

Enhancing diversity and inclusivity in North Yorkshire Police and North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service

The Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for North Yorkshire has set the overarching ambition in both the Commissioner's Police & Crime Plan and Fire & Rescue Plan to be achieved through four **C.A.R.E.** Principles:

- Caring for the vulnerable
- Ambitious collaboration
- Realising our potential
- Enhancing our service for the public.

To deliver against the '**Realising our potential**' principle, both services must ensure the fundamentals of Diversity, Equality and Inclusivity are fully embedded to create an inclusive and diverse workforce which is a true reflection of the communities we serve.

This report provides an update to Members on the progress made by North Yorkshire Police ("NYP") and North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service ("NYFRS") to enhance diversity and inclusivity both internally, in terms of recruitment and retention practices and externally, in how services are provided to our communities. This report will also provide an update on the organisational development of the Office of Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner ("OPFCC") and how this will support these strategies.

Key activities of note include:

- Establishment of a **Public Confidence function within the OPFCC**, and appointment of new OPFCC Director of Public Confidence and Inclusivity & Public Confidence Manager
- **Commenced review and development of the Independent Scrutiny Panels** and Community Review Groups to ensure these processes are more inclusive and representative of our communities from Summer 2023
- **Public Trust and Confidence and Perceptions Surveys** launched
- **Diversity, Equality and Inclusivity training** and staff development programme commenced.

The appendices provide detailed information on the progress made against each service's strategies (Appendix 1 - North Yorkshire Police and Appendix 2 and North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service).

OPFCC Organisational Development – Progress to date

A report was previously presented to Members in October 2022 outlining the planned organisational development of the OPFCC following a comprehensive review of the team's

leadership, structure and resourcing completed in 2021. This included the adoption of an Assurance Model to monitor progress being made to achieve the Strategic Principles, Priorities and Outcomes within the Police & Crime Plan and the Fire & Rescue Plan, alongside the adoption of a Delivery Plan for the OPFCC. A revised organisational structure has been implemented from October 2022 to support this which included the establishment of a Public Confidence function incorporating an Inclusivity & Public Confidence function alongside the enhanced Customer Services function and Communications & Public Engagement team. The new Director of Public Confidence will lead on some of our most important areas of focus in relation to Diversity, Equality and Inclusivity, working closely with both NYP and NYFRS to ensure they are diverse and inclusive both as employers and as providers of vital public services.

During consultation for the Police & Crime Plan and the Fire & Rescue Plan, the OPFCC engaged with over 3,500 members of the public and received over 2,000 survey responses; much of this quantitative and qualitative public feedback highlighted that diversity and inclusivity is an increasingly important issue for our communities, and has a significant impact on overall public confidence in both services. We have responded to this feedback by embedding the 'Realising our potential' CARE principle across both plans and the "Enhance positive culture, openness, integrity and public trust" Public Priority for Change. The Police & Crime Plan and the Fire & Rescue Plan set out the ways in which both services need to develop over the next two years to progress towards achieving our strategic principles and priorities, and ensure we are better able to respond to the needs of the communities we collectively serve.

The new Director of Public Confidence role will drive several key workstreams to support both services to achieve our strategic principles, utilising a programme management approach to ensure the OPFCC, NYP and NYFRS work more closely together whilst also representing the public's interests by linking back to the Commissioner on progress made and any barriers or challenges to be addressed. Recruitment to the new Director of Public Confidence role has now been completed and Amanda Wilkinson is due to commence in February 2023; interim cover has been provided since October 2022 by Sarah Arnott, an existing member of the OPFCC senior management team. More recently, Vicky Booty has been appointed as the new Inclusivity & Public Confidence Manager to lead on our Diversity, Equality and Inclusivity Strategy, as well as developing performance frameworks to monitor overall progress. Vicky will be supported by a new Commissioner's Officer for Inclusivity and Public Confidence, to be recruited.

The Director of Public Confidence will also work closely with Tamara Pattinson, the new Director of Delivery & Assurance who commenced in December 2022, to implement the new OPFCC Delivery Plan, giving effect to the Assurance Model underpinning the delivery of the Strategic Outcomes within the Police & Crime Plan and the Fire & Rescue Plan.

We fully comply with the publication requirements of the Specified Information Order in relation to who is employed by the OPFCC and specifically the proportion of staff who are women, identify as being from an ethnic minority or who have a disability which is published on the OPFCC website here: [Meet the team - Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner North Yorkshire](#)

Enhanced Customer Services

The Enhanced Customer Services function will support the OPFCC's Inclusivity and Public Confidence workstreams by fully embedding our scrutiny processes alongside the complaints, recognition and Commissioner's casework. This more inclusive approach to oversight and scrutiny will ensure we are identifying and addressing organisational learning at an earlier opportunity to improve future

service delivery, particularly for our diverse and vulnerable communities. A separate report has been prepared for the Panel to provide an update on the Complaints, Recognition and Commissioner's Casework so this report will focus on how the OPFCC will embed the oversight and scrutiny processes into our overall Assurance Model.

The OPFCC currently facilitates three Independent Scrutiny Panels which meet quarterly to provide independent oversight and scrutiny of Domestic Abuse Cases; Out of Court Disposals; and Stop and Search and Use of Force. The Panels also identify and promote any good practice in current approaches, reporting into appropriate strategic boards to provide further accountability and assurance. The Stop & Search / Use of Force Scrutiny Panel is supported by four Community Review Groups ("CGR") made up of members of the public who can escalate any matters to the Independent Scrutiny Panel for further scrutiny where concerns are raised. Both the CRGs and Independent Scrutiny Panel review a random sample of Stop Search forms and associated Body Worn Video of Use of Force to ensure these powers are being used fairly and proportionately in all cases. The CRG and panel members specifically focus on any (actual or perceived) impact on our rural or diverse communities. Similarly, the Out of Court Disposal Scrutiny Panel specifically consider the impact as a result of age, gender, and ethnicity of those receiving different Out of Court Disposals.

Options are currently being explored in relation to how we can ensure these processes are more inclusive and representative of our communities, including consultation with current CRG and panel members during the coming months to identify any changes to the format, location and/or frequency of these meetings to support more diverse membership. Work is ongoing to embed a more standardised approach to these panels to ensure feedback is provided consistently to individual officers, with updates on any actions taken as a result of this feedback, along with ensuring that there is a mechanism to monitor wider organisational learning and strategic changes implemented in response to the findings and recommendations of these panels. This process will also allow for any common issues, particularly concerns around disproportionate use of powers against those with protected characteristics, to be escalated through the Assurance Model outlined below for further assurances to be provided via Public Accountability Meetings.

Communications & Public Engagement

The Public Trust & Confidence in NYP online survey went live on 7th November on the OPFCC website. The survey takes under 5 minutes to complete and is open to everyone, whether they've been a victim of a crime, a witness, a suspect or just have an opinion on how they would perceive to be treated by the police if a situation occurred. Over 450 responses were received within the first three weeks, and the survey will remain open indefinitely on the OPFCC website here: [Trust & Confidence Survey - North Yorkshire Police](#)

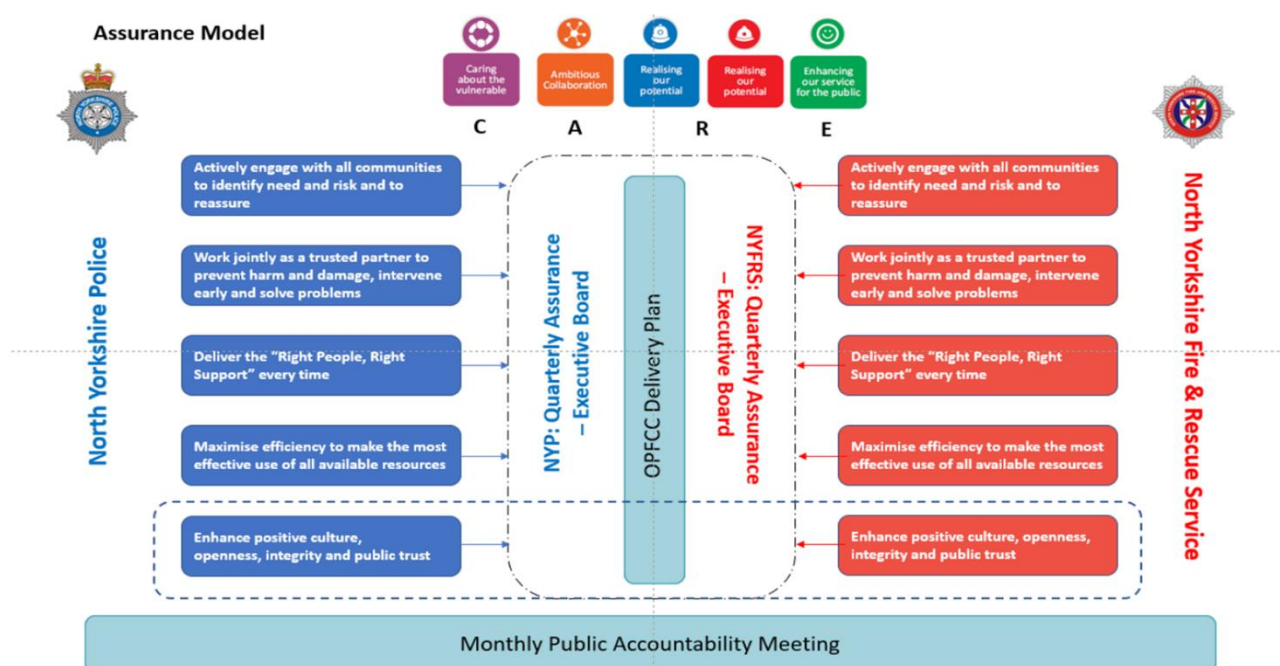
A corresponding Public Trust & Confidence Survey in NYFRS has now been launched and is also available indefinitely on the OPFCC website here: [Trust & Confidence Survey - North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service](#)

Respondents are asked to confirm any protected characteristics in relation to gender, age, ethnicity and disability. Responses will be reviewed and analysed on a quarterly basis, including breakdown by demographic data, with the first summary overview due to be published in May 2023. Responses will be used to inform and promote positive changes, ensure accountability and high standards of service delivery for everyone.

Both online Trust & Confidence Surveys offer the opportunity for respondents to go on to complete our online Perceptions Survey. This gives individuals the opportunity to provide further context in relation to their perceptions of NYP and NYFRS and more detailed demographic data including protected characteristics. We intend to ensure both Trust & Confidence Surveys and the Perceptions Survey are completed by a representative sample of York and North Yorkshire communities during 2023.

Assurance Model & OPFCC Delivery Plan

As per the update provided to Members in October 2022, the Commissioner has agreed an Assurance Model with the Chief Constable, Chief Fire Officer, Managing Director of enable North Yorkshire and the OPFCC as set out in the diagram below. Under this new model, each organisation reports progress (by exception) to the joint Executive Board, which allows for more opportunities for ambitious collaboration in respect of the “Enhance positive culture, openness, integrity and public trust” Public Priority for Change.



The OPFCC is adopting a Delivery Plan, setting out which elements of work will be delivered directly by the OPFCC, and how the Commissioner will hold NYP, NYFRS and enable North Yorkshire to account to achieve the Strategic Outcomes within the Police & Crime Plan and the Fire & Rescue Plan. This will also acknowledge and recognise the value of operational delivery plans in setting out how the police and fire services will achieve these Strategic Outcomes, specifically through the NYP Force Management Statement and NYFRS Risk and Resource Model. We also need to ensure clear links between the Delivery Plan and all elements of the national inspectorate programme of both police and fire services. To facilitate this, we are actively pursuing stronger and closer working relationships with the force and fire service leads to complement plans put in place in response to inspection recommendations and areas for improvement.

The NYP Diversity, Equality and Inclusivity Strategy has been informed by the National Police Race Action Plan to identify any disparities that exist within NYP. However, the National Police Race Action Plan specifically focusses on the Black community as nationally it is among Black people that the disparity is the greatest. NYP need to continue to use the National Police Race Action Plan as guidance to adapt the recommended approaches where appropriate to improve their ways of

working for other ethnic groups to ensure this is reflective of all our communities across North Yorkshire and the City of York. The OPFCC is represented at the NYP Diversity, Equality and Inclusivity Board which seeks to ensure that the strategic principles relating to inclusion and diversity are embedded into all NYP working practices, initiatives and functions – please see Appendix A for more detailed information on the progress made by NYP against their Diversity, Equality and Inclusivity Strategy.

The NYFRS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy has been informed by national Equality Framework and National Fire Chiefs Council’s (“NFCC”) Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Maturity Plan. The OPFCC is represented at the NYFRS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Board which seeks to ensure that the strategic principles relating to inclusion and diversity are embedded into all NYFRS working practices, initiatives and functions – please see Appendix B for more detailed information on the progress made by NYFRS against their Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

This Assurance Model is underpinned by the monthly Public Accountability Meetings (“PAM”) in which NYP and NYFRS are held to account on a range of topics; PAMs are live streamed on the OPFCC website to provide greater transparency. At the most recent PAM held in November, NYFRS provided an update of progress made to increase diversity, promote inclusion and create a fair and equal workplace.

Diversity, Equality and Inclusivity Training & Development

Pearlcatchers, a training provider who specialise in working with emergency services have been commissioned to develop and deliver our new ‘Leading Diversity, Equality and Inclusion’ Leadership Development Programme for First-line managers and Mid-level leaders across the OPFCC, NYP, NYFRS and enable North Yorkshire from November 2022. The programme explores the impact of personal leadership styles and aims to embed the seven ‘Cs’ of Inclusive Leadership at all levels: Compassionate Communication; Collaboration; Cultural Intelligence; Clarity; Cognisance of Bias; Curiosity; and Courage & Commitment. Further to this, the OPFCC’s bespoke training package from the Skills Network now includes mandatory modules on Diversity, Equality and Inclusivity for staff at all levels to complete.

Appendices:

Appendix A – North Yorkshire Police Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Strategy Update

Appendix B – North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Update

Appendix A – North Yorkshire Police Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Strategy 2022/23

This appendix should be read alongside the 'Enhancing Diversity and Inclusivity in North Yorkshire Police and North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service' Report above to provide Members a detailed update on work undertaken to date by North Yorkshire Police ("NYP") in relation to the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Strategy 2022/23. This report has been prepared in consultation with NYP and informed by the NYP Diversity, Equality and Inclusivity Board Action and Decision Log to summarise key progress achieved against the Strategic Priorities for 2022/23 as set out below.

Strategic Aim

NYP aim to be an organisation that is truly representative of the diverse communities they collectively serve. NYP will be inclusive and outward-looking in their engagement, working with partner agencies and the public to build services that are accessible to all. NYP aim to be an organisation that inspires the confidence of every community in their ability to deliver fair and effective policing.

NYP will be an organisation that is free from discrimination, where their staff treat everyone with respect, dignity and according to their needs and in line with our shared values.

NYP will work with partners, communities, support networks and staff and accept nothing less than becoming a fully inclusive organisation. NYP will achieve this Aim by using a strategy which focuses upon two elements:

1. Communities

Community Confidence: NYP will increase the confidence of all communities across North Yorkshire. NYP will be transparent and open, ensuring that policing powers are used fairly and effectively, welcoming scrutiny of their use. NYP will identify any instance of disproportionality in their service delivery and address it. NYP will take ownership of their mistakes and learn from them, removing any institutional defensiveness.

Working with others: NYP will improve how they work with communities, partners, independent advisory groups and critical friends to develop a service that is accessible and responsive. NYP will learn from others and share best practice to improve their reach as an organisation and a service. NYP will build stronger relationships which continuously improve and develop their organisation.

Understanding our Communities: NYP will learn to engage with all communities within the county, whether resident or visiting, in a manner that best suits them. NYP will strive to ensure that all voices are heard and concerns are listened to and understood. NYP will ensure that community engagement is a core part of their policing role. NYP will build stronger independent advisory groups and other scrutiny panels which will help them better understand the impact of their service.

Tackling Prejudice and Hate: Working with communities NYP will better understand the prejudice they face and how they can help eliminate it. NYP will work with partners to improve confidence in reporting hate crimes and incidents, providing better support to victims. NYP will improve the confidence of all communities in North Yorkshire by delivering an effective and consistently high standard of investigation.

2. People

Representative workforce: NYP will use Positive Action and engagement to attract, recruit and retain people from a wide range of backgrounds and communities, creating a truly representative organisation. NYP will create an environment where people feel confident to disclose their protected characteristics and feel safe and valued for who they are. Our communities will see themselves reflected in their workforce.

Developing their people: NYP will set their organisation up for success by building an environment and structure that provides equality of opportunity for everyone. NYP will provide timely, quality and credible learning and development which is guided by our communities both internally and externally, ensuring they have a competent, informed workforce. NYP will support the development and progression of their people to ensure representation at all levels, creating an environment where people can be the best version of themselves.

Culture: NYP will create a culture where people feel engaged, valued and a part of the organisation, enabling individuals to bring their whole self to work. NYP will develop their people to be motivated, ethical and engaged, taking ownership of issues to achieve success. NYP recognise that they are all leaders, who have a part to play in creating an inclusive organisation that will challenge and tackle prejudice and discrimination wherever it is found. Their leaders will be given the skills and knowledge to achieve their aims modelling the behaviours expected of a modern Police Service.

Strategic Governance and Accountability

The NYP Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Board is Chaired by DCC Mabs Hussain and includes representatives from the OPFCC, Evolve Legal Services, enable North Yorkshire, People Services and Professional Standards. The Board meets quarterly and feeds into the joint Executive Board, Strategic People Board, Chief Officer Team and Force Performance Meetings.

The purpose of the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Board is to ensure that all principles relating to inclusion and diversity are fully embedded into all NYP working practices, initiatives and functions. The Board aims to empower leaders to effectively communicate internal messages to the workforce and externally to our communities across a range of channels, ensuring the long-term strategy is understood and delivered. This includes sharing good practice and knowledge arising from Heads of Departments, support network leads, relevant staff associations and trade unions, and other key personnel.

The Board also monitors NYP development against nationally agreed action plans for diversity to ensure workforce data is frequently and accurately captured, and that these statistics are used to inform all decision-making impacting on inclusion and diversity.

The Board is supported by the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Silver Group which is Chaired by ACC Elliot Foskett who leads on delivery of training activity and continuing professional development to develop the workplace environment, ensuring there is focus on inclusivity and diversity through attraction, recruitment, retention and progression of both officers and staff.

Positive Action Team and Positive Action Champions

The Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Strategic Delivery Plan is being facilitated by a fully dedicated Positive Action Team made up of five police officers headed by Inspector Jo Crooks-Rea. The Positive Action Team lead on a programme of activities aimed at creating equality of opportunity for people with protected characteristics, who might otherwise be at a disadvantage when it comes to

recruitment, progression and retention. The Team provides support sessions and workshops when recruiting for Police Community Support Officer, Specials, Police Officer and staff roles.

The Team regularly attends local events, schools, colleges, universities and engages with communities to ensure NYP understand what is happening and ensure they provide services that people feel included in and value.

The Team identifies learning opportunities to change policy and procedures from both internal and external sources, including complaints to improve Diversity, Equality and Inclusive ways of working and ensure NYP remain up to date, legal and ensure equality in all that they do. For example, the Team ensure training for transgender considerations is included via hate crime inputs or through speaking to local response and Neighbourhood Policing officers so they may better understand different peoples' perspectives to be able to support them better.

There are also 114 Positive Action Champions throughout NYP who support the Positive Action Team to provide consistent and accurate messaging regarding the Positive Action agenda to help dispel any myths and be the authentic voices and faces of Positive Action.

The Positive Action Team is also supported by Staff Support Networks which have also undergone some changes to enable them to invest more time and resources into supporting the workforce. The Staff Support Networks provide support, assistance, information and guidance to Police officers, staff and their families on a wide range of topics affecting under-represented groups including disability, race, religion, gender, neurodiversity, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning and others ("LGBTQ+").

Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Priorities for 2022/23 – Progress to date

Priority 1 – Training and Education

Delivering training and education is fundamental to ensure that everyone in NYP understands the importance of diversity, equality and inclusion and their role within it. NYP have commenced delivery of 'Leading Diversity, Equality and Inclusion' training to all first line managers and supervisors, so they can support their teams as part of the overall Leadership Development Programme. This is now being rolled out to Mid-level managers to ensure a fully 'Inclusive Leadership' approach is adopted across the wider organisation.

Diversity, Equality and Inclusion and Positive Action objectives will be included within individual's Personal Development Plans for all police officer and staff roles moving forward which will enable Diversity, Equality and Inclusion to be fully embedded into NYP culture at every level.

Priority 2 – Building a Representative Workforce

Ensuring representation in the workforce is also key to increasing diversity, equality and inclusion overall. This does not just include recruitment of applicants from more diverse backgrounds, but also ensuring NYP have the tools and skills to develop and retain people and enable them to reach their full potential.

All internal and external recruitment and progression opportunities must now include specific Positive Action. NYP is currently under-represented from black and minority ethnic backgrounds including Eastern European and Chinese communities, from those with disability, women and those

from the LGBTQ+ communities. NYP are therefore proactively encouraging job applications from these groups and aiming to support them through every stage of the recruitment process.

The Corporate Communications Team and People Services are working together to develop a multi-media campaign promoting NYP's inclusive recruitment processes. This includes speaking to our neighbouring forces to learn from their successful recruitment campaigns aimed at diverse communities.

NYP have invested in both the Positive Action Team and Staff Support Networks to ensure they have capacity to better support the workforce. This is also being considered alongside information gleaned by more meaningful exit interviews with those who choose to leave the organisation to identify any barriers to retention and/or progression opportunities.

NYP are also working with staff associations and the wider workforce to develop an interactive Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Dashboard to establish more accurate and up-to-date baselines in terms of both recruitment and retention rates for under-represented groups. Clear but ambitious targets will then be set both in terms of recruitment and retention of those from under-represented groups.

Priority 3 – Understanding and Including our communities

NYP are fully supportive of the independent scrutiny of the use of police powers facilitated through the OPFCC, including review of Stop and Search forms and relevant Body Worn Video to ensure these powers are being used fairly and proportionately in all cases. Officers attend Scrutiny Panel and Community Review Group meetings to ensure feedback is provided consistently to individual officers, with updates provided on any actions taken as a result.

Additionally, NYP support three Independent Advisory Groups ("IAGs") in the following areas: York and Selby, Scarborough and Ryedale, and Harrogate and District. The primary role of an IAG is to act as a 'critical friend' to NYP to challenge conventional thinking, to give an independent perspective on issues and provide advice on how policing services may be, or are being, perceived by communities.

However, IAGs are not 'the' voice of the community, and are a collection of individual community voices, therefore IAGs are only one part of the jigsaw. NYP are considering a range of options to involve wider community representation including establishing a new community reference group to support these existing groups and scrutiny processes to enable all communities to be part of the decisions and changes that NYP make to increase diversity, equality and inclusion.

Priority 4 – Building an Inclusive Working Environment

The 'Leading Diversity, Equality and Inclusion' training delivered to line managers and supervisors emphasises the fundamental aspects of creating and encouraging an inclusive culture within NYP. NYP celebrate difference and look at opportunities to celebrate together through a Diversity, Equality and Inclusion calendar of key events including different religious holidays, cultural events and periods such as Black History Month, Dyslexia Awareness Week, and LGBTQ+ History Month.

The 'Call it out' campaign clearly sets out the attitudes and behaviours NYP expect from those who work there. This is supported by a number of different ways officers and staff can report bullying, racism, misconduct or other inappropriate behaviours through anonymous messaging, secure email addresses or direct phonelines.

The NYP 'safe to say' campaign encourages all officers and staff to disclose their protected characteristics so NYP are better able to support them, including sourcing further funding for support in particular areas. For example, until recently there were only a small number of people who disclosed they had Dyslexia but over the past few months the Positive Action Team have worked with the Neurodiversity Network to build meaningful rapport within the workforce to ensure NYP provide the right help and support, and as a result a significant number of people have now come forward to disclose they also have dyslexia or other neurodiversity including attention deficit hyperactivity disorder ("ADHD"). The Positive Action Team have then been able to use the 'Access to Work' scheme to secure funding to make reasonable adjustments to support these people to do their day-to-day tasks such as books in particular colours, specific software, and noise cancelling headphones to support an environment to better concentrate whilst doing their work. The Neurodiversity Network have also secured funding to train three people within NYP as initial screeners for Dyslexia from next year, as it often takes over a year for people to be assessed through current processes. The Positive Action Team have also recently attended the National Disability Conference to learn from best practice in other areas nationally and sectors, including from the private sector. Part of this work also includes reviewing NYP estates and custody buildings to ensure that NYP are able to better support those who are arrested and may be struggling within this environment including those with physical disabilities, neurodiversity and mental health vulnerabilities.

The NYP 'Health and Wellbeing Passport' ensures officers and staff don't have to make repeated disclosures of protected characteristics when they move into new roles or directorates. This is completed and owned by the individual and should include details of any reasonable adjustments required to support them to do their job. The passport should be reviewed and updated regularly by the individual to reflect any changes which could impact upon their wellbeing.

Appendix B – North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Update

This appendix should be read alongside the 'Enhancing Diversity and Inclusivity in North Yorkshire Police and North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service' Report above to provide Members with a detailed update on work undertaken to date by North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service ("NYFRS") in relation to their Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2022/24.

Strategic Intent

Outlined in their new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2022/24, the strategic intent of NYFRS is as follows:

"Equality, diversity and inclusion are central to the Service's way of working, embedded in our behaviours, culture, practices and workplaces. Our working environment enables a sense of belonging, where employees are valued for their individuality and have equal opportunities – we are an employer of choice. Our Service reflects the diversity of our communities - the delivery of our services is based on a rich understanding of the communities we serve."

NYFRS will achieve this by using a strategy which focuses upon three key elements:

1. People and Culture

NYFRS want to enhance their working environment making it more welcoming, supportive, and inclusive, where people don't need to 'fit in', but feel they belong and can thrive to reach their full potential.

NYFRS will promote awareness and understanding of how societal changes need them to adapt their workplaces and working practices to better serve the public. This will help them promote a more open and inclusive culture whereby people feel valued. Ultimately it will help them to satisfy their legal and moral duty to better serve the public across all areas of diversity.

2. Effective Collaboration

NYFRS need to explore opportunities to broaden collaborative working, sharing good practice and developing innovative ideas to improve their public value and make them more effective and efficient.

NYFRS are committed to working with their partners to better understand and help identify people in need, including safeguarding issues. NYFRS will target their prevention, protection, and community resilience work to help address vulnerability through best practice, shared resources, and delivery of shared services.

3. Our Communities

Delivering excellent services through prevention, protection, community resilience and response activities to their diverse communities is the core of NYFRS's work. NYFRS must do this collaboratively; truly demonstrating their values alongside partners.

NYFRS want to build stronger links with their local communities, so they can provide a more inclusive service to the public and build diverse talent pools and provide access to careers that may not have historically been considered by members of some communities. NYFRS must anticipate the needs of people who use their service, ensuring their service is accessible and individual to their requirements.

NYFRS will better understand the diverse needs within their communities and the associated risks that they face. This will help prepare NYFRS to respond to their diverse needs in the most effective and inclusive way possible, taking account how it will be received by the public and their workforce.

Governance and Accountability

Whilst there has been progress, there is much more to be done to increase equality, diversity and inclusion in NYFRS. Moving forward, the focus of the Commissioner and Chief Fire Officer is on greater accountability and scrutiny to ensure significant improvements, to realise the equality, diversity and inclusion strategic outcomes in the Fire & Rescue Plan and the NYFRS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

Work is in progress to restructure the NYFRS Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Board to reflect a more strategic approach, including the development of strategic action plan, aligned to the national Equality Framework and National Fire Chiefs Council's ("NFCC") Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Maturity Plan.

The NYFRS Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Board is chaired by Chief Fire Officer Jonathan Dyson and includes representatives from NYFRS, the OPFCC, enable North Yorkshire and the NYFRS Staff Network leads. The Board meets quarterly and feeds into the Service's Strategic Leadership Team.

The purpose of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Board is to ensure that all principles relating to inclusion and diversity are embedded into working practices, initiatives and functions and to share good practice and knowledge via the Staff Network leads. The Board also monitors NYFRS progress against action plans, to include a gap analysis against the NFCC's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Maturity Plan and will help develop equality, diversity and inclusion outcome assurance measures.

During 2023, the Chief Fire Officer intends to lead an initiative to talk confidentially with all employees with a protected characteristic and representatives from the majority workforce, to listen first hand to staff experiences of the recruitment process and of day-to-day life, working for NYFRS. The outcomes of these talks will help inform the equality, diversity and inclusion action plan and assurance framework.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy outlines a range of actions and outcomes that define what success will look like, aligned to each of the three elements of the Strategy (*People and culture*, *Effective collaboration* and *Our Communities*). These will inform an action plan and assurance framework to provide the Commissioner and Chief Fire Officer with a robust assessment of progress against the Strategy and in achieving the priorities outlined in the Fire & Rescue Plan. This will be reviewed regularly at both the Service's Strategic Leadership Team and the joint Executive Board.

Recruitment and Training

Improvements to the recruitment processes have increased fairness and accessibility to applicants from a range of backgrounds. Vacancies are now open to both internal and external candidates and NYFRS is taking steps to ensure recruitment campaigns are directed at or accessible to under-represented groups.

'Have a go' days at stations and online testing for new applicants has made NYFRS more accessible. Aimed at underrepresented staff of both NYP and NYFRS, the Shine programme has been developed to support Positive Action commitments, and NYFRS has participated in the Women in the Fire Service's development programme.

NYFRS is the first fire and rescue service in England to trial strengths-based assessments, a much fairer process with a focus on what kind of person will thrive in each role and the strengths they need. A strengths profile for a given role means interviewers seek to understand if, and how individuals display the strengths required for the role in their values and behaviour. This is a very different approach from a competency-based interview which tends to allow for people to provide prepared answers. Over the last 12 months, strengths-based assessments have been used successfully to recruit to the posts of Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Area Manager.

The Commissioner and the Chief Fire Officer strongly support the opportunity of the NFCC's Direct Entry Scheme to introduce diversity of experience and background into the organisation. However, NYFRS cannot afford to commit funding to the scheme given its current financial position, and there are currently no roles available to allocate to a Direct Entry entrant. That being said, nationally the NFCC has postponed the launch of the scheme as many services were finding the scheme cost prohibitive alongside the impact of potential industrial action.

The On-call firefighter recruitment process has been subject to an in-depth review to identify and improve areas of weakness. Consequently, an online candidate application and tracking system is now in place to assist candidates' access into NYFRS and the flow of communication between NYFRS and the applicants has improved considerably. Common points of failure have been brought forward in the application process, such as the eye-test and the potential need for reasonable adjustments is flagged earlier on. The recruitment process is now far quicker and the consolidation of the practical sessions has reduced the burden on applicants of multiple site visits and the resources of the Service. In addition, there is improved diversity monitoring (all applicants are asked to provide equality information). Overall, experience of the application process is much improved with very positive (ad hoc verbal) candidate feedback including from underrepresented groups.

A budget has been identified to deliver interactive equality, diversity and inclusion staff training, commencing with those in supervisory roles. The supervisory training will be completed by the end of January 2023 and will be revisited every three years with 'hot topic' training at regular intervals in-between.

Culture and Staff Wellbeing

Published in November 2022, the Independent Cultural Review of London Fire Brigade ("LFB") found the organisation to be institutionally misogynist and racist with evidence of bullying and harassment. The full report can be found at [Independent Culture Review of London Fire Brigade \(london-fire.gov.uk\)](https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/independent-culture-review-of-london-fire-brigade)

NYFRS's Chief Fire Officer, Jonathan Dyson, provided a verbal response to the findings of the review at the November Executive Board, including observations and implications for the sector and NYFRS. The Chief Fire Officer will assess where NYFRS is from a cultural perspective against each of the 23 recommendations outlined in the LFB Review and identify any actions to be taken where improvements can be made.

On the back of the LFB Review, the Chief Fire Officer wrote a special staff newsletter to share his initial response to the Review. Staff were encouraged to review the Core Code of Ethics and were reminded that reports of bullying and harassment are taken very seriously and encouraged the reporting of any such negative behaviours to ensure staff feel physically and psychologically safe in the workplace. A copy of the Bullying and Harassment Policy was circulated.

The national Core Code of Ethics is designed to help fire and rescue service employees act in the best way towards each other and while serving the public. The five ethical principles are: Putting our communities first, Integrity, Dignity and respect, Leadership and Equality, diversity and inclusion. The Core Code has been aligned to the new Service values of People, Results, Creativity, Learning and Inclusion. NYFRS has delivered interactive Code of Ethics training to all middle managers who have then cascaded the same training to their staff. The training received very positive feedback from attendees, given directly to the trainers at the end of each session.

The importance of staff wellbeing is supported by the introduction of the Wellbeing Pledge and the launch of 'Health and Wellbeing Passports'. The 'Health and Wellbeing Passport' identifies any issues that could impact on staff wellbeing, and this will help Line Managers understand and support individual needs. The NYFRS 'Health and Wellbeing Passport' ensures officers and staff don't have to keep repeating themselves or making repeated disclosures of protected characteristics when they move into new roles or directorates. This is completed and owned by the individual and should include details of any reasonable adjustments required to support them to do their job. The passport should be reviewed and updated regularly by the individual to reflect any changes which could impact upon their wellbeing.

Diversity Champions and Staff Networks

NYFRS continues to raise awareness of inclusion and diversity within its workforce, with local crews and Staff Networks working within their local communities and strengthening links within our under-represented groups, to inform of opportunities within NYFRS for recruitment and service delivery. Staff Network Leads continue to be the workforce point of contact for those with protected characteristics.

Diversity Champions will be introduced in 2023 to formalise and share knowledge and best practice across NYFRS. They will help at attraction and positive action events and on recruitment panels to ensure NYFRS is more appealing to those who wouldn't normally have considered a career in fire and rescue. The intention is to have a specialist champion for each protected characteristic.

Estates – Inclusivity Programme

The Estates Inclusivity Programme details planned and essential investment in the fire and rescue estate to increase and improve facilities to ensure an inclusive environment appropriate for a diverse workforce.

The scope of the Programme was based on surveys carried out by inclusivity experts and Estates under the direction of the (then) NYFRS Inclusivity Board. The original programme was approved by the Executive Board in February 2020 and capital funding approved in February 2021, available to spend from April of that year (2021/22).

The agreed scope identified a series of required investments ranging from minor works to structural alterations with a total estimated budget of £942,000 (based on the 2020 cost estimates). This was due to be procured and delivered in the financial years 2021/22 and 2022/23.

In addition to the confirmed expenditure, an additional £279,738 (up to Q3 2022/23) has also been committed (i.e. orders placed with the supply chain) by the Estates team. These have mainly been committed in 2022/23, with a couple of exceptions which were committed in the previous year but for which delivery of goods is still awaited.

There have been significant delays to the delivery of the work so far, with limited expenditure on physical works incurred in financial years 2021/22 and 2022/23. There have been a number of

reasons for these delays, largely attributable to external factors including procurement delays at the start of the programme, Covid-19 abstractions in the supply chain, contractor under-performance and availability, materials availability, as well as abstractions in the assets and estates team. There are a lot of major works yet to complete and this is an absolute priority for the Commissioner and Chief Fire Officer. As such, monthly scrutiny of progress is undertaken at the joint Executive Board to ensure completion of these works in 2023.