



DORSET & WILTSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE

Culture Action Plan



About this action plan

This action plan brings together:

- the recommendations from the independent review commissioned by the Chief Fire Officer in 2023
- the Service's own cultural review following the report into London Fire Brigade in November 2022
- commitments to the Culture Action Plan for UK Fire and Rescue Services. National Fire Chiefs Council. July 2023
- existing initiatives and actions by the Service

Where we want to be

“A culture where everyone works in safe environments that are free from bullying, harassment & discrimination, abuse & harm, where they feel supported, welcomed and able to thrive.”

More specifically:


- values and behaviours are well understood and displayed by all staff.
- staff have the confidence to challenge inappropriate behaviour and know that it will be consistently and fairly dealt with
- managers at all levels have the skills and confidence to robustly deal with inappropriate behaviour when it happens.
- Support and welfare arrangements, facilities and workwear meet the needs of our staff.

How we will take it forward


This action plan will be overseen by the Culture Development Committee that is chaired by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer. This committee comprises of a senior representative from all departments, the staff network leads and all of the representative bodies.

To further strengthen the committee, the Chief Fire Officer has engaged the White Ribbon charity. This charity is recognised as a leading light in helping organisations prevent harmful behaviours and attitudes towards women.


Members of the Fire and Rescue Authority will oversee and scrutinise progress through regular reviews and reports. These reports will be available on the Service's website.

	 Building trust and confidence	Key outcomes	Deliverables	Priority			Lead Officer
				Short (by April 2024)	Medium (by April 2025)	Long (by April 2026)	
1	Promote and further develop our culture dashboard to increase the transparency of HR performance data and outcomes.	<p>Increased transparency to build staff confidence and trust.</p> <p>Staff know that robust action is taken to manage inappropriate behaviours.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A culture dashboard that is regularly updated and is accessible to all staff. 				Vikki Shearing
2	Explore means of overcoming data protection restrictions to allow a greater public interest test to drive increased reporting.	<p>Increased transparency to build staff confidence and trust.</p> <p>Staff know that robust action is taken to manage inappropriate behaviours.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised procedures that include a legitimate interest test that conforms to data protection and employment legislative requirements for cases of potential gross misconduct. National lobbying for further transparency in discipline outcomes. 				Jenny Long
3	All managers that are promoted, including on a temporary basis, are clear on their role and expectations.	<p>Staff have increased confidence and trust in their line management and promotion processes.</p> <p>Inappropriate behaviour is more consistently dealt with at the earliest opportunity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear expectations and formalised handover arrangements. Increased monitoring and support arrangements by Group and Area Management. 				Andy Cole


4	Implement a revised complaints process for members of the public to raise concerns.	<p>Increased public trust and confidence in the way the Service will handle complaints.</p> <p>Better data analysis to inform organisational learning and performance management.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A revised complaints procedure and database. 				Vikki Shearing
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	 Strengthening support, welfare and facilities	Key outcomes	Deliverables	Priority			Lead Officer
				Short (by April 2024)	Medium (by April 2025)	Long (by April 2026)	
5	Introduce 'Safe to' staff support programme.	<p>A more accessible means for staff to raise concerns on a confidential and anonymous basis and improved awareness of what they can expect from the Service.</p> <p>Better data analysis to inform organisational learning and performance management.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A range of initiatives to support staff, to include:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent reporting line Speak Up Guardians Staff Portal 				Jenny Long
6	Improve mental health provision.	Ensure the Service have a range of supportive measures in place so that staff can seek help when they need it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A range of mental health support interventions. 				Jenny Long
7	Commence a further review of female facilities on stations.	Appropriate and fit for future facilities so that staff feel valued aiding recruitment and retention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A blueprint of appropriate facilities which is built into the capital replacement programme. 				Jill McCrae

8	Review the fireground welfare provision.	Improved and dignified welfare facilities at incidents commensurate with a modern fire & rescue service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A revised procedure for incident ground welfare, the effectiveness of which is regularly monitored and audited. 				Andy Cole
9	Undertake further consultation on workwear.	<p>Workwear is of high quality and fit for purpose.</p> <p>Staff feel they can represent the Service in a positive and professional manner.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of workwear in collaboration with key stakeholder to identify and implement further improvements. 				Jill McCrae
10	Review our remote working arrangements	Maintaining a long-term positive culture where all staff and in particular new starters feel a sense of belonging.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated smarter working principles. • Included in our leadership development interventions. 				Vikki Shearing


	 Clear cultural expectations for all staff	Key outcomes	Deliverables	Priority			Lead Officer
				Short (by April 2024)	Medium (by April 2025)	Long (by April 2026)	
11	Introduce and publicise a new Dignity at work framework including a zero tolerance and culture statement that is aligned to the NFCC Culture statement.	<p>Staff are clear that unacceptable behaviour will be dealt with robustly.</p> <p>Staff have a clear understanding of expected behaviours and their personal responsibility in this.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dignity at work framework. • Zero tolerance and culture statement. • Contracts of employment amended. 				Jenny Long
12	Continue to deliver and embed the code of ethics.	Our code of ethics is fully understood by managers and staff and embedded across the Service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A code of ethics information resource that is widely publicised and made easily accessible to all staff. • A new code of ethics e-learning package for managers. • A code of ethics workshop. • Recording and monitoring mandatory attendance at workshop/ training session. • Strengthen code of ethics and EDI input on corporate induction. 				Jenny Long
13	Develop and deliver a revised set of station expectations for operational managers and staff.	Clear expectations of standards and behaviours for all station-based staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A coherent, visible, and well understood set of revised standards for all stations. 				Andy Cole
14	Develop a culture assurance framework.	An on-going framework to measure the levels of understanding and adherence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An evaluation and assurance framework linked to our staff survey, culture dashboard and 				Jill McCrae

		to the code of ethics to aid continuous improvement.	engagement initiatives to measure our cultural improvements.				
15	Implement changes arising out of changes to legislation on our approach to DBS standard checks for new and existing staff.	Provide increased assurance and public trust and confidence in the staff being employed by the Service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A DBS re-check and risk assessment process. • A revised DBS procedure. 				Jenny Long

	 Strengthening leadership and engagement in workplaces	Key outcomes	Deliverables	Priority			Lead Officer
				Short (by April 2024)	Medium (by April 2025)	Long (by April 2026)	
16	Further strengthen our training to managers on our revised performance and discipline procedures.	All managers clear about the procedures, expectations and support available for dealing with inappropriate behaviour.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised HR Modules within the leadership development programme. 				Jenny Long
17	Review our leadership development programme to ensure an even stronger focus on EDI, behaviours and culture.	<p>All managers better understand cultural expectations and their role in leading and maintaining standards.</p> <p>A leadership programme that sets out mandatory and discretionary training attendance linked to Gartan Expert.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A revised leadership development programme. Recording and monitoring mandatory attendance on our leadership development interventions. 				Jenny Long
18	Review the quantity and quality of our e-learning with a view to increasing the level of face-to-face input.	Staff and managers understand and have the confidence to raise, support and manage EDI issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E-learning aligned to all roles with a clearer distinction between acquisition and reaccreditation. Increased face to face training sessions. 				Jenny Long
19	Review the territorial group structure to provide greater visibility, more consistent working with HR and other corporate departments.	<p>Station-based managers working to clearer standards and expectations.</p> <p>Increased visibility of managers and oversight of station standards.</p> <p>Increased oversight of station-based culture and development.</p> <p>Effective cross department working.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embedded new Area Leadership Team structure with lead references. Improved ways of working Evaluate the effectiveness of the introduction of the Area Leadership Team. 				Andy Cole

20	Continue to deliver 'Not on my Watch' awareness sessions to all staff.	All staff have an increased understanding of cultural standards and expectations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record and monitor mandatory attendance at 'Not on my Watch' awareness sessions. Externally validate 'Not on my Watch' session. 			Jenny Long
21	Introduce a 360-degree assessments aligned to the Code of Ethics.	Managers are self-aware, listen and act positively on feedback provided.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 360-degree assessments, included within the leadership development programme. 			Jenny Long
22	Better understand the barriers to progression for operational female staff.	Improved awareness and understanding of the barriers to progression so that our operational female staff are better supported.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with female staff and in particular the operational women's network to understand their perspective regarding barriers to progression. Working collaboratively, develop, promote, and implement progression initiatives. 			Jenny Long
23	Strengthen coaching and mentoring arrangements for female staff.	Improved progression opportunities for all female staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working collaboratively, set in place a coaching and mentoring programme specifically for women and underrepresented groups. 			Jenny Long
24	Continue to use the 'Our Time' programme to support the progression of operational females.	Operational female staff are better supported in their professional development and career progression.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High levels of participation in the Our Time programme. Evaluate the effectiveness of previous attendance. 			Jenny Long
25	Further training on pregnancy, maternity and menopause for all managers.	<p>Increased understanding and awareness across the Service.</p> <p>All female staff are better supported.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Included in the revised leadership development programme. 			Jenny Long
26	Continue our membership to Women in the Fire Service.	Female staff are supported and have opportunities for professional and personal development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued membership and participation with this national group. 			Jenny Long

		Greater learning for the Service of national issues and approaches.				
27	Develop a decision-making model.	Managers are empowered and confident to make decisions. Decisions are made at the appropriate levels with clear escalation protocols.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A decision-making model that is included in the leadership development programme. 			Jenny Long
28	Develop a senior leader coaching programme.	Managers and leaders benefit from external support for their personal growth and organisational learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior leader coaching programme. 			Jenny Long

	 Strengthening key procedures and practices	Key outcomes	Deliverables	Priority			Lead Officer
				Short (by April 2024)	Medium (by April 2025)	Long (by April 2026)	
29	Further strengthen the monitoring, oversight and reporting of our managing performance and discipline procedures.	<p>Staff have confidence that performance is appropriately managed in a consistent way.</p> <p>Increased corporate oversight of trends, management intervention and learning opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of a panel to improve oversight arrangements. 				Jenny Long
30	Review the HR departmental structure to have a stronger focus on delivering the HR function through the HR business partners.	<p>A higher level of support and autonomy to HR Business Partners and managers.</p> <p>Improved ways of working between the HR department and departments across the Service.</p> <p>Higher levels of ‘customer’ satisfaction with HR.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A revised HR structure and improved ways of working. Evaluate the effectiveness of the introduction of the new HR structure. 				Jenny Long
31	Further review maternity and menopause procedures and processes.	<p>Increased understanding and awareness across the Service.</p> <p>Female staff are supported.</p> <p>Improved retention of female staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed procedures in collaboration with key stakeholders. 				Jenny Long

32	Strengthen the leavers process.	Increased awareness of the reasons for staff leaving the Service so that this can inform organisational learning and performance management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New electronic process embedded. • Evaluate the effectiveness of the new leavers process. 				Jenny Long
33	Provide assurance that we are fully compliant with the national fire standards.	Fire standards are met.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit implementation and compliance with national fire standards, in particular standards for Leading the Service, Leading and Developing People, and Communications and Engagement. 				Jill McCrae