

# COMMISSIONERS FOR FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

Papers for the People Committee to be held on:

**Thursday 27 March 2025, 1030hrs**

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

**Or**

**Remotely via MS Teams: Link <https://bit.ly/3C1K1NU>**

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

**Any issues please contact  
01443 232000 and ask for Governance Support**

## **A G E N D A**

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest

Attendees 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 South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (Exercise of Functions) (Wales) Directions 2024 and the Local Government Act 2000.

3. Chairperson's Announcements

### **REPORTS FOR INFORMATION**

4. To receive the minutes of;  
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5. Update on Outstanding Actions 7

**REPORTS FOR DECISION**

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**REPORTS FOR INFORMATION**

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Signature of Monitoring Officer:



## COMMISSIONERS FOR SOUTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

### MINUTES OF THE PEOPLE COMMITTEE HELD ON FRIDAY 7 FEBRUARY 2025 AT 1000 HRS IN MEETING ROOM 08 AND REMOTELY VIA TEAMS

#### COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Chairperson - Mr V Randeniya

#### PRESENT:

Assistant Chief Officer A Reed – Director of People Services, Assistant Chief Fire Officer D Loader – Director of Service Delivery, Assistant Chief Fire Officer C Hadfield – Director of Corporate Support, D Mika – Director of Strategic Change and Transformation, G Greathead – Interim Monitoring Officer, L Shroll – Head of People Services, W Thomas – Head of Corporate Support, J Wells – People Services Manager, H Goodchild – People Services Manager, M Collins – Business Partner of Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion and Equity, N Howell – Business Partner of Wellbeing and Welfare

#### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Chief Fire Officer F Monahan, Assistant Chief Fire Officer Brian Thompson – Director of Technical Services

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 3. CHAIRPERSONS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Pioneer Programme launched on 20 January 2025 which is aimed current or aspirational strategic leaders which provides learning, reflection and development of key areas and themes for effective leadership. The programme will run over the next 6 months. There are 9 individuals from South Wales Fire and Rescue Service on the All-Wales programme.

The Fire Cadet Branch Manager and Instructor pay award increase of 2.5% agreed in December will be paid in February salaries.

The South Wales Fire and Rescue Service reward and recognition awards ceremony was held on 20 November 2024.

There are a number of recruit course pass out parades upcoming. Last year, there were 6 courses held and there are 6 courses scheduled for 2025.

#### **4. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF; PEOPLE COMMITTEE HELD ON 28 NOVEMBER 2024**

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of the Committee.

#### **5. UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

There were no outstanding actions.

#### **6. GENDER PAY GAP (GPG) 2024**

Under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 (the public sector Regulations), all public authorities are required to publish Gender Pay Gap (GPG) information by reporting the percentage differences in pay between their male and female employees.

In Wales, public bodies, including Fire and Rescue Services, must comply with the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011.

These regulations set broader equality duties, which include a focus on gender pay gap reporting as part of advancing equality and fostering good relations.

The deadline for publication is 31 March 2025.

The report presented by People Services Manager Jemma Wells also referenced specific aspects of the Morris report into the culture of South Wales Fire and Rescue Service and how this is likely to impact the GPG in future years.

#### **RESOLVED THAT**

- 6.1 The Commissioner approved the 2024 Gender Pay Gap (GPG) report at Appendix 1 to be published by 31 March 2025.

#### **7. REPORT ON SICKNESS ABSENCE AND WELLBEING OVERVIEW**

The report presented by Business Partner Natalie Howell provided information on the Service's sickness absence statistics for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. Where appropriate, it also stated relevant comparisons against previous year's performance.

#### **RESOLVED THAT**

- 7.1 The Commissioner noted the content of the report. Discussion was held around the future work and challenges set out in the

report. A further report being presented to the March People Committee drawing on wider research to inform the Wellbeing Strategy was agreed.

## **8. FORMALISATION OF A TALENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME**

The report presented by Head of People Services Lisa Shroll provided an overview of a Talent Management Programme. This is critical to ensure that South Wales Fire and Rescue Service (SWFRS) attracts, develops and retains skilled personnel to deliver its core mission: protecting lives, property and the environment. A strategy is being developed as part of the Service Change and Transformation 'Step Forward – Talent Management' project. The Executive Sponsor is ACO People Services – Alison Reed and the Project Executive is Head of People Services – Lisa Shroll.

The purpose of the project is to develop a strategic approach to managing talent (ref appendix 09), ensuring that the workforce stays aligned with our vision, mission and objectives via healthy culture and employee engagement, building a resilient, diverse and high-performing workforce capable of meeting current and future challenges.

Talent management means implementing processes to attract, identify, develop, engage and retain valuable talented individuals. To be effective, these processes need to align with the Service's strategic objectives.

The report highlighted some of the Service gaps relative to these areas, some for information and awareness, and some recommend 'initiatives' to facilitate diversity, strategic succession planning, talent management, and structured employee development to further progress SWFRS in achieving its ambition to become a leading Fire and Rescue Service in the UK, recognised as an employer of choice, fostering high performing workplaces.

### **RESOLVED THAT**

- 8.1 The Commissioner noted the content of the report for information and awareness purposes. It was acknowledged that whilst some initiatives are in their infancy, there will be a requirement for further consideration and wider consultation. The Commissioner agreed to the content within the report.

## **REPORTS FOR INFORMAITON**

### **9. RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION OVERVIEW 2024-2025**

The report presented by People Services Manager Hannah Goodchild provided an overview of the Service's Operational recruitment campaigns for 2024, the Operational recruitment plans for 2025 (including Promotions) and the Current Corporate and pipeline campaigns.

#### **RESOLVED THAT**

- 9.1 The Commissioner noted the content of the report and took assurance that continuous improvement is being undertaken to ensure fair and transparent recruitment and promotion processes. Efficiency opportunities are being maximized, whilst prioritising actions to ensure the Service recruits the right people and supports their long-term career progression.

### **10. DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, COHESION AND EQUITY OVERVIEW**

The report presented by Business Partner Matthew Collins provided an overview of all Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion and Equity (DICE) advancements that South Wales Fire and Rescue Service have made. Specific reference was made within the report to the Inclusive Action Plan and the Morris Review recommendations following mapping of such in June 2024.

#### **RESOLVED THAT**

- 10.1 The Commissioner noted the content of the report.

### **11. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME FOR PEOPLE COMMITTEE 2024/2025**

The Commissioner requested that the Gender Pay Gap (GPG) be presented to the Board of Commissioners in March 2025.

The Commissioner would like to see 'Reflections of the Meeting' added to the agenda going forward.

### **8. TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRPERSON DEEMS URGENT (PART 1 OR 2)**

There were no items of urgent business to discuss.

<b>UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING ISSUES ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS</b>
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### No Outstanding Actions

<b>Minute No</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Leading Officer</b>	<b>Current Status:</b>
07/25 9	FWP - Alignment of Services Inclusive Action Plan to the Morris Report Cultural Recommendations	To provide Commissioners with an update on the work undertaken in respect of the Service's Inclusive Action Plan	ACO Alison Reed	Complete

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**THIS REPORT IS NOT EXEMPT AND IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN**

SOUTH WALES FIRE &amp; RESCUE SERVICE

AGENDA ITEM NO 6  
27 MARCH 2025

PEOPLE COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE SERVICES

**PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2025/26****THIS REPORT IS FOR DECISION**

REPORT APPROVED BY THE DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE SERVICES  
PRESENTING OFFICER ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER ALISON REED,  
DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE SERVICES

**SUMMARY**

The Fire and Rescue Service is required to publish a Pay Policy Statement for each financial year which sets out the policy approach on pay for the new financial year. This report contains the Pay Policy Statement for 2025/2026 and seeks approval of the content from Commissioners. Formal sign off is required from Board of Commissioners and as such the Statement is tabled for the meeting on 28 March 2025. The Statement must be published by the required deadline of 31 March 2025.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That Commissioners review and approve the Pay Policy Statement for 2025/2026 and agree for it to be brought to the Board of Commissioners on 28 March 2025.

**1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Localism Bill 2010 was enacted in Parliament in November 2011, and as such requires the Service to publish a Pay Policy Statement by 31 March each year.
- 1.2 A Pay Policy Statement is expected to contain a number of key elements including the remuneration levels of its Chief Officers, the approach to pay on appointment, changes to the level of remuneration for Chief Officers and more generally the policy approach for pay levels of other staff including those covered by Green and Grey Book Terms and Conditions.

1.3 There are supplementary provisions relating to statements as follows:-

- A relevant Pay Policy Statement must be approved by resolution before it comes into force.
- The Statement must be prepared and approved before the end of 31 March.

1.4 The Pay Policy Statement may be amended by resolution, including after the beginning of the financial year to which it relates.

1.5 As soon as is reasonably practicable after approving or amending a Pay Policy Statement, the Statement must be published on the organisation's website.

## **2. ISSUE / PROPOSAL**

2.1 Attached at Appendix 1 is the 2025/2026 Pay Policy Statement.

2.2 The Pay Policy Statement contains all relevant information and therefore meets the requirements for publication by 31 March 2025.

2.3 Salary levels within the Pay Policy Statement reflect the latest position in terms of annual pay settlements.

2.4 The Statement has been updated to reflect the introduction of market supplements to support the recruitment and/or retention of employees in 2024.

2.5 The Morris report contains two specific recommendations in relation to elements of the Pay Policy Statement; the first is to pause the use of temporary promotions in excess of six months and the second relates to an immediate review of any current temporary promotion with a record of reasons why, exceptionally, it should be permitted to continue beyond six months, and plan to end it. A review was undertaken in early 2024 and a similar review is currently underway.

## **3. IMPLICATIONS**

### **3.1 Community and Environment**

The Pay Policy Statement provides a consistent policy approach to decisions relating to pay. This reduces the risk of equal pay challenge.

### 3.2 Regulatory, Strategy and Policy

The Localism Act includes the provision of general powers with a requirement to publish a Pay Policy Statement each year.

### 3.3 Resources, Assets and Delivery

There are no implications with this regard.

## 3 EVALUATION & CONCLUSIONS

3.1 The Service is required to publish its Pay Policy Statement by 31 March each year.

3.2 The Pay Policy Statement at Appendix 1 contains all relevant information and therefore meets the requirements for publication by 31 March 2025.

## 4 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 That the Commissioners for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service review and approve the Pay Policy Statement for 2025/2026.

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Alison Reed Director of People Services	
<b>Background Papers</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Source / Contact</b>
None		
Title		

<b>Appendices</b>	
Appendix 1	PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2025/2026

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## **South Wales Fire and Rescue Service Pay Policy Statement 2025/26**

### **1. Introduction**

South Wales Fire & Rescue Service is committed to providing consistent and equal pay arrangements for all our employees. This policy establishes key principles that must be followed in establishing employee pay levels and in approving pay related allowances. It sets out the basis for determining salaries, how salary levels are arrived at, the method of pay progression and the approval process for acting up, honoraria and severance payments.

Section 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011 requires English and Welsh Local Authorities to produce a Pay Policy Statement for each financial year. The Bill as initially drafted referred solely to Chief Officers (a term which includes both statutory and non-statutory Chief Officers; and their Deputies); but amendments reflecting concerns over low pay and also drawing on Hutton's 2011 'Review of Fair Pay in the Public Sector' that introduced requirements to compare the policies on remunerating Chief Officers and other employees, and to set out policy on the lowest paid.

The legislation requires pay to include all remuneration including salary, allowances, and expenses. All such payments are covered within this policy, or the other pay policies referred to in 'Other Pay Related Policy' section. There are no discretions to make further payments outside of these policies.

### **2. Pay Principles**

- South Wales Fire and Rescue Service recognises the importance of a pay and reward system that allows us to recruit and retain talented staff who are committed to delivering for the people of South Wales.
- We believe our pay system should be equal to all, and action will be taken to address gender, ethnicity and disability pay gaps.
- We believe that pay structures should be transparent, appropriate and simple to follow.
- We believe that pay Structures should provide value for money for taxpayers.
- We believe that pay Structures should reward staff fairly for the work they perform.
- We believe that pay structures should allow employees to progress with incremental pay scales to enable employees to reach the rate pay for their role, based on experience and/or qualifications gained.
- South Wales Fire and Rescue Service are committed to paying salaries based on The Real Living Wage (as defined by the Real Living Wage Foundation) wage rates as we have Real Living Wage accreditation.

### **3. Legislative Framework**

In determining the pay and remuneration of all its employees, South Wales Fire and Rescue Service will comply with all relevant legislation. The legislations include Part Time Employment (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000, the Equality Act 2010 and Agency Workers Regulations 2010.

#### 4. **Scope**

The Act as finally passed, required the Pay Policy Statement to range over disparate aspects of remuneration policy and must include the following: -

- A Local Authority's policy on the level and elements of remuneration for each Chief Officer.
- A Local Authority's policy on the remuneration of its lowest-paid employees (together with its definition of 'lowest-paid employees' and its reasons for adopting that definition)
- A Local Authority's policy on the relationship between the remuneration of its Chief Officers and other Officers.
- A Local Authority's policy on other specific aspects of Chief Officers' remuneration: remuneration on recruitment, increases and additions to remuneration, use of performance-related pay and bonuses, termination payments and transparency.
- The Act defines remuneration widely, to include not just pay but also charges, fees, allowances, benefits in kind, increases in/enhancements of pension entitlements, and termination payments.

The Fire & Rescue Service advocates collective bargaining arrangements and supports existing national level provisions that govern pay and conditions of service for the following employee groups:-

- National Joint Council for Local Authorities' Fire and Rescue Services, Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book)
- National Joint Council for Brigade Managers of Fire and Rescue Services, Constitution and Scheme of Conditions of Service (Gold Book)
- National Joint Council for Local Government Services (Green Book)
- British Medical Association (BMA) guidance within the Occupational Physician (Consultant initial appointment) salary range
- Royal College of Nursing - NHS Agenda for Change - Pay Rates
- Joint Negotiating Committee for Local Authority Craft and Associated Employees
- Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) for Youth and Community Workers

For the purposes of this statement the term 'Chief Officer' is not limited to Heads of Paid Service or statutory Chief Officers. It also includes those who report directly to them both statutory and non-statutory. For South Wales Fire & Rescue Service this includes the Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Officer, Assistant Chief Fire Officers, and Assistant Chief Officers.

#### 5. **Honoraria and acting up payments**

There may be occasions where an employee is required to take on additional responsibility for duties on a temporary basis and payment of honoraria or acting up payments may be agreed to be made to recognise the additional responsibility.

#### 6. **Additional Benefits**

In addition to paid salary and allowances where appropriate, South Wales Fire Service offers a range of financial benefits, these include membership of the Firefighters Pension Scheme (Wales) 2015 and Local Government Pension Scheme and salary sacrifice arrangements. We also offer non-financial

workplace benefits, including learning and development opportunities, Employee Wellbeing and Fitness schemes, Employee Assistance Programmes, free onsite gym, free onsite parking, as well as ways of working that build on recent advances in technology and smart working.

## 7. Chief Officer Remuneration

National Joint Council for Brigade Managers of Fire and Rescue Services (Services Constitution and Scheme of Conditions of Service 5<sup>th</sup> edition 2006) confirms the approach on Principal Officers pay. It states there is a two-track approach for determining levels of pay for Brigade Manager roles. At national level the NJC shall review annually the level of pay increase applicable to all those covered by this agreement. In doing so the NJC will consider affordability, other relevant pay deals and the rate of inflation at the appropriate date. Any increase agreed by the NJC will be communicated to Fire Authorities by circular. All other decisions about the level of pay and remuneration to be awarded to individual Brigade Manager roles will be taken by the Commissioners for South Wales Fire & Rescue Service, who will annually review these salary levels. To support the twin-track approach identified above, the services of an independent pay consultant have been utilised.

Chief Officers are employed under Joint National Council terms and conditions which are incorporated in their contracts. The Joint National Councils for Chief Fire Officers / Chief Officers negotiates on national (UK) annual cost of living pay increases for this group, and any award of same is determined on this basis. Chief Fire Officers / Chief Officers employed under Joint National Council terms and conditions are contractually entitled to any national Joint National Council determined pay rises and the Commissioners for South Wales Fire & Rescue Service will therefore pay these as and when determined in accordance with current contractual requirements. NJC for Brigade Managers of Fire and Rescue Services (Services Constitution and Scheme of Conditions of Service 5<sup>th</sup> edition 2006) recommends that salary levels are reviewed.

South Wales Fire and Rescue Service's Executive Leadership Team Remuneration matrix is identified as comprising:-

Title	Notional % of CFO salary
Chief Fire Officer (CFO)	100%
Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO)	80% of CFO
Deputy Chief Officer (DCO)	76% of CFO
Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO)	75% of CFO
Assistant Chief Officer (ACO)	62% of CFO
Treasurer*	Treasurer's salary is not directly linked to the CFO however has been determined through a benchmarking exercise. Annual pay increases reflect the same level to that awarded to the CFO. The Treasurer reports directly to the Commissioners, does not hold directorate responsibility and is employed for 118 days per annum.

Note: from time to time the percentage figures may need to be amended to reflect the pay award made to ensure that each role's salary actually receives the pay award.

Chief Officer's remuneration on appointment is determined by the Commissioners for South Wales

Fire & Rescue Service and no additional allowances or enhancements to salary or pension are offered upon employment. On cessation of their duties no additional payments are made other than those that are due for salary purposes or payments made to the individual in line with the appropriate pension scheme on retirement.

Information on the remuneration of Chief Officers is published as part of the South Wales Fire & Rescue Service annual end of year Statement of Accounts which is published on our website.

In accordance with this Pay Policy Statement, Chief Officers' remuneration levels should be reviewed annually as part of South Wales Fire & Rescue Service's commitment to maintaining a competitive grading and remuneration structure. In the absence of nationally determined guidance on 'cost of living' increases the Fire & Rescue Service may identify and agree a local rate and implementation date. The People Committee will be responsible for reviewing this situation, and for making recommendations to the Commissioners. Only the Commissioners for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service may make a final determination in respect of remuneration rates for Chief Officers, including annual cost of living awards.

The Senior Occupational Health Physicians are part time roles and remuneration is a fixed rate based on market forces.

### **Area Managers – Local Agreement**

Following a review of the Area Managers' establishment and operational rota, it was determined that the number of posts would reduce from 6 to 4, with a move to a continuous duty system rota. The remuneration for this group of staff has been locally agreed as Area Manager B (once deemed competent) salary as per NJC Fire and Rescue Services uniformed pay scales, plus an additional 20% flexi duty allowance, plus 14% continuous duty system payment.

### **8. Job Evaluation Scheme**

In 2021 the Fire Authority approved the outcome and implementation of a job evaluation exercise for Corporate Staff, in line with the National Joint Council for Local Government Services' (NJC) Job Evaluation Scheme. This exercise determines the level of responsibility of a role in relation to other roles within the Service to establish a rational pay structure and pay equity between roles. The pay principles adopted included consideration of several factors including the pay framework to be implemented as a result of the exercise. This resulted in the lowest spinal point for Corporate Staff becoming Point 5 for the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (Green Book) spinal point.

### **9. Corporate Heads of Service**

Since 2023 that the Corporate Heads of Service base salary is linked to the base salary for Area Managers.

### **10. All other staff**

All other staff employed by South Wales Fire and Rescue Service are encompassed within Wholetime, On Call Duty System, Control, Corporate, Fleet Apprentices, Fire Cadet Instructors and Auxiliary Staff categories. Their remuneration is based on the relevant NJC agreed salary schemes listed above.

The Service recognises the role of trade unions in consultation of pay at local, and national levels and for collective bargaining purposes. These arrangements are embodied in the Scheme of Conditions of Service of the National Joint Council and are supplemented by the Fire and Rescue Service's rules, records, Organisational Policy and Procedural documents, and other instructions, as amended, along with such other employment law legislation which will apply from time to time.

The 'lowest salary' used by the Fire and Rescue Service is the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services (Green Book), Spinal Point 5.

An examination of the current pay levels within the Authority enables the Authority to identify the multiplier between the lowest pay point and that of the Chief Fire Officer. The multiple between the lowest paid (full time equivalent) employee and the Chief Fire Officer is 1:7.05.

#### 11. **Delegated Authority Levels**

People Services is responsible for overseeing any decisions on pay in order to ensure that they are made in accordance with the delegated authority levels and are compliant with the terms of the Pay Policy and legislation.

Delegations for decision on pay cannot be delegated below the levels outlined in the table below.

Any variation in pay detailed within this policy is subject to appropriate approval, as described below.

<b>DECISION</b>	<b>DELEGATED AUTHORITY LEVEL</b>
Starting pay (above grade minimum) but not including Assistant Chief Officer (and equivalent level)	Assistant Chief Officer People Services (As identified in the Standing Orders)
Starting Pay Assistant Chief Officer (and equivalent) level and above	Commissioners for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service to agree the senior management organisational structure including grades and salary bands. Appointment panel to agree and approve actual salary on appointment within the management structure agreed by full Commissioners for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service.
Appointment to higher graded job (above grade minimum) up to, but not including Assistant Chief Officer level.	Assistant Chief Officer People Services or delegated to Head of HR.
Acting-up payment at Assistant Chief	Chief Fire Officer

<p>Officer level where total salary package is less than £100k.</p> <p>Acting up payment for posts where total salary package is more than £100k.</p>	<p>Commissioners for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service</p>
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## 12. Pay Relativities

The lowest paid persons employed under a Contract of Employment with the Fire & Rescue Service are employed on full time (37 hours) equivalent salaries in accordance with the minimum spinal column point currently in use within the Fire & Rescue Authority's grading structure. As at 1 April 2024, this is £24,790 per annum. The Fire & Rescue Service engages apprentices (and other such trainees) who are not included within the definition of 'lowest paid employees.

South Wales Fire and Rescue Service remunerates substantive personnel above the National Living Wage as a Real Living Wage accredited employer.

## 13. Starting Salary

Employees appointed to roles will normally be appointed to the minimum point of the pay grade for the job.

In certain circumstances it may be appropriate to appoint to a higher point in the pay grade. This may arise when the preferred candidate for the job is in or has been in or has been in receipt of a salary at a higher level than the grade minimum.

An Appointment Panel wishing to appoint a candidate up to, but not including Assistant Chief Officer level, at a salary above the grade minimum must seek approval from the Assistant Chief Officer, fully outlining the business case. Managers may seek guidance from People Services, if required.

The business case should incorporate the following:-

- Preferred candidate's current or most recent salary.
- Salary range for job being appointed to, preferred candidate's interview assessment outcome and details of point scores for other interviewees.
- Benefits to Service and customers of appointing the preferred candidate.
- Potential impact on other jobholders of appointing the preferred candidate at a level higher than the grade minimum.
- Confirmation that increased employee costs will be met by the existing Service budget.

The Assistant Chief Officer People Services will:-

- Consider the request presented by the recruiting manager.

- Discuss their proposed decision with Head of People Services to ensure it is compliant with the terms of the Pay Policy.
- Response to the appointment panel.
- Complete the relevant payroll authorization so that the recruitment process can be completed.

The decision of the Assistant Chief Officer People Services is final. A resolution of the Commissioners for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service is required for all organisational re-structures and associated grading and salary.

#### **14. Market Supplements**

In 2024 the Service introduced the use of market supplements to support recruitment and challenges and in 2025 it did the same for retention challenges. A market supplement may be paid where the “going rate” for a specific job or specialism is higher than that offered by the Service and it has been unable to recruit or retain post holders as a result. A clear business case is required in order to pay a market supplement.

#### **15. Re-Employment of former employees**

Former employees are able to be re-employed, but there are several determining factors.

The introduction of the application of abatement of salaries/pension for a fixed term period in order to retain specialist skills, expertise, and knowledge was agreed.

Applications for abatement of salaries/pension will be referred by directors back the Commissioners for consideration based on business needs.

When someone retires or is released on voluntary or compulsory redundancy, it would not be expected that they would be re-employed as either an employee or an agency worker/contractor in the same or similar job role or service area from which they were made redundant. Such action could indicate that the original decision on the voluntary or compulsory redundancy was not a value for money decision for the taxpayer. Therefore, any exceptions to this approach leading to the re-engagement of voluntary or compulsory redundant employees will have to be justified to ensure that the original terms of the redundancy i.e., cessation of work has actually occurred.

Managers who wish to recruit former employees or procure workers who have previously been made redundant from the same Service area will need to provide a business case for doing so and request authorisation from the Commissioners for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service or designated Assistant Chief Officer.

When a Local Government Pension Scheme or Fire & Rescue Services (on Grey Book terms and conditions) pensioner is re-employed within the Local Government sector, and combined earnings and pension exceeds final salary in the original employment when adjusted for inflation, the pension will be abated.

#### **16. Acting-up to a higher Graded Job**

Acting up is appropriate when the higher graded post becomes vacant due to maternity leave, sick leave etc. Acting-up allowances are made to employees who agree to carry out the full or partial duties, and responsibilities of a higher grade job. The higher graded job must be part of the agreed staffing establishment.

The allowance is payable when an employee carries out the work of the higher grade job for a continuous period for any reason other than annual leave.

Employees who undertake the full duties and responsibilities of a higher graded job will receive the salary that would apply if they were promoted to the higher graded post.

Employees who undertake part of the duties and responsibilities of a higher-grade job will receive a partial acting-up allowance. For example, if the employee is covering 20% of the higher graded duties and responsibilities then they would receive 20% of the grade differential as acting up allowance.

Where there are only one or two employees who are able to 'act-up' to the higher grade job it is relatively easy to identify the jobholder(s) who could reasonably be asked to carry out the higher graded job. Where there are a large number of employees who may be in a position to 'act-up' to the higher graded job, the most appropriate person will be chosen in line with Service promotional processes.

Managers who wish to use either full or partial acting up arrangements must seek approval from their Head of Service. In addition, managers may also seek guidance from People Services if required.

The approving officer will:

- Consider the request presented by the requesting manager.
- Discuss their proposed decision within the People Services Department to ensure it is compliant with the Pay Policy.
- Provide a response to the requesting manager, normally within 10 working days.
- Complete and notify the Employee Relations Team if a pay variation is to be implemented.

Any acting up arrangements at Assistant Chief Officer level must be agreed by the Chief Fire Officer. Any acting up arrangements for posts with remuneration package at or above £100k must also be agreed by the Commissioners for the Fire and Rescue Service. In both cases the salary must be within the organisational structure agreed by Commissioners for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service and be financed in full.

Acting-up allowances are removed once the need for the acting-up arrangement no longer exists. Managers are responsible for ensuring that employees receive sufficient notice of this.

## **17. Honorarium Payments**

Whilst the majority of the workforce are contracted to substantive posts, at any given point in time there will be some corporate employees who carry out specific duties in a temporary capacity.

Where the Service wishes to recognise the significant and additional discretionary efforts of an employee in the above instance, honoraria can be requested to be paid to the employee.

Payments are made to recognise the employee undertaking agreed additional work against their existing job description. This could be due to a sudden and critical requirement to complete a time bound project or a task of which the employee willingly gives their time and effort to undertake, whilst continuing to undertake their usual work. This work can also be planned, but it will be expected that other ways to reward for the work is considered first (e.g. the creation of a new temporary project job, which should be assessed against the job evaluation framework).

If a manager wishes to recognise this effort and believes the work falls within the definition of an honorarium payment, they must prepare a business case outlining the key factors to their Head of Service and the Head of People Services explaining the circumstances, length of honorarium payment and the amount they recommend should be paid. This will then be considered by the Heads of Service and a decision will be made as to whether it can be paid.

The payment structure is set out below:

- In the majority of cases this shall be for an additional three spinal points above the individual's substantive point. This will take account of any natural progression through the spinal scale to ensure the honorarium payment maintains its value.
- In exceptional cases, and only with the approval of the respective Director, the honorarium may be increased beyond three spinal points.

The duration is as follows:

- Where an honorarium payment is requested, this shall not normally extend beyond six months. Where it is considered necessary to continue payments beyond six months a review must be undertaken between the Head of Service and their Director to consider whether the payment should continue, or if some other arrangement should be made to cover the duties.
- Any extension beyond the six-month period must be approved by the Director of People Services prior to commencement and should not normally last for more than a twelve-month period unless there is a specific business reason.

Only one honorarium can be paid to each employee within a 12-month period. Honorarium payments based on spinal column point differentials will be subject to any cost-of-living increase applied by the Commissioners for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

Honorarium payments may be pensionable, this however will be dependent on the individual's pensions scheme regulations.

Information on all honoraria payments will be compiled and reviewed annually by People Services and reported to the Commissioners for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service for monitoring purposes.

If the payment of a honoraria leads to a remuneration package exceeding £100k it must also be approved by the Chief Fire Officer and the Commissioners for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service having taken advice from the Assistant Chief Officer for People Services or their nominated representative.

## 18. **Severance**

On ceasing to be employed, employees will be paid contractual payments due under their contract of employment. In the event of redundancy, severance pay will be paid in line with the employer's discretions as set out in the Employment Protection Policy retained by Rhondda Cynon Taff Pension Section.

All business cases for redundancy, early retirement and severance must be reported to the Commissioners for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service for scrutiny prior to the Commissioners for South Wales Fire Service making a resolution to either accept or reject.

Regulation 30(6) 'Flexible Retirement' – Local Government Pension Scheme Discretion. This discretion will be applied subject to the Chief Fire Officer and Assistant Chief Officer People Services agreeing to the application after taking into account the costs and benefits to the organisation. There will be a requirement by the employee to reduce their working hours by at least 40%. Any actuarial reductions in pension benefits will apply.

The Commissioners for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service will receive reports to countersign the Chief Fire Officer and Assistant Chief Officer People Service's decisions.

## 19. **Uniformed Fire and Rescue Services**

All Fire & Rescue Service employees up to and including Area Managers, are paid in line with the National Joint Council for Local Authorities' Fire & Rescue Services, Scheme of Conditions of Service. These are nationally agreed terms and conditions (the 'Grey' Book).

Under the National Joint Council for Brigade Managers of Fire & Rescue Services, Constitution and Scheme of Conditions of Service (the 'Gold' Book), the Chief Fire Officer and Brigade Managers have separate pay arrangements in place. The Chief Fire Officer's salary is reviewed prior to a new appointment being made and a number of factors are taken into account during this process. These are summarised below:

- The relevant minimum salary of the Chief Fire Officer and the most relevant benchmark data.
- The relationship of current salary to the national benchmark.
- Any substantial local factors not common to Fire and Rescue Authorities of similar type and size.
- Comparative information on salaries in other similar authorities.
- Top management structures and size of management team compared to those of other Fire and Rescue Authorities of similar type and size.
- The relative job size of each post
- Incident command responsibility and the requirement to provide operational cover.

Other Fire & Rescue Service managers who are paid as a percentage of the Chief Fire Officer's salary may be reviewed at the same time as any review to the Chief Fire Officer's salary takes place.

For a review the benchmarking and associated analysis will be collated by the People Services Department and any recommendations presented to the Commissioners for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service for final determination.

## **20. Other Pay Related Policies**

Other pay related policy areas that are applicable to all employees are: -

- Business Travel and Expenses
- Relocation expenses
- Handling redundancy
- Early retirement – including redundancy, flexible retirement, and efficiency of service
- Pensions – LGPS, Firefighters' Pension Scheme 1992, New Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2007, and the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (Wales) 2015, RDS Modified Scheme, Firefighter Compensation Scheme

## **21. Other Terms and Conditions**

The Act defines remuneration widely, to include not just pay but also charges, fees, allowances, benefits in kind, increased enhancements of pension entitlements and termination payments (Ref Section 4 Principal Officers Pay Construct).

South Wales Fire & Rescue Service contributes to the lease vehicle payments for its Senior Members of staff that choose to take part in the Service lease vehicle scheme. Contributions level vary and are dependent on the specific post. These Service contributions form only part of the lease vehicle cost.

## **22. Monitoring and Review**

The Assistant Chief Officer People Services will review the application of this policy on an annual basis. The Pay Policy will then be presented to Commissioners for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service for final determination annually in March. Any changes or deviation from this policy outside of such a review requires Commissioners for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service approval.

## **23. Salary Scales**

Appendix 1 - South Wales Fire & Rescue Service Principal Officers and Heads of Service, salary matrix.

Appendix 2 - Firefighting Roles, salary matrix

Appendix 3 - Control – specific roles, salary matrix

Appendix 4 - On-Call Duty System Payment Structure, salary matrix

Appendix 5 - Corporate Staff, salary matrix

Appendix 6 - Local Authority Craft & Associated Employees, salary matrix

Appendix 7 - Auxiliary Firefighter, salary matrix

Appendix 8 -Auxiliary Firefighter (Control), salary matrix

Appendix 9 - Fire Cadet Instructors, salary matrix



## Appendix 1

**SOUTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE, PRINCIPAL OFFICERS AND HEADS  
OF SERVICE SALARY DETAILS**

	<b>FT Salary</b>	<b>Actual Salary</b>
<b>DIRECTORS [date of last award – 1 January 2024]</b>		
Chief Fire Officer	£174,661	£174,661
Deputy Chief Fire Officer (80% CFO)	£139,729	-
Deputy Chief Officer (76% - CFO)	£132,742	-
Assistant Chief Fire Officer - Technical Services (75% CFO)	£130,996	£130,996
Assistant Chief Fire Officer- Service Delivery (75% CFO)	£130,996	£130,996
Assistant Chief Fire Officer- Corporate Governance (75% CFO)	£130,996	£130,996
Assistant Chief Officer - People Services (62% -CFO)	£108,290	£108,290
Assistant Chief Officer – Corporate Services (62% - CFO)	£108,290	£108,290
<b>STATUTORY OFFICER</b>		
Treasurer	£ 82,182	
The Treasurer reports directly to the FRA, holds no directorate responsibility and is employed for 118 days per annum.		
<b>HEADS OF SERVICE [date of last award – 1 July 2024]</b>		
Head of Service - Finance (AM baseline salary)	£ 72,054	£ 72,054
Head of Service - Corporate (AM baseline salary)	£ 72,054	£ 72,054
Head of Service - PS (AM baseline salary)	£ 72,054	£ 72,054
Head of Service ICT (AM baseline salary)	£ 72,054	£ 72,054
- Comms and Engagement (AM baseline Head of Service - salary)		
Area Manager - Head of Operations	£ 99,375	£ 99,375
Area Manager - Head of Operational Risk Management	£ 99,375	£ 99,375
Area Manager - Head of Risk Reduction	£ 99,375	£ 99,375
Area Manager - Training & Development	£ 99,375	£ 99,375
<i>Area Manager B - Baseline Salary</i>	<i>£72,054</i>	
	<i>£14,411</i>	
<i>20% flexi duty allowance</i>	<i>£12,105</i>	
<i>14% continuous duty system pay CPD</i>	<i>£805</i>	

All **Principal Officers and Treasurer** are included in the pay arrangements as covered by the Brigade Managers pay arrangements, effective 1 January. All **Heads of Service** are included in the pay arrangements as covered by the National Joint Council for Local Authorities' Fire & Rescue Services, Scheme of conditions of service, effective 1 July.

**MEDICAL**

Sessional Doctor	£144,686
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## Appendix 2

## FIREFIGHTING ROLES – PAY RATES FROM 1 JULY 2024

	Basic annual £	Basic hourly rate £	Overtime rate £
<b>Firefighter</b>			
Trainee	28,265	12.91	19.37
Development	29,442	13.44	20.16
Competent	37,675	17.20	25.80
<b>Crew Manager</b>			
Development	40,041	18.28	27.42
Competent	41,767	19.07	28.61
<b>Watch Manager</b>			
Development	42,672	19.48	29.22
Competent A	43,857	20.03	30.05
Competent B	46,707	21.33	32.00
<b>Station Manager</b>			
Development	48,580	22.18	33.27
Competent A	50,041	22.85	34.28
Competent B	53,586	24.47	36.71
<b>Group Manager</b>			
Development	55,953	25.55	Not Applicable
Competent A	57,632	26.32	“
Competent B	62,028	28.32	“
<b>Area Manager</b>			
Development	65,690	30.00	Not Applicable
Competent A	67,658	30.89	“
Competent B	72,054	32.90	“

## Appendix 3

## CONTROL SPECIFIC ROLES – PAY RATES FROM 1 JULY 2024

\*(95% of the respective firefighting role basic annual salary as set out in Appendix A)

	Basic annual £	Basic hourly rate £	Overtime rate £
<b>Firefighter (Control)</b>			
Trainee	26,852	12.26	18.39
Development	27,970	12.77	19.16
Competent	35,791	16.34	24.51
<b>Crew Manager (Control)</b>			
Development	38,039	17.37	26.06
Competent	39,679	18.12	27.18
<b>Watch Manager (Control)</b>			
Development	40,538	18.51	27.77
Competent A	41,664	19.02	28.53
Competent B	44,372	20.26	30.39
<b>Station Manager (Control)</b>			
Development	46,151	21.07	31.61
Competent A	47,539	21.71	32.57
Competent B	50,907	23.25	34.88
<b>Group Manager (Control)</b>			
Development	53,155	24.27	Not applicable
Competent A	54,750	25.00	“
Competent B	58,927	26.91	“

## OCDS SCHEME PAY AWARD 1ST JULY 2024

	Firefighter					Crew Manager	Watch Manager			Station Manager		
<b>105 Hours</b>	Trainee	Development	Development Phase 1	Development Phase 2	Competent	Development	Competent	Development	Competent A	Competent B	Development	Competent A
Hourly Rate	£12.91	£13.44	£14.94	£16.45	£17.20	£18.28	£19.07	£19.48	£20.03	£21.33	£22.18	£22.85
Active Hours	62.5	62.5	62.5	62.5	62.5	62.5 + 12.5 hrs Admin						
Paid a Month						75	75	75	75	75	75	75
Total Salary	£12,103.13	£12,600.00	£14,010.00	£15,420.00	£16,125.00	£20,565.00	£21,453.75	£21,915.00	£22,533.75	£23,996.25	£24,952.50	£25,706.25
<b>94.5 Hours</b>	Trainee	Development	Development Phase 1	Development Phase 2	Competent	Development	Competent	Development	Competent A	Competent B	Development	Competent A
Hourly Rate	£12.91	£13.44	14.94	16.45	£17.20	£18.28	£19.07	£19.48	£20.03	£21.33	£22.18	£22.85
Active Hours	56.25	56.25	56.25	56.25	56.25	56.25 + 11.25 hrs Admin						
Paid a Month						67.5	67.5	67.5	67.5	67.5	67.5	67.5
Total Salary	£10,892.81	£11,340.00	£12,609.00	£13,878.00	£14,512.50	£18,508.50	£19,308.38	£19,723.50	£20,280.38	£21,596.63	£22,457.25	£23,135.63
<b>84 Hours</b>	Trainee	Development	Development Phase 1	Development Phase 2	Competent	Development	Competent	Development	Competent A	Competent B	Development	Competent A
Hourly Rate	£12.91	£13.44	£14.94	£16.45	£17.20	£18.28	£19.07	£19.48	£20.03	£21.33	£22.18	£22.85
Active Hours	50	50	50	50	50	50 + 10 hrs Admin						
Paid a Month						60	60	60	60	60	60	60
Total Salary	£9,682.50	£10,080.00	£11,208.00	£12,336.00	£12,900.00	£16,452.00	£17,163.00	£17,532.00	£18,027.00	£19,197.00	£19,962.00	£20,565.00
<b>73.5 Hours</b>	Trainee	Development	Development Phase 1	Development Phase 2	Competent	Development	Competent	Development	Competent A	Competent B	Development	Competent A
Hourly Rate	£12.91	£13.44	£14.94	£16.45	£17.20	£18.28	£19.07	£19.48	£20.03	£21.33	£22.18	£22.85
Active Hours	43.75	43.75	43.75	43.75	43.75	43.75 + 8.75 hrs Admin						
Paid a Month						52.5	52.5	52.5	52.5	52.5	52.5	52.5
Total Salary	£8,472.19	£8,820.00	£9,807.00	£10,794.00	£11,287.50	£14,395.50	£15,017.63	£15,340.50	£15,773.63	£16,797.38	£17,466.75	£17,994.38

63 Hours	Trainee	Development	Development Phase 1	Development Phase 2	Competent	Development	Competent	Development	Competent A	Competent B	Development	Competent A
Hourly Rate	£12.91	£13.44	£14.94	£16.45	£17.20	£18.28	£19.07	£19.48	£20.03	£21.33	£22.18	£22.85
Active Hours	37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5 + 7.5 hrs Admin						
Paid a Month						45	45	45	45	45	45	45
Total Salary	£7,261.88	£7,560.00	£8,406.00	£9,252.00	£9,675.00	£12,339.00	£12,872.25	£13,149.00	£13,520.25	£14,397.75	£14,971.50	£15,423.75

52.5 Hours	Trainee	Development	Development Phase 1	Development Phase 2	Competent	Development	Competent	Development	Competent A	Competent B	Development	Competent A
Hourly Rate	£12.91	£13.44	£14.94	£16.45	£17.20	£18.28	£19.07	£19.48	£20.03	£21.33	£22.18	£22.85
Active Hours	31.25	31.25	31.25	31.25	31.25	31.25+6.25 hrs Admin						
Paid a Month						37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5
Total Salary	£6,051.56	£6,300.00	£7,005.00	£7,710.00	£8,062.50	£10,282.50	£10,726.88	£10,957.50	£11,266.88	£11,998.13	£12,476.25	£12,853.13

42 Hours	Trainee	Development	Development Phase 1	Development Phase 2	Competent	Development	Competent	Development	Competent A	Competent B	Development	Competent A
Hourly Rate	£12.91	£13.44	£14.94	£16.45	£17.20	£18.28	£19.07	£19.48	£20.03	£21.33	£22.18	£22.85
Active Hours	25	25	25	25	25	25+5 hrs Admin						
Paid a Month						30	30	30	30	30	30	30
Total Salary	£4,841.25	£5,040.00	£5,604.00	£6,168.00	£6,450.00	£8,226.00	£8,581.50	£8,766.00	£9,013.50	£9,598.50	£9,891.00	£10,282.50

31.5 Hours	Trainee	Development	Development Phase 1	Development Phase 2	Competent	Development	Competent	Development	Competent A	Competent B	Development	Competent A
Hourly Rate	£12.91	£13.44	£14.94	£16.45	£17.20	£18.28	£19.07	£19.48	£20.03	£21.33	£22.18	£22.85
Active Hours	18.75	18.75	18.75	18.75	18.75	18.75+3.75 hrs Admin						
Paid a Month						22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5
Total Salary	£3,630.94	£3,780.00	£4,203.00	£4,626.00	£4,837.50	£6,169.50	£6,436.13	£6,574.50	£6,760.13	£7,198.88	£7,485.75	£7,711.88

**South Wales Fire & Rescue Service**  
**Corporate Staff Salary Scales Effective from 01 April 2024**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Spinal Point</b>	<b>Salary</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>£24,790</b>
	<b>6</b>	<b>£25,183</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>£25,584</b>
	<b>8</b>	<b>£25,992</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>£26,835</b>
	<b>11</b>	<b>£27,269</b>
	<b>12</b>	<b>£27,711</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>£29,093</b>
	<b>16</b>	<b>£29,572</b>
	<b>17</b>	<b>£30,060</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>£31,586</b>
	<b>21</b>	<b>£32,115</b>
	<b>22</b>	<b>£32,654</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>£33,366</b>
	<b>24</b>	<b>£34,314</b>
	<b>25</b>	<b>£35,235</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>£36,124</b>
	<b>27</b>	<b>£37,035</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>£37,938</b>
	<b>29</b>	<b>£38,626</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>£39,513</b>
	<b>31</b>	<b>£40,476</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>£41,511</b>
	<b>33</b>	<b>£42,708</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>£43,693</b>
	<b>35</b>	<b>£44,711</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>£45,718</b>
	<b>37</b>	<b>£46,731</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>£47,754</b>
	<b>39</b>	<b>£48,710</b>
<b>17</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>£49,764</b>
	<b>41</b>	<b>£50,788</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>£51,802</b>
	<b>43</b>	<b>£52,805</b>

## Appendix 6

## Extract

**Joint Negotiating Committee for Local Authority Craft &  
Associated Employees**

**CRAFT & ASSOCIATED EMPLOYEES**

Pay for craft & associated employees from the pay week including 1 **April 2024** are as follows:

**Apprentice Engineers & Electricians**

Engineering and Electrical Apprentices following a recognised training course. Rate per week and rate for calculation of overtime and other premium payments from the pay week including 1 **April 2024** are as follows (percentage of full-time rate is denoted in brackets).

<b>Age at Entry</b>	<b>1st Year</b>	<b>2nd Year</b>	<b>3rd Year</b>	<b>4th Year</b>
<b>16 Years</b>	£261.48 (55%)	£332.79 (70%)	£427.88 (90%)	£451.65 (95%)
<b>17 Years</b>	£261.48 (55%)	£380.34 (80%)	£427.88 (90%)	£451.65 (95%)
<b>18 Years+</b>	£380.34 (80%)	£404.11 (85%)	£427.88 (90%)	£451.65 (95%)

## **SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE AUXILIARY FIREFIGHTERS**

From 1 April 2022 Auxiliary Firefighter will be linked to Green Book terms and conditions and as such pay will be made up of the following components:

### **Pay award 1 April 2024**

- £1,158.17 per year retainer (paid in quarterly instalments of £289.54) for the availability of previous 3 months
- £1,158.17 per year for training attendance (paid in quarterly instalments of £289.54) for the attendance and compliance with training requirements
- £289.54 per year enhancement for LGV drivers (to include a one day per year EDRT)

Therefore (subject to availability in meeting retainer requirements and attendance on quarterly training):

- An Auxiliary Firefighter will receive £2,316.34 per annum
- An Auxiliary Firefighter that is also a EDRT (LGV response driver) will receive £2,598.82 per annum
- An Auxiliary who is only EDRT (LGV Response driver) will receive £1,440.65 per annum

Additionally, WDS and RDS personnel of all ranks (up to and including Area Manager) are also able to apply for a "Resilience Contract". The salary will be between £2,316.34 and £3,184.96 depending on skill sets.

Upon deployment Auxiliary firefighters will be paid £70 per hour (inclusive of holiday pay calculation). Existing operational personnel will see their normal pay rate and other Terms & Conditions (including normal hours worked) suspended and all will be paid £70 per hour, irrespective of the position they are deployed to.

## Appendix 8

### SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE AUXILIARY CONTROL OPERATORS

#### Pay award 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024

Auxiliary Control Operators will be paid at 95% of the ARFF rate above, in line with the main pay agreement for Control Operators. Therefore, their deployment rate will be £66.50 per hour (inclusive of holiday pay calculation).

- £1,100.25 per year retainer (paid in quarterly instalments of £275.06) for the availability of previous 3 months
- £1,100.25 per year for training attendance (paid in quarterly instalments of £275.06) for the attendance and compliance with training requirements

**Fire Cadet Instructors**

Fire Cadet Pay Award wef 1st September 2024

<u>Role</u>	<u>Hours Per 40 week Year</u>	<u>New Hourly Rate</u>	<u>Annual salary</u>
Fire Cadet Instructor	50	£14.27	£713.50
Fire Cadet Instructor	75.2	£14.27	£1,073.10
Fire Cadet Instructor	100	£14.27	£1,427.00
Branch Manager	125	£22.79	£2,848.75
Branch Manager	150	£22.79	£3,418.00

**THIS REPORT IS NOT EXEMPT AND IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN****SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**AGENDA ITEM NO 7  
27 MARCH 2025

PEOPLE COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE SERVICES

**PRE-RECRUITMENT GOVERNANCE****THIS REPORT IS FOR DECISION**REPORT APPROVED BY DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE SERVICES, ALISON REED  
PRESENTING OFFICER – HEAD OF PEOPLE SERVICES, LISA SHROLL**SUMMARY**

The recent Morris Review identified several systemic issues causing frustration among personnel. Notably, the report highlighted serious failings in the Service policies, procedures, and systems, leading to negative impacts on staff. Additionally, the Review pointed out a lack of transparency in recruitment and promotion procedures.

Introducing formal Pre-Recruitment due diligence is helpful in addressing specific recommendations from the Morris Review of South Wales Fire and Rescue Service (SWFRS). The Review highlighted several areas where enhanced recruitment practices can lead to substantial improvements.

A structured vacancy review process before recruitment ensures that SWFRS hiring decisions align with strategic workforce planning, efficiency, and compliance with key legislative and ethical responsibilities. By embedding due diligence at the vacancy stage, SWFRS can improve workforce diversity, sustainability, financial accountability, and long-term service resilience.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Commissioners note the content of the report, is assured of progress developing Recruitment and Promotions processes, and agrees to the following recommendations to:

1. introduce line manager responsibilities and due diligence into the pre recruitment process
2. streamline the PeopleXD (formerly CoreHR) authorisation process

## 1. BACKGROUND/ ISSUE

- 1.1 The recent Morris Review identified several systemic issues causing frustration. Notably, the report highlighted serious failings in the Service policies, procedures, and systems, leading to negative impacts on staff. Additionally, the Review pointed out a lack of transparency in recruitment and promotion procedures.

*“... we have heard that many corporate departments are under significant pressure. Individuals are facing high workloads, without adequate support being in place from management, in a high stress environment. This is exacerbated by the fact that a number of departments have vacancies, both permanent and temporary, which are not being filled promptly, and there appears to be a laissez-faire approach leading to slow recruitment being tolerated”*

- 1.2 These findings underscore the need for SWFRS to address systemic inefficiencies to improve overall organisational culture and effectiveness.
- 1.3 Currently, a wholesale review of Recruitment, Promotions (including temporary promotions) and Transfer process is underway, with consultation and engagement expected to commence in April 2025.
- 1.4 Following a review of the existing ‘authorisation to recruit’ process, the following key issues were identified:
- 1.4.1 Inefficiencies & Delays - The existing process includes multiple approval stages, leading to avoidable delays in filling critical vacancies.
- 1.4.2 Single Points of Failure - Dependencies on specific individuals for approvals create bottlenecks, increasing the risk of delays if key decision-makers are unavailable.
- 1.4.3 Due Diligence & Workforce Planning - While ensuring budget control, the current process does not always guarantee alignment with succession planning, talent management, or redeployment opportunities, potentially leading to missed internal development opportunities.
- 1.4.4 Clarity & Accountability - Some line managers lack clear guidance on pre-submission due diligence, leading to incomplete requests that require resubmission, further delaying recruitment.
- 1.4.5 It is recommended that recruiting line managers are accountable for undertaking due diligence Vacancy Reviews, this will facilitate a reduction in the number of authorisation steps required to approve a recruitment

campaign. Please refer to appendix 01 – proposed ‘governance process’ workflow and appendix 02 – existing workflow.

## **2. IMPLICATIONS**

### **2.1 Community and Environment**

#### **2.1.1 Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)**

- Considers alternative ways to fill the role (e.g., part-time, job sharing) to attract diverse applicants.

#### **2.1.2 Welsh Language Compliance**

- Determines whether the role requires Welsh language skills in line with the Welsh Language Standards.
- Identifies opportunities to support Welsh language development in the workplace.

#### **2.1.3 Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

- Ensures recruitment supports long-term workforce sustainability.
- Encourages the use of apprenticeships, internal career progression, and skills development.
- Avoids unnecessary hiring by considering role redesign or automation.

#### **2.1.4 Sustainability, Environment & Carbon Reduction**

- Ensures recruitment decisions align with SWFRS sustainability goals.
- Reduces unnecessary recruitment that increases carbon footprint through printing, commuting, and facilities use.

#### **2.1.5 Consultation & Communications**

- Avoids unnecessary recruitment by exploring role redesign or restructuring.

#### **2.1.6 Conclusion**

- A robust vacancy review process ensures that SWFRS recruitment decisions are strategic, inclusive, and sustainable.

## 2.2 Regulatory, Strategy and Policy

Embedding due diligence before recruitment reduces legal exposure, financial inefficiencies, and operational risks, strengthening SWFRS resilience, transparency, and accountability. Specifically:

### 2.2.1 Financial Implications

- Ensures recruitment is financially justified and sustainable, preventing unnecessary long-term costs.
- Confirms budget approval, ensuring cost-effective workforce planning.
- Reduces financial risks associated with overstaffing, inefficient hiring, or unnecessary temporary roles.

### 2.2.2 Procurement Implications

- Reduces reliance on high-cost agency recruitment, promoting cost-effective hiring strategies.

### 2.2.3 Corporate Risk Implications

- Prevents staffing gaps that could impact service delivery and operational resilience.
- Ensures that roles align with organisational risk management frameworks.
- Reduces risks of skills shortages by ensuring workforce planning supports future service demands.

### 2.2.4 Governance and Audit Implications

- Reduces risk of unjustified or unaudited workforce expansion, ensuring recruitment meets strategic needs.

## 2.3 Resources, Assets and Delivery

### 2.3.1 HR and People Development

- Ensures recruitment aligns with workforce planning and career development opportunities.

### 2.3.2 Assets and Resources

- Ensures recruitment decisions account for required assets, equipment, and facilities.

### 2.3.3 Service Delivery

- Aligns recruitment with demand, response capabilities, and community needs.

- Reduces service disruption by ensuring well-planned recruitment timelines.
- Identifies whether alternative resourcing models (e.g., automation, outsourcing) could improve service efficiency.

#### 2.3.4 Procurement

- Reduces unnecessary agency or consultancy recruitment costs.
- Ensures value-for-money principles are followed in external hiring.

#### 2.3.5 Budget (Revenue & Capital)

- Ensures recruitment decisions are financially sustainable and within approved budget allocations.
- Prevents over-recruitment or unnecessary salary expenditure.
- Aligns workforce spending with strategic financial planning and efficiency goals.
- Supports cost-effectiveness by considering redeployment, workforce upskilling, or shared roles.

#### 2.3.6 Conclusion

A robust vacancy review process ensures recruitment decisions support HR, service delivery, budget control, and resource planning while aligning with long-term workforce and financial strategies.

### 2.4 MORRIS Report

The Morris report highlighted serious failings in the Service policies, procedures, and systems, leading to negative impacts on staff. Additionally, the Review pointed out a lack of transparency in recruitment and promotion procedures. Ref appendix 03.

## 3 EVALUATION & CONCLUSIONS

By introducing pre recruitment due diligence and streamlining the authorisation to recruit process on People XD (formerly CoreHR), SWFRS can ensure timely, strategic, and well-governed recruitment, reducing inefficiencies, complaints and frustrations while maintaining financial oversight and operational resilience; and:

- Increase Efficiency - Streamline approval workflows to reduce unnecessary delays while maintaining governance integrity.
- Improve Resilience - Remove single points of failure by introducing clear escalation routes and delegated authority where appropriate.
- Enhance Workforce Planning - Strengthen alignment with succession planning, internal talent pipelines, and alternative resourcing options (e.g., redeployment, secondments, apprenticeships).

- Ensure Financial & Strategic Oversight - Maintain financial scrutiny while ensuring recruitment decisions align with SWFRS long-term workforce strategy.
- Clarify Responsibilities - Strengthen line manager accountability by introducing pre-submission due diligence requirements, ensuring recruitment requests are fully developed and justified before submission.

By embedding these focused recruitment due diligence practices, SWFRS can effectively implement the Morris Review's recommendations, fostering a more transparent, equitable, and professional environment.

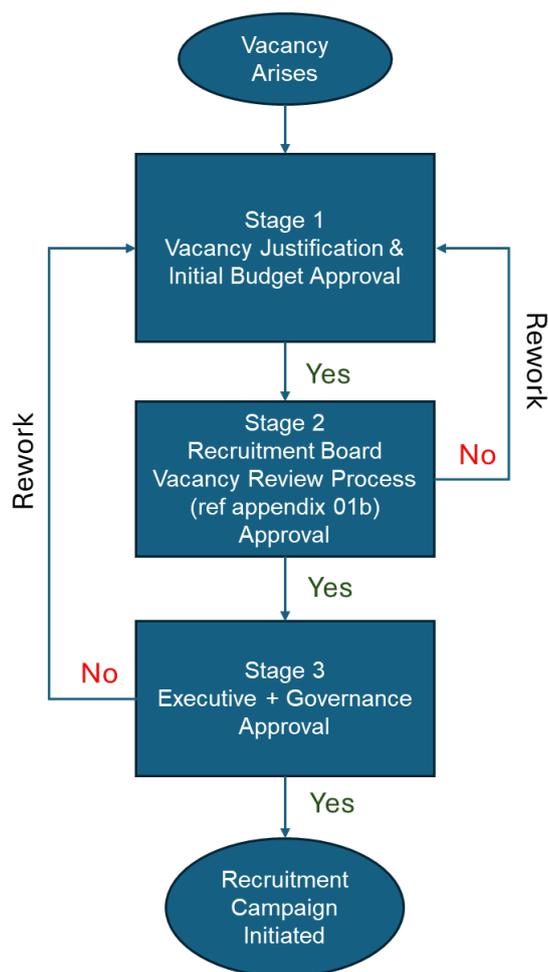
#### 4 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Commissioners note the content of the report and agree to the recommendation to:

- 1) introduce line manager responsibilities and due diligence into the pre recruitment process
- 2) streamline the PeopleXD (formerly CoreHR) authorisation process

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Lisa Shroll, Head of People Services	
<b>Background Papers</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Source / Contact</b>
Appendix 01a – Proposed 'Governance Process' Workflow Appendix 01b – Recruitment Board - Vacancy Review Procedure  Appendix 02 – Existing Workflow  Appendix 03 – Implications of Morris Report		Lisa Shroll, Head of People Services

## APPENDIX 01a – PROPOSED ‘GOVERNANCE PROCESS’ WORKFLOW



### Key Benefits of This ‘Three Step’ Governance Process

- Efficiency & Reduced Rejections: Proper preparation ensures faster approvals with fewer delays.
- Strategic Alignment with NFCC Guidance: Recruitment aligns with national workforce planning best practices.
- Financial Accountability: Prevents unnecessary expenditure and supports cost-effective workforce planning.
- Transparency & Auditability: Creates a clear, justifiable recruitment process with full governance oversight.
- Diversity & Inclusion: Embeds NFCC’s Inclusive Recruitment Framework, ensuring fairness in hiring.
- Organisational Resilience: Guarantees sustainable workforce growth, preventing unnecessary gaps in service delivery.

By following this structured authorisation process, SWFRS ensures that recruitment is transparent, strategically driven, and financially responsible, while maintaining efficiency and reducing unnecessary delays.

---

The recruiting line manager is responsible for conducting all necessary due diligence reviews before submission to ensure an efficient approval process. To include:

- Thorough Due Diligence: Before submitting a recruitment request, ensure all factors have been explored, including internal talent, succession planning, redeployment, and alternative resourcing options.
- Budget Accountability: Confirm financial viability and demonstrate cost-effectiveness to prevent rejections at later stages.
- Strategic Workforce Planning: Align recruitment with NFCC best practices and SWFRS long-term workforce strategy rather than simply filling vacancies.
- Audit & Transparency: Ensure all decisions are justifiable, evidence-based, and compliant with governance policies to maintain a clear audit trail.
- Efficiency & Accuracy: Minimise delays by ensuring recruitment proposals are fully developed, well-justified, and correctly structured before submission.

*Failure to conduct due diligence increases the risk of rejection at later approval stages, delaying recruitment and affecting service delivery.*

### **Step 1: Vacancy Justification & Initial Budget Approval**

- The role aligns with SWFRS workforce strategy
- There is a clear and justified business need, rather than defaulting to replacement
- The role is budgeted, cost-effective, and sustainable\*\*
- Successors identified through Talent Management Programme
- Medical Redeployment pool availability
- Alternative resourcing options (e.g., secondments, apprenticeships, job-sharing)
- Recruitment aligns with NFCC workforce resourcing financial best practices
- Alternative financial options (e.g., temporary contracts, restructuring) have been properly considered

Authorisation: (/Head of Service/Head of Finance)

\*\*Requests lacking financial clarity or justification will be rejected\*\*

### Recruitment Business Case

Line Manager completes the Recruitment Business Case, ensuring:

- The rationale is fully developed to prevent rejection at later stages
- The job description and grading are up to date and accurate
- Consideration of flexible/agile working arrangements
- The role contributes to organisational diversity and inclusion goals

- The role is budgeted, cost effective and sustainable
- Head of Finance and Head of Service approval

### **Step 2: Monthly Recruitment Board (Line Manager)**

Line Manager completes a Workforce Planning – Request to Recruit application (usually via the monthly Recruitment Board) to ensure:

- The role aligns with NFCC Core Code of Ethics and inclusive workforce planning principles
- The job description is current, fair, and correctly graded
- Internal alternatives (redeployment, talent pipelines) were properly explored

*Incomplete or unjustified requests may be returned for revision, potentially until the next recruitment board thus delaying approval.*

Approval Required: Chair of the Recruitment Board

### **Step 3: Executive & Governance Sign-Off**

Executive Leadership Team (ELT) reviews the recruitment proposal, ensuring:

- It aligns with SWFRS strategic workforce planning priorities
- Justification is clear and well-evidenced
- Transparency and governance principles are upheld

*Rejections at this stage indicate a failure in prior due diligence, recruiting line managers must ensure requests are fully compliant before submission.*

Approval Required: Principal Officer (final sign-off), FA or Commissioners for senior roles or major restructures

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## Appendix 01b – Recruitment Board - Vacancy Review Procedure

### Purpose:

- This brief outlines the intent to implement a robust due diligence process for vacancies arising within SWFRS, ensuring that each role is critically evaluated before being replaced.
- The objective is to align our workforce planning with operational needs, eliminate unnecessary bureaucracy, and drive efficiency while maintaining service effectiveness.
- This process will also be underpinned by principles of transparency, equity, and fairness, ensuring that decisions around workforce planning are open, justifiable, and aligned with organisational priorities.

### Background:

Historically, vacancies have often been backfilled as a default response without fully assessing whether the role remains essential in its current form. Given the evolving needs of SWFRS and the financial and operational pressures facing the service, there is an opportunity to take a more strategic and equitable approach to vacancy management. This ensures that all roles are assessed fairly, with due consideration of their contribution to the wider organisation and service users.

### Proposed Approach:

For every vacancy that arises, we will introduce a structured Vacancy Review Process (VRP), ensuring:

1. Assessment of Service Need - Evaluating whether the role is still required in its current form, can be redesigned, or is no longer necessary.
2. Alignment with Organisational Priorities - Ensuring roles support strategic objectives, operational efficiency, and service delivery.
3. Efficiency & Process Improvement - Identifying opportunities to eliminate bureaucratic processes and modernise ways of working.
4. Consideration of Alternative Solutions - Exploring whether responsibilities can be redistributed, automated, or managed differently before proceeding with recruitment.
5. Transparency & Fairness - Ensuring all decisions are made through a clear, objective process that is communicated effectively to stakeholders, avoiding perceptions of unfairness or inconsistency.
6. Implementation:
  - Recruitment Board - Vacancy Review Panel: A small cross-functional group (e.g., People Services, Finance, and relevant department leads) will assess each vacancy before progressing to recruitment approval by the Head of Service and a Principal Officer, ensuring equity in decision-making across departments.
  - Business Case Justification: Departments will be required to provide a short rationale for replacement, redesign, or removal of a role, ensuring fair and transparent evaluation.

- Streamlined Decision-Making: A rapid review process to avoid unnecessary delays while ensuring due diligence and fairness in how roles are assessed.

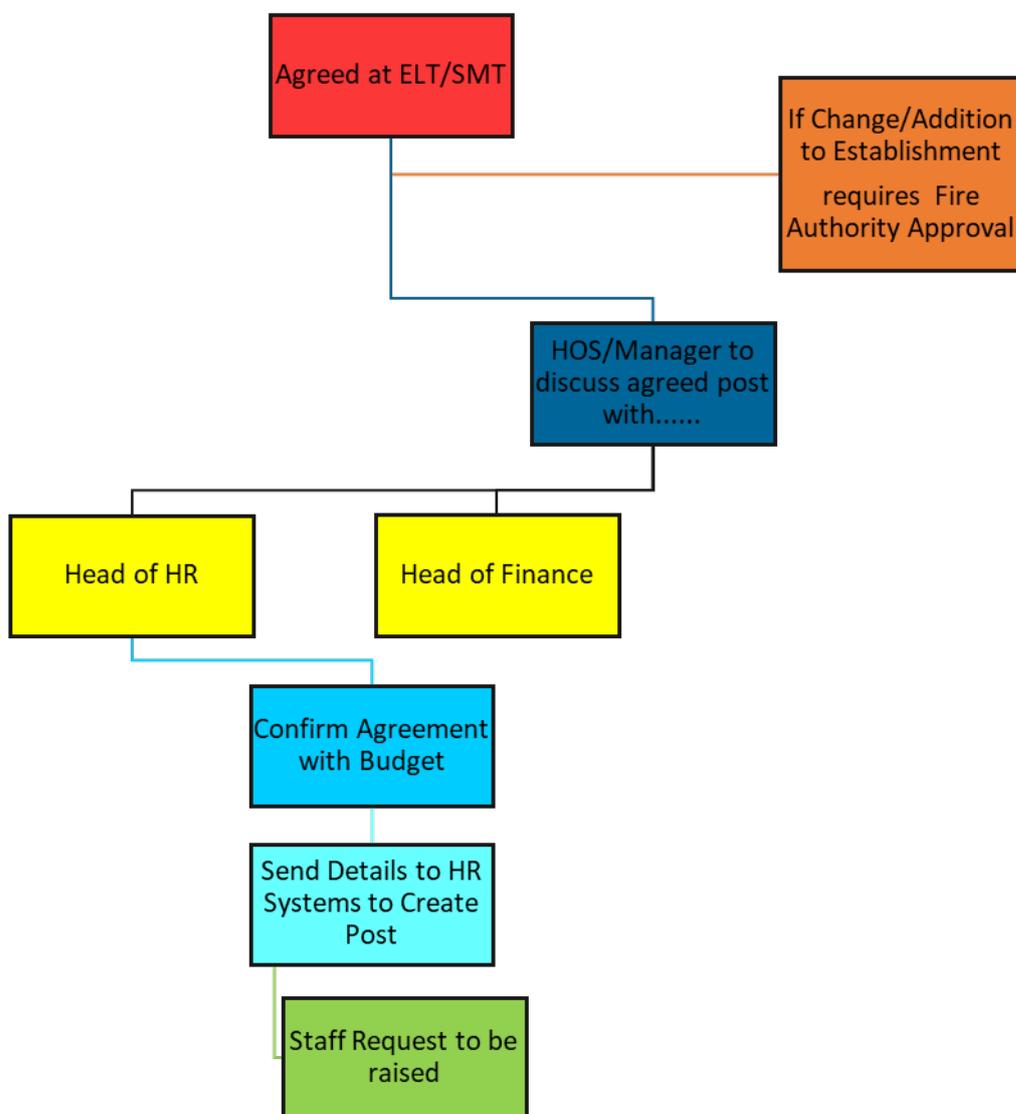
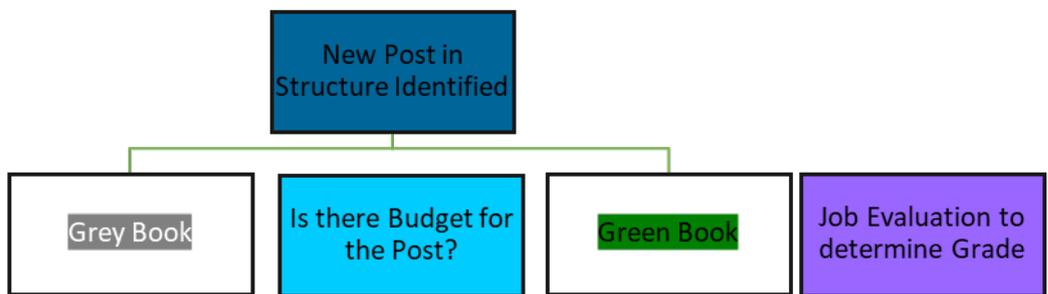
#### Expected Benefits:

- Ensures roles remain fit for purpose and aligned with SWFRS priorities.
- Reduces unnecessary bureaucracy and enhances organisational agility.
- Encourages innovation in workforce planning, supporting smarter working practices.
- Contributes to cost efficiency without compromising service delivery.
- Embeds equity and fairness, ensuring all roles are evaluated through a consistent and objective process.
- Improves transparency, allowing staff to understand the rationale behind vacancy-related decisions.

#### Next Steps:

We propose a phased rollout of this approach, starting with corporate and support functions before wider implementation. If approved, People Services will lead the development of the framework, ensuring that it is fair, transparent, and aligned with best practice, and provide an update on progress.

## APPENDIX 02 – EXISTING WORKFLOW



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## APPENDIX 03- IMPLICATIONS OF MORRIS REPORT

Key connections between recruitment due diligence and the 2024 Morris Review recommendations:

1. Enhancing Organisational Culture:
  - Issue Identified: The Review uncovered serious failings in policies, procedures, and systems, leading to negative impacts on personnel.
  - Due Diligence Role: Implementing thorough recruitment processes ensures that new hires align with SWFRS values and desired cultural standards, fostering a positive and supportive environment.
2. Promoting Diversity and Inclusion:
  - Issue Identified: The Review emphasised the need for SWFRS to diversify its workforce and enhance inclusivity.
  - Due Diligence Role: A meticulous recruitment approach actively seeks candidates from varied backgrounds, ensuring equal opportunities and broadening the Service's diversity.
3. Ensuring Competence and Professionalism:
  - Issue Identified: There were concerns about the adequacy of training and the professionalism of personnel.
  - Due Diligence Role: Rigorous vetting during recruitment guarantees that candidates possess the necessary skills, qualifications, and commitment to uphold high professional standards.
4. Strengthening Governance and Accountability:
  - Issue Identified: The Review highlighted deficiencies in governance structures and accountability mechanisms.
  - Due Diligence Role: A robust recruitment process ensures that individuals in leadership and governance roles are selected based on merit and integrity, reinforcing accountability within SWFRS.
5. Aligning with Strategic Objectives:
  - Issue Identified: The need for alignment between staffing practices and the Service' strategic goals was noted.
  - Due Diligence Role: Thoughtful recruitment aligns personnel selection with SWFRS long-term objectives, ensuring that new hires contribute positively to the Service's mission and vision.

By embedding rigorous due diligence into recruitment practices, SWFRS can effectively address the Morris Review's recommendations, leading to a more competent, diverse, and ethically grounded workforce.

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**THIS REPORT IS NOT EXEMPT AND IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN**

SOUTH WALES FIRE &amp; RESCUE SERVICE

AGENDA ITEM NO 8  
27 MARCH 2025

PEOPLE COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE SERVICES

**NFCC COMMISSIONED REPORT: INDEPENDENT CHALLENGE AND SUPPORT PANEL****THIS REPORT IS FOR INFORMATION**

REPORT APPROVED BY CHIEF FIRE OFFICE FIN MONAHAN  
PRESENTING OFFICER ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER ALISON REED,  
DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE SERVICES

**SUMMARY**

The Independent Challenge and Support Panel was established at the request of the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) to provide scrutiny, challenge, support and advice to the NFCC on its culture and inclusion improvement work, including delivery against the NFCC Culture Action Plan.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Commissioners review the report and discuss resulting impacts for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

**1 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Independent Challenge and Support Panel was established in July 2023.
- 1.2 The report has been published on the NFCC website, together with a letter from the panel Chair, Anthea Sully, and a response to the Panel from NFCC Chair, Mark Hardingham, as part of NFCC's commitment to keeping members and partners informed of the continuing work with fire and rescue services (FRSs) towards safe and inclusive places to work.
- 1.3 Reporting back on its findings, the panel emphasised the need for disruptive change to ensure FRSs become more open and inclusive workplaces. The Panel's report also highlights the need for sustained focus in the coming years, warning that the scale of the challenge demands courageous leadership willing to break from traditional ways of working.

- 1.4 The Panel's report recognises the work being undertaken by the NFCC and FRS leadership in driving improvements and supporting services in tackling culture, inclusion and misconduct challenges. While noting progress, the report says that much more remains to be done, requiring committed and values-driven leadership.
- 1.5 The Panel undertook research and reviewed conclusions from a number of published papers and materials and the conclusion reached by the Panel is that the sector is institutionally racist, misogynistic and homophobic.

## **2 ISSUE / PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 Commissioners note the content of the report, in particular, the messaging arising out of it, which places emphasis on the need for radical action to be taken to stop racism, misogyny, and other forms of criminal and unacceptable behaviour in the workplace.

## **3 IMPLICATIONS**

### **3.1 Community and Environment**

- 3.1.1 The Morris Report identifies impact on the community.

### **3.2 Regulatory, Strategy and Policy**

- 3.2.1 The Morris Report identified improvements that were needed to improve the culture within South Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

### **3.3 Resources, Assets and Delivery**

- 3.3.1 There are no immediate impacts.

## **4 EVALUATION & CONCLUSIONS**

- 4.1 The report highlights a pressing need for change, as identified through a number of existing independent reviews and reports. The report states that whilst progress has been made, the pace is too slow, and progressive action is not consistent.
- 4.2 The Service is on its own journey of cultural change, however in light of this latest report, it should consider the good practice highlighted and undertake a gap analysis to ensure it incorporates learning into its current programme of activity.

## 5 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 That Commissioners review the report and discuss resulting impacts for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	ACO Alison Reed. Director of People Services
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<b>Appendices</b>	
Appendix 1	Independent Challenge and Support Panel Closing Report
Appendix 2	Letter from Anthea Sully to Mark Hardingham, February 2025
Appendix 3	Response letter Mark Hardingham to Anthea Sully, February 2025

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## APPENDIX 1

**Independent Challenge and Support Panel Closing Report**

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## Introduction and background

The independent Challenge and Support Panel was established at the request of the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) to provide external scrutiny, challenge, support and advice to NFCC on its culture and inclusion improvement work, including delivery against the [NFCC Culture Action Plan](#).

NFCC is an independent membership association and the professional voice of the UK Fire and Rescue Service (FRS), comprised of a Council of UK Chief Fire Officers and has a unique role in representing FRS at a national level. NFCC plays a key leadership role in providing FRSs with the tools and guidance to support and enable culture change, however it is not NFCC's role to deliver culture change at a local level. Further, NFCC is just one organisation in a much broader fire and rescue system.

Whilst NFCC is a UK-wide body, and much of this report will resonate with those FRSs in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, many of the national functions and people the Panel spoke with had roles supporting English FRS, and not those across the rest of the UK. The panel did not engage with the Governments, advisors, inspectorate, or senior leaders directly from those devolved FRS.

The panel was chaired by Anthea Sully, outgoing Chief Executive of White Ribbon UK. Other panel members were:

- Alex Johnson QFSM: Former Chief Fire Officer; Vice Chair and Patron of Women in the Fire Service.
- Baljit Ubhey OBE: Director of Strategy and Policy, Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)
- Eimear Meredith-Jones: Deloitte Partner - Culture and Transformation<sup>1</sup>
- Professor Katrin Hohl OBE: Academic, City St George's University of London - Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)
- Sal Naseem: Former Regional Director IOPC; Strategic advisor EDI; Assistant Director Birmingham City Council.
- Sue Fish OBE, QPM: Former Chief Constable; Consultant - transformational change, leadership and equality.

As panel members, we were invited because, collectively, we are different in terms of our construct, backgrounds, perspectives and experiences, and we all shared the same passion and focus to ensure the fire and rescue service provides the best possible response and experience to the public, firefighters and all FRS personnel, especially those who find themselves in a minority.

As a panel we met 11 times between July 2023 and January 2025. We have received support from NFCC's senior leaders, with meetings attended by:

- Mark Hardingham - NFCC Chair;
- Susannah Hancock - NFCC Chief Executive;
- Chief Fire Officer Wayne Bowcock - NFCC Leadership Lead;
- Chief Fire Officer Kathryn Billing - NFCC Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Lead<sup>2</sup>; and
- Chief Fire Officer Rob MacDougall - NFCC People Programme Executive Lead.

Individually we also met with the above-named NFCC senior leaders, outside of formal panel meetings, to share further input. Further, we were invited to attend NFCC events to deliver keynote speeches. Anthea Sully presented at NFCC's Culture and Inclusion Conference (July 2024), and Sal Naseem presented at NFCC's Spring Conference (April 2024).

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<sup>1</sup> Eimear Meredith-Jones was an original member of the panel, but for personal reasons was unable to attend for the majority of the meetings.

<sup>2</sup> To note, CFO Kath Billing has since stepped down as the NFCC National Lead but continued to attend and support the Panel meetings.

Focus:

Our panel meetings focused on key topics and themes, including leadership, misconduct, recruitment and training, governance and accountability and, most significantly, listening to voices of those with lived experience. We also held a session focused on the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase Two report and its implications for organisational culture. As panel members we individually conducted an informal one-day visit to three fire and rescue services. These were London, Greater Manchester and West Midlands.

During our work we recognised the importance of engaging with key stakeholders from across the sector to hear a range of perspectives. Over the term of the panel, we invited the following individuals to attend meetings to deliver inputs:

- Andy Roe KFSM, London Fire Commissioner;
- Representatives from Women in the Fire Service;
- Representatives from the Asian Fire Service Association;
- Roy Wilsher OBE QFSM, HM Inspector of Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS); and
- Sarah Gawley, Home Office Director Fire and Major Events.

Anthea Sully also met with the Fire Minister Rt Hon Dame Diana Johnson DBE MP to discuss the work and findings of the panel. The Minister welcomed the work of the panel, and its importance given her previous involvement with this work as the Chair of the Home Affairs Select Committee and now in her ministerial role.

Information:

We have received and reviewed a wide range of information, listened to evidence given at Parliamentary Select Committee hearings and heard from the above-named people in relation to a range of different aspects of misconduct, culture and inclusion in the FRS. We have used this information to inform our independent views and have remained intentionally high-level and strategic in our considerations. This final report is not intended to provide a detailed review of culture in FRSs, nor to provide an exhaustive and tactical list of actions, but rather it outlines our independent views and reflections as a panel, based on the information we have received and the context in which we have operated.

As a panel it has not been our role to commission academic research or undertake independent reviews of FRSs. This quantitative analysis and evidence already exist, in part, and we have reviewed it. Our role has been one of triangulating what we have read, with what we have heard during our meetings and external forums, culminating in our own qualitative analysis and professional reflections.

A copy of the Panel's Terms of Reference can be found at **Annex A**.

NFCC Culture Action Plan:

The independent panel was established at the same time as the launch of the [NFCC Culture Action Plan](#) in July 2023, which followed some highly critical reports into culture and inclusion in FRSs and calls for action from both inside and outside the sector.

We have reviewed progress against the NFCC Culture Action Plan at a high level, including updates and presentations on key actions including the development of the NFCC Culture Dashboard Methodology and the Challenging Behaviour toolkit, which were co-designed with FRSs and other national partners. One year into the plan NFCC produced a [Culture Action Plan update report](#) which was shared with us.

From what we have reviewed in our meetings and from this report it is evident that progress is being made in delivering against the Culture Action Plan. In addition, following our scrutiny and feedback to NFCC on the importance of listening to, and acting upon, the voices of those with lived experience, NFCC has included an additional workstream within the Culture Action Plan on Lived Experience and established a lived experience panel.

As NFCC comes to the end of the first phase of their action plan, we have asked that the actions within this panel report form a core part of the second phase, and that this second phase be strategic, sustainable and long term in its ambition and reach, with measurable outcomes of success.

We have also asked NFCC to work with key national partners to deliver on our calls for action and to set out, in their phase two Culture Plan, how they will do this with a clear timeline for delivery. NFCC has confirmed they are committed to doing this. We have asked NFCC to continue to publish progress against the recommendations via their website, so it is available to all partners and the public. In addition, we have asked NFCC to consider how they will continue to use external Challenge and Support to inform its future culture and inclusion work and response to this report.

#### Finally:

Whilst we have seen evidence of positive practice in the FRSs we visited and seen and heard the work that NFCC is doing to support positive culture change, there continues to be too many people who are let down by poor cultures, inconsistent standards and inappropriate behaviours that too often remain unchallenged. Much more needs to be done across the sector to deliver the step change that the public, those who work for FRSs, in particular women, people of colour and those with other protected characteristics need.

NFCC needs to maintain the work at pace, doing so with national partners including the Home Office, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS), Local Government Association (LGA), Trade Unions and representative bodies and more widely to bring about the change needed. This work needs to be properly resourced, at both a local and national level to deliver and sustain change.

In conclusion, as a panel, we believe that radical action is needed to stop racism, misogyny and other forms of criminal and unacceptable behaviour in the workplace. This action will need to disrupt and challenge more traditional ways of working and ask leaders to work differently and outside of their familiar patterns. This change is critical to ensuring that FRSs are open and inclusive places to work, better reflecting the diverse communities they serve. The National Fire Chiefs Council has a key role to play, alongside their membership, in leading this change.

## The Panel at work - Key themes:

As a panel, we have focused on a small number of key strategic themes:

- The case for change
- Leadership
- Voices of lived experience
- Psychological Safety and speaking up
- Managing misconduct
- Governance and accountability
- Training and recruitment
- The Grenfell Tower Fire Inquiry Phase 2 report in the context of culture and inclusion

Under each theme, we set out 'what we heard' and 'what we discussed'.

### 1. The case for change

What we heard:

- There is a pressing need for change, as identified through a growing number of independent reviews and reports and through HMICFRS, including in their thematic reports on Values and Culture, and Misconduct<sup>3</sup>.
- Whilst progress has been made, the pace has been slow, and progressive action has been applied inconsistently. Too many people are still being let down.
- The diversity of firefighters and those in leadership positions continues to be well below proportionality compared to the general population. As of 31 March 2024, 9.3% (2,987) of firefighters employed by Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) were women. On the same day 5.4% (1,701) of firefighters employed by FRAs stated their ethnicity were from an ethnic minority. Whilst the diversity of the workforce increases each year, the pace of increase is very slow. To an extent, this is impacted by a significant reduction in the number of UK firefighters in the last 10 years<sup>4</sup>, and very low turnover of operational firefighters and officers. However, even in that context more needs to be done to accelerate a diverse workforce, and especially those in leadership roles.
- Culture change is also about hearts and minds; about those on the frontline seeing and experiencing the benefits a positive culture brings for everyone. But it is clear to the panel that the case for change has not yet been sufficiently made, or actioned, by all fire leaders. Too many FRS staff still don't understand why culture change and a more inclusive workplace is important or relevant to them.

What we discussed:

- Whilst there is significant learning we can take from other sectors, including policing and the NHS, as a panel (despite initially thinking otherwise) we concluded that there is a uniqueness to the fire sector that makes culture improvement work distinct and different to other sectors. This includes:

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<sup>3</sup> [HMICFRS Spotlight report on Values and Culture](#)  
[HMICFRS Standards of behaviour: the handling of misconduct in fire and rescue services](#)  
[Independent Culture Review of London Fire Brigade](#)  
[Independent review into the workplace culture of Dorset & Wiltshire fire and rescue service](#)  
[South Wales FRS Culture Review](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Fire and rescue workforce and pensions statistics: England, year ending March 2023 - GOV.UK](#)

- a lack of national infrastructure and investment across the sector to support culture change;
- the unique FRS watch and on-call fire station system, with each watch/station having its own 'culture', creating multiple sub-cultures in an FRS;
- national consistency being harder to achieve because of significant local devolution;
- public confidence in fire, whilst reportedly by HMICFRS as slightly less than it was in previous years, is for the most part good and certainly not as low as it is for most other public services. Whilst this level of confidence is welcomed, it can make it harder to press home the case for change.
- that culture issues in FRSs are, for the most part, centred on how FRS staff treat each other in and outside of the workplace, particularly those with protected characteristics, rather than issues in relation to the service delivered to the public, albeit the two cannot be entirely divorced from one another.
- The [Fire Core Code of Ethics](#) should be at the heart of every FRS. FRSs need to ensure their recruitment, retention, promotion and recognition processes are values-led, values-driven, and values-weighted.
- The role of Trade Unions and representative bodies in leading and supporting culture change is critical. In such a strongly unionised public service, they must be an active and positive partner.
- It is likely that there will need to be legislative change and that securing time on the legislative timetable is a challenge for fire and rescue service matters given it has limited political attention. Whilst the sector waits for legislative change, Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) have a key role to play in providing local scrutiny and support.
- Culture should not be treated separately from leadership. Leaders at all levels should be accountable and responsible for culture within their organisation.

## 2. Leadership

What we heard:

- Whilst some fire leaders are providing clear and visible leadership, there remains inconsistent degrees of understanding and commitment to improving culture by some senior leaders. The evidence we heard and read led us to conclude that not every leader understands the importance or acknowledges the extent of the national problem.
- It is critical that impactful, values-based leadership is embedded across FRSs to make the step change needed from the first line of leadership through to Chief Fire Officers, their governing bodies, and into the national partners who support fire and rescue services.
- Leadership programmes need to focus as much on inclusion as they do on operational and strategic competence. There are questions about whether the right amount and the right access to leadership training is in place across fire to do this.
- Fire leaders need to have visible, active and engaged support and the backing of local and national political governance in their drive for culture change.
- Some senior leaders who have taken a high-profile role, challenged misconduct and led culture change have experienced significant levels of abuse and harassment.

What we discussed:

- It is imperative that those who hold senior leadership positions in FRSs and across all national fire and rescue sector bodies, must always lead by example and uphold the highest values. Senior leaders must live and breathe the behaviours the public and staff would expect, in line with the Core Code of Ethics.
- There is an inherent challenge that leaders who have been working in the sector for many years could be seen as part of the problem (and indeed some may be) and whether all senior leaders across the sector recognise the urgent need for change. For example, they may not have previously called out unacceptable behaviour when they saw it or have become complacent with, or overly accustomed to, ingrained ways of working that are not conducive to creating safe and inclusive cultures.
- There is a gap between leaders who live their values in line with inclusion and those who operate in line with exclusionary values. The sector requires strong, inclusive values-led leadership.
- There needs to be more leaders across the system who are prepared to be 'disruptors' - increasing their cultural curiosity, calling things out that need changing; challenging assumptions; asking why; recognising that if the sector carries on doing what has always been done, little will change. To strengthen this happening and being commonplace, there needs to be support structures in place for those who 'disrupt' and the processes in place to support and enable them to do so.
- NFCC is a membership organisation, but it also needs to be prepared to act as a disruptor and pose challenge and questions back to members. We asked NFCC to consider how it could act as a disruptor around culture change, and to consider how best to build this into NFCC leadership programmes and culture work moving forward.
- Senior leaders must instil impactful, values-led leadership at every level of their organisation and establish a culture in their FRS where they proactively seek out issues of concern and misconduct, rather than waiting for victims to report.
- We have concerns about the disturbing instances of online abuse and harassment directed towards female leaders and those with protected characteristics.

### 3. Voices of lived experience

What we heard:

- We met with colleagues from Women in the Fire Service (WFS) and the Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA) and heard first-hand about their experiences. We are grateful for their openness, honesty and courage in speaking about their experiences of harassment, abuse and discrimination in the workplace, both historic and recent.
- The key themes from the lived experiences shared were:
  - Use of misogynistic language and treatment towards women in the fire service.
  - Microaggressions and racist comments from colleagues.
  - The challenge as a woman to be your whole self at work and the need to 'fit in'.
  - Feelings of isolation because you do not see a reflection of yourself in a service that lacks diversity.
  - Inability to recruit and retain colleagues from marginalised communities.
  - Inadequate responses by managers and senior leaders to misconduct allegations.
  - Inconsistent approaches by managers to investigations and a lack of transparency.

- Women are reluctant to share and report misconduct issues due to fear of retaliation.
- Hierarchical nature of FRS makes it difficult to raise concerns and be heard.
- Employers not taking decisive action when a concern is raised - 'ball is put in victim's court' on what should happen.
- Colleagues not challenging racist and inappropriate comments made by members of the public.
- Systems are part of the problem due to the structural nature of the fire service, but it is individuals that cause the problem.
- Negative perceptions of some culture and inclusion training.
- The cumulative impact of the experiences described on an individual resulting in exhaustion, burn out, withdrawal and ultimately leaving the service. The cost of this in human (and business) terms is significant.

*"The vast majority of people in the service are amazing, and it is an amazing job, sadly it is down to a few individuals who ruin it. It is these few individuals that need to be dealt with, rather than 'blanket' the whole group."* - Lived Experience Voice

*"People have shared stories of sexual harassment and these victims 'absolutely won't report' due to the fear of retaliation, and it is only by 'chance' that women are getting the outcomes they deserve."* - Lived Experience Voice

*"Everything has changed in 30 years, but also nothing has changed."* - Lived Experienced Voice

*"Feeling that you have to be 'twice as good as everyone else' - to 'survive' and 'to prove yourself'."* - Lived Experienced Voice

*"There was a perception the incident went wrong just because a woman went in first".* - Lived Experienced Voice

#### What we discussed:

- We were shocked and disturbed by what we heard. The experiences shared were very distressing. Those who spoke had suffered harassment, abuse, discrimination and more. In addition, we were concerned that in some instances what we heard suggested that due process had not taken place. Whilst some of what we heard was related to historic experiences, we also heard about examples of these behaviours and actions continuing in 2024.
- Significant concerns that those who shared their lived experiences had also been victimised in their services for speaking out and reporting instances of misconduct, harassment and discrimination.
- It was apparent that complaints are seen as disloyalty by some in FRS cultures; the cost can be high for those victims who do report.
- Concerns about the impunity with which perpetrators act, and in some cases the protection they are afforded at all levels.
- Our strong view that outcomes from gross misconduct hearings should be made public, accepting that FRS are currently working within the constraints of employment law as it currently stands. If the outcome is kept private, as seems to be the current limitation in many FRSs, there is less opportunity for lessons to be learnt and for confidence in the system to be improved. As it stands, the often-legal requirement for confidential outcomes reinforces the views that perpetrators are protected, and victims punished, which the panel believe is fundamentally wrong.
- Victims should be made aware of the outcome of an investigation or hearing at the earliest opportunity

- There needs to be clear consequences for perpetrators and for those who try to dismiss, refuse to acknowledge or investigate, or victim blame.

#### 4. Psychological safety and speaking up

What we heard:

- Individuals who are brave enough to speak up about their experiences often experience a form of retaliation as a result, this is in addition to the harm they have already experienced. The retaliation can manifest in the form of disassociation by colleagues within the work setting or socially, or the individual finds themselves unable to progress in their career or subject to their own complaint.
- All staff need to have confidence that they can report incidents and complaints confidentially and safely, without fear of reprisals; the current complaint systems do not appear to consistently support this fundamental principle.

What we discussed:

- Every FRS should have a culture where staff are encouraged to speak up and feel psychologically safe to do so.
- The importance of supporting those who have spoken up, to ensure they are not subjected to retaliation in any form.
- The need for protection of advocates who speak up on the behalf of others.
- That there is often too heavy a burden on victims to respond and take responsibility for what has happened, and instead the burden should fall on FRSs as employers to support their personnel. FRSs need greater clarity on the threshold of reporting crimes to their local police forces and how to access victim and specialist support services for their employees. This is a gap that NFCC and FRSs must address.

#### 5. Managing misconduct

What we heard:

- Examples of misconduct cases that have been badly managed.
- Misconduct processes are often lengthy and bureaucratic.
- The system is not victim-centred, nor does it provide them with a form of closure once the misconduct investigation is concluded, due to the outcomes usually needing to be treated as confidential, which only 'protects' the perpetrator.

What we discussed:

- The risk that if misconduct cases are not well managed, which reaffirms the message to victims that they cannot trust those in power to deal robustly with misconduct.
- The misconduct system needs a radical overhaul, with a need for the sector to develop a more professional, nationally consistent misconduct system, based on evolving good practice.
- The policing misconduct model should not be replicated in the fire and rescue service. Whilst it is better resourced and more comprehensive, it is seen by the panel to be overly complex, lengthy and bureaucratic, and similarly failing victims whilst far too frequently protecting perpetrators.
- Managers need to improve how they oversee misconduct cases and ensure that they are managed at the right level, before resorting to formal discipline. If more "minor"

misconduct cases were addressed earlier, then it is potentially less likely that serious misconduct would occur. Failure by managers and leaders to intervene leads to a culture of impunity to inappropriate or criminal behaviours.

- Investigations into more serious complaints need to be undertaken by independent, trained investigators rather than often being loaded onto managers who are less experienced in these matters and who already have existing, and usually very busy organisational roles. To facilitate this, FRSs would benefit from having their own dedicated, properly resourced, Professional Standards functions, as is the case in policing. However, to enable and sustain this, additional long term government funding would need to be forthcoming.
- Whilst in most circumstances when serious misconduct is disclosed, it is acted upon immediately, there are occasions when it is not. This needs to be addressed and backed by strong leadership. The failure to act on serious misconduct is serious misconduct and needs to be recognised as such within the FRS.

## 6. Fire governance, accountability, and scrutiny

What we heard:

- We were surprised to learn there is no single, nationally consistent model of fire governance. Instead, there are multiple models including stand alone and combined fire authorities; fire authorities based within county councils; Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners (PFCCs) and Mayors, with each model having different decision-making approaches, different delegations and different scrutiny practices.
- Some of those in fire governance positions lack skills and competencies in providing effective scrutiny and oversight of misconduct and complaints processes.
- That without effective and strong governance, poor culture can flourish.
- HMICFRS lack formal powers to inspect fire governance, however we learned that the Home Office could commission HMICFRS to undertake a thematic inspection on fire governance, and HMICFRS will soon be considering the impact of fire authority governance on FRS as part of their regular inspections.
- As highlighted in NFCC's presentation on their Culture Dashboard toolkit, there is no national minimum culture and inclusion data set or survey, therefore no ability to compare this data across FRSs, benchmark good practice or measure in any comprehensive way cultural progress, or not, across all FRS.

What we discussed:

- Under whichever governance model an FRS finds itself, there is the need for CFOs to be accountable to the public, and the public rightly expect the highest levels of service and standards.
- Those in governance positions have a critical role to play in delivering this scrutiny and accountability on behalf of the public, and they need to be trained and equipped to do so.
- Those that hold CFOs to account also need to demonstrate values led leadership and governance and a positive commitment to culture and inclusion.
- There is currently no body with powers/jurisdiction to challenge the decision-making of Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs).
- It is key that CFOs are scrutinised and challenged on the cultures within their services to identify areas for improvement and how to prevent current or future failings. However, the focus should primarily be on learning and making positive changes, rather than apportioning blame.

- Those whose role it is to scrutinise and hold CFOs to account must have access to a range of reliable information, data and evidence and have the knowledge and skills necessary to scrutinise effectively.
- Effective internal FRS governance, with a constructive learning culture, will also play a vital role in enabling positive cultural change to take place.

## 7. Training, development and recruitment

What we heard:

- The fire sector is focused primarily on operational competence. Whilst the importance of this is not disputed, values-based leadership and the competence of leaders to understand, value and drive forward improvements to culture and inclusion is equally critical - yet not always given the prominence it needs.
- The common 'image' of a firefighter is, for the most part, of a white heterosexual male, turning out in a fire engine to fight fires. Whilst fighting fires is a core element of the work, we came to understand that the role of the firefighter is so much broader than this, involving areas such as search and rescue; water rescue; fire prevention; responding to road traffic collisions; fire protection; national and local resilience; supporting vulnerable people and so much more. The diversity of the service needs to be much more reflective of the communities it serves and the wide range of services it delivers. Currently this is not the case.
- Whilst NFCC has developed a range of leadership development programmes, we believe these would benefit from a much stronger focus on positive action programmes specifically aimed at enabling and supporting those with protected characteristics in the fire service.

What we discussed:

- If there was a greater understanding among the public of the range of roles that firefighters fulfil, this could help attract a wider and more diverse pool of talent. We asked whether there were opportunities for national campaigns aimed at broadening public perceptions on the role of firefighters, as there has been in policing.
- The need for a greater emphasis on positive action as part of leadership transformation. This should include a specific positive action leadership development offering at all managerial levels and a greater focus on enabling and empowering under-represented groups to access leadership development opportunities, which should be evidenced by data.
- The need for everyone to be engaged in work and conversation around cultural change - engendering allyship is key. Without everyone engaged, there is a risk of some groups feeling marginalised.
- The sector needs people who are both culturally and operationally effective.
- Workforce culture and inclusion training must be personally impactful, delivered by those with credibility and prominently supported by those with influence.
- Training needs to be tailored to the context of the workforce, for example for neurodiverse cohorts or for those who prefer to learn in an operational discussion-based environment, rather than a structured office-based, or e-learning style.
- The value of taking learning from other sectors that NFCC can translate into practice, for example, on recruitment and retention processes and on professional development for women and for black and minority ethnic groups.

## Overview of the Grenfell Tower Fire Inquiry Phase 2 report in the context of culture and inclusion

What we heard and discussed:

- In our penultimate meeting we discussed the Grenfell Tower Inquiry report that had been published just a few weeks previously. We considered the links between the inquiry's findings and organisational culture across all those organisations with responsibility for building and fire safety, including fire and rescue services.
- The Grenfell Tower fire led to the tragic loss of 72 people. We spoke about the demographics of those who lived in the Tower, with a very high percentage of those who died from minority ethnic communities; almost half had disabilities; and a quarter were children.
- The Grenfell Tower Inquiry has been detailed and complex in its nature and the evidence and findings from the inquiry are clear and stark. We recognise that we can only touch the surface of some of the many complex, strategic culture and inclusion themes raised within.
- However, we are clear that the links between internal organisational culture and the service the public receive (for public services) are evident. The best services provided to the public come from those which have great internal organisational cultures and behaviours.
- The Grenfell Tower Inquiry has highlighted a clear example of wider societal problems and disparities in our communities. It is these inequalities that are swept into the fire and rescue service and have service delivery impacts. The demographics of those 72 people who so tragically lost their lives is clear evidence of this.
- We strongly encourage NFCC to continue to work with FRSs, Government and others to respond to both the Grenfell Tower Inquiry recommendations, but to also look deeply into the impact of organisational culture that runs through the inquiry findings, and to use that as a further catalyst for improvement in fire and rescue service culture.
- We look to NFCC to continue to use its voice clearly and strongly to make the case for change into Government as well as more widely on building and fire safety.

### The Panel at work - 'Call to action'

From the wealth of information we have read, we recognise it is already a crowded space with reports and recommendations, therefore in response to what we heard and discussed; we are proposing seven key actions. Whilst they are primarily aimed at NFCC, our calls to action go beyond the control and scope of NFCC, therefore stakeholder engagement and partnership working will be required to deliver them.

We have focussed our actions on those areas which we believe will have the greatest impact.

The panel calls on NFCC to:

#### 1. Listen to those with lived experience and act upon what they hear

*Why action is needed: Proactively seeking out opportunities to listen to the experiences of people who work in the FRS, particularly women, people of colour and wider protected characteristics, will ensure a wider diversity of perspectives and a better understanding of the key issues and enablers for positive change. Acting on*

*this feedback and using it to inform and develop NFCC workstreams will best enable NFCC to support FRSs to deliver positive culture change for everyone.*

This must include:

- Formalising arrangements for how NFCC engage with and listen to those with lived experience in the development of NFCC products, policies, and services. This could include co-production.
- Ensuring the voices of those with lived experience are heard, alongside and as part of, wider engagement with all FRS personnel.
- Sharing existing and developing new guidance with and for FRSs on how they can engage those with lived experience in the improvement and development of their local services.
- Actioning the learning from those with lived experience and ensuring there is accountability and governance to oversee that action is taken.

## **2. Build in positive action at every single stage of NFCC's Leadership Programmes, and CPD, supporting FRS to do the same.**

*Why action is needed: Leadership is an action not a position<sup>5</sup> and leaders need to be equipped with the skills and the confidence to take forward positive culture and inclusion improvement action within their role and their services. Ensuring there is diversity in leadership – that reflects the diversity of the workforce and the community the workforce serves – is key to ensuring positive action to improve culture and inclusion is driven forward in a way which has positive impacts for everyone.*

This must include:

- For every initiative, project and product, NFCC should consciously build in additional positive action activity and measures to ensure NFCC are drawing in more diverse representation.
- Work with FRS to develop bespoke positive action offerings for each level of their service and seek resources to support this.
- NFCC should ensure every leadership programme and CPD event they convene has a sufficient and appropriate focus on culture and inclusion. FRS should be encouraged to do the same.
- Supporting FRS to develop their understanding around positive action, including 'myth-busting' and promoting best practice and engendering meaningful allyship across the whole workforce.

## **3. Embed impactful, culturally informed, consistent values-based leadership across all FRSs.**

*Why action is needed: From the first line of leadership through to Chief Fire Officers, their governing bodies, and into the national partners who support fire and rescue services, **all** leaders have a responsibility to make the fire and rescue service inclusive and safe places to work.*

This must include:

- As a membership organisation, considering how NFCC could act as a disruptor to challenge as well as support the sector in driving forward culture change and how best to build this into NFCC leadership programmes.

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<sup>5</sup> Quote attributed to D. McGannon.

- Supporting FRSs to develop mechanisms to proactively seek out issues of concern and misconduct, rather than waiting for victims to report. This should include approaches to improving people's confidence and capability to be active bystanders.
- Seeking to influence government to strengthen harassment laws to mitigate against the harassment and abuse experienced by those working within the fire and rescue sector and the wider public sector.

#### **4. Continue to use independent, external scrutiny and support to inform NFCC's culture and inclusion work and response to this report.**

*Why action is needed: Addressing poor culture and inclusion across the sector is an ongoing priority for NFCC, therefore independent, external scrutiny and support needs to be continuous and not just be for a time bound period (i.e. on the conclusion of the panel).*

This must include:

- Scoping, and implementing, the best means for continual independent, external scrutiny and support of NFCC's culture and inclusion work. The agreed approach should be published on the NFCC website, so the public and sector are aware.

The panel calls on NFCC to work with national and local government and partners to:

#### **5. Develop mechanisms for improved scrutiny and accountability**

*Why action is needed: System-wide change requires system-wide action. Those who have a role in providing scrutiny, oversight and challenge to ensure that FRSs and CFOs are held accountable for their performance related to improving culture and inclusion must carry out their roles robustly and expertly and, in an evidence-based way.*

This must include:

- Ensuring there are robust processes and policies in place for those who oversee and scrutinise FRSs' performance relating to culture and misconduct issues.
- Ensuring that those whose role it is to scrutinise and hold FRSs and CFOs to account have access to a range of reliable information from a variety of sources to enable them to undertake their role effectively.
- Sharing best practice and learning on effective scrutiny.
- Enhanced compulsory culture and inclusion training to support those whose role it is to scrutinise and hold CFOs to account.
- Introducing greater clarity about the operational independence of CFOs, as set out in previous reform proposals, and for this to extend into respective roles for culture, inclusion and misconduct handling.
- HMICFRS continuing the upcoming extension of their inspections to include the impact of governance on the FRS operations, including on culture and inclusion.

#### **6. Develop a professional, nationally consistent misconduct system, based on good practice.**

*Why action is needed: Ensuring that there is a greater focus on the victim when handling misconduct cases, and challenging perpetrators, is fundamental to rebuilding trust and confidence in the misconduct system and ensuring that everyone can work in a safe environment.*

This must include:

- Ensuring there is a systemic, victim-centred approach to misconduct, with victims' rights, support needs and wishes considered at every stage of the misconduct process, and with safeguarding paramount. This should include having due regard to the [Code of Practice for Victims of Crime](#) for England and Wales, the [Victims Code for Scotland](#) and the [Victim Charter](#) in Northern Ireland.
- A misconduct system that focuses on the actions of the perpetrators and stopping their behaviours, recognising that failing to act on serious misconduct is serious misconduct.
- Creating transparent and consistent processes, including explicit processes that prevent retaliation towards victims who speak up. The retaliation may be committed by the perpetrator or those around them.
- The Fire Standards Board creating a strategic standard for the handling of misconduct cases.
- NFCC developing guidance for FRSs on how best they can support their staff who are victims of criminal offences within the workplace, including engagement with their local police forces and local victim support services.
- Support for those who have spoken up, including those advocating on behalf of others, and providing ongoing support where needed, to ensure they are not subjected to retaliation in any form.

**7. Establish arrangements, including resources, to support further academic research around culture and best practice in the fire sector to support improvements. This should be informed by the science of behaviour change.**

*Why action is needed: Developing a national research-informed and data-led approach for culture and inclusion is key to identifying good practice and areas of concern that may require improvement action in services and monitoring progress.*

This must include:

- Developing a national culture and inclusion performance dashboard across all FRS, to enable comparison, using both quantitative and qualitative data.
- Build on proposals relating to establishing a College of Fire and Rescue which should include values-based leadership, ethics, research and learning as key elements of the 'curriculum'.
- Consideration of a national culture staff survey of all FRS to inform future work and benchmark culture and inclusion performance across the FRS and in comparison, with other organisations.

## Conclusion

As a panel we have been impressed by the dedication and service of so many staff across FRSs who seek to make a difference to the public they serve. There is so much in these FRSs to be proud of. From our visits, we saw many positive cultures, effective leadership and supportive environments, which are in part the reason why the public continues to have a good level of trust and confidence in the sector.

However, the need for on-going and significant cultural improvement driven by impactful, values-based leadership is clear, and we do not underestimate how difficult this will be. The uniqueness of the fire and rescue service, with its watch systems, on-call retained stations, hierarchical structures, uniformed and non-uniformed teams, varying governance arrangements, low staff turnover, resource challenges, competing priorities, industrial

relations and multiple other stakeholders, pose additional challenges. These challenges are not entirely unique to the fire and rescue service; they exist across many parts of society and other organisations; however, these challenges can be overcome and must not be barriers to change.

In our considerations and research, the panel have read and heard discussion and conclusions about the systemic or institutional nature of racism, misogyny and homophobia in the fire service and other organisations. This has come from places including, evidence at the Select Committee, from correspondence to Government from the Chair of the Select Committee, from the London Fire Brigade independent culture review, from those we have spoken with who have lived experience, and in a similar context across other organisations.

From the work we have undertaken we would concur with these findings that the sector is institutionally racist, misogynistic and homophobic. We also see this reflected not just in fire and rescue services, but in the wider system that is the fire and rescue sector. We have formed this view because the current system, which includes leadership failings, unequal policies and processes, stretched resources and limited national infrastructure, contributes to unacceptable bias and negatively impact on and discriminate against marginalised individuals.

However, there is also so much, and so many people, in fire and rescue services to be proud of. The panel are confident that the sector is on a journey to improvement, and that it can and must improve further, and quickly.

NFCC and its membership must continue to play a key national leadership role in supporting and enabling change. We believe NFCC has grasped this challenge. NFCC is actively supporting FRS to address culture, inclusion and misconduct issues where they exist in services. We are clear that this needs to continue and the focus on culture and inclusion must remain a top priority. Ensuring a positive and inclusive culture, alongside proactive responses to misconduct, is integral to the operational performance of fire and rescue services, and at the heart of trust and confidence of the public in fire services.

## **Annex A - NFCC Independent Challenge and Support Panel: Culture and Inclusion Terms of Reference**

### **Purpose**

The Independent Challenge and Support Panel will provide scrutiny, oversight, challenge and support to the work of the NFCC Culture and Inclusion programme, action plan and more widely. This will include scrutiny and review of the impact of the NFCC work on improving outcomes for the people who work for fire and rescue services, and for the public.

The Panel will primarily provide challenge and support to the NFCC People, Culture and Leadership Co-ordinating Committee (PCLC) which is the committee responsible for the NFCC work around culture and inclusion.

### **Responsibilities:**

- Act as a critical friend, with an active and independent voice, highlighting issues and providing challenge and support to the NFCC culture and inclusion work and action plan.
- Provide scrutiny and review of progress against the action plan.
- Offer advice, challenge and ideas for innovation into the PCLCC.
- Working with the PCLCC, agree a shared baseline from which progress against the action plan can be measured.
- Be able to request updates and information on progress and developments.
- Meet regularly with the NFCC Chair and the PCLCC Chair to discuss progress.
- Have the ability to engage with stakeholders internally and externally who can offer feedback on the content and delivery of the programme, facilitated through the independent panel Chair.
- Be timebound, with an expectation that the work of the board will last for 18 months and conclude by January 2025. This will be reviewed towards the proposed end date to ensure that the Challenge and Support Panel has met its aims.

### **Out of scope:**

- The panel will not commission its own work but can route proposals and suggestions through the PCLCC and NFCC Chairs.
- The panel does not have decision making authority over NFCC business.

### **Independent Challenge and Support Panel: Core Membership**

Members of the challenge and support panel will be independent of Fire and Rescue services. This means that they will not be employed, either currently or recently, by a FRS, the NFCC or another sector related body.

This independence is important as it will enable the panel to provide open and transparent advice, challenge and support which will be independent from the sector and will draw in expertise, learning and experience from different perspectives.

The only exception to this is the proposed panel member with lived experience. Whilst this individual cannot be currently employed within the sector, they may have been previously employed.

**The panel will comprise of the following:**

- An independent Chair
- Approx. 5 other members drawn from backgrounds including:
  - Culture and transformation
  - EDI
  - Legal
  - HR
  - Lived experience

The Chair once identified will work with the NFCC in establishing the wider membership of the Board.

The chair may also wish to invite additional subject matter experts or other individuals to attend specific panel meetings as contributors.

**Frequency of meetings:**

The Challenge and Support Panel will meet at least quarterly, prior to the quarterly meetings of the PCLCC.

Additional meetings can be held at the request of the panel chair.

The panel will be able to review all papers going into the PCLCC meetings.

**Secretariat:**

The panel secretariat will be provided by the NFCC. Any papers for panel meetings will be shared one week in advance. The meeting will be minuted and shared with Challenge and Support Panel members within one week of the meeting.

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Mark Hardingham  
Chair National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC)  
c/o 71-75 Shelton Street  
Covent Garden  
London  
WC2H 9JQ

19 February 2025

Sent via email

Dear Mark,

I am writing as Chair of the Independent Challenge and Support Panel (the panel). After 18 months, the panel has concluded its work. Over our term we have provided scrutiny, oversight, challenge and support to NFCC's work on culture and inclusion, in line with our Terms of Reference.

From the panel's inception, we recognised that we needed to be brave in asking challenging questions of NFCC and put victims and those with lived experience at the heart of our discussions. We emphasised that we would put people before systems and institutions and that, where needed, we would be disruptive in our approach with you, recognising that if the sector carried on doing what has always been done, little would change, and the change would be too slow. As a panel I believe we have remained true to our values.

As Chair, I have been grateful for the open and honest meetings with you and your NFCC leadership team and staff; the engagement the panel has received from Chief Fire Officers and wider fire sector partners. On behalf of the whole panel, I want to thank the members of Women in the Fire Service, the Asian Fire Service Association and other FRS staff who took the time to share with us their powerful and courageous testimonies. The panel were also pleased to have had the opportunity to visit and witness firsthand the positive leadership and hard work taking place in three fire and rescue services to improve their culture and inclusion.

However, as a panel, we believe that radical action is needed to stop racism, misogyny and other forms of criminal and unacceptable behaviour in the workplace. This action will need to disrupt and challenge more traditional ways of working and ask leaders to work differently and outside of their familiar patterns. This change is critical to ensuring that FRSs are open and inclusive places to work, better reflecting the diverse communities they serve. The NFCC has a key role to play, alongside their membership, in leading this change.

Our engagement with front line staff, middle managers and senior leaders during the visits we made has given us hope that with committed, values driven leadership, the sector can and will improve. NFCC is playing a key national leadership role in supporting and enabling this change. We have seen that NFCC is actively supporting fire and rescue services to address culture, inclusion and misconduct issues, and we are clear that this needs to continue and the focus on culture and inclusion must remain a top priority for the years ahead. We do not underestimate how challenging this will be. It will take courageous leadership and require senior leaders to be willing to do things differently by rooting themselves in tangible action and not just rhetoric. People are suffering right now because of these issues, and as a panel we want everyone to share an impatience for change.

Whilst there was no expectation in the panel's Terms of Reference to produce a closing report, we wanted to capture in writing what we have read, heard and discussed over the last 18 months and share our professional, independent reflections to ensure that momentum is maintained and action taken as a result. The purpose of the report is not intended to provide a detailed review of culture in fire and rescue services, but rather it

outlines our independent views based on the information we have received and the context in which we have operated.

We conclude the report with 'calls to action' for NFCC, as the organisation that commissioned us as a panel. We recognise that our calls to action go beyond the control and scope of NFCC, therefore stakeholder engagement and partnership working will be essential to deliver them. A copy of our closing report is included with this letter and for the purposes of transparency and accountability we felt, and we know you agree, it was important for it to be published.

You have confirmed that the NFCC will be publishing the next phase of its culture action plan in April 2025. We expect to see the calls for action clearly reflected in the plan and look forward to following the progress made through regular NFCC reporting on your website.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anthea Sully'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Anthea' written in a larger, more prominent script than the surname 'Sully'.

Anthea Sully

Chair Independent Challenge and Support Panel



**NFCC**  
National Fire  
Chiefs Council

National Fire Chiefs Council Ltd  
71-75 Shelton Street  
London, United Kingdom  
WC2H 9JQ

Anthea Sully  
Independent Challenge and Support Panel Chair  
19 February 2025  
Sent via email

Dear Anthea,

### **Independent Challenge and Support Panel Final Report**

As Chair of the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) I would like to thank you and the members of the independent Challenge and Support Panel for your work over the last 18 months. Your challenge, support and insights have been exceptional. They have already had a significant impact on our work moving forward and will continue to do so.

I acknowledge receipt of your report which clearly captures the discussions that have been held, and details the Panel's considerations, insights and reflections, which have been invaluable to our work around culture and inclusion. The report's calls for action are clear and compelling. NFCC accepts them all and is committed to delivering against them, working in partnership with fire and rescue services (FRS) and national sector partners.

As the first phase of the NFCC Culture Action Plan nears completion, we will be publishing a further progress report on our website in April. This will be alongside proposals for the next phase of work to continue to support culture improvements now established across FRSs. This next phase will include work to address the calls for action set out in your report.

I am pleased that positive progress has been made in delivering against the Culture Action Plan and want to acknowledge the hard work and commitment of many people across FRSs who have been instrumental in delivering positive transformation and change. However, as your report rightly acknowledges, there is still a significant way to go in ensuring that every FRS is an open, inclusive, diverse

and welcoming place for all staff and for the communities they serve. As the Panel has identified, inclusion is still not something felt by everyone in the FRS and change is not happening fast enough or consistently enough.

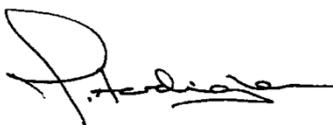
As a result of the Panel's deliberations, NFCC has already started to implement new work, including:

- Establishing a Lived Experience Advocacy Forum. The Forum was first launched at NFCC's Culture and Inclusion conference in July 2024 and has met three times to date. It is comprised of organisations that represent those with lived experience and provides an important forum to ensure NFCC listens to the voices of those with lived experience in the development of our products, tools and guidance.
- Developing guidance for FRS on how they can support victims of criminal offences within their FRS to access victim support services and be more confident in reporting incidents to their local police force. Publication is scheduled for Spring 2025.
- Commissioning Active Bystander and Inclusion Ally training opportunities to support the launch and implementation of new NFCC Addressing Sexual Harassment and Race Equality toolkits. These new toolkits are scheduled for publication in April 2025.
- As part of NFCC's work to support Officer Pathway Development, we are establishing a working group to develop guidance for positive action development programmes for officers and those in every leadership role.
- In response to the HMICFRS Misconduct thematic report, we are developing support, guidance and tools to help FRS improve their misconduct processes and practice.
- Scoping options with blue light partners for developing a national culture staff survey with a view to progress this work in 2025/26.

Thank you again for the work of the panel and for the challenge and support provided. Supporting FRSs to improve culture and inclusion remains one of the highest priorities for NFCC and me personally as it's Chair.

We are committed to publishing progress against the panel's calls for action and will keep you and panel members updated on developments as we move forward with this work.

Yours sincerely,



**Mark Hardingham CBE QFSM**  
Chair  
National Fire Chiefs Council

## **THIS REPORT IS NOT EXEMPT AND IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN**

**SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**

AGENDA ITEM NO 9  
27 MARCH 2025

PEOPLE COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE SERVICES

### **AGILE WORKING FRAMEWORK**

#### **THIS REPORT IS FOR INFORMATION**

REPORT APPROVED BY DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE SERVICES, ALISON REED  
PRESENTING OFFICER – HEAD OF PEOPLE SERVICES, LISA SHROLL

#### **SUMMARY**

Gov.Wales website defines agile working as ‘working outside of a traditional workplace or central place of work for all or for part of an individual’s working hours’. It includes working at home and close to home in your local community.

This report provides a status update on an “Agile Working” project within SWFRS, initiated as a response to feedback from multiple sources, including the 2024 Morris Culture Review, Staff complaints, Union feedback, Welsh Government initiatives, Exit Interviews, recruitment/candidate feedback, the Hydra 10KV event (2023/24), and the Policies and Procedures Working Group (originally convened following publication of the Morris Report and recommendations).

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Commissioners note the content of the report and are assured of progress on the Morris Report paragraph ref 108, 109, 110 and the intent to develop a ‘Future Workplace Strategy’ to ensure SWFRS remains a modern, adaptable, and inclusive employer, capable of attracting and retaining a diverse workforce.

## **1. ISSUE**

- 1.1 Feedback from current employees, potential employees and exiting employees consistently highlights concerns regarding rigid working practices, lack of recognition for modern workplace practices, and inconsistency in flexible working arrangements. However, it is also recognised that not all roles can benefit from agile working due to their operational nature.

Key themes include:

- Morris Culture Review & Staff Complaints: Concerns about inconsistency in work flexibility and lack of autonomy.
- Union Feedback: Calls for a fairer, more inclusive approach to work-life balance.
- Welsh Government Initiatives: Commitment to Fair Work and Wellbeing in Work, advocating for flexible working.
- Exit Interviews: Flexibility cited as a key factor in staff retention challenges.
- Hydra 10KV Event (2023/24): Identified agile working as a strategic priority for future workforce resilience.
- Policies & Procedures Working Group: Supporting the development of a formalised Agile Working Procedure to ensure fairness and consistency.

Following the Morris Report, a working group had been established early 2024 to look at Service Procedures. This group commenced a review of agile working, however that review was halted due to extenuating changes of priority, and the review was subsequently re-launched under the 'Step Forward Project – A Safe and Positive Environment' which is adopting a three phased approach.

## 1.2 PHASE ONE – INTERNAL AGILE WORKING FRAMEWORK

Trial agile working within the existing workforce, building on established flexible working procedures such as flexitime and core hours. Explore the feasibility of hybrid working and remote options where operationally viable. Gather feedback to refine policies while ensuring productivity, well-being, and service delivery remain effective - focusing on:

- Hybrid & Flexible Working Options: Where operationally and organisationally viable, staff will have greater autonomy over when and where they work, while maintaining service standards.
- Consistent Application Through Line Manager Training: All managers will receive training to ensure fair and transparent implementation, reducing inconsistencies.
- Trust & Accountability: A shift towards measuring productivity by outcomes rather than visibility and hours spent in the office.
- Work-Life Balance & Wellbeing: Supporting staff retention and engagement, while reducing absenteeism.
- Updated Policies & Digital Infrastructure: Ensuring IT systems, performance measures, and processes support a modern, agile workforce.

### 1.3 PHASE TWO – EXPANSION AND INCLUSION

Extend agile working to other SWFRS locations to foster collaboration between Grey and Green Book staff and explore the needs of Gen Z and future talent by researching modern workplace expectations and piloting additional flexible working models, such as Compressed hours, a four-day week or nine-day fortnight.

This phase will require development of a structured framework to ensure operational effectiveness is not compromised, including:

- Technology Upgrades: Ensuring IT systems are fit for purpose on all stations.
- Booking & Capacity Management: Implementing a station booking system to prevent overcrowding or disruption to station operations.
- Clear Guidelines & Expectations: Defining when and how remote working from stations can take place to maintain efficiency and fairness.

### 1.4 PHASE THREE: FUTURE WORKPLACE STRATEGY

Use insights from Phases One and Two to develop a long-term agile working strategy, integrating successful initiatives alongside existing flexitime and core hours policies.

This will ensure SWFRS remains a modern, adaptable, and inclusive employer, capable of attracting and retaining a diverse workforce

### 1.5 ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION PLAN

As many roles within SWFRS cannot fully benefit from agile working, it is essential to ensure transparent communication and engagement with all staff. A communication plan will need to be developed to:

- Acknowledge the limitations of agile working for operational roles and avoid perceptions of unfairness.
- Clearly articulate the rationale behind agile working and its intended benefits for the organisation as a whole.
- Engage with all staff groups, ensuring those who cannot work remotely still feel valued and included.
- Gather ongoing feedback through both phases to ensure any concerns or unintended impacts are addressed.

## 1.6 NEXT STEPS

<b>Task</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
Consultation on the Agile Working Procedure to be completed.	14/03/2025	Currently out for consultation
Development of an Engagement & Communication Plan to ensure transparency.	14/03/2025	Work in Progress
Development of line manager training to ensure consistent application.	31/03/2025	Training designed; next phase is to roll out
Design of Phase Two framework, considering operational requirements.	30/09/2025	
Produce SWFRS “long-term agile working strategy”	31/03/2026	Based on outcomes from Phases I + II
3 monthly updates to be provided as implementation progresses.	Ongoing	

## 2. IMPLICATIONS

### 2.1 COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT

#### 2.1.1 Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)

Positive Impacts:

- Increases accessibility for employees with disabilities or caring responsibilities by allowing flexible work arrangements.
- Supports diverse working needs, improving recruitment and retention of underrepresented groups.
- Reduces bias in workplace culture by shifting focus from presenteeism to performance and outcomes.

Considerations:

- Ensure equal access to agile working opportunities, some roles may be less adaptable.
- Monitor for unintended barriers or disparities, such as digital exclusion for some employees.

#### 2.1.2 Welsh Language Compliance

- Maintain Welsh language provision in all communications, digital platforms, and customer-facing interactions.
- Ensure staff working remotely still have access to Welsh language training and support.

### 2.1.3 Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

#### Positive Impacts:

- Long-term well-being benefits through better work-life balance, reducing stress and absenteeism.
- Strengthens resilience in workforce planning, ensuring adaptability for future challenges.
- Enhances cultural well-being by allowing greater flexibility to participate in community activities.

#### Considerations:

- Agile working must support social connection to prevent isolation.
- Need to track well-being indicators to assess impact on long-term staff health.

### 2.1.4 Socio-Economic Duty

#### Positive Impacts:

- Expands employment opportunities for people from lower-income backgrounds by reducing location-based barriers.
- Supports cost savings (e.g., lower commuting costs, childcare flexibility).
- Can help decentralise economic activity by allowing work from different locations.

#### Considerations:

- Digital exclusion risks, ensure employees have equal access to technology and training.
- Ensure pay equity and job security are maintained for all employees, including frontline staff with fewer agile options.

### 2.1.5 Sustainability, Environmental & Carbon Reduction

#### Positive Impacts:

- Reduces carbon footprint by cutting down on commuting and office energy use.
- Supports more sustainable work practices through digital transformation.
- Potential for smaller office spaces, reducing resource consumption.

Considerations:

- Monitor and mitigate any unintended environmental costs, such as increased energy use in home settings.
- Ensure sustainable IT policies (e.g., energy-efficient remote working tools).

### 2.1.6 Safeguarding

Positive Impacts:

- Allows discreet reporting of safeguarding concerns, particularly for remote workers in sensitive roles.
- Supports more flexible safeguarding interventions through digital check-ins and training.

Considerations:

- Need clear policies on safeguarding reporting and escalation for remote workers.
- Ensure regular contact and well-being checks to prevent isolation or hidden risks.

### 2.1.7 Consultation & Communications

Positive Impacts:

- Improves inclusivity in decision-making by using digital engagement tools.
- Enables wider consultation to reach across teams, including those working remotely.

Considerations:

- Need structured two-way communication to maintain engagement and transparency.
- Ensure agile working does not lead to fragmented communication between office-based and remote staff.

### 2.1.8 Conclusion

An Agile Working Policy aligns well with SWFRS commitments under key legislation and policy frameworks. However, careful planning, monitoring, and mitigation strategies are needed to ensure equitable access, well-being, and environmental sustainability while maintaining strong

communication, safeguarding, and compliance with Welsh language requirements.

## **2.2 REGULATORY, STRATEGY AND POLICY**

### **2.2.1 Legal Implications**

- Compliance with employment law, including remote working rights and working time regulations.
- Potential liability for health and safety issues in remote work environments.
- Ensuring policies align with statutory duties for emergency response and public safety.

### **2.2.2 Financial Implications**

- Cost savings from reduced office space and travel expenses.
- Increased investment in IT infrastructure, cybersecurity, and training.
- Potential rise in operational costs due to managing a dispersed workforce.
- Risk of financial inefficiencies if agile working is not effectively monitored.

### **2.2.3 Procurement Implications**

- Need for procurement strategies that support flexible working, including IT systems and remote working tools.
- Ensuring contract compliance when procuring services or equipment for remote workers.

### **2.2.4 Corporate Risk Implications**

- Potential decline in service effectiveness if agile working disrupts communication and collaboration.
- Increased cyber risks due to remote access and data handling.
- Difficulty in maintaining a strong organisational culture with dispersed teams.
- Risk of inconsistent service delivery due to varied working arrangements.

### **2.2.5 Information Management Implications**

- Need for robust data security measures to protect sensitive information.
- Challenges in ensuring proper record-keeping across different work locations.
- Increased reliance on digital solutions for document management and communication.

### **2.2.6 GDPR and Privacy Implications**

- Ensuring personal and operational data is stored and accessed securely.
- Compliance with GDPR regulations in remote working environments.
- Risk of data breaches due to employees using personal devices or unsecured networks.
- Increased need for employee training on data protection responsibilities.

### **2.2.7 Health, Safety, and Wellbeing Implications**

- Duty of care for employees working remotely.
- Potential for increased stress and mental health issues due to isolation.
- Challenges in monitoring and managing work-life balance.
- Risk of non-compliance with health and safety regulations for remote work environments.

### **2.2.8 Governance and Audit Implications**

- Need for clear policies and procedures to maintain accountability in an agile workforce.
- Potential difficulties in conducting audits and ensuring compliance.
- Risk of reduced oversight and transparency in decision-making.
- Challenges in maintaining consistent performance monitoring and reporting.

### **2.2.9 Service Policy Implications**

- Need for updates to policies to accommodate flexible working arrangements.
- Potential impact on response times and service delivery efficiency.
- Ensuring operational continuity while allowing flexible working.
- Risk of disparities in policy application across different teams or roles.

### **2.2.10 National Policy Implications**

- Alignment with Welsh Government initiatives on flexible working and sustainability. (Reference Appendix 01)
- Potential funding opportunities for digital transformation and agile working initiatives.
- Compliance with national emergency response and resilience policies.

## 2.3 RESOURCES, ASSETS AND DELIVERY

### 2.3.1 HR and People Development

- Workforce Planning: Ensuring the right staffing levels and skills to maintain service delivery while allowing flexible working.
- Training & Development: Providing training on remote working tools, digital collaboration, and self-management skills.
- Employee Engagement & Morale: Maintaining motivation, teamwork, and a sense of belonging in a dispersed workforce.
- Performance Management: Adapting performance monitoring and evaluation methods to suit flexible working models.
- Diversity & Inclusion: Ensuring agile working does not disadvantage specific employee groups, such as frontline staff who cannot work remotely.
- Recruitment & Retention: Using agile working as a tool to attract and retain talent while balancing operational needs.

### 2.3.2 Assets and Resources

- IT Infrastructure: Investing in secure, reliable technology to support remote access, virtual collaboration, and data security.
- Workspaces: Reviewing office space requirements and considering a hybrid model with shared office hubs.
- Fleet & Equipment: Ensuring essential operational equipment is accessible for staff who need to work in different locations.
- Security & Access Control: Managing cybersecurity risks and ensuring physical security of sensitive documents and equipment.
- Support Services: Adapting administrative and logistical support functions to accommodate a more flexible workforce.

### 2.3.3 Service Delivery

- Operational Readiness: Ensuring emergency response times and service effectiveness are not impacted.
- Communication & Coordination: Maintaining clear communication channels and structured workflows across dispersed teams.
- Customer/Community Impact: Ensuring that public-facing services remain accessible and efficient despite flexible working arrangements.
- Service Continuity Planning: Preparing for challenges that may arise from agile working, such as IT failures or staff availability.
- Monitoring & Quality Assurance: Implementing tracking mechanisms to measure service performance and identify potential gaps.

### 2.3.4 Procurement

- Contract Flexibility: Ensuring supplier contracts support agile working needs, such as IT services, digital tools, and remote access solutions.
- Supplier Management: Maintaining strong relationships with suppliers while adapting to decentralised working patterns.
- Compliance & Governance: Ensuring procurement processes remain transparent and compliant with public sector regulations.
- Cost Efficiency: Avoiding unnecessary duplication of resources across different locations due to dispersed working.
- Technology & Equipment Provision: Ensuring procurement strategies align with the needs of a remote or hybrid workforce.

### 2.3.5 Budget (Revenue & Capital)

- Long-term Cost Savings: Reducing expenditure on office space, travel.

## 2.4 MORRIS REPORT

### Working from home

108. There is no formal 'working from home' policy. Whether or not an individual member of corporate staff is entitled to work at home is entirely a matter of line manager discretion. Whilst there are roles that cannot realistically be carried out from home, the lack of a clear policy in this respect has led to perceived inconsistent treatment across the organisation. It is an issue that has been frequently raised with us by corporate staff, and it is clearly having a material impact on morale.

There is a lack of clarity around how a manager's discretion to permit working from home will be exercised, and a lack of transparency as to why certain people can work from home and others cannot. The desire for flexibility has trumped the need for clarity and transparency and fails to account for the importance of ensuring that decisions surrounding work practices are perceived to be taken fairly.

Many members of staff are frustrated by the perceived inconsistency and unfairness and feel a lack of trust and support.

## 3 EVALUATION & CONCLUSIONS

Since 2020, agile or hybrid working arrangements have, in one form or another, become a standard offering for most employers in the UK.

Staff feedback (to include potential employees, current employees and exiting employees), confirms that our employees place the formalisation of our agile/hybrid working practices high on their priority.

As the modern workplace continues to evolve, organisations must adapt to attract and retain the next generation of talent. Gen Z - now entering the workforce prioritises flexibility, work-life balance, technology integration, and a strong sense of purpose in their careers.

Agile working provides a key opportunity for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service (SWFRS) to diversify its workforce, making roles more accessible to a broader range of individuals, including those from underrepresented backgrounds.

By embracing hybrid working models, flexible hours, and digital collaboration tools, SWFRS can create an inclusive environment that appeals to a wider talent pool, fosters innovation, and enhances employee well-being while ensuring organisational effectiveness.

Agile working is not just about where people work it's about creating a culture of trust, adaptability, and inclusion, making SWFRS an employer of choice for the future.

#### 4 RECOMMENDATIONS

That Commissioners note the content of the report and are assured of progress on the Morris Report paragraph ref 108, 109, 110 and the intent to develop a 'Future Workplace Strategy' to ensure SWFRS remains a modern, adaptable, and inclusive employer, capable of attracting and retaining a diverse workforce.

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Lisa Shroll, Head of People Services	
<b>Background Papers</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Source / Contact</b>
None*		

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## Appendix 01 - Background / Research

- The ONS Opinions and Lifestyle Survey conducted in October 2024 reported that more than a quarter of working adults in Britain were hybrid working at that time. It is more common among those ages over 30, those working as managers or professionals and those where less face-to-face contact was required. Working parents were more likely to hybrid work and it was acknowledged that people with unpaid caring responsibilities would also benefit from hybrid working.
- The CIPD believes that good work is fundamental to individual wellbeing, supports a strong, fair society and creates motivated workers, productive organisations and a strong economy.
- The CIPD Good Work Index 2024: Wales states that many employees in Wales are now able to maintain a healthy work-life balance through flexibility of working arrangements and being afforded autonomy over ways of working. [CIPD – Good Work Index 2024](#)
- Internal surveys, as well as the Hydra event in 2023 provided confirmation that our employees place the formalisation of our agile/hybrid working practices high on their priority list.

### Smarter working: a remote working strategy for Wales

The Welsh Government has issued a strategy to encourage remote (agile) working, in which they set out the following vision:

- see 30% of the workforce working remotely on a regular basis
- work in partnership with employers, workers, trade unions and others to support a shift to more people working remotely, helping them to build on progress made during the pandemic and better understand the benefits of remote working
- take action against climate change by reducing the need to travel thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with transport
- improve air quality by reducing congestion and softening rush hour peaks
- create inclusive workplaces in our local communities that have equality at the heart of decision making
- promote a hybrid workplace model of office, home and local hubs to enable people to live and work in their local communities
- increase opportunities for more fair work and promote well-being and work-life balance in the Welsh workforce.

### Welsh Government Hybrid Working Staff Survey March 2024:

Suggested that it would be helpful if the following was provided:

- Clearer guidance on how to encourage staff to come into the office.
- Additional support for line managers who are managing difficult situations with staff members.
- Greater clarity around what is classed as 'business need'. Managers felt that they were often 'caught in the middle' of staff and senior leaders, or 'left to be the bad guys when asking people to come in'.
- A mandate on staff attending the office for some of their time.

## **Fire Sector Research**

Several UK Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) have implemented agile working and modern workplace strategies to enhance flexibility, inclusivity, and operational efficiency:

- Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority introduced an Agile Working Policy to enable employees to perform tasks at times and locations where they are most efficient, supported by technology that facilitates remote access without compromising team cohesion.
- Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service developed a People Strategy (2023-2026) that emphasises supporting health and wellbeing, considering new or alternative ways of working, and promoting a culture where health and wellbeing issues can be openly discussed.
- County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service developed a People Strategy for 2023-2026, detailing strategic priorities aligned with their vision of 'Safest People, Safest Places'. This strategy emphasises the importance of supporting health and wellbeing, considering new or alternative ways of working.
- Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service published a People and Organisational Development Strategy for 2021-2025, aligning with the government's fire reform agenda. This strategy sets a clear direction to ensure fire and rescue services are efficient, accountable, transparent, and reflective of the diverse communities they serve. It emphasises the safety, wellbeing, and capability of their people to respond to challenges and turn them into opportunities.
- London Fire Brigade implemented a Flexible Working Options Policy applicable to all employees. This policy reflects the brigade's commitment to improving employee wellbeing by offering flexibility in working hours, organisation of work periods, and work locations to contribute to a better work-life balance and enhanced productivity.

- Humberside Fire and Rescue Service offers an Agile Working Policy among its various policies, reflecting their commitment to modernising workplace practices. This policy is part of a broader set of guidelines aimed at promoting flexibility and inclusivity within the service.
- The Inclusive Fire Service Group\* recommends that FRSs adopt flexible working arrangements to improve work-life balance and assist with career progression.

These initiatives reflect a sector-wide commitment to modernising workplace practices, promoting inclusivity, and enhancing employee wellbeing within Fire and Rescue Services.

*\* The Inclusive Fire Service Group (IFSG) is a collaborative body within the UK fire and rescue sector, comprising employer and employee representatives. Established to promote diversity and inclusion, the IFSG has developed improvement strategies focusing on:*

- *Promoting an Inclusive Culture*
- *Recruitment*
- *Progression*
- *Retention*

*These strategies aim to foster a more inclusive environment within fire and rescue services, benefiting both personnel and the communities they serve.*

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# OP-02.054 – Agile Working

**(\*\*Phase one - Six month initial trial\*\*)**

## Document Information

Security Classification	Security Number
Document Owner	Head of People Services
(M33C) Date Last Review Published Category of amendment Completed by	Initial publication April 2025
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In Case of Query Contact	People Services
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## 2 Introduction

- 2.1 South Wales Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) is committed to equality of opportunity in employment and as part of this commitment, is extending the measures designed to make it easier for its employees to combine work with family life.
- 2.2 Agile or hybrid working in the fire service refers to a modern approach that allows employees to work flexibly across different locations, such as from home, fire stations, or other operational sites. It focuses on outcomes rather than fixed locations, enabling a balance between remote and in-person work where operationally feasible. Agile working can be undertaken on an informal basis without a contractual change and in agreement with the Service, where the main location or hours worked do not change.

Formal flexible working, on the other hand, is a structured arrangement agreed upon between the employee and employer, often involving changes to working hours, shift patterns, or job-sharing. It is requested through a formal process and must meet both the needs of the employee and the operational requirements of the fire service. (Please refer to the [Flexible Working Policy](#) for more details). While agile or hybrid working provides dynamic flexibility based on tasks, formal flexible working is a more structured and long-term adjustment to an individual's working conditions.

- 2.3 By enabling our employees to work in an agile way, we aim to promote a work-life balance, and create a more responsive, efficient and effective organisation, and minimise disruption to operational service delivery. In so doing, not only are we recognising the environmental benefits of minimising travel needs, we are also able to sustain the health and well-being of our employees, support inclusion and diversity and reduce estate and facilities costs.
- 2.4 We will ensure that all agile working arrangements are implemented effectively, with a focus on maintaining high standard of service delivery, safety and communication. The use of technology, such as MS Teams, will be encouraged to enable seamless collaboration while working remotely.

## 3 Corporate Policy

This Organisational Procedure supports [Corporate Policy 02, Our People](#).

## 4 Scope and Applicability

### 4.1 Scope

- 4.1.1 This procedure outlines the framework for agile working at SWFRS, including the expectations, processes and responsibilities for both employees and managers. It is designed to ensure that agile working arrangements do not interfere with the core responsibilities of the Service, particularly in terms of operational effectiveness and emergency response capabilities.

- 4.1.2 Agile working will be introduced in phases, with phase one including working from employees' contracted place of work and from home. Following successful phase one trial period of six-months, phase two will broaden the possible working locations with the development of location management processes and will include and encourage working from SWFRS Stations.
- 4.1.3 This procedure applies to all employees whose role does not require them to be physically present at specific locations.

## 4.2 Eligibility for Agile Working

4.2.1 Agile working is available to staff in roles that can be effectively fulfilled remotely without disruption to service delivery. Additional advice and guidance can be found in the Manager's Toolkit. Eligibility will be determined based on:

- **Job Role:** The role must be one where tasks can be completed remotely without impacting the quality or timeliness of service delivery.
- **Performance:** Employees must demonstrate a consistent level of performance and productivity.
- **Operational Needs:** Agile working arrangements must not interfere with critical operational requirements or business needs.
- **Manager's Approval:** All remote working arrangements are subject to approval by the employee's line manager to ensure that operational needs are met.

## 4.3 New employees

4.3.1 Line managers will consider whether agile working is appropriate for new employees in the initial weeks of their new role and whether it is beneficial to maintain more face-to-face contact in the initial weeks, in consultation with the new employee.

# 5 Roles and Responsibilities

## 5.1 Expectations for Employees

- **Availability:** Employees must remain contactable and available during their agreed working hours. They should attend virtual meetings, respond to emails and calls promptly, and be engaged with team communication tools such as MS Teams. Should there be an urgent operational requirement or an unplanned event, employees can be required to attend the workplace.
- **Work Output:** Employees should ensure they continue to meet deadlines and deliver their work as expected. Agile working is not an opportunity to reduce workload but to offer flexibility in how and where work is performed.

- **Data Security:** Employees must ensure that sensitive and confidential information is handled securely while working remotely. This includes using secure devices, logging out of systems when not in use, and following all data protection and IT security protocols. ICT Procedures can be found in the [ISMS Index](#) .
- **Technology Use:** Employees are expected to use technology effectively to collaborate with colleagues and participate in virtual meetings, ensuring operational continuity. They should be familiar with MS Teams, email, and other platforms used for communication and project management.
- **Regular Check-ins:** Employees are expected to participate in regular check-ins with their managers and teams, whether virtually or in person, to review work progress and ensure alignment with team goals. Employees should also pay attention to all aspects of their own and other team members' well-being and ensure they access any support needed.
- **Work Location:** Employees are responsible to ensure the suitability of furniture and equipment, complete [Form H08](#), Display Screen Equipment User Assessment Form, and report changes to their line manager for review of risk assessments if necessary. Employees must maintain up-to-date records of where they are working via their outlook calendar and must notify their manager in advance if there are any changes to their usual work location. This is essential for ensuring compliance with health and safety protocols, supporting team coordination, and addressing any operational or service delivery needs.

Phase one of the agile working trial involves employees working from contracted work locations, and from home. Time already spent working away from their contracted location during the normal course of the job role will not impact employees' ability to agile work for up to 2 days per week.

Phased one of SWFRS agile working procedure does not apply to working whilst on holiday overseas or elsewhere in the UK.

## 5.2 Expectations for Managers

Managers play a critical role in ensuring agile working arrangements are implemented successfully.

Key responsibilities include:

- **Approval:** Managers must respond to requests for agile working consistently and fairly in the context of the workstyle for the employee's role, facilitating agile ways of working where possible while continuing to meet the needs of the Service.
- **Monitoring:** Managers should monitor employee performance and ensure that employees remain productive while working remotely.

Regular check-ins should be scheduled to ensure progress is being made.

- **Communication:** Managers must ensure that teams remain connected and maintain high levels of communication while working remotely. They should encourage use of MS Teams, virtual meetings, and collaboration platforms to ensure that all employees are engaged and informed.
- **Availability:** Should it be necessary to request the return of an employee on an agile working day due to urgent operational requirement or unplanned event, consideration should be given to the employee's circumstances on that day.
- **Support:** Managers should provide ongoing support and address any challenges employees may face while working remotely. This includes ensuring employees have the right tools, technology, and workspace to perform their roles effectively. (However, it is the employee's responsibility to ensure the suitability of their furniture and equipment, complete a Display Screen Equipment assessment for their home work environment using [Form H08](#), Display Screen Equipment User Assessment Form, and review risk assessments if necessary, collaborating with the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team where appropriate.)
- **Team Days Management:** Managers are responsible for scheduling and communicating 'All-in Place Workdays' or 'Belonging Days' to ensure that they align with team needs, training schedules, and operational requirements.
- **Monitoring Work Location Records:** Managers will be responsible for ensuring that employees maintain up-to-date records of where they are working via Outlook calendars. This will allow the service to stay compliant with health and safety protocols, ensure operational effectiveness, and manage team coordination.
- **Assess suitability** of individuals for agile working, referring to guidance in the Managers Toolkit.

It is essential to employee well-being that managers understand the limit on weekly hours and their rights to breaks and rest periods as set out in the Working Time Regulations 1998. Managers should communicate this knowledge and work with their team to ensure good working practices are embedded. This will help employees manage their time and work-life balance and prevent our people from overworking. [Link to Service procedure/info on WTD\(draft\)](#)

## 6 Procedures

### 6.1 Key Principles

- 6.1.1 Eligible employees will be able to work flexibly under the terms of this procedure within the existing bandwidth of 0700-1900hrs, for an average of **up to two days** per week in an agile working arrangement, subject to agreement by their line manager. These days can be taken

flexibly (e.g. full days or split across several days), depending on operational needs and team requirements and subject to managerial approval.

- 6.1.2 The Service Flexitime scheme still applies where this is part of the employee's existing contract; any time in excess of 7hrs 24 minutes per day will accrue as flexitime, with the bandwidth for this remaining as 0700hrs – 1900hrs. Historically applied 'core hours' and strictly defined lunch period inside of the 0700-1900 flexitime bandwidth, will no longer be in effect, allowing for maximum flexibility during the working day. Corporate employees will continue to record their hours via their People XD Employee Portal.
- 6.1.3 Full Service provision should be maintained between 0830 and 1700 hrs, either from the workplace, or via remote contact (e.g. phone, Teams, 24/7).
- 6.1.4 It is important to ensure that agile working does not detract from team collaboration, service delivery, and organisational culture. As such, certain departments or functions may require designated 'All-in Place of Workdays' or 'Belonging Days' to foster teamwork, high-performing team development, and to promote training and wellbeing.
- 6.1.5 Agile working must not impact the delivery of SWFRS's services. Employees will continue to meet their work objectives, maintain communication, and collaborate effectively with team members and stakeholders.
- 6.1.6 Technology such as MS Teams, email, collaboration platforms, and virtual conferencing must be used to ensure continuous communication and effective service delivery. All employees are expected to remain accessible and responsive during agreed working hours.
- 6.1.7 Clear and consistent communication is vital. Employees should remain accessible through MS Teams, email, and phone during working hours. Managers and employees must ensure that communication is maintained to avoid any disruption to operations.
- 6.1.8 SWFRS recognises that agile working can improve work-life balance and reduce stress. Employees should take regular breaks and ensure they have a suitable work environment to support their health and wellbeing while working remotely.

## **6.2 All-in Place of Work / Belonging Days**

6.2.1 To ensure that agile working does not negatively impact operational service delivery or team culture, certain departments or functions may require specific 'All-in Place Work Days' or 'Belonging Days'. These days are designed to:

- Promote Teamwork: Team members will be expected to work together in person on these days to foster collaboration,

improve communication, and create stronger working relationships.

- High-Performing Teams: Regular in-person collaboration supports high-performing teams by encouraging knowledge sharing, problem-solving, and building trust within teams.
- Team Development and Wellbeing: These days will offer an opportunity for team-building exercises, training, or wellbeing activities.
- Training & Development: It provides a dedicated time for formal or informal training, professional development, or team-wide upskilling initiatives.

6.2.2 These days will be scheduled by line managers in consultation with teams, and agreed upon in advance, based on operational needs and business requirements.

### **6.3 Working Locations**

6.3.1 Home Working: Employees are encouraged to work from home if this is practical and appropriate. Employees should ensure they have a suitable workspace with internet access and the necessary tools to perform their tasks effectively. Refer to Point 5.1 for more detail.

6.3.2 Station/Other Locations: Following successful trial of agile working during phase one, working locations will be extended to include Station or other locations that are suitable for remote working, with prior approval from their line manager.

6.3.3 SWFRS Offices: Employees may occasionally be required to work from Service offices if operational needs require it, or for specific meetings, training, or team-building activities.

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## AGENDA ITEM NO 10

**PEOPLE COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2024/2025**

<b>Expected Date of Report</b>	<b>Report Name</b>	<b>Purpose of Piece of Work</b>	<b>Information or Decision</b>	<b>Lead Director/ Contact Officer</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Mar 2025	Pay Policy Statement 2025/26	To consider the Service's Pay Policy Statement in compliance with the Localism Act 2011 and associated guidance.	D	ACO PS Contact Officer: Alison Reed	On Agenda
Mar 2025	Criteria for Service Critical Corporate Roles		D	ACO PS Contact Officer: Alison Reed	On Agenda
Mar 2025	Hybrid Working	To provide Commissioners with an update on the Service's plan to introduce a hybrid working policy	I	ACO PS Contact Officer: Alison Reed	On Agenda
Mar 2025	"Alignment of Services Inclusive Action Plan to the Morris Report Cultural recommendations"	To provide Commissioners with an update on the work undertaken in respect of the Service's Inclusive Action Plan	I	ACO PS Contact Officer: Alison Reed	Update on outstanding action log.

July 2024	“Alignment of Services Inclusive Action Plan to the Morris Report Cultural recommendations”	To provide Commissioners with an update on the work undertaken in respect of the Service’s Inclusive Action Plan	I	ACO PS  Contact Officer: Alison Reed	Completed
July 2024	Occupational Health Activity / Sickness Report	Purpose is to update Commissioners on Occupational Health Activity and sickness absence	I	ACO PS	Completed
July 2024	Grievance / Discipline Cases Overview	Purpose is to update Commissioners on disciplinary and grievance cases that have occurred through the Service	I	ACO PS	Completed
July 2024	Whistleblowing / Complaints / Compliments Report	To update Commissioners on whistleblowing, complaints and compliments received by the Service	I	ACO PS	Completed
Nov 2024	Training Activity Annual Report	To update Commissioners on training activity during 2023/24	I	ACO PS  Contact Officer: Alison Reed	Completed
Nov 2024	Recruitment & Attraction Annual Report	To update Commissioners on recruitment and attraction activity during 2023/24	I	ACO PS  Contact Officer: Head of HR	Completed

Nov 2024	Job Evaluation	To update Commissioners on the Job Evaluation Process	I	ACO PS Contact Officer: Lisa Shroll	Completed
Feb 2025	Introduction of a Talent Academy at South Wales Fire and Rescue Service.	To provide Commissioners with a new work experience programme for consideration	D	ACO PS Contact Officer: Alison Reed	Completed
Feb 2025	Gender Pay Gap	To update on the analysis of the gender pay gap across the Service.	D	ACO PS Contact Officer: Alison Reed	Completed
Feb 2025	Upcoming recruitment campaigns	To provide Commissioners with an overview of upcoming recruitment campaigns	I	ACO PS Contact Officer: Alison Reed	Completed
Feb 2025	Sickness absence statistics and management.	Purpose is to update Commissioners sickness absences across the Service and work undertaken to manage these	D	ACO PS Contact Officer: Alison Reed	Completed
Feb 2025	Update on the collection of Equality Data and inclusion initiatives across the Service	To provide Commissioners with an update on the collection of equality data and inclusion initiatives	I	ACO PS Contact Officer: Alison Reed	Completed

Feb 2025	Sickness absence statistics and management.	Purpose is to update Commissioners sickness absences across the Service and work undertaken to manage these	D	ACO PS Contact Officer: Alison Reed	Completed
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## AGENDA ITEM NO 11

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

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## AGENDA ITEM NO 12

**Any items to report back to the Board of Commissioners Committee**

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1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest

Attendees 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 South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (Exercise of Functions) (Wales) Directions 2024 and the Local Government Act 2000.

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

People Committee held on 7 February 2025	3
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5. Update on Outstanding Actions 7
- REPORTS FOR DECISION**
6. Pay Policy Statement 2025/26 9
7. Pre-Recruitment Governance 35
- REPORTS FOR INFORMATION**
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9. Agile Working Framework 79
10. Forward Work Programme for the People Committee 2024/25 103
11. To consider any items of business that the Chairperson deems urgent (Part 1 or 2) 107
12. Any items to report back to the Board of Commissioners Committee 109