

LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Meeting to be held on 21 March 2018

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

(Appendix 1 refers)

Contact for further information:

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Executive Summary

Further to the approval of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy in 2017, it was agreed that Members would review the policy in 2018.

Decision Required

The Committee is asked to note and endorse the Service policy, which is subject to a next review in 2021.

Information

The Equality Act 2010 states that everyone has the right to be treated fairly and equally. The Act has two main purposes, it brings together and simplifies all of the existing discrimination law and strengthens the law to further support progress on equality. In the exercise of its functions (including any functions carried out by external supplier/organisation) LFRS must have due regard to:

- 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.

These are often called the three main aims of the general duty and are detailed in the Equality Act 2010 Section 149. The Equality Duty is supported by two main specific duties which require public bodies to:

- Publish equality information at least annually.
- Set and publish equality objectives at least every four years.

As a public body LFRS is required to publish equality information which demonstrates our compliance with the Equality Duty it does this via the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report.

LFRS has already agreed the following equality objectives:

Our Communities:

- Support local business's to reduce the risk of fire and remain compliant within fire safety legislation
- Reduce the number and impact of fire and other emergencies to our diverse communities across Lancashire.
- Develop and deliver a Prevention Service targeting our most vulnerable communities

Our workforce:

- Promote equality in our workforce policies and workforce practices
- Develop our staff to ensure they can respond competently meeting the different needs of our diverse communities

The EDI Policy identifies individual responsibilities and defines LFRS' commitments in terms of the following:

- Equality: Fairness, respect and giving people an equal and fair chance of opportunity to fulfill their potential.
- Diversity: Recognising, valuing and taking account of people's difference, backgrounds, knowledge, skills and experiences. In the context of this policy it also means encouraging and using difference to create a productive workforce, celebrate difference and recognising the contribution that every individual can make.
- Inclusion: Positively striving to meet the needs of different people and taking deliberate action to create an environment where everyone feels respected and able to achieve their full potential.

The Service should also be cognisant of Unconscious Bias. Psychologists refer to unconscious bias as simply being our natural people preferences, biologically we are hard-wired to prefer people who look like us, sound like us and share our interests; this preference can bypass our normal, rational and logical thinking.

During 2017/2018, all employees have been required to undertake refresher equality, diversity and inclusion training incorporating unconscious bias via the completion of an online training module and all members of staff who are involved in the recruitment and selection of staff have also attended additional training in relation to how to avoid unconscious bias within the recruitment and selection process.

Financial Implications

N/A

Business Risk Implications

In serving all the people of Lancashire it is imperative that we are seen as a fair and welcoming organisation and this delineation of responsibilities assists in this task. Failure in this area could present serious difficulties for the CFA.

Environmental Impact

N/A

Equality and Diversity Implications

The policy fits alongside the initiatives the service is adopting to ensure we are a diverse and equal organisation and provides guidance to our employees

Human Resource Implications

Gives greater clarity to Employees on expectations of the service

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact
None		
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate:		