

Appendix A – 4th Quarter Performance Report Finance & Governance Committee

01/01/2018 - 31/03/2018



DORSET & WILTSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE

Finance and Governance Committee

Priority 4: Making every penny count

KLOE 13: Are effective governance and decision-making arrangements in place?

Actions

Action Code	Action Name
1.4.1.54	Are effective governance and decision-making arrangements in place?
<p>Progress comment:</p> <p>Governance Framework</p> <p>Sound governance arrangements are in place with no significant strategic issues or areas of concern. The Authority has now agreed its Statement of Assurance required under the National Framework 2018 following its initial scrutiny and recommendation at September's meeting of this Committee. The process by which these statements are developed received a substantial level assurance from internal auditors last year. Moving forward, the Authority has now agreed to reduce its membership from 30 to 18. Members have now approved the new committee arrangements along with changes to the appropriate aspects of the constitution in readiness for June's Authority.</p> <p>Strategic Planning:</p> <p>Work continues on further strengthening the overall strategic approach and more closely aligning our work to the outcomes of our partners. Work has been completed on a strategic assessment for 2018-19 and a mapping exercise has been undertaken to link actions we are undertaking with the outcomes being worked on by our partners. The Community Safety Plan is to be considered by Members at their meeting in June along with the Service Delivery Plan for 2018-19. In addition, a revised approach to policy statements is to be considered by Members in June. We are seeking to ensure that all of this work supports and appropriately references the developing approach underpinning the fire inspectorate methodology.</p> <p>Information and Communications</p> <p>During Q4 we received a high number of freedom of information requests - 35 in total. All but three of these were responded to within the 20 working days timeframe and the average response time is 11 working days. We monitor trends from requests to establish where we might need to routinely publish more information in line with our publication scheme. We have found that this quarter there are a few unique requests for which we have been able to provide the information, applying exemptions in only two cases, using three exemptions - commercial information, law enforcement and safeguarding national security. Ten out of the 35 requests were received from journalists and we are unable to identify the source of the remaining 25 requests. Three subject access requests were received under the Data Protection Act in the same quarter and all were responded to within the 40-day timeframe. From May 2018 this access regime falls under the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), allowing a month to respond to straight forward requests, with the opportunity to extend this by two months where requests are complex. Our performance management arrangements have been amended to reflect these changes. Members can be assured that the Authority is managing its information compliance requirements. The progress against the action plan for compliance against the GDPR has received substantial assurance from internal auditors in Q1 of 2018-19.</p> <p>The Information Governance Group continues to manage information risk on a Service wide basis, reviewing risks to information assets and ensuring the Service has the right controls in place to manage these, including monthly monitoring of the cyber security risk.</p> <p>The policy framework established at combination is embedded across policy teams and provides staff with a single location for accessing policies, procedures and guidance. The review, consultation and publication of documents is centrally managed to ensure a consistent and robust process which ensures our policies and procedures meet our legal requirements. The alignment of our procedures following combination, continues to be actively monitored and has received substantial assurance from Internal Audit in Q1 of 2018-19.</p>	



In Q4 only six complaints were received and five of these were resolved within 14 working days. Three complaints related to staff conduct and only one of which was upheld, this is pending discipline action. Two complaints related to an appliance driving to an incident and both were upheld with local management action taken. One complaint related to the recent recruitment process and after thorough investigation this was not upheld.

KLOE 14: How are we providing effective health and safety support to our staff?

Actions

Action Code	Action Name
1.4.2.2	How are we providing effective health and safety support to our staff?
<p>Progress comment: Overall, there are no real causes for concern or strategic issues to raise with Members. The Service has good overall levels of compliance in relation to health and safety with a comprehensive overview by the Health and Safety Committee comprising of key officers and representative bodies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The quarterly trend of working days lost is up by 12% over the same period last year. There is a large annual increase in the total number of working days lost. This has been attributed to a consolidated approach to sickness reporting system allowing for improved reporting, recording and monitoring work related absence.• This quarter, the same level of Adverse Occurrences Reports (AOR) have been reported leading to an overall 18% increase in the number of AORs reported this year. It is pleasing to note is there has been a 19% increase in the number of 'near miss' reporting when compared to the previous year (2016-17). This allows us to better understand and prevent accidents occurring.• There has been a 50% decrease in the number of manual handling incidents with no significant trends to be reported.• This quarter has seen three reportable incidents to the HSE (Health and Safety Executive) via Reporting of Injuries, diseases or Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR). For the year this has resulted in 119 injuries or ill health incidents being reported to the Service, with 19 to be reported under the RIDDOR legislation. There were no identified trends.	

KLOE 15: Do we have robust financial management and procurement plans in place to ensure long term viability and value for money?

Actions

Action Code	Action Name
1.4.3.16	Are we making the most effective use of our assets to deliver our priorities?
<p>Progress comment:</p> <p>March 2018: The Authority has a Medium Term Financial Plan in place, developed with Members, covering the financial years to 2020-21. The Plan demonstrates how the Authority is able to balance its revenue budget over this time period, using reserves and balances as necessary. The Plan was updated and agreed by the Policy & Resources Committee in October 2017, followed by a further revision within the budget paper at the February meeting of the Authority.</p> <p>Budget proposals for 2018-19, were completed, taking on board the details of announced in the Local Government Finance Settlement that was published on 19 December 2017 and confirmed in February. A Members Budget Seminar was delivered on 22 January 2018 looking at the budget proposals in more detail prior to the Fire Authority meeting on 9 February 2018. Members approved the budgets and precepts, choosing to increase the fire precept band D by 2.99% for 2018-19 to £72.70.</p> <p>Financial performance is monitored by Members on a quarterly basis. The Q3 performance for 2017-18 was reported to the Finance, Governance and Audit Committee in March 2018. Final outturn will be reported to the Finance and Governance Committee in July.</p> <p>The statutory accounts for 2016-17 received an unqualified opinion from our external auditors and were approved by Members in September. Planning for the production of the 2017/18 statutory accounts included an initial planning meeting with KPMG in November. Dates were agreed with KPMG for the interim and final audit fieldwork, with the accounts to be presented for approval to the Finance and Governance Committee on 31st July 2018, two months earlier than in previous years.</p> <p>The Key Financial Controls internal audit for 2016-17 concluded that adequate controls were in place, with a small number of minor improvement actions to be progressed, and these are now completed. The 2017-18 audit which concluded in January, was consistent with the 2016-17 audit, concluded that we have adequate controls in place, again with a small number of minor recommendations.</p> <p>Throughout the year there has been significant procurement activity taking place. New contracts have recently been awarded in respect of payroll services, firefighters' pensions' administration, occupational health provision and mobile data terminals (MDTs). These contracts were procured in collaboration with other fire and rescue service (FRS) partners, and in particular the MDT procurement, in which we took the lead role involving six other FRSs nationwide, making approximately £800k worth of savings across the partnership in total.</p>	

KLOE 16: Are we making the most effective use of our assets to deliver our priorities?

Actions

Action Code	Action Name
1.4.4.33	Are we making the most effective use of our assets to deliver our priorities?
<p>Progress comment:</p> <p>Information Systems:</p> <p>19 out of the 24 systems in the programme have now been combined into single databases/systems and are in use throughout the Service. The remaining five systems have clearly defined project, stakeholder and communication plans following the principals outlined within the programme. The Strategic Leadership Team continues to monitor the programme monthly. The programme is currently on track to deliver single databases/systems within the agreed timescales.</p> <p>The four system migration projects due to be completed in 2018-19:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Health and safety (COSHH) - Slight delay (Go-live March 2018) 2. GARTAN (Competence) - On track (Go-live December 2018) 3. Assets (Supplies) - Slight delay (Go-live July 2018) 4. Assets (Equipment) - On track (Go-live December 2018) <p>Assets:</p> <p>There has been progress with the development of the integrated systems approach to asset management with the asset plans fully embedded in the Service Delivery Plan. There has been significant progress with the identification of software systems within the department with procurement underway for the replacement of the two existing equipment management databases with one modern system that will allow the Service to manage its equipment assets effectively and efficiently. The fleet systems have been merged into one system, as have the hydrant maintenance management system (Hydra). The stores system is being consolidated into the Agresso finance system to be more efficient working with finance. The estates system is already Service wide ensuring a common approach to management. All major managerial roles now have substantive managers except the Equipment Manager which has been interviewed for and the successful applicant should start in the next couple of months, in the meantime an experienced uniformed officer is maintaining the systems and ensuring that the equipment is tested in accordance with our maintenance schedule. Review of the Equipment departments integration within the Assets Department: Project officers have (Q4 2017-18) been reviewing processes and procedures of the Equipment teams north & south and how they interact with Fleet and Supplies teams. It is intended that this piece of work will identify how efficiencies and cost savings can be achieved in how the Equipment team operate.</p> <p>ICT:</p> <p>The ICT Roadmap provides a five-year plan of the direction of ICT, both in ICT Service delivery and Technology and Software management. This Roadmap is linked to Business plans and Business needs and feeds the Capital Finance plan. It is constantly reviewed and added to by the ICT Management Team and then discussed and approved by the Senior Leadership Team on an annual basis to ensure alignment with budgets. All ICT work is managed through a centralised ICT Management system which tracks projects, jobs and incidents in one place, allowing the extraction of reports on fault call times, job deliveries, service requests etc. Many formal meetings are programmed through the year on a quarterly or monthly basis to ensure that all ICT staff are aware of the direction and purpose of work within the Roadmap. These range from manager updates within specialised areas, through ICT Technician meetings, up to the ICT Management Team. An ICT BRM (Business Relationship Manager) is in place to ensure that the ICT Service Desk is performance managed and to act as a point of contact and information between the Business and ICT. ICT Instructors are in place to ensure that we get the most usage and value from the systems that we install. They are managed by the BRM to ensure that any training issues raised by the business can be dealt with quickly. All ICT Assets, both hardware and software are fully managed from the cradle to the grave, within an ICT Inventory system that also provides information on replacement costs and dates to ensure that we can predict in advance the future costs of the ICT Hardware Replacement program.</p>	

Priority 5: Supporting and developing our people

KLOE 17: How are we ensuring our strategic workforce plans support the attraction and recruitment of the right people with the right skills at the right time to deliver current and future Service priorities?

Actions

Action Code	Action Name
1.5.1.21	How are we ensuring that our strategic workforce plans support the attraction and recruitment of the right people with the right skills at the right time to deliver current and future service priorities?
<p>Progress comment:</p> <p>We are creating stronger links between our workforce transformation plans and our workforce planning and establishment controls to ensure close alignment to our financial forecasts and communities programme. We continue to improve the integration of our systems so that we can provide workforce data that enables better monitoring, intervention and organisational learning. Further refinements are being made to our HR system to improve management reporting processes which will assist our workforce and financial planning. Mindful of our ageing workforce and our corporate target to increase the diversity of our workforce, we are setting in place workforce and succession plans to ensure we have the right people, with the right skills at the right time. This starts at the point of attraction and we have reviewed our recruitment literature to ensure that applicants are well informed and have a good understanding of the varied career opportunities that we offer.</p> <p>We have carried out an external review of our recruitment processes and have developed an action plan to further streamline and enhance the work that we do in this area. As part of this work we have invested in our E-Recruitment system to improve its functionality and user interface.</p> <p>A key area of focus has been our positive action programme ahead of commencing our whole-time recruitment. Our positive action campaign “#BeOneOfUs” was launched in October 2017. Posters, leaflets and banners were produced and our website included a link to an inspirational promotional video about a career in the Fire & Rescue Service and provided a structured 12-week fitness programme for potential applicants to follow.</p> <p>Six “have a go” days were held across the Service area and encouraged those attending to carry out some of the practical elements of the role such as hose running and wearing breathing apparatus. Following this our wholetime duty system (WDS) recruitment campaign commenced in November 2017.</p> <p>The selection process consists of many elements with the last stage of presentation and interviews taking place in March. We are carrying out equality monitoring at each stage of the process and will use the data gathered to assess what additional interventions can be made in the future in support of our corporate target to increase the diversity of our operational workforce. An internally run recruit course is scheduled to commence in June with recruits being posted to station in August.</p> <p>Work is being undertaken to develop the organisational requirements for talent management and the associated frameworks, procedures and processes. This work will complement the strategic workforce plan to ensure that we are able to develop and grow talent throughout the Service to meet the future needs of the organisation. The approach we adopt will also need to be able to deliver outcomes aligned to our values and behaviours framework that will form the foundations of our emerging approach to leadership development. Our new promotion procedure enables accelerated progression of our talented staff. Historically candidates needed to be competent or substantive in the role below the one being advertised. Our new procedure provides the opportunity for individuals at two roles below the vacancy to apply if they can demonstrate relevant experience of operating at a higher level.</p> <p>The Group Manager process was successfully run in February 2018. Candidates were placed in colour-coded talent pools which identified their ‘readiness’ for promotion. Individuals were given detailed feedback outlining their strengths and areas for development.</p>	



Our use of temporary promotions give staff a valuable development opportunity to acquire key skills ahead of or because of the promotion board process. Opportunities to make use of new apprenticeship training and the associated levy funding continue to be explored in the context of wider workforce planning activities. Marketing materials have been produced and are being shared at community events and open days to begin sign-posting potential applicants to future apprenticeship opportunities within the Service.

We currently have six operational apprentices, who will complete their two-year programme in the Autumn. If successful, these individuals will be offered permanent employment. Many changes were made to UK apprenticeships during 2017, not least the introduction of an employer levy (effective 6 April 2017) and public-sector apprentice targets. Whilst we are embracing the government reform agenda on apprenticeships to continue to upskill our workforce, improve diversity, and ensure we are best placed to continue to attract and retain talent for the future we face a number of challenges specifically:

- Funding band: The time taken to agree the funding band has impacted on operational apprenticeship new starts in 2017-18 and has meant that our new WDS recruits could not be placed on apprenticeship programmes as we had initially hoped.
- Training provision: There are limited training providers to deliver trailblazer standards, particularly sector-specific ones such as firefighting.
- On-Call staff – It would take longer for our on-call staff to complete an apprenticeship
- Public Sector Apprenticeship Target: Our high proportion of On-Call staff, where we have the highest turnover and therefore the highest number of new starters, will adversely impact on our ability to achieve the 2.3% target.

The impact of these issues has reduced our ability to employ our new WDS recruits on an operational firefighter apprenticeship which means we will have a difficulty in achieving the targets but also means that we haven't been able to draw down much of our levy before we start to lose it after two years. With regard to other apprenticeships, two members of corporate staff have commenced apprenticeships and we continue to look for opportunities to recruit apprentices to identified corporate roles.

KLOE 18: How are we making sure that our staff are trained and developed to be able to carry out their role effectively?

Actions

Action Code	Action Name
1.5.2.13	How are we making sure that our staff are trained and developed to carry out their role effectively?
<p>Progress comment:</p> <p>Corporate induction days continue to be successfully delivered and these are, increasingly, supported by e-learning modules and on-boarding materials. Work has commenced to produce a "welcome" video for those joining the Service which will support the further development of self-service induction materials to give new starters and their managers more flexibility about how their induction is delivered.</p> <p>We continue to make good progress with E-learning and we are developing a blended approach to our learning and development activities through greater use of e-learning tools to provide essential knowledge prior to attending workshops or training courses. This allows more time at face to face events to focus on skills and behaviours and, in some cases, means that the length of time spent on training can be reduced. E-learning materials are available on our DWdle (Dorset Wiltshire dynamic learning environment) platform and hosts a catalogue of e-learning to all staff groups to encourage people to use the resources there for their own training and development; which they can access at a time and place to suit them. The Personal Review process has been evaluated and improvements have been made to the process that will be rolled out at the start of Q2 (July 2018).</p> <p>We are reviewing our development pathways and developing an accompanying prospectus which will provide staff with information on what learning and development interventions they 'must', 'should' or 'could' undertake. In support of this, staff will have a comprehensive Journey Log to record their progress. This work will be completed in Q2 (June/July 2018)</p> <p>We are also developing our approach to Learning and Development Governance and Quality Assurance Framework which will also be completed in Q2 (June/July 2018)</p>	

KLOE 19: How are we ensuring we have the leadership capability to successfully lead and support our staff?

Actions

Action Code	Action Name
1.5.3.13	How are we ensuring that we have the leadership capability to successfully lead and support our staff?
<p>Progress comment:</p> <p>Leadership Development:</p> <p>The Service has forged an exciting partnership with the Royal National Lifeboat Institute which we hope to extend to other organisations at a sub-regional level including the police. The leadership programmes are at three levels - Supervisory, Middle and Strategic. A prototype supervisory course will be delivered in April 2018 and a further course will be held in September and will include attendees from Wiltshire Police. The Middle and Strategic level programmes are at the design stage and will be rolled out in 2019. This multi-agency programme will be a key foundation for developing our leaders. For operational members of staff, we have also developed a joint approach to incident command development and assessment.</p> <p>The Leadership Forum is well established and comprises all strategic and middle managers at heads of department level including all group managers. This forum meets monthly to talk through key issues to gain wider understanding; insight and ownership. The forum has a comprehensive programme of masterclasses developed through the understanding organisational development needs arising from the 'Eyes and Ears' staff survey and general feedback. In addition, we are looking to set in place a programme of monthly masterclasses for team managers including all station managers.</p> <p>The insights 'colourworks' leadership profile of the Strategic Leadership Team and Heads of Department has been established to aid personal and team development. The profiling tool used is that which is well established within our police partners and used by other fire and rescue services where it has been very effective in developing leaders and helping to transform organisational culture. The effectiveness of this approach will be evaluated in Q2 2018/19. To complement this work, we are planning to roll out a programme of 360 reviews in May 2018.</p> <p>Health and Wellbeing:</p> <p>Our Occupational Health provision has successfully moved to our new provider (DuraDiamond Healthcare) and we are working closely with them to develop new ways of working and are using their expertise to support the introduction of a range of proactive health initiatives in accordance with the agreed contractual arrangements. A first contract management meeting will be held in April 2018 to discuss issues that arose through the transitional period.</p> <p>Fitness Assessment:</p> <p>Good progress has been made on fitness assessments and fitness equipment has been delivered and installed in stations. To support operational staff located in Wiltshire to attain the required level of fitness, and to complete a development plan if required, a 12-month amnesty period up to 30 September 2017 was agreed. We have now commenced the second cycle of the yearly fitness testing following the end of the amnesty period. Staff falling below the standards are being supported and managed through the provision of improvement programmes, occupational health, physiotherapy assistance etc, so that they achieve the required fitness standard. Overall, there is a positive picture of staff fitness across the Service. In Q4, 11 out of 123 on-call staff did not pass a fitness assessment, two of the 11 were placed on improvement plans. Four of 72 WDS staff did not pass the fitness assessment, two of the four we placed on improvement plans.</p> <p>Absence Management:</p> <p>Whilst sickness absence in Q4 has increased for all staff groups, there are no significant concerns or issues to raise. Absence management is monitored closely and good controls are in place. In most cases long term sickness absence continues to be higher than short term sickness and all long-term absence cases are managed in accordance with our respective attendance management procedures and occupational health recommendations. All staff members are offered early intervention of physiotherapy, whilst waiting for the NHS provision, to prevent any delay in rehabilitation commencing. The Firefighters charity is also promoted for musculoskeletal injuries. All staff have direct access to our confidential counselling provision with an appointment offered within seven days of triage.</p>	

In respect of short term attendance management, the trigger process is managed by HR Wellbeing Team and implemented by managers and HR Business Partners. Staff being managed through the short-term absence process also have access to the measures identified above should they wish to utilise them. A long-term attendance management procedure that includes limited duties options, has been developed and is currently being consulted upon with the representative bodies.

The absence data across the Service for Q4 is detailed below:

On-call – 4.42 days lost per person. This is an increase to Q3 (Q3 - 3.40 days lost per person). Average 68% long term absence; 32% short term absence during Q4. There were eight people on long term sickness from Q3, with a further ten people booking sick in Q4, who remain off as at 19 April 2018. In addition, there were a further 146 periods of sickness absence in Q4 (all booking sick and fit in the quarter). This is reflected in the slight increase in short term sickness in Q4 compared to Q3. Of those who are sick due to long term sickness absence, all are being managed; we have processed one resignation, one ill health retirement, three Review Board and one legal proceedings.

Wholetime - 2.78 shifts lost per person. This is a slight increase to Q3 (Q3 2.76 shifts lost per person). Average 62% long term absence; 38% short term absence during Q4. There are no significant concerns or issues to raise with the SLT or Finance & Governance Committee.

Fire Control – 3.86 shifts lost per person. This is an increase to Q3 (Q3 - 3.58 shifts lost per person). Average 43% long term absence; 57% short term absence in Q4. One person was on long term sickness from Q3 (who has returned to work in Q4), with a further person booking sick in Q4 who remains off (as of 19 April 2018). In addition, there were a further 22 periods of sickness in Q4 (all booking sick and fit in the quarter) compared to 13 in Q3. This is reflected in the increase in short term sickness compared to Q3. All long-term sickness cases are being managed in accordance with the Attendance Management Procedure.

Corporate – 2.40 shifts lost per person. This is an increase to Q3 (Q3 - 2.34 shifts lost per person). Average 45% long term absence; 55% short term absence in Q4.

National Fire & Rescue Service Occupational Health Performance Report April 2017-March 2018

Cleveland Fire and Rescue Service carry out a bench marking analysis of Attendance Management data. 38 Fire and Rescue Services in England provide their data and whilst there are various data nuances, for example, different working patterns, it represents the best benchmarking of absence management within the fire sector. The Service did not contribute figures to the performance report in 2016-2017 but have been providing data since April 2017.

The report published at the end of Q4 for the financial year 2017-2018 provides an average figure for sickness across the financial year. The benchmark report outlines a national average for wholetime, corporate and fire control as 8.18 shifts lost per person. This is an increase from 2016-17 which was 7.84 shifts lost per person. For On-call the national average is 9.89 days lost per person. This is a decrease of 0.13 duty days lost compared to 2016-2017.

This compares to the Service average of 9.64 shifts lost per person for wholetime, corporate and fire control and 13.93 days lost per person for On-call staff. This demonstrates Service average sickness across all staff groups for 2017-2018 is higher than the average outlined in the national performance report.

Significant improvement work is being undertaken in terms of sickness management which includes management training and developments to our HRMiS system to enable improved tracking and performance management. The Health & Wellbeing (H&W) Team and Strategic Planning Team are also looking to reduce the burden of manual manipulation of sickness data, without compromising the quality of information required. This work is due to commence at the end of Q1 (June 2018).

We are also looking to more accurately calculate the cost of sickness absence and reviewing how pay data from the HRMiS can link to sickness reporting. This work commences in Q1 (June 2018) and we plan to have a first draft available by end of Q2 (August/September 2018). Once we have confirmed an approach we intend to apply this formula and look to back date the costs to April 2018.

The update provided by National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Occupational Health Network Group advised that many FRSs have expressed an interest in signing up to the Oscar Kilo Health and Wellbeing Police initiative, that will form part of the inspection process. NFCC met with Oscar Kilo representative in February 2018 to discuss progress and any associated costs. It is likely that systems development will be required by FRSs with an anticipated launch date of Summer 2018.

KLOE 20: How are we successfully engaging and involving our people to develop a flexible, values-driven culture and demonstrate a one team approach?

Actions

Action Code	Action Name
1.5.4.21	How are we successfully engaging and involving our people to develop a flexible, values driven culture and demonstrate a one team approach?
Progress comment	
Staff Engagement: A comprehensive engagement plan is in place and monitored on a quarterly basis by SLT. Internal auditors have provided a substantial level of assurance over these arrangements. The delivery plan of the Employee Engagement Strategy continues to be reviewed to ensure there are service wide actions to provide regular internal communication with staff and opportunities for engagement. In the final quarter of 2017-18 this has included a regular weekly update, a monthly magazine, the eyes and ears forum, a video message from the Chief Fire Officer following the Authority meeting in February and a supplementary message following the Salisbury incident. We have continued to communicate the improvements being put in place as a result of the 2017 'Eyes and Ears' staff survey, and conducted the survey again in February 2018. The results of which have indicated the Service is moving forward in a positive direction, with an increased response rate and engagement levels. We are now delivering the programme of communication and engagement which involves managers presenting the service wide results to their teams and getting feedback on how to improve the areas of focus, as well as discussing local issues and improvements. This programme will also involve targeted workshops where there are significant negative scores for the four key areas of focus. Corporate actions will be monitored at the monthly Leadership Forum throughout the year. The 'Eyes and Ears' forum continues to provide a sounding board for proposals for improvements being made as a results of the survey with valuable input being received on personal reviews and the smarter working programme.	
Smarter ways of working: The Smarter Working principles have been agreed and the programme of work is now underway across the multi-disciplinary Smarter Working group which includes ICT, Assets, Information Management, HR and People Development. An e-learning module has been developed to promote the principles and new ways of working and further workshops with managers are planned to help embed these ways of working across the Service. All staff now have an Office 365 account which enables staff to maximise the collaborative benefits of cloud based technology, further supporting our commitment to flexible working. This was launched with a new Intranet, CONNECT providing staff with a single web based point to access service wide information, their email, calendar, notice board, systems and targeted communications from any device with an internet connection. Adoption of this technology is key to the Service being able to realise many of the principles of the smarter working programme, evidenced during this last quarter of 17/18 with the period of adverse weather. The technology enabled minimal disruption to departments able to work remotely so staff could continue to work and stay connected without travelling. There is a programme of work to update and review HR policies and procedures. Progress can be tracked on Sycle. As part of this work, policies and procedures are being reviewed to ensure that they support and encourage the flexible and smarter working principles.	
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion An Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee is established that is chaired by the DCFO and involving key members of staff; lead officers from a range of staff networks and representative bodies. A comprehensive assurance process has been developed against the draft fire and rescue service equality framework to underpin the assurance of the policy to be considered by the Authority at its June meeting. EDI training and awareness is occurring at all levels within the Service and now forms a central pillar of the leadership development programme. Officers are currently developing the self-assessment for this year's Stonewall workplace equality impact and will be attending pride events across the Service area.	