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Inclusion Policy

1. Introduction

Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS / the Service) is committed to encouraging Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) among our workforce, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

Our aim is for our workforce to represent the community that we serve and for each employee to feel respected, be able to be themselves and able to give their best. This also extends to the communities, and is underpinned by our core values, our Code of Conduct and Ethics and our commitment to the Public Sector Equality Duty 2011.

1.1 Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to clearly communicate TWFRS's position with regards to our statutory responsibilities as they relate to ED&I, and the responsibilities incumbent on every individual within TWFRS.

The principles of this policy relate to the experiences of all employees, visitors, contractors, service users and members of the public. It underpins all policies, procedures and working practices and will influence the nature, shape and delivery of our services.

1.2 Legal and Regulatory Requirements

The [Human Rights Act 1998](#) states that all public bodies must respect and protect each person in the UK, by acting in a way that is compatible with their human rights.

The [Equality Act 2010](#) legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. It replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act and sets out the different ways in which it's unlawful to treat someone.

The [Public Sector Equality Duty \(PSED\) 2011](#) ensures that all public bodies play their part in making society fairer by tackling discrimination and providing equality of opportunity for all. It specifically requires public bodies to demonstrate due regard in meeting the aims of the Duty, which are to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, 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; and
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

In addition to demonstrating due regard to the aims of the PSED, public bodies are also required to:

- publish information to demonstrate their compliance with the Equality Duty, at least annually;
- set equality objectives, at least every four years

As an organisation with more than 250 employees we are also legally obligated to publish the following four types of figures annually on our own website and on a government website:

- Gender pay gap (mean and median averages)
- Gender bonus gap (mean and median averages)
- Proportion of men and women receiving bonuses
- Proportion of men and women in each quartile of the organisation's pay structure

1.3 Exclusions from this policy

This document underpins a number of other key policies and procedures that support the Service in delivering on ED&I, but does not provide the detail to directly address what to do should things go wrong. The policies and procedures listed below should be consulted on as and when applicable (the list below is not exhaustive, ED&I are priorities that inform all Service policies and procedures).

- Recruitment, Selection and Promotion Policy and Procedure
- Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure
- Grievance Policy
- Discipline Policy
- Flexible Working Policy
- Family Friendly Procedure
- Code of Conduct and Ethics

You can find out how to access support, should you need it, using the following links.

- The Human Resources (HR)- HR.Helpdesk@twfire.gov.uk
- The Inclusion Team- Inclusion.Team@twfire.gov.uk

- Safecall the confidential help line- 0800 915 1571 www.safecall.co.uk
- Trade unions- [External support \(sharepoint.com\)](http://External support (sharepoint.com))

2. Definitions

- 2.1 Equality** is about recognising that everyone does not have equal access to opportunities, and managing this by addressing these inequalities so that everyone has a fair chance to participate equally in the workplace and wider society.
- 2.2 Equity** considers the different needs that an individual may have. Where as equality treats everyone the same, equity is taking differences into account, so everyone has a chance to succeed.
- 2.3 Diversity** means difference, and our recognition of the value that it brings. It is about creating a culture and practices that recognise, respect, value and embrace difference for everyone's benefit.
- 2.4 Inclusion** refers to an individual's experience within the workplace and in wider society and the extent to which they feel valued and included.
- 2.5 Protected Characteristics** are personal characteristics upon which it is unlawful to discriminate.

The Protected Characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

Everyone has protected characteristics, but some people experience marginalisation, discrimination and disadvantage because of their protected characteristics.

3. Principles of the policy

- 3.1** The Principles of this policy are to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded into all aspects of our work, so that we are able to realise our vision in

creating the safest community, and deliver on our mission to save life, reduce risk, provide humanitarian services and protect the environment.

In order to do this we have established the following Equality Objectives:

3.1.1 Equality Objective One: To ensure employees feel confident in bringing their whole selves to work, knowing that they will be recognised and encouraged to draw on their diversity to improve what we do

3.1.2 Equality Objective Two: To make a concentrated and positive effort to further diversify our workforce to ensure we reflect our whole community.

3.1.3 Equality Objective Three: To continue to create a positive culture for employees where everyone feels valued, there are fair and transparent routes to both employment and progression and people take pride in and ownership of their actions and behaviour.

3.2 In order to demonstrate TWFRS commitment to our Equality Objectives these have been built into our People and Organisational Development Plan and are reflected in our Strategy 2025, ensuring consistency. Progress will be driven and measured within these strategies.

4. Accountability and Responsibility

4.1 Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority is responsible for:

- setting the Authority's strategic direction with regard to equality, diversity and inclusion
- approving Authority's Policies (delegated to the Executive Leadership Team)
- championing equality, diversity and inclusion in its membership, policies and practice

4.2 TWFRS Executive Leadership Team is responsible for:

- demonstrating organisational leadership in promoting equality, diversity and inclusion
- embedding equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of working practice, policy and procedure
- driving the Equality objectives, making sure they are central to service delivery
- keeping equality, diversity and inclusion on the radar of every member of staff
- monitoring and reviewing the progress of the Equality objectives

4.3 Inclusion Manager is responsible for:

- implementing this policy
- communicating this policy and related information to all staff
- collaborating with other members of the HR Team in the development of this policy
- providing high quality advice and support on related matters
- co-ordinating training and awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion

4.4 All Managers are responsible for:

- complying with, and supporting the key principles of the policy
- supporting staff to understand, comply with and use the policy
- championing equality, diversity and inclusion
- challenging inappropriate behaviours
- demonstrating their commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion through their personal behaviour
- discussing equality, diversity and inclusion when possible and appropriate, this could be within the Personal Development Reviews, during a 1:1 or at a team meeting.
- recording and capturing evidence of work that drives equality, diversity and inclusion and promoting that work throughout the Service using our Equality Impact Assessment tool.

4.5 All Employees are responsible for:

- ensuring that regardless of an individual's diversity they will work and operate in an environment that promotes the dignity and welfare of all staff or service users
- undertaking and promoting training and awareness of equality, diversity and inclusivity issues
- demonstrating and practicing equality, diversity and integrity
- working in line with the Service's core values

4.6 Representative Bodies are responsible for:

- working to the agreed union/management ethical code; promoting and maintaining good practice
- agreeing the issues for information and consultation
- communicating and engaging with Management and their members
- providing feedback and constructive challenge

5. Monitoring and Review

- 5.1** The Inclusion Team will review this policy on a three year basis taking into consideration the most up to date Inclusion research and information, feedback from our staff and progress towards our Equality Objectives.

6. Additional Information

- 6.1** An Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out for this policy, utilising staff voice and Staff Network Group feedback in the process.

7. Authority for Issue

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Link to Strategy:	TWFRS 2025- Inclusion Objective		
Links to other policies:			