

Due to the current heightened security level at all our premises, Members are reminded to wear their identity badges whilst attending meetings. Any visitors must produce photographic identification at Reception.

FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY SUMMONS

SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

You are required to attend a meeting of the HR and Equalities Committee to be held on:

Monday, 10 July 2023 at 1030 hours

**In person at South Wales Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters,
Forest View Business Park, Llantrisant, CF72 8LX**

or

Remotely via Microsoft Teams <https://bit.ly/HREqualities-10-07-23>

Please ensure you join the meeting 15 minutes prior to meeting time

**Any issues please contact
01443 232000 and ask for Member Services**

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest

Members of the Fire & Rescue Authority are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare both orally and in writing any personal and/or prejudicial interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, the Fire & Rescue Authority's Standing Orders and the Members Code of Conduct.

3. Chairperson's Announcements
4. To receive the minutes of:

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Signature of Monitoring Officer:



MEMBERSHIP

Councillors:

M	Hughes	Bridgend
C	Elsbury	Caerphilly
A	Hussey	Caerphilly
D	Ali	Cardiff
K	Carr	Cardiff
S	Melbourne	Cardiff
D	Naughton	Cardiff
L	Wright	Monmouthshire
T	Watkins	Newport
G	Holmes	Rhondda Cynon Taff
A	Roberts	Rhondda Cynon Taff
A	Best	Torfaen

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SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

**MINUTES OF THE HR & EQUALITIES MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY, 27 FEBRUARY, 2023**

HELD IN MEETING ROOM 8 OR REMOTELY VIA TEAMS

15. PRESENT:

Councillor	Left	Authority
A Roberts (Chair)		Rhondda Cynon Taff
D Ali (Deputy Chair)		Cardiff
A Best		Torfaen
K Carr		Cardiff
P Ford		Bridgend
G Holmes		Rhondda Cynon Taff
A Hussey		Caerphilly
S McConnel		Monmouthshire
D Naughton		Cardiff
T Watkins		Newport

APOLOGIES:

C Elsbury	Caerphilly
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ABSENT:

S Melbourne	Cardiff
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OFFICERS PRESENT:- ACO A Reed – Director of People Services, T/ACFO G Davies – Director of Technical Services, Mr A Jones – Head of HR, Mrs S Watkins – Deputy Monitoring Officer & Head of Corporate Support

16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Each Member declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in each agenda item which affected their Authority.

17. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Following the devastating earthquake in Turkey, the Chair took the opportunity to thank the three operational members of the Service who had been deployed to assist the International Search & Rescue Team.

T/ACFO Garry Davies confirmed that members of the operational team would attend the Fire Authority meeting in March to provide Members with a full report.

18. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous HR & Equalities meeting held on 7 November, 2022, were received and accepted as a true record of proceedings, subject to the following amendment:-

- Councillor K Carr is a Member of Cardiff (not Torfaen)
- Councillor D Naughton is a Member of Cardiff (not Caerphilly)

19. REPORTS FOR DECISION

19.1. ANNUAL PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2023/2024

The ACO People Services informed Members that South Wales Fire & Rescue Authority was required to publish a Pay Policy Statement for each financial year, which provided information for the following financial year.

The Fire & Rescue Authority at their meeting held on 6 February, 2012, adopted and published its first Pay Policy Statement. The Fire & Rescue Authority also determined that the HR & Equalities Committee should review the Pay Policy Statement and report to the full Committee. In 2014 Welsh Government issued new guidelines with further amendments which determined the contents of the Pay Policy. The 2023/2024 Pay Policy Statement had been drafted for Members.

RESOLVED THAT

- 19.1.1 Members agreed to review South Wales Fire & Rescue Authority's Pay Policy Statement for 2023/2024.

- 19.1.2 Members agreed to approve the 2023/2024 Pay Policy Statement to be published by 31 March 2023.

19.2 GENDER PAY GAP STATEMENT REPORT

The ACO People Services advised Members that under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 (the public sector regulations), all public authorities were required to publish Gender Pay Gap information by reporting the percentage differences in pay between their male and female employees.

Public authorities must publish the required information based on data captured on the snapshot date of 31 March, within 12 months. Accordingly the deadline for publication was 30 March, 2023.

RESOLVED THAT

- 19.2.1 Following a question and answer session on the recruitment of more female firefighters into the Service, Members agreed to approve the 2022 Gender Pay Gap attached to the report at Appendix 1, to be published by 30 March, 2023.
- 19.2.2. Members agreed to note the further analysis provided, attached to the report at Appendix 2.

19.3 PROPOSED INCREASED SALARY INCREMENTS FOR ON-CALL FIREFIGHTERS

The T/ACFO Technical Services informed Members that to assist in the retention of On-Call firefighters who were in the development stage of their careers, by financial incentives. This would be achieved by decreasing the timescales for pay increase of On-Call staff following their initial training course. Pay rises would be linked to the completion of essential core skills modules as illustrated within the report.

RESOLVED THAT

Following a question and answer session, Members agreed that On-Call firefighters would be funded in line with the recommendations contained within the report.

20. REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

20.1 REPORT ON PEOPLE PLAN 2021-2024 & ALL WALES POD STRATEGY

The ACO People Services presented a report which invited Members to review the progress against activity set out in the South Wales Fire & Rescue Service (SWFRS) People Plan. Members would also be aware of the All Wales People & Organisational Development Strategy which dovetailed to the proposals in the SWFRS Plan. https://www.southwales-fire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2021/10/All-Wales-People-and-Organisational-Development-Strategy-2021-2024_en_final.pdf

RESOLVED THAT

- 20.1.1 Members agreed to note the All Wales People & Organisational Development Strategy.
- 20.1.2 Members agreed to note the South Wales Fire & Rescue Service People Plan attached to the report at Appendix 1.
- 20.1.3 Members agreed to note the progress against the SWFRS Plan attached to the report at Appendix 2.

20.2 FIREFIGHTERS PENSION SCHEMES – WALES GOVERNMENT CIRCULARS 2022/2023

The ACO People Services informed Members that under the terms of the Public Services Pension Act 2013, the Fire & Rescue Authority was the recognised Scheme Manager for Firefighters Pension Schemes.

Welsh Government issued regular communications to all Chief Fire Officers, Chairs, and Clerks of Fire & Rescue Authorities, electronically in a standard circular template. These e-mails and circulars could cover a variety of areas, including all aspects of Firefighters Pension Schemes, and would be noted or actioned as appropriate.

20.2.1 Members agreed to accept the Welsh Government Firefighters' Pension Scheme Circulars and e-mails that had been received in the year 2022/2023.

20.2.2 Members agreed to note the actions that had been implemented for each of the circulars.

20.3 WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS UPDATE – JANUARY 2023

The Head of HR presented a report which provided Members with an overview of the current position with regards to meeting the legal requirements contained within the Welsh Language Standards Compliance Notice issued to the Fire & Rescue Authority by the Welsh Language Commissioner on 30 September, 2016.

RESOLVED THAT

20.3.1 Members agreed to note the information contained within the report.

20.3.2 Officers agreed to email Members with the exact figures on the number of employees who had Welsh Language skills.

20.4 REVIEW OF SERVICE RESPONSE TO THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

The Head of HR presented a report which provided Members with a brief overview of the Socio-Economic Duty and how it related to the Service. The report also highlighted what activities had been achieved by various departments within the Service over the previous year.

RESOLVED THAT

20.4.1 Following a question and answer session, Members agreed to note the content of the report.

20.4.2 Members agreed to note that future reporting on the Socio-Economic Duty would now be included in the

Service's Strategic Equality Plan review on an annual basis as opposed to a standalone agenda item.

20.5 ESTABLISHMENT STRUCTURE UPDATE

The Head of HR presented a report which provided Members with an overview of the current position in respect of any permanent changes to the Service's staffing structure. This followed the agreement at the Fire & Rescue Authority meeting in September 2018 to approve the establishment restructure in order to meet future challenges and demands.

RESOLVED THAT

Members agreed to note the information contained within the report.

20.6 JOB EVALUATION PROCESS

The Head of HR presented a report which provided Members with the outcomes of the Service's Job Evaluation process which commenced in 2020 and concluded early 2022 due to the delay experienced during Covid. The report contained details of the number of posts affected and subsequent impacts.

RESOLVED THAT

Members agreed to note the implementation and completion of the Job Evaluation exercise as outlined within the report.

20.7 ANNUAL SUMMARY OF HR & TRAINING REPORTS 2022/2023

The ACO People Services presented a report which informed Members of the work that the HR & Equalities Committee had undertaken during the Municipal Year 2022/2023.

RESOLVED THAT

Members agreed to note the work of the HR & Equalities Committee.

21. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2022/2023

The ACO People Services provided Members with the Forward Work Programme for 2022/2023.

RESOLVED THAT

Members agreed the content of the Forward Work Programme for 2022/2023.

22. TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRPERSON DEEMS URGENT (PART 1 or 2)

There were no items of urgent business to discuss.

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THIS REPORT IS NOT EXEMPT AND IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN**SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**AGENDA ITEM NO 5
10 JULY 2023

HR & EQUALITIES COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER PEOPLE SERVICES

RECRUITMENT & ATTRACTION 2022-2023**THIS REPORT IS FOR INFORMATION**REPORT APPROVED BY ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER PEOPLE SERVICES
REPORT PRESENTED BY RECRUITMENT & ASSESSMENT MANAGER
DEBORAH DOEL**SUMMARY**

This report provides Members with an update in relation to ongoing Recruitment Attraction & Engagement Strategies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members note the content of the report.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update Members on the work that has been and will be undertaken in terms of attracting, engaging, and recruiting a diverse workforce.
- 1.2 The Recruitment & Selection Procedure has been updated, and the first draft is currently out for consultation. It has been streamlined and represents the modern approaches used to attract, engage, and recruit a diverse workforce.
- 1.3 The Service's Career booklet that was introduced last year has been a success (2nd edition) and will be uploaded to the Service's webpage shortly.
- 1.4 The On-Call booklet has been updated and was recently launched. The next piece of work that has been started is updating the WDS webpage and a review of literature provided to applicants.
- 1.5 Work is being undertaken to update the Recruitment webpage, e.g. WDS and Recruitment intranet pages linking in with internal procedures and documents.

2. ISSUES

- 2.1 At the moment there is a national issue in Recruitment, and that is of filling posts. All organisations, including South Wales Fire & Rescue Service, are facing situations where it is hard to find the right candidate, with the right experience and qualifications for the role. Figures reported are around 80% of vacancies being hard to fill (HR Magazine Feb 2023)
- 2.2 Efforts are being made to make our employer brand stronger by ensuring that not only our Crest, Values and our credibility are at the forefront of what we do, but that we listen to the community both internally and externally, e.g. the employee benefits/rewards have been amended on all materials, linking in with sustainability, and our health and wellbeing of staff. A piece of work on our Employee Brand has been undertaken, linking in with NFCC guidance, and is currently being consulted on within the Recruitment procedure, as set out in Appendix 4 attached to the report.
- 2.3 The Recruitment & Resourcing team, alongside other departments, are constantly reviewing recruitment processes to ensure that timelines are not too long, content is appropriate for the audience, and a fair approach is delivered.
- 2.4 During the third and fourth quarters of 2022-2023 the Recruitment & Resourcing team, together with Operations, Stores, and the Occupational Health Unit, pulled out all the stops to ensure that there was enough Auxiliary resilience available for possible strike action. This also included working with Mid & West Wales FRS to employ Auxiliary Control operators.
- 2.5 Early 2023 the Recruitment & Resourcing team worked with Mid & West Wales FRS to deliver a Control campaign, resulting in two cohorts of 4 being employed.
- 2.6 More use of statistics is coming to fruition, i.e. making more use of BMIS, e.g. Auxiliary numbers were monitored and recorded in readiness for possible strike action. Service Performance & Communications are currently working with HR, Operations, and Finance, to create a more up to date workforce planning model for employing WDS Firefighters. Plus BMIS is being reviewed in terms of recording engagement events and the value they bring.

- 2.7 During the last 5 years a lot of campaigning has been undertaken in terms of increasing female applicants. However, there is more work to be done in terms of why people from ethnic minority groups and socially deprived areas are not applying.
- 2.8 May 2022 saw the launch of the NFCC Recruitment hub with which the HR Manager of Recruitment & Resourcing was fully involved with. A software called 'Reachdeck' has been used alongside it to create different formats of communicating and interpreting information, as per Appendix 1 attached to the report.
- 2.9 The Recruitment & Resourcing team is making inroads with Fire Cadets, offering information sessions and application/interview techniques as a starting point.
- 2.10 A Service-wide working group has been established to help with continuous improvement and engagement for the Wholetime Campaign, which will also have positive impact on the On-Call process, as contained in Appendix 2.

3. THE WAY FORWARD

- 3.1 Recruitment & Resourcing will continue linking into the Service's People Plan to achieve its objectives.
- 3.2 To develop a longer-term Service wide Recruitment, Attraction & Engagement Strategy with key stakeholders.
- 3.3 To continue with positive action events, and linking in with stations to help deliver these as they have strong links within their community.
- 3.4 To ensure that strong communication links are continuously maintained with the community, partners, applicants and staff members.
- 3.5 Continuously monitor and review processes in terms of how fit for purpose our attraction and engagement activities are.
- 3.6 Links to the Socio-Economic Duty and the Future Generations Act will aid us in creating a fairer and more prosperous Wales, e.g. Recruitment along with other departments/stations are creating more links with the community, e.g. Cardiff Commitment, as per Appendix 3.
- 3.7 To publish the Recruitment & Selection procedure by September 2023, once all due diligence has been undertaken.

4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Community and Environment

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	Yes
Welsh Language	No
Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015	Yes
Socio Economic Duty	Yes
Sustainability/Environment/Carbon Reduction	Yes
Safeguarding	No
Consultation and Communications	No
Consultation with Representative Bodies	Yes
Impact Assessment	Yes

4.1.1 There are no additional financial issues arising as a result of this report.

4.2 Regulatory, Strategy and Policy

Legal	No	Data Protection / Privacy	No
Financial	No	Health, Safety and Wellbeing	No
Procurement	No	Governance & Audit	Yes
Corporate Risk	No	Service Policy	Yes
Information Management	No	National Policy	No

4.3 Resources, Assets and Delivery

Human Resource and People Development	Yes
Assets and Resources (Property/Fleet/ICT/Equipment)	No
Service Delivery	Yes
Procurement	No
Budget Revenue/Capital	No

5. EVALUATION & CONCLUSIONS

5.1 There are no Equality Risk Assessments issues arising as a result of this specific report.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 That Members note the content of the report.

Contact Officer:	Ms Deb Doel Recruitment & Resourcing Manager
Background Papers	Appendix 1 – NFCC Recruitment Hub Appendix 2 – WDS Campaign Working Group Appendix 3 – Key Partner – Cardiff Commitment Appendix 4 – Employer of Choice

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Appendix 1



N.O.G.

COMMUNITY RISK

DIGITAL & DATA

PEOPLE

PREVENTION

FIRE STANDARDS



People

Investing in people by providing good practice guidance, tools and improvements at a national level for implementation locally.



People People products

<https://www.ukfrs.com/recruitment-hub>

Recruitment Hub

The Recruitment Hub content has been curated from fire and rescue services across the UK and provides a comprehensive collection of information, guidance, good practice, and tools to support each individual fire and rescue service to develop its own bespoke selection and recruitment approach, tailored to its own unique context.

Recruitment Hub icon



Introduction



Step one - Prepare to
recruit



Step two - Application and
candidate review



Step three - Selection
process



Step four - Hiring



Index

'We recognise that local discretions apply but we need to work at national level on the single status concept and mechanisms that can help build equality.'

Fire and Rescue People Strategy 2017/2022

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Appendix 2

Wholetime Working Group

Engagement

- Created, implemented and amended Work Out With The Watch (WOWTH)
- Added into the station reporting system events attended eg large scale , station events
- Created a section on BMIS for reporting of recruitment / engagement events
- Creation of evaluation form for events
- Recommendation that more structure / clarity is given re EDI officers role with engaging in groups
- Website reviewed and updated
- Video in process of being created of content from 13 week external course to highlight in further detail what this entails. Can be used as promo and on final offer letter (link)

Process review

- Add back in standardisation days for operational staff assessing P & P, this is be included in timeline
- “Application guidance” following SMT feedback – e.g. how to answer application etc/ crib sheets
- Create a new ability test
- Made contact with other brigades around interview – who interviews, how to minimise leaking of details. (This needs additional work pre campaign)
- Attended WDS course on week 12 to hold a feedback session on the WDS application form in readiness for next campaign . This is now booked for every course.
- Female mentoring group review (link in with report submitted to HOS by RC)

Entry Criteria

- Report created on comparison with other brigades (swimming), with input from H&S and Legal
- Report created on RDS entry requirements

Links Internally

- Awareness sessions for volunteers around not only operational but corporate roles also
- “Firefighter Fit” Days to be programmed within the summer holidays (weekdays) for cadets – ongoing work, link in with Health and Fitness Advisors also.

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Appendix 3

Key Partner (working alongside University of South Wales)



Vision

Working together to be a city that inspires its children and young people towards a better future.

Mission

Inspire young people aged 16-24 to explore and discover the jobs for the future in the Cardiff Capital Region.

Empower young people to make informed choices about their next steps through a visible and transparent offer of provision and opportunities.

Support employers, training and education providers to target skill gaps and address recruitment challenges.

[PLAN YOUR PATHWAY](#)

[EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES](#)

[FUNDING](#)

[TRAVEL](#)

[INTO WORK ADVICE SERVICE](#)

[CARDIFF YOUTH SERVICE](#)

[ABOUT](#)

[HAVE YOUR SAY](#)

[CONTACT US](#)

[CREATE AN OPPORTUNITY](#)

[BLOG](#)

Video

COMING SOON Here you will find a videos of real people from Cardiff who work in each of the job roles we have presented. These will give you a taste of what it's really like to work in these roles for a whole range of employers in Cardiff.

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Appendix 4

Employer Brand

Through our employer brand, we project the value our brings to the work environment, our culture, and the tangible and intangible benefits provided when working for us.

Benefits include:

- **Rewards** – salary, incremental progression for corporate staff, annual national reviews, out of hours payments for different rota systems.
- **Benefits** – generous schemes for annual leave, sick pay, family friendly provisions; generous pension schemes, Employee Assist Scheme, Car lease schemes and other salary sacrifice schemes.
- **Job** - career progression, personal and professional development, job security, personal reviews, continuous dialogue about performance, fulfilling and meaningful work, variety, and challenge; ability to participate in stretching tasks and projects.
- **Working environment** - inclusive environment, work life balance, flexible working, recognition, autonomy and trust, wellbeing support, psychological safety, on-site gym facilities, free car park, safe working practices supported by in-house Health & Safety team.
- **The Service** – connection to our purpose and strategic vision; our culture – commitment to our staff, values and ethical behaviours, openness, communications, engagement, inclusivity, learning, organisation respected and admired within our communities.

We want to make a positive and defining impression on candidates in advance of their employment beginning with us, and for this reason we will embed our employer brand into all phases of the candidate experience.

Overleaf are details of opportunities to embed employer brand during employee life cycle.

Appendix 4 continued

Phases	Opportunities to communicate our employer brand
Attraction and engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job events/ station open days • Positive action events • Recruitment events/career fairs • Public Service Courses and attendance at schools and colleges • Social media (and messages) • Career booklet • Employee advocacy ('why I applied' or 'day in life' stories) • Working with Us webpage • Virtual events
Application and interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidate experience at the application stage • Accessibility of the process • Collection and use of data • Timeliness and Quality of communications • Interviews and assessments • Quality of feedback given and choice of channels to provide feedback
Induction, and on-boarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post offer engagement with manager and HR • Induction and onboarding process
Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance management • Personal and professional development • Internal career progression opportunities/ secondments
Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee engagement • Communications • Benefits and rewards • Culture and values • Management style • Job design • Ethical behaviours • Leadership • Internal processes / customer experience
Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exit process and Re-join

THIS REPORT IS NOT EXEMPT AND IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN**SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**AGENDA ITEM NO 6
10 JULY 2023

HR & EQUALITIES COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER PEOPLE SERVICES

ANNUAL REPORT ON SICKNESS DATA 2022-2023**THIS REPORT IS FOR INFORMATION**REPORT APPROVED BY ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER PEOPLE SERVICES
REPORT PRESENTED BY THE ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT MANAGER**SUMMARY**

This report provides Members with an update on the sickness absence data for 2022/2023. It provides an overview of musculoskeletal and mental health absences, rehabilitation roles and ill health retirements.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members note the content of the report.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This is the annual report on the sickness absence data for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. Where appropriate it also provides relevant comparisons with the previous year's performance.
- 1.2 The report distinguishes long-term and short-term absences.
- 1.3 The report also provides an overview of musculoskeletal mental health absences and the impact of the absences for operational employees.
- 1.4 The report also includes the activities in place for supporting those returning to work following complex or long term medical conditions.
- 1.5 The report confirms the number of ill health retirements.

2. ISSUES

- 2.1 **SICKNESS ABSENCE DATA FOR THE PERIOD OF 1 APRIL 2022 TO 31 MARCH 2023**

2.1.1 The table below provides a comparison of the total sickness absence broken into short-term and long-term for 2022/2023 and 2021/2022:-

2022-23	Wholetime	OCDS	Fire Control	Corporate	Total
Number of shifts/days lost to short-term sickness	2,701.00	2,144.00	292.00	1,407.00	6,544.00
Number of shifts/days lost to long-term sickness	9,299.00	12,710.00	1,411.00	2,734.00	26,154.00
Total	12,000.00	14,854.00	1,703.00	4,141.00	32,698.00
2021-22	Wholetime	OCDS	Fire Control	Corporate	Total
Number of shifts/days lost to short-term sickness	3,760.00	2,940.00	344.00	1,182.00	8,226.00
Number of shifts/days lost to long-term sickness	8,994.00	8,747.00	1,349.00	2,338.00	21,428.00
Total	12,754.00	11,687.00	1,693.00	3,520.00	29,654.00

2.1.2 The table below provides the percentage change in sickness absence, short and long-term sickness for 2022/2023. The overall sickness absence has increased by 10.3%, with a reduction of 20.4% in short-term sickness, and an increase of 22.1% in long-term sickness.

	Wholetime	OCDS	Fire Control	Corporate	Total
YEAR ON YEAR % CHANGE					
Number of shifts/days lost to short-term	-28.2%	-27.1%	-15.1%	19.0%	-20.4%
Number of shifts/days lost to long-term	3.4%	45.3%	4.6%	16.9%	22.1%
Total	-5.9%	27.1%	0.6%	17.6%	10.3%

2.2 MUSCULOSKELETAL ABSENCES

2.2.1 The highest number of sickness absences types is musculoskeletal issues. This is in line with previous years and that of national Fire Service absences. There has been an increase in Wholetime of 45% and On-Call of 46% year on year. Further analysis is planned to establish why the increase has occurred. The average length of sickness has also increased. It is assumed that delays in access to NHS treatment may be driving the length of absence.

2.2.2 A Senedd Research report on NHS waiting lists states that in March 2023 10,070 patients were waiting over 105 weeks for trauma and orthopaedic treatment. This may partially explain why the long-term absences have increased.

2.2.3 The volume of referrals for Occupational Health support for musculoskeletal diagnosis and treatment increased throughout Covid, and is anticipated to continue to rise for several more years.

As a result, the spend on treatment in 2022/2023 to return operational employees back to work has increased:-

- Surgical procedures, actual £84,864
- MRI Scans, actual £25,248
- Physiotherapy, actual £21,248

This has been funded through underspends in other areas within the HR Budget.

2.3 MENTAL HEALTH ABSENCES

2.3.1 The second highest sickness type is mental health. Again this is in line with previous years and mirrors the National Fire Service absences. There has been a 21% decrease in mental health absences for Wholetime, but a 49% increase in On-Call. Further analysis is planned to explore why this pattern has occurred.

2.3.2 Access to NHS Mental Health Services is also difficult as there are long waiting lists.

2.3.3 The volume of referrals to Occupational Health for mental health support has increased throughout Covid and is anticipated to continue to rise for several more years. As a result, the spend on counselling treatment for 2022/2023 has increased to £76,621. This has been funded through underspends in other areas.

2.4 REHABILITATION ROLES

2.4.1 To support staff who are recuperating from complex or long term conditions, a small number of rehabilitation roles have been made available for up to 12 months. This is part of our Employment, Redeployment and Reasonable Adjustments under the Equality Act 2020 procedure. In the past 12 months, four operational staff have successfully returned to their substantive positions on station. One corporate member of staff has successfully applied for and gained a role in a new department.

2.4.2 There are currently five operational staff on formal redeployment arrangements.

2.5 ILL-HEALTH RETIREMENTS

2.5.1 In 2021/2022 three staff were ill health retired from the Service, in 2022/2023 five staff were ill health retired. So far in 2023/2024 two staff have been ill health retired with a further nine staff waiting for

the Independent Qualified Medical Practitioner (IQMP) outcome reports.

3. IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Community and Environment

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	Yes
Welsh Language	No
Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015	Yes
Socio Economic Duty	No
Sustainability/Environment/Carbon Reduction	No
Safeguarding	No
Consultation and Communications	Yes
Consultation with Representative Bodies	Yes
Impact Assessment	No

3.1.1 There are no additional financial issues arising as a result of this report.

3.2 Regulatory, Strategy and Policy

Legal	No	Data Protection / Privacy	No
Financial	No	Health, Safety and Wellbeing	Yes
Procurement	No	Governance & Audit	No
Corporate Risk	No	Service Policy	No
Information Management	No	National Policy	No

3.3 Resources, Assets and Delivery

Human Resource and People Development	Yes
Assets and Resources (Property/Fleet/ICT/Equipment)	No
Service Delivery	No
Procurement	No
Budget Revenue/Capital	No

4. EVALUATION & CONCLUSIONS

4.1 There are no Equality Risk Assessment issues arising as a result of this specific report.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 That Members note the content of the report.

Contact Officer:	Mrs Karen Davies HR Manager – Absence Management
Background Papers	None

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THIS REPORT IS NOT EXEMPT AND IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN**SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**AGENDA ITEM NO 7
10 JULY 2023

HR & EQUALITIES COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE ACO PEOPLE SERVICES

**OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH UNIT (OHU) ACTIVITY REPORT – 1 APRIL 2022
TO 31 MARCH 2023****THIS REPORT IS FOR INFORMATION**REPORT APPROVED BY ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER PEOPLE SERVICES
REPORT PRESENTED BY RUTH HAZELL, OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH NURSE**SUMMARY**

This OHU Activity Report spans the period from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. The report provides data on services and expenditure, updates on occupational health initiatives and an outline of strategic development.

RECOMMENDATION

That Members note the content of the report.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 OHU Activity Report covering 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 showing some comparisons to the previous reporting period.
- 1.2 The report provides data on services and expenditure, updates on occupational health initiatives and an outline of strategic development.

2. OVERVIEW OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH UNIT SERVICES

- 2.1 The team consists of a part time Consultant Occupational Health Physician (2.5 days p/w); two Occupational Health Physicians (1 day p/w each); Senior Occupational Health Nurse and Occupational Health Nurse (full time); Senior Health and Fitness Adviser and Health and Fitness Adviser (full time); Administrative support is provided by a Senior Medical Administrator, two part time Medical Secretaries and one Administrative Assistant. Some services (physiotherapy, investigations, specialist advice and intervention and psychotherapy) are provided through an outsourced / partnership arrangement.

- 2.2 The Occupational Health Unit aims to maximise the health, well-being, efficiency and morale of Fire and Rescue personnel and to minimise the risks to which they may be exposed as a result of working practices and the working environment.
- 2.3 The activities of the OHU span a wide range of services as detailed in Appendix 1. Consultations, routine medicals, pre-employment medicals and the work involved in progressing with the investigation and treatment of incapacitating or potentially incapacitating medical conditions is the core element of services provided.
- 2.4 The rationale for this being the substantial savings attributable to maintaining the health of the organisation's employees and minimising the cost of sickness absence. Details of consultations and investigation/treatment services are provided below.

3. CONSULTATIONS

Table 1. Provides a breakdown of consultation categories for the period 2022/2023. (Red 2021/2022). Health and Fitness activity is captured in Table 2.

APPOINTMENT TYPE	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL
Routine Medical Surveillance WDS/RDS	1	2	14	106	123
Routine Medical Surveillance AUX				1	1
First Appointment Telcons	58	41	54	41	194
First Appointment Face to Face	56	70	89	99	314
Follow Up Appointment Telcons	168	155	184	195	702
Follow Up Appointment Face to Face	25	26	43	64	158
Physiotherapy Face to Face	88	100	106	114	408
Physiotherapy Telcons	6	5	3	2	16
D&A Pre Employment	5	5	4	2	16
Recruit Pre Employment *	63	74	87	104	328
Counselling * (inc Tel Cons)	135	135	143	170	583
Spirometry	2			2	4
Audio			1	9	10
BP	2			2	4
TOTAL APPOINTMENTS	609	613	728	911	2861 (2763)

*In January 2023 we employed a qualified nurse on a 12-month temporary contract to assist with completing routine medicals on firefighters. Routine medicals were unable to take place during the COVID-19 pandemic. Since starting in January 2023 this nurse has been able to complete **102** medicals

which has been a great start in clearing the backlog we experienced due to the pandemic.

Table 2. Health and Fitness Advisors activity 2022/2023 (Red 2021/2022)

APPOINTMENT TYPE	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL
Fitness Tests	237	217	201	166	821
Fitness Re-Tests	15	14	11	24	64
Functional Assessments	4	8	6	8	26
Health & Fitness Support	1	4	2	5	12
Physical & Practical Test Days	3	4	6	4	17
Firefighter Fit Days	1	0	4	0	5
Pre-Employment Fitness Tests	50	69	94	73	286
TOTAL APPOINTMENTS	311 (264)	316 (219)	324 (281)	280 (300)	1231 (1064)

Pre-employment fitness tests have increased by 95 in this reporting period compared to 2021/2022. This is likely due to the recruitment of Auxiliary Firefighters that were employed due to the possible industrial action that was anticipated.

Table 3. Attendance of appointments at Occupational Health (Not including counselling)

	Total Number of Appointments Booked	Did Not Attend (DNA)/ No Answer
Total Appointments	2280	70

Table 4. Referrals by type received for 2022/2023 (Red 2021/2022)

REFERRALS	1	2	3	4	TOTAL
	QUARTERS				
2022-23	117	112	147	167	543 (479)
LGV	17	33	23	49	122
Management Referral	43	26	51	47	167
Sickness Absence	51	43	55	44	193
Self-Referral	5	9	10	17	41
Follow Up from RMS (internal)	0	0	0	5	5
HFA to Medical Advisor	0	0	1	2	3
Other	1	1	7	3	12

- We have continued to see an increase in referrals in this reporting period. The NHS continues to experience long waiting times. Employees appear

to be more comfortable seeking support through Occupational Health with regards to both physical and mental health.

- Due to the increase in referrals and appointments the Occupational Health Physician hours have continued to be temporarily increased to reduce waiting times.

There were **8** Cases referred to the Independent Qualified Medical Practitioner in 2022/2023 compared to **8** in 2021/2022.

4. INVESTIGATION/TREATMENT SERVICES

- 4.1 Since 2001 the Fire & Rescue Authority has agreed to allocate funds for a contingency initiative to reduce the costs to the Service arising from delays in NHS investigation and treatment services. Funds are used when the projected costs to SWFRS and ultimately the public of any NHS delay, are estimated to be considerably more than the cost of investigation or treatment that is available on a private basis.

Table 5. Provides the Contingency Budget Expenditure 2022/2023 (Red 2021/2022)

SERVICE	NUMBER	COST (£)
Surgical Procedures	20	£83,079 (Average cost per procedure £4,154)
Specialist Referrals	96	£16,520 (Average cost per referral £172)
Scans and X-Rays	86	£25,723 (Average cost per scan £268)
TOTAL	212 (186)	£125,322 (£75,239)

- There was an increase in specialist referrals and scans and X-Rays during this reporting period. This is likely due to the NHS waiting times. Surgical procedures completed remained the same.

5. INVOLVEMENT AND SPECIALIST ADVICE TO ORGANISATION

- 5.1 The Consultant Occupational Health Physician and Occupational Health Nurses may be required to provide specialist Occupational Health input into organisational policy development and support the Service in a number of initiatives.
- 5.2 The following demonstrate initiatives within this reporting period where specialist advice has been provided by the Consultant Occupational Health Physician and from other members of the Occupational Health team:
- Participation on Health & Safety Committee
 - Input into the 'Your Health' Delivery Group
 - Input into the Ill Health Capability Panel
 - Input on Claims Reduction Group
 - Continuous review of vaccination requirements for USAR/ISAR personnel.
 - Regular contribution on sickness advisory panel meetings with Human Resources and Management.
 - Regular contribution to case review meetings.
 - Preventing Cancer in Firefighters presentation to Senior Management Team.

6. PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICE

- 6.1 Musculoskeletal conditions and injuries are responsible for the majority of sickness absence and lost productivity in SWFRS. Early access to physiotherapy is important in achieving a speedy recovery from these conditions and injuries.
- 6.2 SWFRS continues to benefit from on-site physiotherapy services 1 day per week. The physiotherapist is provided through Spire Hospital. They have a wide range of experience relevant to the role of the Firefighter and developed a good working relationship with the Occupational Health professionals and the Health & Fitness Advisors (HFAs). The on-site availability of a physiotherapist has improved the quality and efficiency of the services to staff. The physiotherapist communicates frequently with clinicians providing prompt advice on further investigations or treatment required which reduces the time frame an employee may be absent from work.
- 6.3 The physiotherapist has resumed face to face appointments during this reporting period following the COVID-19 pandemic.

7. STRESS AWARENESS AND COUNSELLING INITIATIVES

- 7.1 Psychological ill health is the second most prevalent cause of reduced performance and sickness absence. SWFRS has benefitted from a long standing partnership with the Department of Liaison Psychiatry at UHW, which has provided very effective treatment for firefighters affected by the traumatic aspects of Fire & Rescue Service duties as well as other occupational and non-occupational psychological health conditions. Examples of conditions referred to this service include: post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety disorders, depression, panic disorder, phobias. A substantial amount of sickness absence is associated with non-occupational stressors, including family bereavement, relationship break-ups, caring commitments, difficulties in achieving a healthy work-life balance. Preventative measures focus on raising awareness of stress and the coping strategies, ensuring that early supportive intervention is available through the Occupational Health Unit and counselling services.
- 7.2 The table below provides the number of referrals to the Department of Liaison Psychiatry in this reporting year compared to 2021/2022.

Table 6. NHS Partnership referral numbers

YEAR	NUMBER REFERRED
2022/2023	28
2021/2022	35

The table below provides a break-down of the types of cases referred to the service.

Table 6a. Cases referred by type

Cases Assessed	Number
PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder)	9
Anxiety	8
Stress	7
OCD (obsessive compulsive disorder)	2
Dropped out	2

During the reporting period these appointments have been held virtually via video call and this has continued to be an effective way of delivering therapy. The option of face-to-face therapy is also offered to employees.

- 7.3 The ability of individuals to deal with and overcome personal stressors can also be greatly enhanced with support from good quality professional **counselling**. Using the National Procurement Service (NPS) Framework,

an external provider has been appointed to deliver counselling services. This current contract provides an on-site counselling service 3 days a week over a 4-day period. This assists in reducing the waiting list for counselling and providing more days available offers further flexibility for employees to attend their sessions. The average waiting time to commence counselling is approximately 2-3 weeks.

Table 7 provides a breakdown of the figures for this reporting year. Appointments are mainly face to face; however, the employee has the option of a telephone session if that is their preference.

Table 7. Provides a summary of in-house counselling appointments

2022-23	Appts Available	Appts Booked	Attended	UTA	DNA
April	57	56	40	10	6
May	59	57	47	7	3
June	65	65	48	10	7
July	51	49	39	5	5
August	65	64	49	8	7
September	61	57	47	7	3
October	60	57	52	3	2
November	82	80	56	18	6
December	48	47	35	8	4
January	74	72	63	4	5
February	67	66	49	15	2
March	66	65	58	3	4
TOTAL	755	735	583	98	54

- There was a total of **755** appointments available for 2022/2023 compared to **533** in 2021/2022 – this is due to the temporary increase in counselling days which has enabled a more efficient service with reduced waiting times for appointments.
- The Unable to Attend (**UTA**) appointments would have been rearranged for another day.
- The Did Not Attend (**DNA**) figure is mostly due to individuals being ‘forgetful’ or due to the nature of their role they may have been on an emergency call and couldn’t attend. A text reminder is sent out by the counselling service.

7.4 As part of the Service’s ongoing commitment to employee Health & Wellbeing, an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) was launched on 1st December 2015.

- 7.4.1 SWFRS has signed up to this service to provide additional support to all employees through the NPS arrangements.
- 7.4.2 The EAP is an online resource that is available free of charge to all staff offering immediate information, answers and advice on a range of workplace and personal issues.
- 7.4.3 The EAP provides confidential, impartial advice and support 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and consists of:
- A free phone telephone service answered directly by a team of qualified and experienced counsellors.
 - Professional information and advice services provided by a separate team of information specialists plus
 - Access to a web based information service.
- 7.4.4 The combination of the above preventative steps and the professional counselling initiative will be important factors in improving the health and reducing stress-related sickness absence in SWFRS.

8. AWARENESS RAISING EVENTS/INITIATIVES

- 8.1 In August 2019 a Wellbeing Steering Group was established. This group consists of members from various departments across the service. The group is focussing on the health promotion calendar and will plan awareness raising events throughout the year according to the calendar. The group has since been named 'Your Health Delivery Group'.

The Occupational Health Nurses have recommenced Heart Awareness Sessions at various work locations offering blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar checks. These are always well received and further visits have been planned for 2023.

The Occupational Health Nurses deliver presentations for New Starters which includes awareness of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and the services Occupational Health provide to support employees with both physical and mental health issues.

The Occupational Health Nurses (OHN) met with the recruitment team to review the recruitment process of firefighters. If a firefighter had passed the recruitment process, they were then invited for a pre-employment medical. It was identified that delays occurred due to requesting GP

(General Practitioner) records at the medical. The OHN's now attend the physical and practical days held by recruitment. Here they can carry out some basic medical tests and advise perspective new starters on how to obtain their GP records before their medical to prevent delays. This new process has been very effective and welcomed by all teams involved.

- 8.2 Health promotion and advice are regularly provided to employees by occupational health clinicians during routine medicals and consultations.

9. FRAMEWORK FOR POST CRITICAL INCIDENT SUPPORT

- 9.1 The nature of the work of a Fire and Rescue Service is such that attending traumatic incidents is an unavoidable aspect of the job.

- 9.2 Access to Specialist Services are promptly available if any individual is experiencing difficulties following a traumatic incident. Clinicians will often liaise with the allocated psychotherapist for advice on managing a case should they require it. Trauma Screening Questionnaires (TSQ's) are available to send employees to assess symptoms following a critical incident should they require it.

10. HEALTH AND FITNESS ADVISER INITIATIVES / PROJECTS

- 10.1 During this reporting period, the Health and Fitness Advisers have undertaken the following initiatives / projects:

Health & Wellbeing

- Health & Fitness Advisers are currently undertaking a Diploma in Teaching Yoga so that yoga sessions can be delivered to employees with the aim of improving health & wellbeing
- Leading group walking sessions at Headquarters to encourage and support staff to undertake more regular physical activity
- Developed nutrition videos which will be accessible through the intranet and staff app to assist staff to make healthy eating choices
- Promoting the 'Workout of the Week' through the routine notice and staff app to encourage employees to undertake regular physical activity
- Organised a 'Stair Climb Challenge' on National Fitness Day in September to promote staff to engage in regular exercise
- Set a Half Marathon/Marathon walking challenge with progressive guide to promote National Walking Month in May with the aim of encouraging walking amongst employees
- Assessment of Firefighters role related fitness during initial training course using the Bleep Test and Fireground Fitness Test to assess fitness throughout the course

- Ongoing delivery of presentations to new starters on the benefits of health and fitness to promote a healthy work / life balance

Fitness

- Continued fitness support for firefighters presenting with physical fitness issues
- Continued support to provide functional assessments and fitness support to speed up firefighters returning from injury/illness
- Continued collaboration with the training department to provide role-related fitness sessions to Wholetime recruits throughout the training course. The aim of this is to encourage the uptake of lifelong physical activity amongst firefighters

Gyms

- Ongoing fitness equipment replacement and upgrades: Continued updating of cardiovascular and resistance training equipment across all sites.
- Purchase of cost effective, multi-user functional fitness equipment due to decreased fitness equipment budget in order to maximise value for money

Other

- Ongoing recruitment of WDS, On Call and Auxiliary firefighters
- Ongoing Health & Fitness Adviser collaboration with other Welsh Fire & Rescue Services
- Assisting with the delivery of Firefighter Fit days for potential firefighter applicants including specific sessions for underrepresented groups aimed at providing fitness advice in relation to the role.

11. STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT

- 11.1 The unit are hoping to procure a Patient Management System in the near future which will be able to offer an intuitive interface for the management of employee's medical information, appointments, specific health surveillance and other occupational health related data.
- 11.2 Due to the consistent increase workload of the Occupational Health Unit we have managed to increase staffing levels on a temporary basis. Going forward we will likely be required to provide a business case to ensure adequate staffing is maintained within the unit.

12. EQUALITY RISK ASSESSMENT

- 12.1 An Equality Risk Assessment has been undertaken to assess the potential impact, relative to the operational activity of the Occupational Health Unit.

12.2 The assessment concluded that there were no adverse impacts on any individual or group of personnel arising from the services provided to the Fire & Rescue Service by the Occupational Health Unit.

13. RECOMMENDATION

13.1 That Members note the content of this report.

Contact Officer:	Andrew Jones Head of HR
Background Papers:	None

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APPENDIX 1**OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICES**

The Occupational Health Unit provides the range of services required by Fire & Rescue Authorities under Health and Safety Law, Employment Law, Equality Law, Pension Provisions and in accordance with directions issued by relevant government departments. Firefighting can be extremely demanding and hazardous occupation requiring high levels of medical and physical fitness. The prevention of unnecessary ill health and incapacitation are essential factors in our efforts to maintain optimum operational effectiveness and efficiency. A good quality occupational health service has a vital role to play.

The range of services provided includes:

- Medical surveillance of all Wholetime Duty System (WDS), On Call System (OCS) and Auxiliary (AUX) Firefighters on a 3-yearly cycle
- Physical fitness assessments of all WDS, OCS and AUX Firefighters biannually or when required.
- Pre-employment screening medical examinations of all WDS and OCS Firefighters and cooperate staff. A drug and alcohol test is completed at all pre-employment medicals.
- Post-incident surveillance of Firefighters exposed to toxic and hazardous Substances
- Post incident support to Operational staff and USAR/ ISAR teams
- Medical advice on fitness for employment and rehabilitation following illness, injury or identification of health problems during medical surveillance/fitness assessments
- LGV medical examinations
- Assessment of eligibility for ill health retirement and injury awards
- Medical advice and counselling for members of staff with work-related and other health problems, e.g. musculoskeletal disorders, post traumatic stress, alcohol problems, uncertainty/delays over diagnosis and NHS treatment
- Medical advice and counselling to specialist teams i.e. USAR and ISAR teams
- Health promotion and Wellbeing Events

- Specialist advice on the assessment and control of health risks associated with firefighting
- Progressing the medical management of cases faced with NHS delays
- Managerial referral consultations when work may be adversely affecting health and wellbeing, or vice versa
- Immunisation management of the USAR and ISAR teams through outside providers

THIS REPORT IS NOT EXEMPT AND IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN**SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**AGENDA ITEM NO 8
10 JULY 2023

HR & EQUALITIES COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER PEOPLE SERVICES

**FIREFIGHTERS PENSION SCHEMES – WALES GOVERNMENT CIRCULARS
2023/2024****THIS REPORT IS FOR INFORMATION**REPORT APPROVED BY ACO PEOPLE SERVICES
REPORT PRESENTED BY ACO A REED**SUMMARY**

Under the terms of the Public Services Pension Act 2013, the Fire & Rescue Authority is the recognised Scheme Manager for Firefighters Pension Schemes.

Welsh Government issues regular communications to all Chief Fire Officers, Chairs, and Clerks of Fire & Rescue Authorities, electronically in a standard circular template. These e-mails and circulars can cover a variety of areas, including all aspects of Firefighters Pension Schemes, and have to be noted or actioned as appropriate.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 Members accept the Welsh Government (Firefighters' Pension Scheme Circulars and e-mails) that have been received in the year 2023/2024.
- 2 Members note the actions that have been implemented for each of the circulars.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Firefighter pensions are devolved to Welsh Ministers under the Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004. The current Pension Schemes for Firefighters in Wales:- the Firefighters Pension Scheme 1992 (FPS), the New Firefighters Pension Scheme 2007 (NFPS 2007), the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (Wales) 2015, and the Modified Pension Scheme.
- 1.2 The South Wales Fire & Rescue Authority is the designated 'Scheme Manager', and as the administering authority for the Firefighters pension fund is responsible for ensuring the effective management of the Schemes, including any changes.

2. ISSUES

- 2.1 Welsh Government issues regular communications to all Chief Fire Officers, Chairs and Clerks of Fire & Rescue Authorities, electronically in a standard circular template which are intended to be a means to ensure that messages are conveyed to the Fire & Rescue Service are clear and consistent.
- 2.2 These emails and circulars encompass a wide variety of issues and areas and as such there is requirement that they consistently and efficiently applied by the Scheme Manager in order to ensure the integrity of the relevant Schemes and the proper exercise of discretionary powers where appropriate.
- 2.3 The appendix attached to the report is a table of Welsh Government (Firefighters' Pension Scheme Circulars) that have been received in the 2023/2024 year to date. The table contains comments to advise Members of the actions that have been implemented. This table will be updated regularly and brought to Members for information and action. In future non-shaded rows will indicate those which have been received since the last report.

3. IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Community and Environment

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	No
Welsh Language	No
Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015	No
Socio Economic Duty	No
Sustainability/Environment/Carbon Reduction	No
Safeguarding	No
Consultation and Communications	No
Consultation with Representative Bodies	No
Impact Assessment	No

3.1.1 There are no additional financial issues arising as a result of this report.

3.2 Regulatory, Strategy and Policy

Legal	No	Data Protection / Privacy	No
Financial	No	Health, Safety and Wellbeing	No
Procurement	No	Governance & Audit	No
Corporate Risk	No	Service Policy	No
Information	No	National Policy	No

Management	No		
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3.3 Resources, Assets and Delivery

Human Resource and People Development	No
Assets and Resources (Property/Fleet/ICT/Equipment)	No
Service Delivery	No
Procurement	No
Budget Revenue/Capital	No

4. EVALUATION & CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 An Equality Risk Assessment has been undertaken to assess the potential impact relative to the future roles and responsibilities associated with the governance of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes.
- 4.2 The assessment concluded that there were no adverse impacts on any individual or group of personnel at this juncture.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 That Members accept the Welsh Government (Firefighters' Pension Scheme Circulars and e-mails) that have been received in the year 2023/2024.
- 5.2 Members note the actions that have been implemented for each of the circulars.

Contact Officer:	Alison Reed Director of People Services
Background Papers	None

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HR & EQUALITIES COMMITTEE

WELSH GOVERNMENT CIRCULARS – THE FIREFIGHTERS’ PENSION SCHEME (WALES) 2023/2024

CIRCULAR NO.	TITLE	DATE ISSUED	SUMMARY
W-FRSC(2023)06	Fire and Rescue Authorities Performance Indicators 2023-24	21 April 2023	<p>Following the introduction of the Fire and Rescue Authorities (Performance Indicators) (Wales) Order 2015, FRAs are under a legal duty to collect and report on three statutory indicators.</p> <p>This circular advises FRAs that the statutory Performance Indicators that apply for 2023-24 remain unchanged.</p> <p>Action taken: Circulated to SMT and shared with Stats & Performance team.</p>
W-FRSC(2023)05	Fire and Rescue Operational Statistics Arrangements 2022-23	21 April 2023	<p>This circular sets out the operational statistics collection arrangements for the period 1 April 2022-31 March 2023. Data for this period should be submitted by 9 June 2023.</p> <p>Action taken: Circulated to SMT and shared with Stats & Performance team.</p>
W-FRSC(2023)04	Firefighters’ Pension Schemes (Wales) – Change to SCAPE Discount Rate and Resulting Changes to	3 April 2023	<p>This circular provides revised advice on immediate handling of Actuarial Factors as a result of the change to the SCAPE discount rate confirmed on 30 March 2023. This includes the suspension of CETV calculations and revised guidance and factors for 1992 scheme commutation calculations.</p>

	Actuarial Factors – Suspending CETV Calculations – Revised 1992 Scheme Retirement Lump Sum Commutation Factors.		Action taken: Shared with SMT, RCT Pensions and SWFRS Pensions team.
W-FRSC(2023)03	Public Service Pension Indexation and Revaluation 2023	31 March 2023	This circular informs FRAs of the increase in Public Service Pension Indexation which will take effect from 10 April 2023 and Revaluation from 1 April 2023. Action taken: Shared with SMT, RCT Pensions and SWFRS Pensions team.
W-FRSC(2023)02	Firefighters’ Pensions – Employer and Employee Contribution Rates 2023-2024	29 March 2023	This circular confirms that both the employee and employer contribution rates for 2023-24 remain unchanged from 2022-23. The employee contribution rates remain the same as those that came into effect in April 2018. The employer contribution rate remains the rate that came into effect in April 2019. Action taken: Shared with SMT, RCT Pensions and SWFRS Pensions team.
W-FRSC(2023)01	Financial Arrangements for Firefighter Pensions: Top-up Grant Forms 2023-24	9 March 2023	This circular requests each Fire & Rescue Authority (FRA) to complete the attached pension forms (FPF2 and FPF3), and confirm estimates already provided for 2023-24 onwards (FPF1) by 3 April 2023. This information will be used to calculate final top-up grant payments to FRAs in respect of 2021/22 (FPF3) and 2022/23

			(FPF2) and interim payment for 2023-24 (FPF1). Action taken: Shared with SMT, RCT Pensions and SWFRS Pensions team.
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THIS REPORT IS NOT EXEMPT AND IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN**SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**AGENDA ITEM NO 9
10 JULY 2023

HR & EQUALITIES COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE ACO PEOPLE SERVICES

ANNUAL REPORT ON GRIEVANCE AND DISCIPLINE ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR 1 APRIL 2022 TO 31 MARCH 2023**THIS REPORT IS FOR INFORMATION**REPORT APPROVED BY THE HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES
REPORT PRESENTED BY JEMMA WELLS, TEMP HR MANAGER -
EMPLOYEE RELATIONS**SUMMARY**

This report provides a summary of grievance and discipline matters investigated by the Resolution Unit during the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members note the content of the report

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Grievance Procedure provides individual employees with a formal mechanism for highlighting concerns and identifying the way in which they can be resolved. These concerns would be in relation to the way the employee has been treated either by a manager, colleague, or organisational procedure.
- 1.2 The purpose of the Discipline Procedure is to support the consistent and fair management of shortfalls in conduct.
- 1.3 Both the Grievance and Discipline Procedures are a statutory obligation under the Employment Rights Act 1996.
- 1.4 Members should note that the breakdown of figures contained within this report are given in general terms rather than in specific case detail to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of the employees concerned.

2. ISSUES

2.1 Grievances

2.1.1 During the period of 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023, South Wales Fire & Rescue Service received 22 grievances, of which, 2 were progressed and managed under the Grievance Procedure. Of the remaining 20, 8 were managed outside of the procedure, 1 was withdrawn, 1 individual resigned their role prior to resolution, 1 was declined as the resolution requested was not in scope and 9 are ongoing.

2.1.2 It is relevant to note that this is an increase from 2021/2022, in which 16 Grievances were received in total. Some of the grievances received in 2022/2023 are linked: 4 relate to issues within one team, which is linked to a more complicated overall issue and is currently with Narrow Quay HR for investigation. 3 others relate to the way in which the additional leave day for Green Book staff has been administered, for which a rationale has been provided to unions for consideration.

2.1.3 Of the 22 grievances:-

- 6 were received from Wholetime employees
- 2 were received from On-Call employees
- 13 were received from Corporate employees
- 1 was received from a Control employee

2.1.4 The reasons for the grievances and their outcomes are shown in Appendix 1 attached to this report.

2.2 Discipline

2.2.1 During the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023, there were 31 reported alleged breaches of discipline, compared to 15 reported in 2021/2022.

2.2.2 Of the 31 reported alleged disciplinary breaches, 13 were against Wholetime employees, 13 were On-Call, 4 were Corporate, and 1 was against a Control employee.

2.2.3 The issues resulting in disciplinary investigation can arise from conduct within and outside of the workplace.

2.2.4 In summary of the outcomes of these cases, there were:-

- 3 cases resulting in dismissal
- 3 cases resulting in final written warning.
- 0 cases resulting in a written warning
- 0 cases resulting in a verbal warning
- 9 cases were addressed through *managerial action
- 1 case required no further action
- 3 cases involved resignation prior to a disciplinary hearing
- 12 cases were ongoing past the 31 of March 2022
- No cases included payment in lieu of notice

**Managerial action refers to activity outside of the formal discipline procedure. It covers a range of managerial strategies including recorded discussions, coaching and the provision of guidance or training.*

2.2.5 There were no appeals to the outcome of disciplinary hearings undertaken between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022.

2.2.6 In 6 of the 19 resolved discipline cases, employees were suspended from duty whilst their case were being investigated (2 Wholetime, 4 On-Call). In 5 of the ongoing discipline cases, employees are currently still suspended (all Wholetime).

3. IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Community and Environment

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	No
Welsh Language	Yes
Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015	No
Socio Economic Duty	No
Sustainability/Environment/Carbon Reduction	No
Safeguarding	Yes
Consultation and Communications	No
Consultation with Representative Bodies	Yes
Impact Assessment	Yes

3.1.1 The Welsh Language Standards under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 allows for employees to have grievance or discipline matters managed through the medium of Welsh. No requests for this provision were made between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023.

3.1.2 A number of discipline investigations require safeguarding considerations to be made under Section 5 of the Wales Safeguarding procedures. These investigations and their outcomes are managed in consultation with partner agencies such as Local Authorities and the police. In such instances, Risk Assessments are conducted to ensure the Service is taking appropriate steps to safeguard its employees and the communities of South Wales.

3.1.3 An Equality Risk Assessment (ERA) has been undertaken on both the Discipline and Grievance procedures to ensure that there is no adverse impact on discrete groups. The ERA for both of these procedures has identified that there is no adverse impact on any individual or group arising from the application of these procedures.

3.1.4 Under the Employment Relations Act 1999, employees have the right to be accompanied by a work companion or Trade Union Representative in matters relating to grievance or discipline. With this in mind, as part of the case management process, Officers of the Service enter into ongoing dialogue with the Trade Unions in relation to the management of these matters.

3.2 Regulatory, Strategy and Policy

Legal	Yes	Data Protection / Privacy	No
Financial	No	Health, Safety and Wellbeing	Yes
Procurement	No	Governance & Audit	No
Corporate Risk	No	Service Policy	Yes
Information Management	No	National Policy	No

3.2.1 Both the Grievance and Discipline procedures are a statutory obligation under the Employment Rights Act 1996. Both of these procedures support Corporate Policy 02 'Our People'.

3.2.2 Breaches in Health and Safety procedures are managed under the Discipline Procedure.

3.3 Resources, Assets and Delivery

Human Resource and People Development	Yes
Assets and Resources (Property/Fleet/ICT/Equipment)	No
Service Delivery	Yes
Procurement	No
Budget Revenue/Capital	No

3.3.1 Grievances and reports of misconduct are investigated by Investigating Officers within the Service's Resolution Unit, which sits within the Employee Relations team, within the People Services Directorate. At present, due to long-term sickness within the Resolution Unit, the Service has contracted the services of Narrow Quay HR to enable us to continue to progress our disciplinary cases.

3.3.2 Effective management of grievance and discipline matters supports the effective delivery of services to the communities of South Wales.

4. EVALUATION & CONCLUSIONS

4.1 The Service will continue to review and monitor its activity under the Grievance and Discipline procedures to ensure the fair and consistent management of employees.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 That Members note the content of the report.

Contact Officer:	Jemma Wells, Temp HR Manager – Employee Relations
Background Papers	Appendix 1 – Grievance matters between 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023

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APPENDIX 1**GRIEVANCE MATTERS
1 APRIL 2022 – 31 MARCH 2023****MAIN AREAS:-**

- **Conflict/Line Manager Behaviours**
- **Time-Off**
- **Flexible Working Request**
- **Bullying**
- **Pay**
- **Wellbeing**
- **Internal Secondment**
- **Time off to attend Trade Union training**
- **Stress Risk Assessment**
- **Annual Leave**

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THIS REPORT IS NOT EXEMPT AND IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN**SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**AGENDA ITEM NO 10
10 JULY 2023

HR & EQUALITIES COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER PEOPLE SERVICES

FRS SPEAK UP**THIS REPORT IS FOR INFORMATION**REPORT APPROVED BY ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER PEOPLE SERVICES
REPORT PRESENTED BY ACO ALISON REED**SUMMARY**

This report informs Members of the introduction of 'FRS Speak Up', which is a new confidential reporting service that is available to all staff should they wish to report a concern in relation to inappropriate behaviours or practices in the workplace.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Members note the launch of the new FRS Speak Up service that was launched on 6 April 2023.
2. Members are aware of the process for employees to raise a concern through the new service.
3. Members note the number of concerns raised since the service was launched.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The new service, which was launched on 6 April 2023, is provided by 'Crimestoppers', who are an independent charity.
- 1.2 The Service currently provides a number of routes for staff to raise a concern. This can be directly to their manager via the 'Reporting Concerns' email account or the Whistleblowing procedure.
- 1.3 The provision of FRS Speak Up provides an additional route for staff to raise a concern about things that are not right, including discrimination and harassment, misogyny and violence against women and girls, fraud and corruption, and health and safety breaches.
- 1.4 Contact with FRS Speak Up can be made by email or via a telephone line. Details of the concern are captured by an operator and kept

confidential. The employee can choose to remain anonymous or provide their details. Telephone calls are not recorded or traced, and all information submitted online is via an encrypted connection.

- 1.5 Employees can opt to stay in contact with FRS Speak Up, whilst remaining completely anonymous. This allows the opportunity for further questions to be asked if necessary.
- 1.6 Following initial contact with the employee, a report is submitted to the Service into the 'Reporting Concerns' email account which is a secure account, accessed by the Director of Corporate Services and the Director of People Services. The concern is triaged and then investigated in line with existing procedures.

2. OTHER INFORMATION / ISSUES

- 2.1 The Service is the first Fire & Rescue Service in the UK to introduce the new 'Crimestoppers FRS Speak Up' advice line and website. The promotional materials used to raise awareness are contained at Appendix 1 attached to the report. These have been placed at all sites across the Service.
- 2.2 There have been six concerns raised since the new service was launched on 6 April.
- 2.3 A formal review of the service will be undertaken at the end of twelve months.

3. IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Community and Environment

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	No
Welsh Language	No
Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015	No
Socio Economic Duty	No
Sustainability/Environment/Carbon Reduction	No
Safeguarding	No
Consultation and Communications	No
Consultation with Representative Bodies	No
Impact Assessment	No

3.2 Regulatory, Strategy and Policy

Legal	No	Data Protection / Privacy	No
Financial	No	Health, Safety and Wellbeing	No

Procurement	No	Governance & Audit	No
Corporate Risk	No	Service Policy	No
Information Management	No	National Policy	No

3.3 Resources, Assets and Delivery

Human Resource and People Development	Yes
Assets and Resources (Property/Fleet/ICT/Equipment)	No
Service Delivery	No
Procurement	No
Budget Revenue/Capital	No

3.3.1 The number of concerns raised is currently manageable from a resource perspective. However, we will continue to monitor these and review resources as necessary.

4. EVALUATION & CONCLUSIONS

4.1 The launch of FRS Speak Up provides employees of South Wales Fire & Rescue Service with an additional mechanism with which they can raise a concern about inappropriate behaviours or practices in the workplace.

4.2 A formal review of the new service will be undertaken after twelve months.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 That Members note the launch of the new FRS Speak Up service that was launched on 6 April 2023.

5.2 Members are aware of the process for employees to raise a concern through the new service.

5.3 Members note the number of concerns raised since the service was launched.

Contact Officer:	Alison Reed Director of People Services
Background Papers	Appendix 1 – FRS Speak Up campaign materials (3 posters).

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Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub
De Cymru

South Wales
Fire and Rescue Service

Providing a safe space to speak up when something isn't right.

- Discrimination and harassment
- Misogyny and violence against women and girls
- Health and safety breaches
- Fraud and corruption
- Poor or unsafe working practices

Online or on the phone,
anonymous or confidential.



FRS **SPEAK UP**

Call **0800 022 3818**
or visit **frs-speakup.co.uk**

Powered by
CrimeStoppers.

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FRS

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CrimeStoppers.

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THIS REPORT IS NOT EXEMPT AND IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN**SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**AGENDA ITEM NO 11
10 JULY 2023

HR & EQUALITIES COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF CORPORATE SUPPORT

ANNUAL REPORT OF COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS RECEIVED 2023**THIS REPORT IS FOR INFORMATION**

REPORT APPROVED BY HEAD OF CORPORATE SUPPORT

REPORT PRESENTED BY HEAD OF CORPORATE SUPPORT – SARAH
WATKINS**SUMMARY**

This is the inaugural report of complaints and compliments received by the Service. This report will be presented to the HR & Equalities Committee on an annual basis. It identifies the complaints and compliments received by the service for the financial year 2022 – 2023. Due to the sensitive nature and GDPR considerations complaints and compliments have been anonymised.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that members consider and note the content of the report and provide recommendations or referrals as appropriate.

1. BACKGROUND

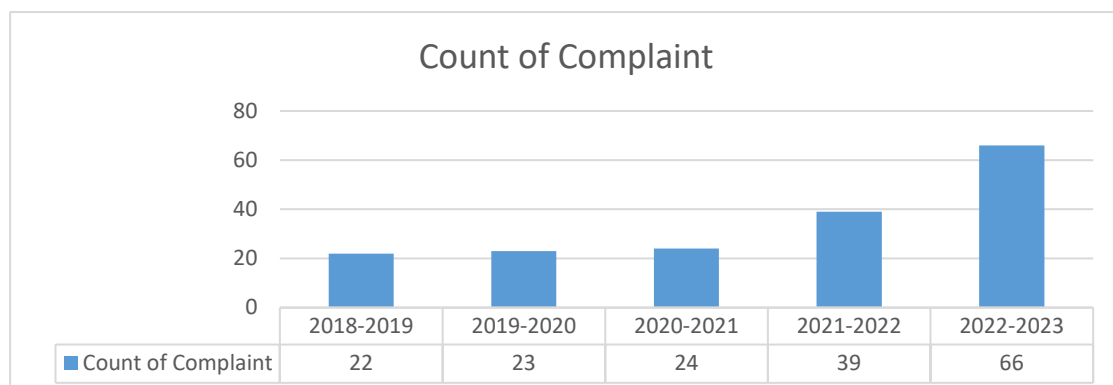
- 1.1 This annual report sets out complaints and compliments received by the Service for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 and focuses on the nature of complaints and the learning they provide to inform Service improvement. The themes of all complaints are identified and analysed to ensure organisational learning.
- 1.2 The Service has a commitment to positive customer experience and is committed to the behaviours set out in our Values and sets out what behaviour our communities should expect from staff.
- 1.3 The aim is for the Service to be sensitive to Service User and Community member needs, prioritise communication and provide clear and current information.
- 1.4 The Service also receives a number of compliments which are reported through Routine Notice on a weekly basis.

- 1.5 By end of the financial year 2022-2023, the Service had received 66 complaints and 84 compliments.

2. ISSUE / PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The Service prioritises addressing complaints to ensure that these are dealt with appropriately and efficiently. The Business Support Team monitors the number of complaints received as well as the quality and timeliness of responses. The team works closely with Heads of Service and appropriate Managers to ensure that corrective actions are put in place and learning from complaints is built into future service design. There is a strong commitment to improve responses and the aim is to reduce the number of complaints.
- 2.2 The Service faces a number of challenges in dealing with complaints, the main one being that the number of cases with added complexity has increased, where responses may need input from multiple departments.
- 2.3 The key headlines from complaints performance in 2022/23 are as follows:
- The number of complaints increased by 69% on the previous year from 39 to 66.
 - There were no complaints escalated to Public Service Ombudsman Wales
 - The number of compliments reduced by 43% on the previous year from 147 to 84.
- 2.4 **Volume of complaints**

- 2.4.1 The table and chart below show the volume of complaints over the last 5 years. It can be seen that the first three years 2018/19 to 2020/21 saw an approximate 4% year on year increase. However, for the last two years there has been a year on year increase of over 60%.

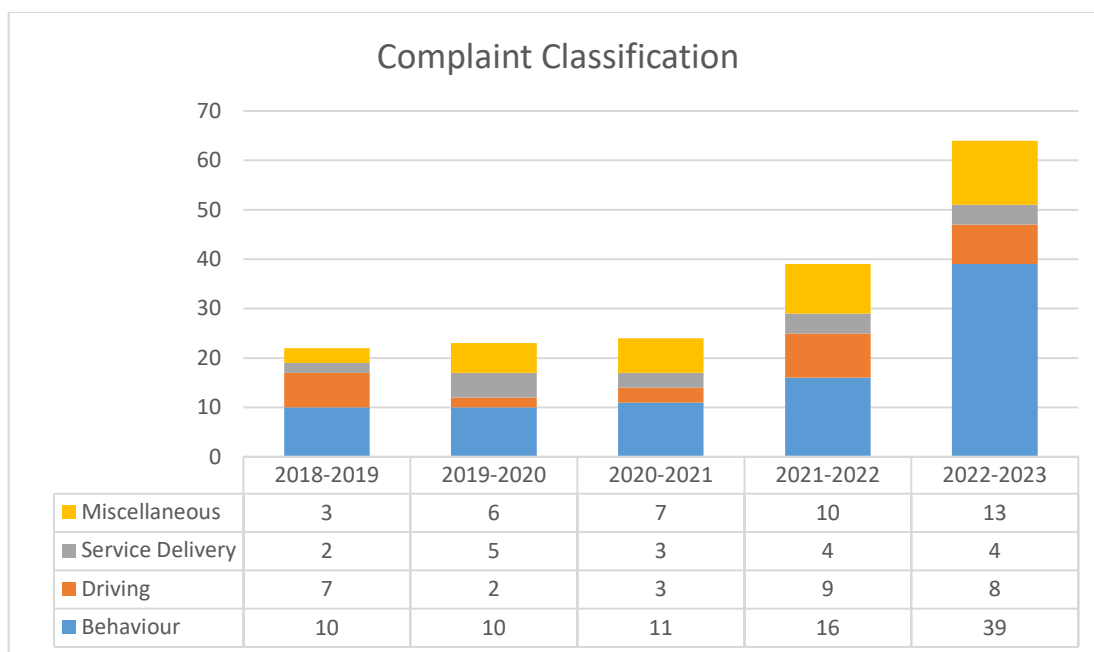


2.5 Classification of Complaints 2022/23

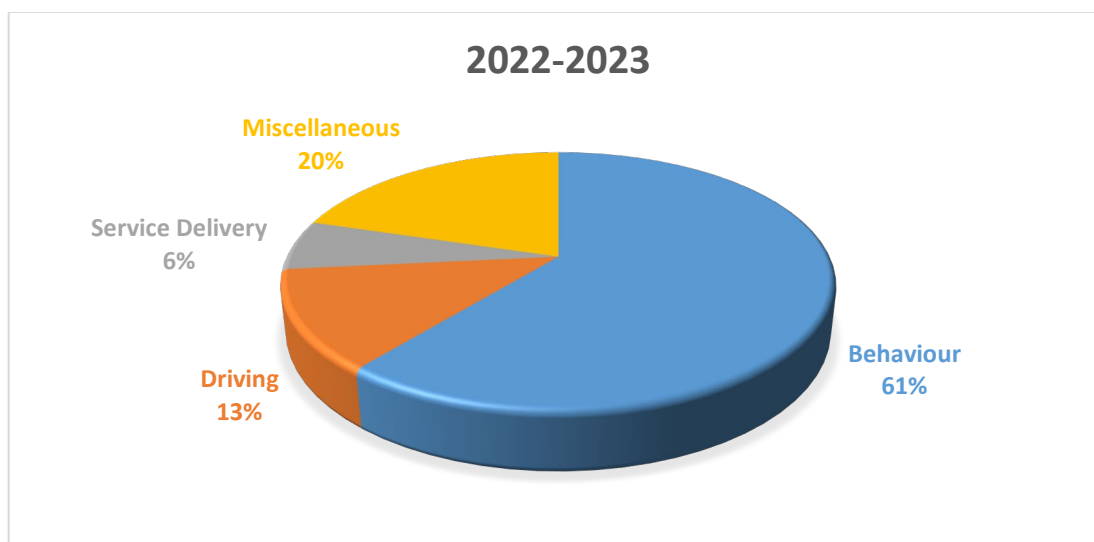
2.5.1 The complaints have been classified into four main areas:

- Behaviours
- Driving
- Service Delivery
- Miscellaneous

Miscellaneous being any complaint not falling in the previous 3 categories.



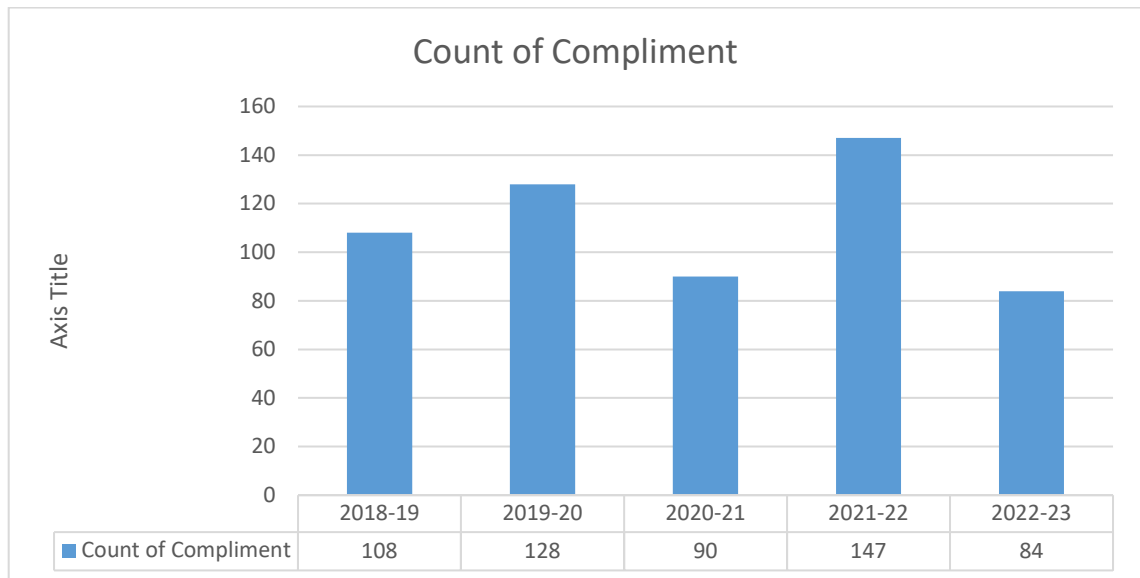
The breakdown for 2022/23 can be seen in the pie chart below.



Over the last 5 years behaviours always make up the largest proportion of complaints, where as Service Delivery is always the lowest proportion of complaints.

2.6 Volume of Compliments

2.6.1 The table and chart below show the volume of compliments over the last 5 years.



The number of compliments has over the last five years outstripped the number of complaints.

3. IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Community and Environment

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	Yes
Welsh Language	Yes
Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act	Yes
Socio Economic Duty	Yes
Sustainability / Environment / Carbon Reduction	Yes
Safeguarding	Yes
Consultation and Communications	Yes
Consultation with Representative Bodies	No
Impact Assessment	No

3.1.1 It is essential that the Service responds appropriately to the complaints that it receives to maintain standards of both behaviour and service delivery. The Service benefits from its good relations and the high regard in which it is held in the communities it serves. To ensure that this continues the Service needs to address complaints and embed the learning derived from the situations that arise. Care is taken to engage and communicate with complainants whilst ensuring that GDPR responsibilities are

adhered to. Should safeguarding issues be identified these are prioritised.

3.2 Regulatory, Strategy and Policy

Legal	Yes
Financial	Yes
Procurement	No
Corporate Risk	No
Information Management	Yes
Data Protection / Privacy	Yes
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	Yes
Governance & Audit	Yes
Service Policy	Yes
National Policy	No

3.2.1 The Service has a number of Statutory duties and were it to fail in these there could be significant implications for not only the Service but also the Communities it serves. Additionally, should the service fail or be negligent in certain areas, litigation could arise that would not only impact on the reputation of the Service but also have financial implications. If complaints are not dealt with to the satisfaction of the complainant, they are advised of the option to escalate to the PSOW.

3.3 Resources, Assets and Delivery

Human Resources and People Development	No
Assets and Resources (Property/Fleet/ICT/Equipment)	No
Service Delivery	No
Procurement	No
Budget Revenue/Capital	No

3.3.1 The complaints process is resourced from existing resources within the Service.

4 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 It is recommended that members consider and note the content of the report and provide recommendations or referrals as appropriate.

Contact Officer:	Sarah Watkins Head of Corporate Support
Background Papers	None

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**FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME FOR
HR & EQUALITIES COMMITTEE 2023/24**

Expected Date of Report	Report Name	Purpose of Piece of Work	Information or Decision	Lead Director/ Contact Officer	Progress
10 July 2023	Recruitment & Attraction 2022-2023	To update Members	I	ACO PS Contact Officer: Head of HR	On Agenda
10 July 2023	Annual report on Occupational Health Unit sickness stats	Purpose is to update Members on Occupational Health Activity and sickness absence	I	ACO PS Contact Officers: Karen Davies, Ruth Hazell	On Agenda
10 July 2023	Pension Circulars - Updates	Purpose is to inform Members on pension circulars received from Welsh Government	I	ACO PS Contact Officer: Alison Reed	On Agenda
10 July 2023	Annual report on Grievance & Discipline Cases 2022-2023	Purpose is to update Members on disciplinary and grievance cases that have occurred through the Service	I	ACO PS Contact Officer: Head of HR	On Agenda

Expected Date of Report	Report Name	Purpose of Piece of Work	Information or Decision	Lead Director/ Contact Officer	Progress
10 July 2023	FRS Speak Up – cases and actions taken (April-June 2023)	To update Members	I	ACO PS Contact Officer: Alison Reed	On Agenda
10 July 2023	Complaints received by the Service – Complaints received and actions taken (Jan-June 2023)	To update Members	I	ACO PS Contact Officer: Sarah Watkins	On Agenda
7 Nov 2023	Report on Personal Reviews 2022-2023	To update Members	I	ACO PS Contact Officer: Serena Ford	
7 Nov 2023	NJC for Brigade Managers Salaries and Numbers Survey 2021	To provide Members with an update on the NJC annual survey of FRA's Brigade Managers roles.	I	ACO PS Contact Officer: Alison Reed	
7 Nov 2023	Review of Training & Development Activities 2022/2023 & Apprenticeship Scheme	To update Members on the Service's training activities and commitments which identifies how we attract and develop our people to promote organisational improvement.	I	ACO PS Contact Officer: Neil Davies	

Expected Date of Report	Report Name	Purpose of Piece of Work	Information or Decision	Lead Director/ Contact Officer	Progress
7 Nov 2023	Strategic Equality Plan 2023-2026 Update	To update Members	I	ACO PS Contact Officer: Serena Ford, Charysse Harper	
7 Nov 2023	Update on Pension Circulars	Purpose is to inform Members on pension circulars received from Welsh Government	I	ACO PS Contact Officer: Alison Reed	
7 Nov 2023	Gender Pay Gap Statement	Purpose is to update Members on the analysis of the Gender Pay Gap across the Service	I	ACO PS Contact Officer: Kim Jeal	
11 March 2024	Annual Pay Policy Statement 2024-2025	Purpose is to inform Members and to enable the Service's Policy to be evaluated	I	ACO PS Contact Officer: Kim Jeal	
11 March 2024	Update on Investors in People Update (IiP)	To update Members	I	ACO PS Contact Officer: Alison Reed	

Expected Date of Report	Report Name	Purpose of Piece of Work	Information or Decision	Lead Director/ Contact Officer	Progress
11 March 2024	Job Evaluation – Phase 2	To update Members on Phase 2 of the Job Evaluation process	I	ACO PS Contact Officer: Head of HR	
11 March 2024	Pension Circulars	Purpose is to inform Members on pension circulars received from Welsh Government	I	ACO PS Contact Officer: Alison Reed	
11 March 2024	Update on Learning Pathways & Learning Management System	To update Members	I	ACO PS Contact Officer: Serena Ford	
11 March 2024	Report on People Plan & All Wales POD Strategy	To provide Members with an update on SWFRS's People Strategy & All Wales POD Strategy	I	ACO PS Contact Officer: Alison Reed	
11 March 2024	Structure Update	To update Members	I	ACO PS Contact Officer: Head of HR	

Expected Date of Report	Report Name	Purpose of Piece of Work	Information or Decision	Lead Director/ Contact Officer	Progress
11 March 2024	Annual Welsh Language Report	The purpose of this report is to update Members on the Service's compliance and progress with the Welsh Language Standards.	I	ACO PS Contact Officer: Alison Reed	
11 March 2024	Annual Summary of HR & Training Reports	To update Members	I	ACO PS Contact Officer: Alison Reed	
11 March 2024	FRS Speak Up – Annual report of cases and actions taken	To update Members	I	ACO PS Contact Officer: Alison Reed	
11 March 2024	Complaints received by the Service – Annual report of complaints received and actions taken.	To update Members	I	ACO PS Contact officer: Sarah Watkins	

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AGENDA ITEM NO 13

**To consider any items of business that the Chairperson deems urgent
(Part 1 or 2)**

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1.	Apologies for Absence	
2.	Declarations of Interest	
	Members of the Fire & Rescue Authority are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare both orally and in writing any personal and/or prejudicial interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, the Fire & Rescue Authority's Standing Orders and the Members Code of Conduct.	
3.	Chairperson's Announcements	
4.	To receive the minutes of:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR & Equalities Committee held on 27 February 2023 	5
	REPORTS FOR INFORMATION	
5.	Recruitment & Attraction 2022-2023	13
6.	Annual Report on Sickness Data 2022-2023	27
7.	Occupational Health Unit (OHU) Activity Report – 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023	33
8.	Firefighters Pension Schemes – Wales Government Circulars 2023-2024	47
9.	Annual Report on Grievance & Discipline Activities for the Year 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023	55
10.	FRS Speak Up	63
11.	Annual Report of Complaints and Compliments received 2023	73
12.	Forward Work Programme for HR & Equalities Committee 2023/2024	79
13.	To consider any items of business that the Chairperson deems urgent (Part 1 or 2)	85