENEI)
- LCC EDI groups

A number of relevant documents are used and referred to in this Strategy including:

- Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP)/Service Plan
- People Strategy (NFCC)
- Fire and Rescue Equality Framework
- LFR People Framework
- Core code of ethics for Fire and Rescue Services (England)
- HMICRS Inspection feedback and guidance

## Data Monitoring and Analysis

A range of quantitative and qualitative data will continue to be used to develop this Strategy and the EDI Action plan further.

These include:

- Employee equalities monitoring data
- Home Safety Check equalities monitoring data
- Youth Engagement equalities monitoring data
- Enforcement Activity
- Safeguarding referrals
- Incident data including fatalities, accidental fires in dwellings, road traffic collisions
- Data for the population of Lincolnshire sources include:
  - *Census*
  - *Office National Statistics Mid-Year Estimates*
  - *National Insurance Number Registrations*
  - *English Index of Multiple Deprivation*

Equalities monitoring data for our employees and some service provision can be found on our website published in our Annual Report. (LCC EDI Annual Report 2020)

It is recognised that there is a challenge to collate data and track the progress on certain protected characteristics; these include sexual orientation and religion & belief where data is not always collected.

Consideration is being given to data collection and monitoring and the rationale for requesting this information and how the data will be used.

## Equality Analysis

When public authorities carry out their functions the Equality Act states they must have a due regard or think about the need to do the following things:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't
- Foster or encourage good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't
- Having a due regard means public authorities must consciously consider or think about the need to do the three things set out in the public sector equality duty. It's the courts who decide if a public authority has done enough to comply with the duty.
- The Equality Act states public authorities should think about the need to:
  - Remove or reduce disadvantages suffered by people because of a protected characteristic
  - Meet the needs of people with protected characteristics
  - Encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life and other activities.

- Specific Duties
- Public authorities have specific duties under the Equality Act to help them comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Public authorities must:
  - Publish equality information at least once a year to show how they've complied with the equality duty
  - Prepare and publish equality objectives at least every four years.

## Publication and Reporting

The EDI Strategy and action plan will be published on the Service's internal and external websites. Action will be reported and monitored through the EDI Tactical Group and Wellbeing and Inclusion Board.



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