Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Resources Committee

Meeting to be held on Tuesday 13 October 2026

Equality Diversity Inclusion and Culture Annual Report 2025 – 2026 and Delivery Plan 2026 – 2027

(Appendix 1 refers)

Contact for further information: Liz Sandiford, Director People and Development
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Executive Summary

The Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture Annual Report 2025 – 2026 and Delivery Plan 2026 – 2027 provides a comprehensive overview of Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's (LFRS) ongoing commitment to fostering equality, diversity, and inclusion across its operations. Shaped by statutory obligations including the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010, LFRS's approach is further informed by inspections from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

This report demonstrates how LFRS is managing risks to its workforce and the communities it serves, advancing equality of opportunity, and promoting good relations among all groups. It details performance in fulfilling legal duties, outlines strategic delivery plans, and identifies key areas of focus such as accessibility, recruitment, training, and community engagement. The report also highlights the Service's method for evidencing compliance and transparency in meeting its public sector equality obligations.

Recommendation

The Resources Committee is asked to note the report.

Information

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) response to equality diversity and inclusion is shaped by:

- Identifying and managing risk whether this is risk to its employees, the environment in which it operates, or in the society that it serves as identified in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.

- His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) which plays a key role in inspecting Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) in England, including their approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI).

- The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), established under Section 149 of the Equality Act 20210, which requires public bodies, including Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, to consider how their policies, services and decision-making processes impact people. The general duty obliges the Service to have due regard to three key aims; 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.

The Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture Annual Report 2025 – 2026 and Delivery Plan 2026 – 2027, attached at Appendix 1, is one of the ways in which the Service can demonstrate transparency, in terms of how it is complying with the Equality Duty.

The report documents the Service's performance in terms of meeting its legal duties over the period 2025 – 2026 and the Plans for 2026 – 2027. It is part of a suite of delivery plans which supports the delivery of the Service's People Strategy and details the Service's areas of focus in terms of minimising risks in local communities, improving accessibility, recruitment and selection, training and development.

Business risk
It is a legal requirement for the Service to publish how it is complying with the public sector equality duty.

Sustainability or Environmental Impact
None.

Equality and Diversity Implications
The action plans included within the Equality Diversity Inclusion and Culture Annual Report details the Service's approach to delivering Response, Protection, Prevention and Departmental activity which supports the Services in meetings its legal obligations.

Data Protection (GDPR)
Will the proposal(s) involve the processing of personal data? No
If the answer is yes, please contact a member of the Democratic Services Team to assist with the appropriate exemption clause for confidential consideration under part 2 of the agenda.

HR implications
The Equality Diversity Inclusion and Culture Annual Report is one of the key strategies which supports the delivery of LFRS People Strategy.

Financial implications
There are no additional financial implications directly arising from this report.

Legal implications
No legal obligations arising from the report.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

Paper: Equality Act 2010
Date: April 2011
Paper: HMICFRS Values and Culture report
Date: March 2023
Paper: HMICFRS Standards of Behaviour. The handling of misconduct in fire and rescue services.

Date: August 2025
Contact: Liz Sandiford

Reason for inclusion in Part 2 if appropriate: N/A

Glossary

AFSA - Asian Fire Service Association
EDI – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
EDIC – Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture
EIA – Equality Impact Assessment
FRS – Fire and Rescue Service
HMICFRS – His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services
LFRS – Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service
PSED - Public Sector Equality Duty

Full Equality Impact Assessment and Equality Analysis

Name of Proposal (Policy, Decision, Strategy, Service, Function, Other (Please indicate)	Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture Annual Report 2026-27
Name Lead Officer **Job Designation**	Jennifer Turner Head of People
Department	Human Resources
Telephone Number **E-Mail Address**	jenniferturner@lancsfirerescue.org.uk
Date of Assessment	02/09/2026

We carry out Full Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) and analysis where we are unsure or know that the proposal, policy or decision will have an impact on an equality group or further to completing an initial analysis negative impacts have been identified. The EIA should be undertaken or started at the beginning of the proposal or policy development process before any decision is made. It will be updated through the decision making or policy development process to inform the decision-making process and then it is completed.

1. Overview

The main aims and objectives of this proposal (project, function, service, policy[1])

The Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture (EDIC) Annual Report sets out how equality, diversity and inclusion objectives are embedded within the Service's corporate planning processes and service delivery arrangements.

The report demonstrates how the Service is shaping and delivering services that meet the needs of Lancashire's diverse communities while also supporting an inclusive workplace culture. The report includes:

- Workforce equality profile data.
- Progress against the previous year's EDIC Action Plan.
- Planned equality, diversity and inclusion objectives and actions for the forthcoming year.
- Evidence of compliance with equality duties and organisational commitments.
- Arrangements for monitoring and governance through the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture Board.

The report supports the organisation's commitment to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not.

Is the policy or decision new or under review or existing[2]

New or Proposed ☐

[1] Policy refers to any policy strategy, procedure, function decision or delivery of service

[2] To tick the box: right click, properties, click check the box

Modified, Reviewed, Updated or Adapted ☒
Existing but new EIA ☐

List the groups of people potentially affected by this proposal (such as, job applicants, employees, customers, members of the public):
Employees and workers across the Service. Job applicants and future employees. Volunteers and partner organisations. Communities across Lancashire. Service users and stakeholders.

2. Findings or Evidence

Findings or Evidence: The following information and data has been considered in developing this proposal (this may include census data, the results of any consultation with community groups or representative bodies.)
What did you do or consider **What did it say and what are your findings**
List any methods used to analyse data to understand the impact on people and provide details (such as, work force census profiles, performance, incident data) **List any consultation with employee voice groups, employees, unions, members of the public.**
The EDIC Annual Report has been developed using a range of quantitative and qualitative evidence, including workforce demographic data, recruitment and retention statistics, equality monitoring information, employee engagement feedback, service performance data, consultation with Employee Voice Groups, and ongoing review through established governance arrangements. The purpose of the report is to assess progress against equality, diversity, inclusion and culture objectives, identify areas of under-representation, and inform actions that promote a more inclusive workforce and equitable service delivery. The report supports the organisation's commitment to meeting its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty. Analysis of workforce data indicates that progress continues to be made in creating a more diverse and inclusive workplace. However, some protected characteristic groups remain under-represented within the workforce when compared with local population demographics. Key findings include: • Women represent 20.8% of the overall workforce but only 10.3% of employees in operational (Grey Book) roles. • Employees from ethnic minority backgrounds represent 3.5% of the workforce overall, rising to 4.9% within Green Book roles. • Employees declaring a disability represent 3.4% of the workforce. • Employees identifying as LGBT+ represent 4.4% of the workforce.

- The operational workforce remains predominantly male, highlighting the continued importance of targeted attraction, recruitment, progression and retention initiatives.
- Workforce data suggests that declaration rates for some protected characteristics may not fully reflect workforce composition, reinforcing the need to continue building confidence in equality monitoring and disclosure processes.
- The average workforce age is 40 years, highlighting the importance of effective succession planning alongside the recruitment and retention of a diverse workforce.

Consultation with Employee Voice Groups and staff networks identified several recurring themes, including the importance of inclusive recruitment practices, equitable access to career development opportunities, employee wellbeing support, inclusive leadership behaviours, and fostering a culture where individuals feel valued, respected and able to contribute fully.

Comparison with local demographic data has been undertaken to assess the extent to which the workforce reflects the diversity of the communities served. This analysis helps identify potential barriers to recruitment, progression and retention for under-represented groups and informs targeted interventions designed to improve equality of opportunity.

The Service also engages with external organisations, including the Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA), to inform its approach to equality, diversity and inclusion and to apply relevant sector best practice where appropriate.

Evidence from the most recent Wholetime recruitment campaign demonstrates increased engagement from individuals belonging to some under-represented groups, including disabled applicants, LGBT+ applicants and applicants from ethnic minority backgrounds. This information will continue to be monitored to assess the effectiveness of recruitment and attraction activities and to identify opportunities for further improvement.

The findings from the report have directly informed the EDIC Action Plan. Actions are intended to improve workforce representation, address potential barriers to recruitment and progression, strengthen organisational inclusion, and support continued compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty. As such, the overall impact of the EDIC Annual Report is expected to be positive across all protected characteristic groups, particularly those currently under-represented within the workforce.

Workforce Demographics LFRS

Total No of roles	White or unknown	BME	Male	Female	Disability	LGBT+	Average Age
1324[3]	1277	47	1048	276	45	58	40 yrs
%	96.5	3.5	79.2	20.8	3.4	4.4	

Workforce Demographics LFRS Grey Book

Total No of roles	White or unknown	BME	Male	Female	Disability	LGBT+	Average Age
1063	1031	32	954	109	32	52	39
%	96.9	3.1	89.7	10.3	3	4.9	

Workforce Demographics Business Support Staff Green Book

Total No of staff	White	BME	Male	Female	Disability	Ave Age
183	174	9	72	111	10	46
%	95.1	4.9	39.3	60.7	5.5	

- Women represent 20.8% of the overall workforce but only 10.3% of operational Grey Book employees.
- Employees from ethnic minority backgrounds represent 3.5% of the workforce.
- Employees declaring a disability represent 3.4% of the workforce.
- Employees identifying as LGBT+ represent 4.4% of the workforce.
- Green Book roles show greater gender balance, with 60.7% female representation, compared with operational roles.
- The operational workforce remains significantly male-dominated, demonstrating the continued importance of targeted attraction, recruitment and retention initiatives.
- Workforce diversity data highlights the importance of ongoing monitoring to identify potential barriers affecting under-represented groups.

Lancashire (E47000018) - ONS
Nomis - 2021 Census Area Profile - North West Region
Strategy – Asian Fire Service Association

Data from our most recent Wholetime recruitment campaign:

Total Applications	1027	% of total
Male	873	85%
Female	128	12.5%
BME	46	4.5%
(BME) Prefer Not to Say	16	1.5%
LGBTQ+	105	10%
(LGBTQ+) Prefer Not to Say	58	6%
Disabled	92	9%
(Disabled) Prefer Not to Say	26	2.5%
On Call	118	11.5%

3. Equality Impact

Using the table below please indicate what impact will the implementation of this proposal have on people who share characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010.

Equality	**Positive Impact** It could benefit	**Negative Impact** It could disadvantage	**Neutral or No Impact**	**Reason why there is a positive and negative impact** and any mitigating actions already in place to reduce any negative impact
Age People of all ages			X	The report includes workforce demographic information and actions designed to promote inclusion and accessibility for employees and members of the public across all age groups. Actions aimed at recruitment, talent development, leadership opportunities, learning and development, and employee engagement have the potential to improve representation and participation among both younger and older individuals. Monitoring of workforce data and recruitment outcomes will continue to identify any age-related disparities and inform future actions.
Disability Physical, Learning Disability Learning Difficulty Mental Health, Carers of disabled people			X	The report identifies actions to support employees and communities with disabilities, including those with physical disabilities, learning disabilities, learning difficulties, neurodiverse conditions and mental health needs. The ongoing review of workplace practices, reasonable adjustments, accessibility arrangements and inclusive recruitment processes supports the advancement of equality of opportunity for disabled people. Regular monitoring through workforce data and staff engagement mechanisms

				will continue to identify barriers and inform improvements. The EDIC Report format aligns with the new accessibility standards (WCAG 2.1)
Gender Identity or Gender Reassignment			X	The report promotes an inclusive workplace culture where all employees are treated with dignity and respect regardless of gender identity. Actions supporting inclusive policies, awareness, education and employee support networks contribute to creating environments where transgender and non-binary individuals can participate fully and safely. The Service will continue to review policies and training to ensure they remain inclusive and compliant with current legislation and best practice.
Pregnancy and Maternity			X	The report reinforces organisational commitments to supporting employees during pregnancy, maternity leave and return-to-work arrangements. Monitoring workforce experience and supporting flexible and family-friendly approaches contributes to equality of opportunity. Existing employment policies and management arrangements provide safeguards against any unintended disadvantage.
Race Ethnicity Nationality			x	The report contains workforce representation data and actions designed to improve diversity, inclusion and engagement among employees from ethnic minority backgrounds and across different nationalities.

				The actions contribute to improving representation, reducing barriers and ensuring services meet the needs of Lancashire's increasingly diverse communities. The organisation works collaboratively with the Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA) and considers its recommendations when developing and reviewing policies, practices and initiatives aimed at improving equality, diversity and inclusion. Progress against recruitment, retention and workforce representation objectives will be monitored through the EDIC governance framework.
Belief or Religion			x	The report promotes a culture where religious belief, faith and non-belief are respected and valued. The actions outlined support inclusive working practices and encourage understanding between different communities and groups. Employee feedback and equality monitoring data will continue to be reviewed to identify emerging issues.
Gender Men or Women			X	The report includes actions designed to support equality of opportunity for all genders and monitor workforce representation. The analysis of workforce data enables the organisation to identify any disproportionate outcomes and address barriers to progression, development and recruitment.

				Gender-related workforce measures will continue to be reviewed through established reporting mechanisms.
Sexual Orientation Lesbian, Gay, bisexual and straight people			X	The report supports the creation of an inclusive workplace where lesbian, gay, bisexual and heterosexual employees are treated fairly and respectfully. Planned actions contribute to improved awareness, visibility and inclusion of LGBTQ+ communities. Ongoing engagement with staff networks and equality monitoring will help identify opportunities for improvement.
Marriage and Civil Partnership (employment only)			X	No adverse impact has been identified. The report promotes equality and fairness for all employees regardless of marital or civil partnership status.
Other groups who are not protected under the Equality Act Examples: social economic factors (such as poverty and or isolation), unemployment, homelessness, rurality, health inequalities, other carers, On-Call staff, part or full time employees or any other disadvantage			X	Many actions within the EDIC Annual Report have the potential to improve accessibility and inclusion for individuals experiencing disadvantage, even where they are not protected by the Equality Act 2010. The report supports fair access, engagement and consideration of diverse community needs during service planning and delivery. The Service will continue to use community insight, feedback and equality data to monitor the effectiveness of actions.
Contributes to equality of opportunity	x			The proposal contributes positively to the Public Sector Equality Duty by:

				• Identifying and addressing barriers experienced by under-represented groups. • Using workforce and community data to inform decision making. • Promoting equitable recruitment, retention and progression opportunities. • Supporting inclusive service delivery. • Improving accessibility and engagement across diverse communities.
Contributes to fostering good relationships between different groups	x			The proposal contributes positively to fostering good relations between people from different backgrounds through: • Promoting understanding and inclusion. • Raising awareness of equality, diversity and cultural issues. • Supporting employee networks and engagement opportunities. • Encouraging respect and dignity in the workplace. • Strengthening relationships with Lancashire's diverse communities.
The decision will be taken in compliance with Human Rights [4]	Yes			
	No			

[4] Human Rights are the basic rights and freedoms that belong to every person in Europe regardless of nationality and citizenship. Human Rights are based on the five FREDA principles: Fairness, Respect. Equality, Dignity, Autonomy.

Analysis Rating: please tick 1 box ✓(The analysis rating is identified after the analysis has been completed - See Completion Notes).	**Red**		**Amber**		**Green**	X	The EDIC Annual Report is intended to have a positive impact on equality, diversity and inclusion across the Service. Whilst workforce data identifies areas where some groups remain under-represented, no adverse or disproportionate impacts arise from the report itself. The actions contained within the EDIC Action Plan are designed to improve representation, remove barriers and support inclusive outcomes for employees, applicants and communities. Progress will be monitored through the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture Board to ensure continuous improvement and compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Red: As a result of performing this analysis, it is evident a risk of discrimination exists (direct, indirect, unintentional, or otherwise) to one or more of the nine groups of people who share Protected Characteristics (or local non-legislative factors (such as social economic, rurality)). In this instance**, it is recommended that the use of the activity or policy be suspended** until further work or analysis is performed, or the activity or policy can be amended

If this risk of discrimination is objectively justified, or the use of this proposal (policy, activity, function) is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim; this should be indicated and further professional advice taken.

Amber: As a result of performing this analysis, it is evident a risk of discrimination (as described above) exists and this risk may be removed or reduced by implementing the actions detailed within the Action Planning section of this document.

Green: As a result of performing this analysis, no **adverse effects** on people who share Protected Characteristics or local non-legislative (such as social economic, rurality) factors are identified - no further actions are recommended at this stage.

4. Outcome of the Equality Impact Assessment: Actions to be taken

What course of action does the Equality Impact assessment Suggest you take	
Green Risk Factor - No major change required The EIA has not identified any potential discrimination or adverse impact and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken.	☒
Amber Risk Factor - Adjust the policy To remove the negative impact identified in the EIA or to promote better equality.	☐
Red Risk Factor - Continue with the policy despite negative impact – Stop and Think You need to ensure the Equality Impact Assessment clearly sets out the justification for continuing with it. You should consider whether there are sufficient plans to reduce the negative impact and to monitor impact. Complete the EIA Action Plan. If you cannot objectively justify any negative impact you must stop planned or current practices and seek guidance from the Head of People as this shows the EIA demonstrates a significant impact on people with a protected characteristic	☐

5. Equality Impact Assessment or Analysis Action Plan and Review

As a result of performing this analysis, what actions are proposed to remove or reduce any negative impact of adverse outcomes identified on people (employees, applicants, customers, members of the public) who share characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010 or who are non-legislative characteristics.

Further action required: Yes ☐ No ☒

Impact identified on the Protected Characteristics	Action Required	Responsible Officer	Completion Date	Review Date

5.1 The completed EIA should be attached to the management or project report, so the details can be considered as part of the decision-making process at the relevant Board or Meeting.

5.2 Send the EIA to your departmental content author and request it is uploaded onto the Equality Impact Assessment Sharepoint site and submitted for approval.

Equality Impact Assessment Approved By: Gill Irving
Date Approved: 4/9/27

Further guidance on completing Equality Impact Assessments is available on the Engine House under 'Equality and Diversity' and from Human Resources.