

West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority

Scrutiny Committee

You are summoned to attend the meeting of Scrutiny Committee to be held on

Monday, 17 July 2023 at 10:30

**At Fire Service Headquarters, 99 Vauxhall Road, Nechells, Birmingham B7 4HW
and digitally via Microsoft Teams**

for the purpose of transacting the following business:

Agenda – Public Session

Item No.

- | | | |
|-----------|---|----------------|
| 1 | To receive apologies for absence (if any) | |
| 2 | Declarations of interests | |
| 3 | Minutes of the Previous Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 24 April 2023 | 3 - 10 |
| 4 | Matters Arising | |
| 5 | Scrutiny Review of Training and Development Progress Report | 11 - 16 |
| 6 | Fire Control Performance Report - Q1 2023-2024 | 17 - 26 |
| 7 | Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion Equality (DICE) Update | 27 - 40 |
| 8 | Dispute Resolution Report [To follow] | |
| 9 | Draft Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2023-24 | 41 - 44 |
| 10 | Any other business | |

Distribution:

Gurdial Atwal - Member, David Barrie - Member, Chris Bott - Member, Jasbinder Dehar - Vice Chair of the Scrutiny Committee, Gavin Lloyd - Chair, Catherine Miks - Member, Vera Waters - Member

This meeting of the West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority will be held at Fire Service Headquarters. However, please note that although the meeting will be open to the public, there will be limited capacity due to ongoing social distancing measures.

The meeting will also be held digitally via Microsoft Teams allowing observers to access remotely. To access the meeting, please contact a member of the Strategic Hub, West Midlands Fire Service, who will be able to provide login details (please note that Microsoft Teams is not required to join a meeting) or provide guidance if you wish to attend in person at HQ.

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This agenda and supporting documents are also available
electronically on the
[West Midlands Fire Service Committee Management Information](#)
[System](#)

Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee

24 April 2023

Conducted as a public meeting at Headquarters and digitally via Microsoft Teams

Present: Councillor Spence (Chair), Councillor Atwal (Vice-Chair), Councillor Barrie, and Councillor Jalil and Councillor Waters

Virtual: Councillor Dehar, Sarah Middleton, Co-Optee

Officers: Richard Stanton, Sam Burton, Kate Alliss, Tom Embury, Kirsty Tuffin, Kelly Whitmore.

09/23 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillor Young and Councillor Hussain, substituted by Councillor Jalil.

10/23 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received.

11/23 **Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 23 January 2023**

Resolved:

1. That the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 23 January 2023 were approved as an accurate record of proceedings.

12/23 **Fire Control Performance Report Update – Quarter 4 2022-23**

Kelly Whitmore, Group Commander – Fire Control, presented the Fire Control Performance Report – Quarter 4 2022-23, that outlined the operational performance of Fire Control over a three-month period.

The Committee were advised that as per the report, a total of 16,085 emergency calls were received between 1 January 2023 and 31 March 2023 across both brigade areas: West Midlands and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Services.

12,071 (75%) were for West Midlands and 3,546 (22%) were for Staffordshire. A total of 3% of calls had been taken on behalf of other services. Of the total number of calls received, Fire Control mobilised to 52% of the incidents for the West Midlands and 51% for Staffordshire. The mobilisation ratio of calls had been dependent upon the following:

- Calls challenging automated fire alarms (AFAs)
- Calls challenging special service calls that were deemed non-emergency
- Repeat 999 calls
- Use of 999eye footage/imagery

During Qtr. 4 the median call handling time by Fire Control had increased to 103 seconds. The increase in time handling over the past three Qtrs. had been a result of the number of new entrants that joined the Fire Control team, the introduction of Vision 4, a new command and control system, and enhanced questioning to support proportionate and appropriate mobilising of resources.

As requested at the last Scrutiny Committee, comparison data available for other Fire Services had been provided, as per the report. Kelly advised that services used different systems and varied approaches across different control rooms so any comparisons had been difficult. Those that provided their data, showed that their control rooms had not been meeting their core times, with some only reaching it 25% of the time on average.

The Committee were advised that the use of 999eye, that assisted Fire Control with intelligence led mobilisation and resource management, had increased to a total of 3,424 times during Qtr. 4, compared to 1954 in Qtr. 3.

Following queries raised, it was agreed that a breakdown of the proportion of calls received by Fire Control be included in the next update. It was agreed that CRMP Officers provide an update on prevention work at a future Scrutiny Committee meeting.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the Fire Control performance update for Quarter 4 2022-23, be noted.
2. That it be agreed that a breakdown of the proportion of calls received by Fire Control be included in the next update.
3. That it be agreed that CRMP Officers provide an update on prevention work at a future Scrutiny Committee meeting.

13/23

Scrutiny Review of Training and Development

Sam Burton, Head of Development and Inclusion, presented the Scrutiny Review of Training and Development report that outlined the proposed Terms of Reference and timeline for the review.

The Committee were advised that as agreed at the last Scrutiny Committee, the next Scrutiny Review would be focused upon the services training and development functions. Progression and development into leadership and management roles within the service, with specific focus upon underrepresented employees, would also be included.

The Committee were also advised that following the recent publication of the HMICFRS spotlight report on culture and values in the service, the Terms of Reference for the review had been adapted to reflect this. It was emphasised that this would need to be scrutiny member-led and evidence based.

The suggested timeline, as per report, was highlighted to members. It was intended for data collections and case studies to take place before the Fire Authority Annual General meeting, with an additional Scrutiny Committee to be arranged for July to provide an update. It would be the intention for face-to-face focus groups to take place with Scrutiny Committee members and stakeholders throughout August and September. It was highlighted there had been a typo in the report and the final report would be issued to the Committee in October 2023, not October 2024. An update report would be brought back in October 2024.

The Chair of the Committee praised the planned review.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the Terms of Reference for the Training and Development Scrutiny Review, including the proposed timeline for the review and reporting, be approved.
2. That it be agreed that members commit to participating in the member-led focus groups with staff to support the delivery of the review.

14/23

Scrutiny Review of Safe and Well

Kate Alliss, Partnerships Manager, presented the Scrutiny Review of Safe and Well Report that outlined the progress made against the learning recommendations from the Scrutiny Review in 2022.

The Committee were advised that as agreed by the Scrutiny Committee in November 2022, 10 recommendations had been agreed and actioned upon to improve Safe and Wells. Updates to the agreed 10 recommendations were highlighted as follows:

- Recommendation 1 – There had been ongoing consultation with the external company to develop the new system. The services IT team were also providing support.
- Recommendation 2 – a quality assurance had been drafted for the internal MESH site and it was the intention to go live in April/May 2023.
- Recommendation 3 – MESH had been updated to provide support whilst awaiting the support documents therein the NFCC Person Centred Framework. Tymly will be adapted accordingly to align with the proposed framework once received.
- Recommendation 4 – To be adapted once NFCC Person Centred Framework has been received.
- Recommendation 5 – completed. Feedback to be obtained.
- Recommendation 6 – work had been conducted to learn from incident reviews, stations and prevention forums.

- Recommendation 7 – completed. Content had been agreed and would be implemented 2023-2024.
- Recommendation 8 – The introduction of the NFCC Person Centred Framework for Home Fire Safety Visits would provide the framework to create the good practice guides and the development plans, once received.
- Recommendation 9 – NFCC guidance video has been shared with workforce. There service were still awaiting the NFCC training package.
- Recommendation 10 – work was underway to work with partners to share information safely and inline with current regulations.

Following queries, it was agreed that that further information be circulated to Cllr Waters on the criteria for a face-to-face Safe and Well visit. It was agreed that Cllr Jalil be contacted regarding participating in a safe and strong visit for businesses with officers.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the progress against the learning recommendations from the Scrutiny Review of Safe and Well be noted.
2. That it be agreed that further information be circulated to Cllr Waters on the criteria for a face-to-face Safe and Well visit.
3. That it be agreed that Cllr Jalil be contacted regarding participating in a safe and well visit for businesses with officers.

15/23

Scrutiny Committee Draft Annual Report

Tom Embury, Deputy Clerk to the Authority, presented the Scrutiny Committee Draft Annual Report that outlined the Committees work throughout 2022-2023.

The Committee were advised that as per the Committees Terms of Reference, an annual report of the Committee must be submitted to Fire Authority to outline the work conducted. The annual report had included standard reports submitted to

the Committee, Scrutiny Reviews Conducted on Business Continuity and Safe and Wells.

No amendments were made.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the draft Scrutiny Committee Annual Report for 2022-2023 be approved.

16/23

Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference Review

Tom Embury, Deputy Clerk to the Authority, presented the Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference Report that outlined the proposed changes to the Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference.

The Committee were advised that all proposed changes outlined therein the report had been highlighted in red for ease of reference and if approved, would be submitted for Fire Authority for approval.

No further amendments were made.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the proposed changes to the Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference (Summarised in Appendix A) be approved and submitted to Fire Authority for approval.
2. That it be agreed that further changes or additions to the Terms of Reference that could support the committee to undertake its role to support the Authority to achieve its strategic objectives be considered.

17/23

Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2022-2023

Tom Embury, Deputy Clerk to the Authority, presented the Scrutiny Committee Work Plan for 2022-2023.

The Committee were advised that following approval at the Fire Authority Annual General Meeting on 26 June 2023, a meeting would be scheduled for 17 July 2023. The proposed items for this meeting were outlined as per report.

Resolved:

1. That the Scrutiny Committee Work Plan for 2022-2023, be approved.

The meeting finished at 14:52 hours.

Kirsty Tuffin Strategic Hub 0121 380 6906

WEST MIDLANDSFIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

17 JULY 2023

1. **SCRUTINY REVIEW OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT –
PROGRESS REPORT**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1. THAT progress be noted by Members of the Scrutiny Committee in relation to the Scrutiny Review of Training and Development.

2. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 2.1. The purpose of this report is to provide a progress update on the Scrutiny Review of Training Development commissioned in April 2023.

3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The key deliverable of the review:

- 3.1.1 Establish if the training and development approach taken by West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) achieves the needs of the Service, in particular groups that are underrepresented in leadership roles.
- 3.1.2 Identify the role of innovation and technology to enable approaches to training and development in improving effectiveness, efficiency, and accessibility for all staff with particular attention to neurodiversity.
- 3.1.3 Actions to ensure inclusiveness and equality in how training is developed and delivered for all staff, especially those from groups which are currently underrepresented within the service.

- 3.1.4 Staff and specifically recruit experiences of training and development, what works well, and where further improvement could be made.
- 3.2. In January 2023, Scrutiny Committee chose Training and Development as the topic for their next formal review. Following this decision, officers developed the terms of reference and methodology for the review in line with the agreed areas of focus approved by the Committee on the 23 April 2023.
- 3.3. Members will note the HMICFRS published their Spotlight Report on Culture and Values in the Fire and Rescue Service. This review has included several specific recommendations for the sector around the training and development of staff, including how services should take steps to improve inclusion and diversity, and provide greater focus on leadership development. This Scrutiny Review supports the Service's wider response to the HMICFRS report.
- 3.4. In line with the Scrutiny Committee's own Terms of Reference, it is intended that the review will be member-led. Following the Authority's AGM, at which Scrutiny Members were appointed, the engagement with staff network groups and key stakeholders will be undertaken through face-to-face focus groups led by Scrutiny Committee members throughout August and September 2023.
- 3.5. It is intended that the final Scrutiny Report will be completed by October 2023. This will be followed 12-months later by a follow-up report to determine what progress has been made on recommendations made in October 2024.

4. **PROGRESS UP-DATES**

The following up-dates are provided.

4.1. **Talent Pool Development**

- 4.1.1 The Service is developing a talent pool approach to recruitment and selection, aligned to the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Leadership Behavioural Framework. This enables individuals to demonstrate the behaviours accepted during several behavioural activities. The pilot began in March for aspiring Group Managers, this has resulted in several individuals embarking on development

opportunities across the Service. The learning and feedback are shaping the development of future talent pools.

- 4.1.2 To achieve the development and progression needs of the Service, in particular groups that are underrepresented in leadership roles, a programme is being developed. The programme will provide individuals with support and mentoring to prepare them for the talent pool process, this will be piloted through the summer with individuals applying for the Station Commander talent pool process in September. The Neurodiversity Networking Group are sharing lived experiences and feedback to shape the process moving forward.
- 4.1.3 The role of the manager is key in identifying and supporting talent. A number of sessions are planned for managers to support them in how to identify and nurture talent in their teams.

4.2 **Competency Risk Assessment**

- 4.2.1 The Competency Risk Assessment (CRA) supports West Midlands Fire Service Competency Framework, which is reviewed annually to determine currency of activities that individuals complete for them to undertake their role.
- 4.2.2 Individual competency is demonstrated through a robust standardised assessment approach, workplace assessments, activity roles, and the completion of E-Learning frequencies.
- 4.2.3 The CRA Committee, are in the process of reviewing the e-Learn frequencies and content. The review of the content is being done in collaboration with a range of stakeholders to ensure they encompass a range of learning styles and neurodiversity. The use of immersive and innovative technology and digital platforms enables this inclusive approach.
- 4.2.4 All current E-Learning content is programmed for review, it is important to note, due to the number of E-Learn packages and new content required to be developed, this will take an extended period due to the capacity of the team.

4.3 **Trainee Firefighter Development Programme**

- 4.3.1 A key objective for the WMFS Training and Development Programme is to ensure it aligns to national best practice and maximises the learning experience for staff ensuring our staff are knowledgeable, competent, and confident in their abilities.
- 4.3.2 The Trainee Firefighter Development Programme (TFDP) is a significant milestone in a Firefighter's career, it is the start of their journey, providing them with the skills and knowledge to development into competent and confident Firefighters.
- 4.3.3 A review of the TFDP has been conducted, this review took into consideration a range of evidence and feedback from staff to determine areas for consideration for review and/or change.
- 4.3.4 In conjunction with the review and as part of our commitment to setting everyone up to succeed, we have commissioned an external review of the employee experience through TFDP. This was undertaken by Real World HR to support us to identify where continuous improvement can be made.
- 4.3.5 As a result, the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) has approved the extension and inclusion of the following areas:
- Introducing enhanced opportunity to understand and develop a positive culture, values, and behaviours.
 - Building understanding of the Service's People Policies.
 - Further development and learning opportunities in safety critical areas such as breathing apparatus, working at height, water rescue and building knowledge and understanding of working effectively with blue light partners.
 - Building an effective on-boarding and station integration and mentoring programme.
 - Tailored learning options to support underrepresented groups.
- 4.3.6 To provide the appropriate time to acquire knowledge, build understanding and apply in a safe environment will require a twelve-week TFDP.

- 4.3.7 The revised TFDP will commence from August 2023. This approach enables WMFS, in the future, to align its TFDP programme to the Firefighter apprenticeship.

4.4 **Trainee Firefighter Apprenticeship Programme**

- 4.4.1 The Trainee Firefighter Apprenticeship Programme will be developed in the People Programme over the next 12 months.

4.5 **Distributed Training Model**

- 4.5.1 WMFS operates a Distributed Training Model (DTM) to ensure that staff are trained and competent in their role. The Service is committed to continual improvement and ensuring our staff are 'set up' to succeed, it is now timely to conduct another review to ensure the DTM fully supports our staff to be highly competent, safe, effective, and assertive when responding to incidents. A Terms of Reference is being developed to support this review.

4.6 **Career and Development Pathways**

- 4.6.1 WMFS recognises that to enable effective individual and organisational development and progression, it is vital that there is consistency in the methodology, approach, and opportunity for all staff. This is particularly key when staff develop into supervisory, middle, and senior leadership roles.
- 4.6.2 To support this approach, a career development pathway is being developed for foundation, supervisory, middle, and senior levels to support individuals to be competent in their role and to enable them to progress through the service.
- 4.6.3 The career development pathway incorporates the development of the talent pool approach highlighted in Section 3.1.

4.7 **Member-Led Stakeholder Sessions**

A range of member-led and stakeholder sessions will be developed and delivered throughout July, August and September, dates to be agreed with Members. These sessions will gather further evidence and feedback to support the development of the report to the Scrutiny Committee in October 2023.

5. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1. No initial Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken for this report as one is not required. The review itself will specifically consider the impact and experience of training and development for staff and new joiners with protected characteristics. Therefore, it is expected that the final review will report and assess the equality impacts.

6. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1. There are no legal implications from this report, although it is expected that the report will consider the service's legal obligations with regards to skills, training, and inclusion.

7. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1. There are no direct financial implications of this proposal – the review will be undertaken by WMFS staff and WMFRA Members.

8. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1. There are no environmental impacts of this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers.

The contact for this report is Sam Burton, Head of Development, and Inclusion - sam.burton@wmfs.net

WAYNE BROWN
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

17 JULY 2023

1. **FIRE CONTROL PERFORMANCE REPORT – Q1 2023/24**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 THAT the operational performance of Fire Control for Q1 be noted.

2. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 2.1 This report is submitted to provide the committee with an update of the operational performance of Fire Control. The report covers a three-month period.

3. **BACKGROUND**

3.1 **Emergency Calls Received and Call Handling**

Fire Control receives the emergency calls and effectively manages the resources for both Staffordshire and West Midlands Fire and Rescue Services.

Staffordshire and West Midlands Fire Control received 19,853 emergency calls between 1 April 2023 and 30 June 2023 across both brigade areas.

This is a 25% increase on the number of calls received from the same quarter in 22/23. This can be attributed to an increase in the number of weather related calls in June, which saw flooding and spate conditions and small outdoor fires.

The number of calls received for Q1 23/24 was split 14,650 calls for the West Midlands (73.8%), 4,639 calls for

Staffordshire (23.4%) and 564 calls from outside of service areas (2.8%). This ratio is consistent with the previous reporting periods.

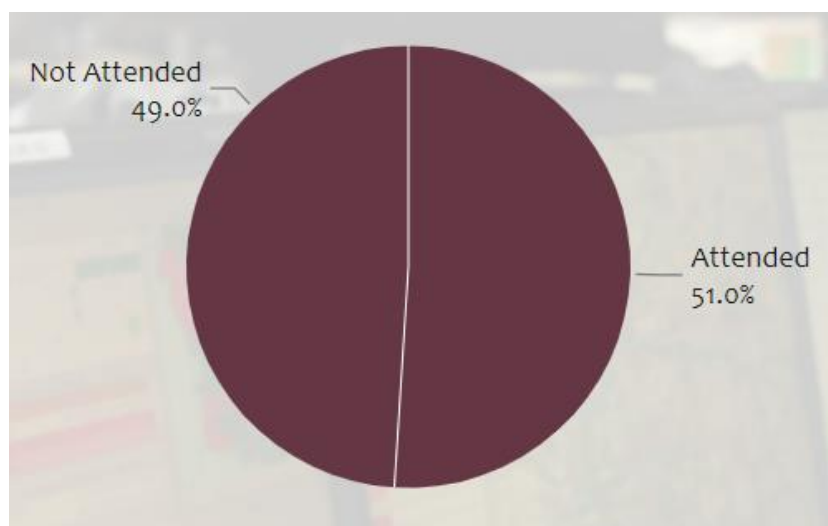
Of the 14,650 emergency calls received for WMFS across the reporting period; Fire Control mobilised to 7,583 (51.7%) of incidents.

Of the 4,639 emergency calls received for Staffordshire FRS across the reporting period, Fire Control mobilised to 2,397 (51.6%) of incidents.

This mobilisation to calls received ratio is because of several factors including –

- call challenging automated fire alarms (AFAs)
- call challenging special service calls which were deemed non-emergency
- repeat 999 calls
- use of 999eye footage and imagery

This ratio again remains the same as previous reporting periods, demonstrating a consistent approach to call challenge, and recognising when repeat calls are being received that have already been mobilized to.



3.2 Call Handling

A key performance indicator for Fire Control is the length of time from answering a 999 call to mobilising appliances to category 1 (life and property) incidents. For these critical

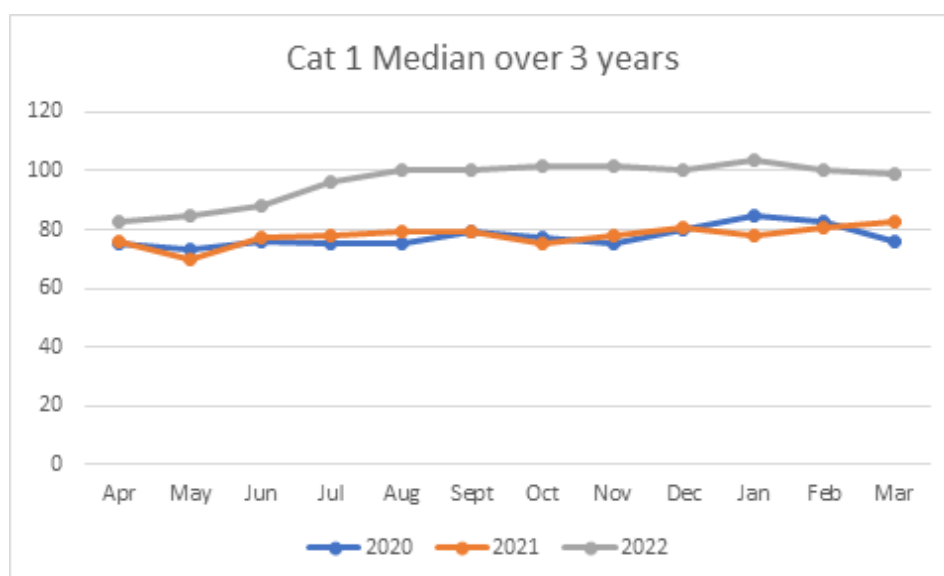
incident types, we aim to mobilise in under 80 seconds. Fire Control's continued focus on mobilising with the required urgency is a key factor in survivability and limiting damage to property. The median call handling for the reporting period was 96 seconds, positively this is a seven second reduction on the previous quarter.

Quarter	Median Call Handling	Performance	Quarter	Median Call Handling	Performance
Q4	103	▲	Q1	96	▲
January	105	▲	April	99	▲
February	101	▲	May	96	▲
March	103	▲	June	94	▲
Total	103	▲	Total	96	▲

A detailed review was undertaken to try and understand why the median average category 1 call handling time has increased gradually over the past few years.

Data captured for a two-year period from April 2020 to April 2022 demonstrates that the 80 second standard was consistently achieved.

However, since April 2022 the monthly call handling median ranged from 83 seconds up to 104 seconds, with an annual median of 99 seconds.



It is difficult to pinpoint an exact reason as to why the call handling has increased over the past 16 months, however the move to Vision 4 has contributed significantly.

The increase in call handling times across the periods where risk based crewing was introduced was approx. seven seconds (increased up to 85 seconds) and at the point when Vision 4 was introduced this then immediately increased to an additional 14 seconds and continued to fluctuate by an additional 1-5 seconds (median monthly average ranged between 99-104 seconds).

Therefore, the most significant contributing factor to increased call handling times can be attributed to Vision 4.

As with the introduction of most new C&C systems it can be anticipated that an initial dip in performance will be experienced whilst confidence is built by the end users, however the data in the table below indicated that we had not yet seen an improvement.

Month	Cat 1 Call time	Significant Dates
Oct 21	75	
Nov 21	78	RBC – 2 Stations go live
Dec 21	81	
Jan 22	78	RBC – Further 2 Stations go live
Feb 22	81	
Mar 22	82	
Apr 22	82	RBC – Further 7 Stations go live
May 22	84	
Jun 22	85	Vision 4 Go Live
Jul 22	99	
Aug 22	101	
Sept 22	101	
Oct 22	103	
Nov 22	102	
Dec 22	100	
Jan 23	105	
Feb 23	101	
Mar 23	103	

FC staff have shared that they are confident in their own ability of using the system, however state that there are some areas of Vision 4 that are not as efficient as the previous mobilising system.

Whilst Fire Control System Management, Digital and Data and SSS continue to review ways to improve the efficiency of the system, we recognized that there were emergency call management process that we could change in an attempt to reduce call handling times.

In May we amended the way in which we searched for addresses and we have been trialing a new salutation which asks a direct, targeted question to the caller which enables the call taker to lead the call in a more efficient way. Whilst still in its infancy, we can see tangible improvements in the call handling average since this has been trialed.

3.3 **Dynamic Mobilising**

Dynamic mobilising involves using resources flexibly and efficiently in our approach to emergency call management and mobilising, resulting in a proportionate and appropriate initial incident response.

The approach enables Fire Control to reduce and increase an incident response to achieve the best match for the incident needs, which includes selecting the most appropriate number and type of resource.

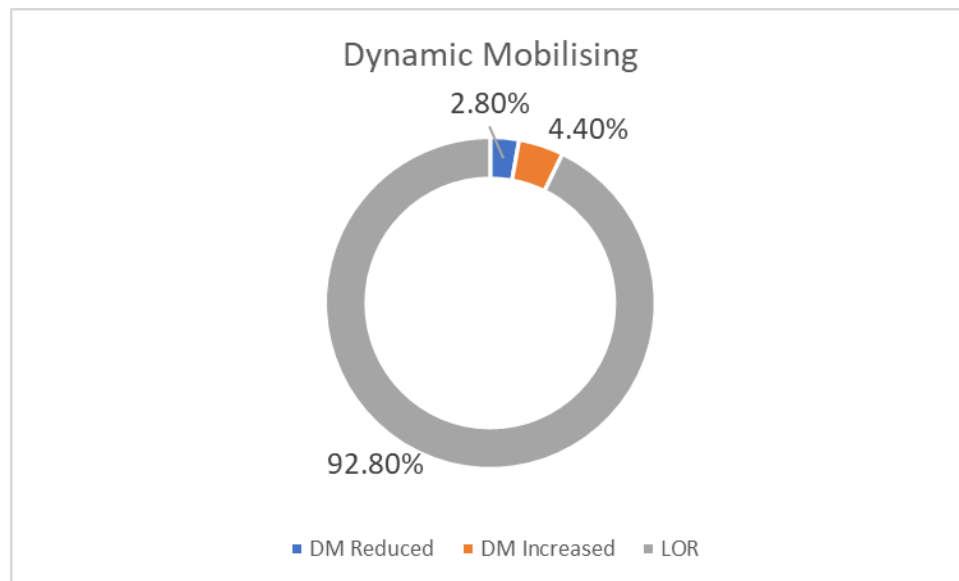
Fire Control continue to utilise several tools to support decision making including –

- Dynamic emergency call handling
- Information gathered at the time of call
- Location of the incident, both geographically and demographically
- Repeat calls
- Footage and images from 999eye
- Number and type of incidents in progress

- Weather
- Time of day

Fire Control dynamically amended the initial level of response 721 times throughout the quarter (7.3% of all incidents mobilized to), increasing the attendance 446 times and reducing the attendance 275 times.

These totals are either an increased or decreased attendance from the standard pre-determined levels of response.



On the occasions Fire Control reduced the attendance none of the incidents resulted in a subsequent make up, demonstrating that the reduced attendance was the correct decision to make. This resulted in at least 275 resources remaining available for category 1 incidents and to support prevention and protection activities, thereby increasing the effectiveness of our resources.

On the occasions Fire Control increased the attendance, this supported the speed and weight of attack allowing for safe systems of work to be implemented leading to effective and efficient resolution of incidents.

180 resources were returned enroute (stood down before booking in attendance). We are improving the quality of our

reporting data and debriefing so we can understand the following –

- Whether the initial attendance was increased by Fire Control or whether this was the standard level of response
- Whether 999eye was used to support decision making
- Whether the resources that were returned enroute were for incidents or standby moves
- Whether the resources that were sent matched the information that was available to Fire Control at the point of mobilisation

Dynamic Mobilising Case Study

- First 999 call received at 17.36 hours – tall building fire persons reported
- Level of response mobilised – four resources and one HP
- Multiple fire survival guidance calls in progress (this is the reason why 999eye footage was unable to be obtained)
- Crews delayed in attending due to PRIDE parade & traffic
- FC Manager dynamically increases the attendance by an additional three resources (seven in total)
- All appliances remained in attendance – none were stood down, no additional appliances were requested
- The early mobilisation of additional resources enabled them to arrive quicker and supported assertive firefighting to save life and prevent significant escalation

3.4 999Eye

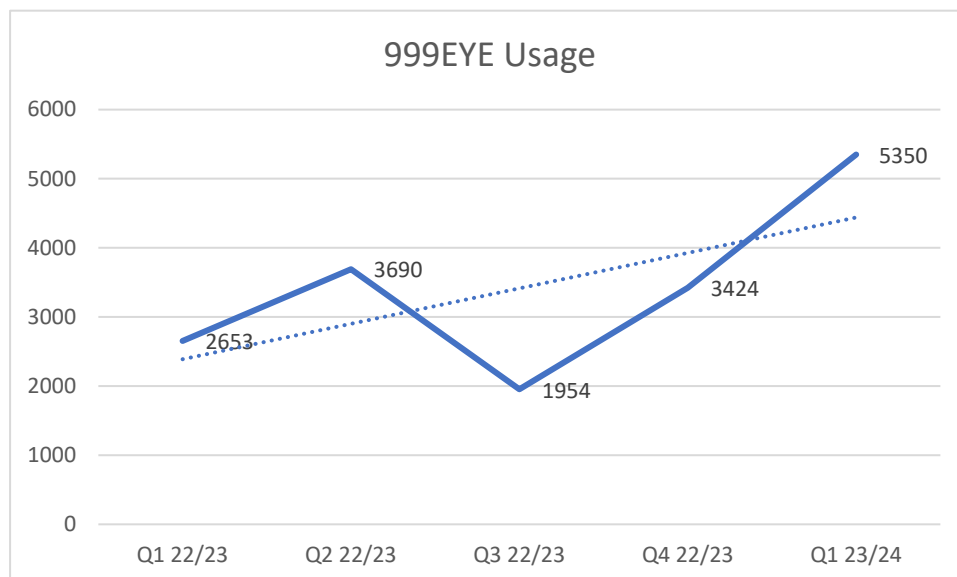
Intelligence led mobilisation and resource management enables Fire Control to send the most appropriate number

and type of resource based on the level of risk, this directly contributes to the achievement of our risk-based attendance standards.

999eye is enhancing the quality of intelligence and information that is received within Fire Control, thereby enabling Fire Control personnel to make more informed dynamic mobilisations using this technology; further supporting our key aim of sending the right level of resource to the right incident type.

In Q1 23/24 Fire Control used 999eye 5,350 times, this was for 27% of all calls received (including repeat calls).

The table below shows the recorded use of 999eye across the reporting periods.



Since Q1 22/23 the use of 999eye has more than doubled and the % of successful images received is at an all-time high of 67.2% of all 999eye requests.

Again, we are improving the quality of our reporting data so we can understand the 'so what' from the images received and determine how many times the 999eye footage has directly impacted on the decisions that we made.

999eye Case Study

House Fire

- Two Pumps mobilised
- 999eye footage received & additional PRL mobilised due to severity of fire and travel time of additional SFRS resources
- Police & Ambulance requested
- Incident treated as persons reported
- Footage used to support Police investigations

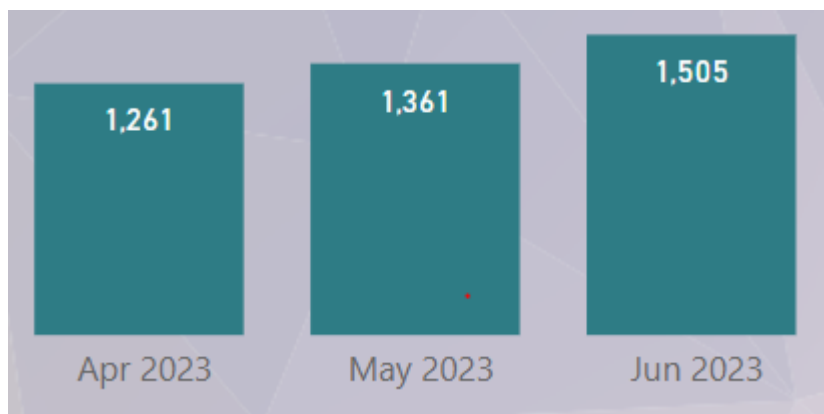
Factory Fire

- Three Pumps mobilised
- 999eye footage received & additional pump mobilised
- Footage shared with Officer to support their decision making regarding attendance
- Incident dealt with as a make pumps four, even though FC make the decision to mobilise all four of the resources
- No additional resources requested

3.5 Automated Fire Alarm Calls

Fire Control continue to be an integral function supporting the introduction of CRMP projects by ensuring a proportional level of response to incidents, including those involving Automated Fire Alarms.

A total of 4,127 AFA calls were received for the reporting period. This equates to 20.7% of all emergency calls received for the quarter.



Whilst Fire Control call challenged and did not respond to 62.7% of these calls, there is still an ongoing impact on time spent managing these types of call. Approximately 137 hours in the quarter is spent handling these types of calls based on an average of two minutes per call.

4. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1 In preparing this report an initial Equality Impact Assessment is not required and has not been carried out.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

7. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The contact name for this report is Alex Shapland Strategic Enabler.

WAYNE BROWN
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

Ref. AU/SC/2023/July/10507231

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

17 JULY 2023

1. DIVERSITY INCLUSION COHESION EQUALITY (DICE) UPDATE

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 THAT Scrutiny Committee note the ongoing progress made by the Service in relation to Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion, Equality (DICE).

2. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 2.1 To provide an update to Scrutiny Committee to review and consider the ongoing progress being made by West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) in advancing DICE. This activity supports our equality objectives as well as our statutory requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty and Equality Act 2010.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 DICE objectives fulfil our legal duties as a public-sector organisation under the Equality Act 2010.
- 3.2 This report details our continued progress towards achieving our objectives and provides an update in relation to DICE activity.
- 3.3 DICE has now moved from People Support Services (PSS) to People Development and Inclusion as part of the People Programme restructure.

4. LEADERSHIP, PARTNERSHIP AND ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

4.1 **TOP INCLUSIVE EMPLOYERS**

In 2022 WMFS achieved the top position of most Inclusive Employer. This is following achieving a top ten position for several years.

4.1.1 The award is judged by an independent panel looking at inclusion across a wide range of indicators, it is open to both public, private and third sector organisations. The prestigious top position is highly sought after, with several multinational companies, West Midlands Police, NHS, FRS, and government including the House of Lords entering. Following the award, WMFS have been approached by several organisations who are in the top 50 to share good practice including West Midlands Police and The Royal Orthopaedic Hospital Trust.

4.1.2 Work has begun on gathering evidence for this year's submission, with the announcement due later in the year.

4.2. **INCLUSION STEERING GROUP – DIFFERENT TOGETHER**

4.2.1 In 2019 an independent cultural review was carried out. In 2020, a steering group was formed to develop a Joint Cultural Implementation Plan (JCIP). The steering group was made up of a range of people, including Fire Authority Members, Trade Unions and Officers. Shortly after this, the Covid-19 pandemic hit and over the following years a series of lockdowns occurred, fundamentally changing the way we worked with each other.

4.2.2 Following a benchmarking exercise in November 2022, progress was established, and next steps considered.

4.2.3 In April 2023, the Inclusion Steering Group was formed and will work together to develop an inclusion action plan based on evidence, data, learning and feedback from across the Service and the wider fire sector.

4.2.4 The Inclusion Steering Group membership is from a wide range of stakeholders who will drive, champion, and action change, working together to address the gaps and find solutions to create an inclusive fire service. The Service acknowledges the outcomes of several internal and external reviews and is committed to action, in pursuit of inclusivity for all.

4.3. **STAKEHOLDERS GROUPS**

- 4.3.1 All the Stakeholder groups are going from strength to strength, a revised 'Terms of Reference' has been developed for each, along with a review of the budgetary arrangements to enable events and learning opportunities to be delivered.
- 4.3.2 Looking forward, working in collaboration with the stakeholder groups and corporate communications, the DICE calendar will be enhanced to bring to life the communication and planning of key events, occasions, and celebrations.

4.4. **AFFINITY**

- 4.4.1 The group is active on Microsoft Teams and DICE has funded a place for a member to attend a leadership conference. The group is also influencing the welfare review and helped promote, engage, and facilitate a recent Brave Space on Women's experiences in WMFS.
- 4.4.2 Representatives from the group engaged with SET in the light of recent national events and have shared their views, thoughts, and considerations. Affinity is in the initial stages of planning its own regional women's weekend based on the format of the successful Women in the Fire Service development weekend held at the Fire Service College yearly.

4.5. **INSPIRE**

- 4.5.1 Inspire are active on Microsoft Teams and support recruitment campaigns and promotional processes as well as representing the Service at various external diversity events across blue light services
- 4.5.2 On 22nd March 2023, members from Inspire, supported by DICE, organised and promoted a Safeguarding, County Lines and Adverse Childhood experiences development day. This event was online and in person with various FRS and blue light services attending, the event was supported by a range of guest speakers from various organisations including WM Police, third sector, and the private sector.

- 4.5.3 Feedback gathered described the event as “excellent”, “relevant”, and “thought-provoking”. Leads from Inspire met with SET to have an open conversation about recent national events and the impact on staff.

4.6. **AFSA (Asian Fire Service Association)**

- 4.6.1 WMFS AFSA supported the national AFSA event on 17th March 2023 to celebrate international women's day. This national event was hosted by WMFS and had a range of guest speakers and was well attended by WMFS and other FRS staff and attendees from public sector organisations.
- 4.6.2 A revised process has been implemented for attendance at all conferences to ensure appropriate and proportionate attendance.

4.7. **FIREOUT**

- 4.7.1 This year WMFS, organised by FireOut, hosted Birmingham's first Tri Service Pride breakfast on the morning of Birmingham Pride, with fantastic attendance from West Midlands Police and West Midlands Ambulance Service as well as several FRS in the region joining to celebrate Pride. The overall attendance was around 250 people which made it the largest Pride breakfast outside of London.
- 4.7.2 WMFS's attendance at this year's Pride was bigger than ever and an overall crowd of around 100,000 people. It is anticipated that West Midlands Police and West Midlands Ambulance Service will take the lead in running the tri service Pride breakfasts for the next two years with the potential to continue to hold it at WMFS headquarters. A debrief is planned to capture the learning from this year's event.
- 4.7.3 It is important to recognise the members of FireOut and volunteers that planned and delivered the events and recognise the success of the event.

4.8. **NEURODIVERSITY**

- 4.8.1 During October, November 2022, and February 2023 the group ran specific focus sessions for employees with Autism, ADHD, and dyslexia. Over 30 staff took part, contributing and supporting each other, identifying, and developing positive ways to work.
- 4.8.2 On 16 March, the group held an event “Turning negatives into positives” to celebrate Neurodiversity week, a range of internal and external guest speakers brought both professional expertise and lived experiences to life. The event was impactful, generating discussion and challenge, concluding with a panel lead discussion.
- 4.8.3 The event was held in person and via teams with a good attendance, the group is planning to use the learning from this event to hold a larger regional event later in the year.
- 4.8.4 Leading on from the event the group have provided feedback to support the planning of selection processes to ensure that neurodiversity is considered to realise the full potential of all.
- 4.8.5 The group is in the initial stages of developing a series of short videos from Neurodiverse employees focusing on the various roles people with neurodiversity can achieve, the aim is to inspire school aged children who are neurodiverse to think big!

5. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS**

- 5.1 Since January 2023, 46 Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) have been completed. 40 initial Equality Impact Assessments of which three progressed to Full Equality Impact Assessment with an additional six Full EIA that required a full assessment from the outset.

6. **UNDERSTANDING AND WORKING WITH OUR COMMUNITIES**

6.1. **ARMED FORCES DAY**

WMFS is committed to treating our serving personnel, veterans and their families with fairness and respect. On 24th June, all of our stations and locations were asked to fly the ‘Armed Services Show Your Support’ flag to show our support to not only those within the Service who are

reservists but to all of those who make up the Armed Forces Community.

6.2. **PRIDE MONTH**

6.2.1 All our stations were asked to fly the Pride flag during June to show support for the LGBTQ+ community. Information about LGBTQ+ history was issued on MESH before and during the month to highlight a wide range of LGBTQ+ issues and history.

6.2.2 Our Communications team, working alongside FireOut and DICE, managed public comments, with adverse comments being challenged respectfully, but firmly. Flying the flag was described as an expectation in all staff briefings.

6.3. **VANGUARD PROJECT**

6.3.1 The Vanguard Project is a new community engagement project. Crews from a range of stations have started to contact faith groups in their station area and are either arranging a visit to the station to see an operational demonstration or arranging for a demonstration, such as an RTC (Road Traffic Collision), to be delivered at the place of worship.

6.3.2 This pilot, if successful, will be delivered across WMFS to re-establish links with faith communities lost during Covid, promote the work of WMFS and raise awareness of career options among groups which are underrepresented in our workforce.

6.3.3 Current stations taking part in the Vanguard pilot;

- Wolverhampton
- Ladywood
- Ward End
- Highgate
- Foleshill

6.3.4 Connections made during the development of the Vanguard Project has enabled further opportunities to be explored with faith communities for events throughout the year.

6.4 **SAFEGUARDING**

6.4.1 Headlines include:

- A similar number of safeguarding concerns were reported in 2022-23 as in the previous year.
- A 37% increase in safeguarding concerns related to children in 2022-23 compared to the previous year.
- 52% of safeguarding concerns in 2022-23 related to females compared to 57% in the previous year.
- 71% of safeguarding concerns related to people who are White British - English/Welsh/Northern Irish/British compared to 70% in the previous year.
- 40% of safeguarding concerns are in Birmingham in 2022-23 compared to 33% in the previous year.
- 81% of concerns do not have the action taken or outcomes recorded in Q4 compared to 92% in Q3.
- There were eight Position of Trust allegations made against WMFS employees compared to three in the previous year.

6.4.2. **THEMES**

6.4.3 The table below shows the main themes of the reasons safeguarding referrals have been made. In many cases the main reason is recorded but there will be elements of other factors in, what can be, complex situations.

Themes	Frequency
Poor living conditions and poor housing	170
Mental Health	170
Self-neglect	127
Hoarding	114
Alcohol	69
Child neglect	64
Smoking including smoking in bed	56
Domestic Violence and Abuse	49
Dementia	44
Evidence of drug use	40
Threat of or attempted suicide	37
Deliberate setting of fire	35

6.5. **POSITION OF TRUST ALLIGATIONS**

6.5.1 There have been 8 Position of Trust Allegations in the year with 3 position reported in Q4. A summary of action taken is shown in the table below.

NB. All Position of Trust Allegations are reported to the LADO. Some of these cases may then result in investigations under safeguarding and/or disciplinary/Code of Conduct.

Action taken	Number of cases
Referral to LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)	8
Investigation (safeguarding)	5
Investigation (code of conduct/disciplinary)	5

The outcomes of investigations are shown below.

NB. Each case may result in one or more of the following outcomes:

Outcome	Number of cases
Investigation is in progress (no outcome yet)	0
Closed to LADO	7
Investigation completed	8
LADO criteria not met	1
Dismissal	4

7. **DIVERSE AND ENGAGED WORKFORCE**

7.1 **BRAVE SPACE TALKS**

7.1.1 Brave Space talks continue to be impactful and are planned to tackle challenging and difficult subject areas.

7.1.2 Most recently the impact of alcohol dependency with a guest speaker from the Aquarius Organisation and a Brave Space on the lived experiences of women in WMFS covering both negative and positive experiences.

7.1.3 DICE is working with several teams to plan the next six to eight months of Brave Space talks, identifying subjects that are

meaningful to individuals and enable learning and development for the Service. The development and communication of these sessions is being supported by the People and Culture leads.

Future suggestions for Brave space talks include:

- Men's mental health
- Veganism (now a protected characteristic)
- Adoption, fostering and infertility
- Mental health across cultures scheduled for Black History month (October).

7.2. **'IS IT OK' CAMPAIGN**

7.2.1 Work has started on developing a campaign around behaviours in the workplace called "Is it OK?" including case studies from WMFS staff, open discussions, training, and educational resources to support creating an inclusive environment.

7.2.2 A working group has been set up with a wide range of stakeholders to scope initial ideas and broad plans, with a further detailed timeline for development and implementation to follow.

7.3. **DICE TRAINING AND AWARENESS COURSES**

7.3.1 A DICE Strategic Awareness workshop for middle managers has been launched following feedback from the pilot.

7.3.2 DICE workshops on unconscious bias, Equality Impact Assessment, and Disability and Reasonable Adjustment continue to be run monthly with good attendance.

7.3.3 Trainee Firefighter induction sessions has been recently updated, it is now linked by a follow up session specifically around discipline and self-discipline, this is supported by the Station Commander recruitment/workforce planning. The Trainee Firefighter Development Programme (TFDP) is being revised for August 2023, with a focus on values and behaviours at both the start and completion of the course, with continual assessment of the TFF (trainee firefighters) throughout their development programme.

7.3.4 As the Career Development pathway is developed there will be a focus on ethics, values, and behaviours at all levels of the progression to ensure leaders have the skills, knowledge and understanding to develop, challenge and champion a positive and inclusive culture.

7.4. **RAMADAN BUDDIES**

7.4.1 During the period of Ramadan, DICE posted advice and awareness information and held a Ramadan buddies' event, eight of our Muslim staff offered to buddy up with someone who wished to try fasting for a day and learn more about what Ramadan is about and why it is so important for the Muslim community. A number of Staff took part in an Iftar hosted at WMFS Headquarters, supported by buddies, FRA Vice Chair and community members

7.4.2 Feedback from this year's event will support the planning of future events.

7.5. **WORKFORCE PROFILE**

As of 1st April 2023, WMFS employed a total of 1875 employees of which:

- 1398 are uniformed, 418 are non-uniformed and 59 Fire Control
- 13% of uniformed staff are female compared to more than half (54%) of non-uniformed staff and 87% fire control. 50% of the working population of the West Midlands are female.
- 15% of all employees are from a Black, Asian, or Minority Ethnic (BAME) background. 30% of the working population of the West Midlands are from BAME communities.
- Declaration rates remain high with 90% of all employees having made a declaration regarding disability. 4% have stated they have a disability.
- 85% of all employees have made a declaration regarding sexual orientation. It should be noted however that 11% (200) employees have declared that they 'prefer not to state'
- The average age of our employees is 43 years.

7.6 **FIREFIGHTER RECRUITMENT**

- 7.6.1 Between April 2022 and March 2023 WMFS employed 92 new entrant Firefighters of which 24 (26%) are women and 19 (21%) BAME.
- 7.6.2 Our positive action strategy for Firefighter recruitment focusses on supporting and nurturing firefighter candidates.
- 7.6.3 There is a refreshed 'Be a Firefighter' portal alongside new social media video clips. The success of the latest videos is being monitored with a view to creating further content of a similar nature to build upon success.
- 7.6.4 Regular recruitment development programmes for under-represented candidates are being carried out, as well as female fitness programmes.
- 7.6.5 Meet and greet sessions continue to be rolled out providing a 'soft' introduction to the recruitment process and the role of the firefighter. These are well attended sessions, and the impact will be monitored over coming months as potential candidate's progress through the recruitment process.
- 7.6.6 Kit familiarisation sessions are being reintroduced for all candidates who have been assigned to a Trainee Firefighter Development Programme.
- 7.6.7 New initiatives for firefighter recruitment are being developed including regular 'Ask Recruitment' events for any potential candidates considering a career with the Fire Service. These will be online sessions for maximum exposure. Targeted taster sessions are being developed, targeting specific groups of people, for example Armed Forces leavers, or Football Academy candidates. These will run alongside station-based taster sessions.

7.7. **PROGRESSION**

- 7.7.1 40% of uniformed posts are Crew Commander or above. 23% of female uniformed staff hold positions of Crew Commander or above, compared to 42% of male staff.

- 7.7.2 27% of BAME uniformed staff hold the position of Crew Commander or above, compared to 44% of white staff.
- 7.7.3 67% of non-uniformed posts are at supervisory level or above. 55% of female non-uniformed staff hold positions of supervisory level or above, compared to 82% of male staff.
- 7.7.4 61% of BAME non-uniformed staff hold positions of supervisory level or above, compared to 71% of white staff.
- 7.7.5 A talent pool positive action work package is in the initial stages of development. WMFS is committed to supporting the progression of under presented groups into leadership roles at all levels.

7.8 **GENDER PAY GAP**

- 7.8.1 The mean gender pay gap has decreased to 6.8% in 2022 when compared to the 8.9% gap reported in 2021.
- 7.8.2 Since the last reporting period we have seen an increase in the number of female supervisory managers, alongside a decrease in male supervisory managers. This includes female crew commanders as well as female non-uniformed supervisory managers. In addition, the number of women holding middle manager positions has increased since the last reporting period.

7.9. **LOOK FORWARD**

- 7.9.1 WMFS has made considerable progress in creating an inclusive and cohesive environment. This continual improvement journey is strengthened by the Inclusion Steering Group and developing the role of the People and Culture Leads to drive change across the Service. Equipping our staff to engage with all individuals, groups and communities across prevention, protection, and response and to advocate WMFS as employer of choice will make the people of the West Midlands safer, healthier, and stronger.

8. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 8.1 This report responds directly to the General and Specific Duties of the Equality Act and considers DICE issues that are pertinent to the needs

of the Service. In doing so, a range of equality data has been analysed and considered regarding all protected characteristics.

9. **RISK IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

9.1 The objectives identified in this report support the organisation in mitigating its risk regarding claims of unlawful discrimination.

10. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 The recommendations outlined in this report assist us to fulfil our duties under the Equality Act 2010 particularly to advance equal opportunities and eliminate behaviours that are unlawful under the Act.

11. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

12. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

The contact officer for this report is Sam Burton, Head of People Development and Inclusion.

WAYNE BROWN
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

**WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24**

Date of Meeting	Item	Responsible Officer	Completed
2023			
17 July 2023	Scrutiny Review – Training and Career Development	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	17 July 2023
	Dispute Resolution Report	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	17 July 2023
	Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion and Equality Update	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	17 July 2023
	Fire Control Performance Report	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	17 July 2023
	Minutes of the previous Scrutiny Committee	Democratic Services Officer	17 July 2023
	Scrutiny Committee Work Plan 2023-24	Democratic Services Officer	17 July 2023
September 2023 (Dates TBC)	Scrutiny Committee engagement sessions as part of Scrutiny Review of Training and Career Development	Head of Development and Inclusion	
11 September 2023	Scrutiny Review - Training and Career Development	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	
	HMI FRS Spotlight report update	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	

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	Fire Control Performance Report	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	
	Minutes of the previous Scrutiny Committee	Democratic Services Officer	
	Scrutiny Committee Work Plan 2023-24	Democratic Services Officer	
04 December 2023	Scrutiny Review - Training and Career Development Final Report	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	
	Dispute Resolution Report	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	
	Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion and Equality Update	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	
	HMI FRS Spotlight report update	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	
	Fire Control Performance Report	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	
	Minutes of the previous Scrutiny Committee	Democratic Services Officer	
	Next Scrutiny Review – Options	Deputy Clerk/Relevant Officers	
	Scrutiny Committee Work Plan 2023-24	Democratic Services Officer	
2024			
Date of Meeting	Item	Responsible Officer	Completed
22 April 2024	Fire Control Performance Report	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	

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	Scrutiny Committee – Terms of Reference	Democratic Services Officer	
	Next Scrutiny Review – Agreement of Terms of Reference	Deputy Clerk	
	HMI FRS Spotlight report update	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	
	Minutes of the previous Scrutiny Committee	Democratic Services Officer	
	Scrutiny Committee Work Plan 2022-23	Democratic Services Officer	
15 July 2024	Dispute Resolution Report	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	
	Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion and Equality Update	ACFO Strategic Enabler - People	
	Fire Control Performance Report	ACFO Strategic Enabler – People	
	Annual Report of the Scrutiny Committee	Chair of Scrutiny Committee	
	Next Scrutiny Review	Deputy Clerk/Relevant Officers	
	Minutes of the previous Scrutiny Committee	Democratic Services Officer	
	Scrutiny Committee Work Plan 2024-25	Democratic Services Officer	

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To report as appropriate:

- Updates on reviews

Note: separate meetings of any review working group are to be scheduled if and when required.