



Diversity Framework 2025-29

Equality Objectives

HEREFORD & WORCESTER
HWFR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



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OUR CORE CODE OF ETHICS

We follow the [Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services \(FRS\)](#) in England which guides everything we do.

Putting our communities first

We put the interest of the public, the community and service users first.

Integrity

We act with integrity including being open, honest and consistent in everything we do.

Dignity and respect

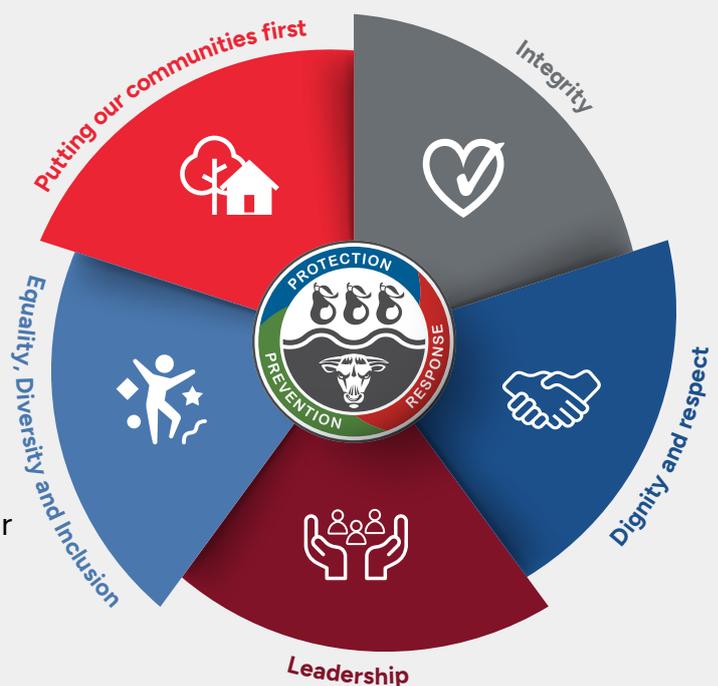
We make decisions objectively based on evidence, without discrimination or bias.

Leadership

As positive role models, we are accountable for everything we do and challenge all behaviour that falls short of the highest standards.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We stand against all forms of discrimination, create equal opportunities, promote equality, foster good relations and celebrate difference.



Introduction

Why is Hereford and Worcester Fire & Rescue Service (HWFRS) focusing on diversity?

At Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS), our main job is clear: keeping people safe from fires and other risks and responding quickly and effectively when emergencies happen. At first, it might seem like all we need to do is hire skilled people and train them well so they can deliver our core work in Protection, Prevention and Response.

But there's a bigger question behind that: *How do we combine what we each bring to the service to achieve those core goals to the best of our ability?*

That's where our Diversity Framework comes in. It focuses on four key areas:

1. Attracting Talent from Across the Community

We want everyone to feel that HWFRS could be a place for them. Not everyone sees the fire and rescue service as a career option, so part of our commitment is to reach out across the community as much as we can to encourage candidates to apply. Within our available resources, we want to make sure people have the information they need and that the process feels fair for everyone.

2. Embracing Different Perspectives and Experiences

We all have different views, bring different approaches and skills to our jobs and that's a strength. To give the best service to our communities, we need to understand them, and that means valuing the diversity within our own workforce. The Framework supports diversity of thought and creating an environment where people feel confident bringing their ideas, experiences and perspectives to the table to have a better chance of being able to understand and meet the diverse needs of the communities we serve.

3. Building a Respectful, Supportive Culture

To put it simply, to work together we need to be able to get along with each other. We don't have to agree on everything, but we do have to treat each other respectfully so that together we create a culture where we collaborate well. Recognising the diversity of our viewpoints on life is crucial to that. So, the Framework commits us to creating a workplace where we all feel valued, treat each other respectfully and so can fully contribute our skills and experience to the service.

4. Meeting Our Legal Responsibilities

Just as, for instance, we all must carry out our duties laid down by law in relation to fire safety, as members of a public body we have also each have a responsibility under the Equality Act, called the Public Sector Equality Duty. It asks us to consider equality in all our functions, aim to eliminate discrimination, advance equal opportunities and foster good relations among people.

In short, HWFRS focuses on diversity because it helps us:

- Attract Talent from Across the Community.
- Embrace Different Perspectives and Experiences.
- Recognise our differences and so collaborate at our best.
- Meet our legal responsibilities under the Equality Act.

Principles

01

Recognise and Value Differences

We acknowledge and value the many dimensions of diversity (in our staff and the community we serve).

02

Promote Inclusion

We are committed to creating a workplace where people feel valued, treat each other respectfully and can fully contribute their skills and experience to the Service.

03

Strive for Fairness

We aim to identify and address any barriers that may prevent individuals or groups from joining and thriving within our organisation.

04

Engage Contribution

We seek to foster a culture where everyone can contribute, grow, and lead.

Equality Objectives

Recognise and Value Differences

01

Recognise and Value Differences

We acknowledge and value the many dimensions of diversity (in our staff and the community we serve).

Equality Objective:

We will build an understanding of the diversities of our communities and workforce, taking account of and responding to their needs when delivering our services.

We will do this by:

Action	Success Measure	Estimated timeline
Community Insight and Demographic Understanding		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Establishing a community insight approach to gathering and reviewing demographic and vulnerability data (fire, flood, RTC) across the Service area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Community insight dataset is established and reviewed quarterly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Year 1 26/27
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Developing community profiling using vulnerability/risk data, census information to understand changes in population characteristics e.g. disability, ethnicity, age.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">100% of core vulnerability datasets refreshed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Annually (from Year 1 26/27)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Establishing a mechanism for these insights to inform station planning, prevention campaigns, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Each station receives a short report (or dashboard) showing local demographics, vulnerability trends, and emerging risks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Year 2 27/28 and then annual refresh
Equality Data, PIAs and Training		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Refreshing self-service equality data collection, encouraging staff to update their protected characteristics in a confidential, transparent way.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">An increase in equality disclosure rates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Annually (from Year 1 26/27)

Equality Objectives continued

Recognise and Value Differences continued

Action	Success Measure	Estimated timeline
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conducting People Impact Assessments (PIAs) for all new policies and significant Service decisions/changes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 100% of new policies and significant Service decisions/changes documented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Year 1 26/27 and then ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing Equality Impact Assessment training to appropriate cohorts of staff.• Providing Equality Impact Assessment Scrutiny training to Heads of Departments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A new cohort of staff trained on completing PIAs, Department heads trained on scrutinising the process and revised toolkit launched.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Year 1 26/27
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Launching an updated PIA toolkit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The PIA process is streamlined with quality and timely completion of PIAs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Year 1 26/27



Equality Objectives continued

Promote Inclusion

02

Promote Inclusion

We are committed to creating a workplace where people feel valued, treat each other respectfully and can fully contribute their skills and experience to the Service.

Equality Objective:

We will create a workplace where we value and treat each other respectfully so we are able to work together well and contribute fully. We will embed inclusive practices into everything we do and encourage others to do the same, in line with the Core Code of Ethics.

We will do this by:

Action	Success Measure	Estimated timeline
Respectful Workplace and Inclusive Culture		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing and launching a Respectful Workplace Training Programme based on the Core Code of Ethics, to promote a culture of respect and inclusion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Series developed; 90% of available staff completed all available modules. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 1 26/27
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing and evaluating Respectful Workplace Training modules for the second cycle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All modules reviewed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 2 27/28
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing and determining the policy on personal social media use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy guidance published and communicated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 1 26/27
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of the 9 remaining recommendations from the 2023 Cultural Audit and 2025 review. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of recommendations implemented. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 1 26/27
Culture Insights and Staff Engagement		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitating a staff survey to gather and evaluate employee feedback by protected characteristics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve 75% response rate and identify 5 key themes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 1 26/27
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing the current Culture Statement of Intent, producing an updated, clearly articulated statement that is communicated to employees and embedded into workstreams. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish revised Cultural Statement of Intent; 75% of staff report that they understand the purpose of the Cultural Statement of Intent in the Station audit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 1 26/27

Equality Objectives continued

Promote Inclusion continued

Action	Success Measure	Estimated timeline
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Designing, building, and launching a Culture Dashboard that consolidates key culture, inclusion, engagement, and people metrics into a single, dashboard to provide action oriented insights for leaders and managers based view, with automated refresh, clear data definitions, and action oriented insights for leaders and managers based view, with automated refresh, clear data definitions, and action oriented insights for leaders and managers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Define a metric dictionary; Dashboard developed, consulted and piloted; Dashboard launched.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Year 1 26/27 and Year 2 27/28
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Embed the use of the culture dashboard into organisational performance monitoring and reporting so leaders can identify trends, address issues early, and make informed decisions that strengthen workplace culture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Use of dashboard used in organisational performance monitoring.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Year 3 28/29
Inclusive Practice		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Establish an annual plan to self-assess / invite peer review on how we can better embed inclusive practices based on feedback or data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Annual plan established.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Year 3 28/29



Equality Objectives continued

Strive for Fairness

03

Strive for Fairness

We aim to identify and address any barriers that may prevent individuals or groups from joining and thriving within our organisation.

- We will ensure applying to the Service is genuinely open to everyone in our communities.
- Anyone, regardless of background, should be able to make an informed decision to apply for a role in HWFRS, based on a level playing field.
- We will actively ensure that no one is disadvantaged by the recruitment process.
- Those we attract must demonstrate the aptitude, personal qualities, abilities, values, and skills needed for the role - and once employed, we will support them to thrive.
- As a public service, we should be a beacon of opportunity for the communities we serve.

Equality Objective:

We work to remove barriers that prevent individuals or groups from joining and thriving in our organisation. By ensuring fair access to opportunities in recruitment, development, and promotion, we aim to build a workforce that is more able to understand the diversities of our local communities.

We will do this by:

Action	Success Measure	Estimated timeline
Recruitment, Promotion and Fair Access		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Examining workforce and community recruitment data for operational recruitment and promotion processes to help identify stages where particular groups may drop out (data collation).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Baseline stage by stage data completed for 100% of operational recruitment and promotion processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Year 2 27/28
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Incorporate recruitment and promotion data into the culture dashboard to review metrics and monitor trends.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Data available in culture dashboard.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Year 2 27/28

Equality Objectives continued

Strive for Fairness continued

Action	Success Measure	Estimated timeline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a process to identify potential barriers with the aim of making recruitment or promotion processes more accessible, including engagement with those with lived experience e.g. staff networks, exit interview information (understanding and solutions). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process established. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 2 27/28
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing employee awareness and use of the Equality of Access resources (videos and documents) by promoting them through internal communication channels and People Impact Assessment completion resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75% of staff report that they understand the purpose and how to access the Equality of Access resources in the Station audit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 1 26/27
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure recruitment activities follow a transparent, inclusive, and unbiased process aligned with the Core Code of Ethics and Equality Act 2010 e.g. assessments directly linked to the role requirements, hiring managers are trained, use of objective, scored assessments, reasonable adjustments are offered and accommodated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of hiring managers involved in recruitment complete mandatory inclusive recruitment training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 2 27/28
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor selection / promotion process stages by equality data to identify trends and actionable recommendations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular equality data reports completed and shared with SLB. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 3 28/29
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate data into the culture dashboard to review metrics and monitor trends. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All recruitment and promotion equality metrics integrated into the culture dashboard by agreed implementation date. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 2 27/28
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include a question/s in the staff survey on perceived barriers inside the organisation, e.g. Do you understand how to access development opportunities? Do you feel encouraged to progress? Have you seen or experienced barriers to your development? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barrier related questions included in the next scheduled staff survey related questions included in the next scheduled staff survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 1 26/27

Equality Objectives continued

Engage Contribution

04

Engage Contribution

We seek to foster a culture where everyone can contribute, grow, and lead.

- The strength of our Service lies in the contributions and ideas of our people.
- Embracing diversity of thought and experience will help us deliver a better service.
- Many of those we recruit today will become our future leaders. By drawing from the widest possible talent pool, we create opportunities for all and build a stronger future.

Equality Objective:

We will champion an inclusive culture where every voice matters, decisions are shared, and everyone is empowered to contribute, grow, and lead with confidence.

We will do this by:

Action	Success Measure	Estimated timeline
Culture Board Structure		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developing and finalising a comprehensive Terms of Reference for the Culture Board that clearly defines its purpose, scope, membership, roles, responsibilities, decision-making authority, meeting cadence, and reporting lines, ensuring alignment with organisational priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drafted Terms of Reference consulted by all key stakeholders• Formal approval and publication of Terms of Reference	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Defining and embedding a clear role, remit, and engagement pathway for the Culture Board in the service policy lifecycle (consultation → approval → implementation).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Culture considerations evidenced in 100% of relevant policies reviewed by the Culture Board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Year 1 26/27
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Considering the appointment of representatives from the staff networks to the Culture Board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Representation confirmed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completed

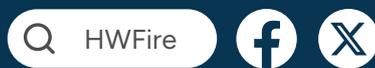
Equality Objectives continued

Engage Contribution continued

Action	Success Measure	Estimated timeline
Employee Voice, Leadership and Growth		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designing, piloting, and embedding a feedback mechanism for employees not affiliated with a staff network to raise culture-related insights, ideas, and concerns to the Culture Board, with transparent feedback loop. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish communication channel; Publish annual themes & actions update. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 1 26/27
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing and updating the Terms of Reference for all staff networks to ensure clarity on purpose, scope, membership, roles, responsibilities, decision-making authority, and reporting lines, aligning them with organisational priorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate all stakeholder feedback and secure formal approval for each Terms of Reference. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 1 26/27
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing leadership capacity in new managers by delivering 'Leading Self' and 'Leading Others' workshops, incorporating PRINT Profiles to enhance self-awareness and equip managers with strategies to perform at their best. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish updated Terms of Reference on SharePoint and; 100% of attendees receive PRINT Profiles. Positive delegate feedback. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 1 26/27 and annual refresh
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting the Step Framework which articulates the value of career and skill development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production of a communication plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 1 26/27
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrating the Step Framework and approach to aspiring leadership into appraisal process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appraisal template updated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and evaluate our employee voice and listening mechanisms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation report is completed with findings and at least three actionable recommendations to strengthen employee voice mechanisms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 2 27/28



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© 2026 Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service
Service Headquarters, Hindlip Park, Worcester WR3 8SP
0345 122 4454 | info@hwfire.org.uk | www.hwfire.org.uk