

POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME PANEL REPORT

Meeting Date	16 th January 2025
Report Title	Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion with the Services

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Purpose of this report

The purpose of this report is to provide the Panel with an update of the status of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusivity (EDI) within North Yorkshire Police (NYP) and North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service (NYFRS). Looking at the initiatives, challenges, audits, and strategies for both services.

1.0 North Yorkshire Police

In 2022 NYP published the North Yorkshire Police Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion (DEI) Priorities and Strategy covering 2022-2025 (**Appendix 1**) with the aim to ...”be an organisation that is truly representative of the diverse communities we serve. We will be inclusive and outward-looking in our engagement, working with partner agencies and the public to build services that are accessible to all. We aim to be an organisation that inspires the confidence of every community in our ability to deliver fair and effective policing.”

1.1 Strategy Focus

The priorities identified in this strategy are **Training and Education, building a representative workforce, Understanding, and including communities and building an inclusive working environment.**

This strategy aims to:

- **Community Confidence:** We will increase the confidence of all communities across North Yorkshire
- **Working with others:** We will improve how we work with communities, partners, independent advisory groups, and critical friends.
- **Understanding our communities:** We will learn to engage with all communities within the county.
- **Tackling Prejudice and Hate:** Working with our communities we will better understand the prejudice they face and how we can help eliminate it.

- **Representative workforce:** We will use Positive Action and engagement to attract, recruit and retain people from a wide range of backgrounds and communities.
- **Developing our people:** We will set our organisation up for success by building an environment and structure that provides equality of opportunity for everyone.
- **Our Culture:** We will create a culture where people feel engaged, valued and a part of the organisation.

1.2 Initiatives

NYP have several initiatives to increase EDI within the service in the last few years:

- **Positive Action Initiatives:** These are designed to support underrepresented groups in the recruitment process. This includes the recruitment of Positive Action Champions, workshops, mentoring, and outreach programs to encourage applications from diverse backgrounds. [Positive Action | North Yorkshire Police](#)
- **Community Engagement:** There are various community liaison officers who work closely with different community groups to build trust and ensure that policing services meet the needs of all community members. And is one of the priorities on their 2024-2029 Plan on a Page. [Our plan on a page 2024-2029 | North Yorkshire Police](#)
- **Training Programs:** Regular training on unconscious bias, cultural awareness, and diversity has been provided to all staff to ensure they understand and respect the diverse communities they serve. As identified in the PEEL inspection, pg.10. See [PEEL 2023–25: Police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy – An inspection of North Yorkshire Police](#)

In addition to the Unconscious Bias training, the Positive Action Team also secured NYP to be an 'Upstander Pilot' force by the College of Policing.

The first session was delivered in July 2023 by the college and included challenging inappropriate behaviour, being an upstander and tools to appropriately challenge. In October 2024, the Bystander training was made part of Mandatory training for all officers, PCSO's and staff.

See <https://assets.college.police.uk/s3fs-public/2022-03/Bystander-programmes-evidence-briefing.pdf>

The code of ethics training programme is being rolled out to all staff and is being monitored through NYP at their skills and capabilities meeting, a team's survey is also being conducted to test awareness of the rollout to ensure that what is reported is being done

- **Support Networks:** There are several internal support networks, such as the Black Police Association, LGBT+ Network, and Women's Network, which provide support and advocacy for staff from these groups.
- **Black History Month:** In October 2024 NYP had several significant events, including the internal launch of their own Police Race Action Plan [Police Race Action Plan | North Yorkshire Police](#). The focus of the Police Race Action Plan in NYP is on all ethnic minority communities and the whole organisation was encouraged to engage in the numerous bespoke events.
- **Independent Ethics Board;** In addition to the internal advisory boards the OPFCC Inclusivity & Public Confidence Team attend the Independent Ethics Advisory Board (IEAB) provides guidance, support and challenge to the Deputy Mayor and Chief Constable. The board helps resolve ethical dilemmas and provide advice where

standards may not meet the ambition or where organisational blindness overlooks unethical practice. In 2025 the board will:

- Review new senior leaders' expectations on the purpose and value of IEAB.
- Raise awareness of purpose and value of IEAB to strengthen issues discussed and ensure full and engaged attendance of IEAB member
- Focus on relevant live issues raising debate and challenge and leveraging IEAB expertise
- Establish stronger links with internal groups and scrutiny panels to identify areas where IEAB can add most value
- Agree a set of core metrics to enable the Board to monitor ethical performance and culture
- Agree impact indicators to track effectiveness of actions taken from published reports and impact of broader activities such as implementation of code of ethics.

1.3 Effectiveness

NYP state they have had the following benefits from their work on EDI:

- **Increased Community Confidence:** There has been a noticeable improvement in community confidence, particularly among minority groups, due to transparent and fair use of policing powers.
- **Representative Workforce:** Positive Action initiatives have led to a more diverse workforce, with increased recruitment from underrepresented groups.
- **Training and Development:** Regular training on unconscious bias and cultural awareness has helped create a more inclusive culture within the force.
- **Support Networks:** Internal support networks have provided valuable support and advocacy, contributing to a more supportive work environment.

1.4 Challenges

NYP face several challenges trying to increase their EDI which include:

- **Recruitment and Retention:** Despite efforts, achieving a truly representative workforce remains challenging. Attracting and retaining individuals from diverse backgrounds, particularly in rural areas, is difficult. And this year they launched The Recruitment and Retention Strategy sets out and describes how they will address these challenges between 2024 – 2026. **(Appendix 2)**
- **Cultural Change:** Shifting the organisational culture to be more inclusive and understanding of diversity takes time. There are still instances of unconscious bias and resistance to change.
- **Community Trust:** Building and maintaining trust with all community groups, especially those who have historically had negative experiences with law enforcement, is an ongoing challenge.

- **Data and Transparency:** Ensuring accurate data collection and transparency in reporting on diversity and inclusion metrics is crucial but challenging.

2.0 North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service

NYFRS's EDI Strategy 2022-24, sets out their commitment and objectives for equality, diversity, and inclusion and how they can improve access to the services provided for staff and communities [NYFRS23-0008 - Booklet Equality Strategy.cdr](#)

The Strategic Leadership Team and EDI Tactical Group have conducted a review of the current Equality Strategy and propose a three-month extension, with a new strategy set to launch in April 2025. This will allow the outcomes of the Framework for Change project, developed in collaboration with the University of Huddersfield, to be reflected in the new strategy.

Additionally, the extension will be supported by the implementation of the:

- Core Code of Ethics
- Leadership Framework
- National Fire Chiefs Council's Culture and Values Strategy
- HMICFRS recommendations

2.1 Activities and Outcomes

NYFRS undertakes a range of activities on wellbeing, culture, and EDI, for example:

- **Positive Action Initiatives:** NYFRS have run targeted recruitment campaigns to attract more applications from women and people from BAME backgrounds. These campaigns have increased the number of applications and joiners from underrepresented groups. NYFRS will be launching the next Wholetime Firefighter recruitment campaign in early 2025. [Wholetime Firefighter recruitment - North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service](#)
- **Wellbeing talks throughout the year:** accessible to all staff via MS Teams, addressing topics such as anxiety, depression, improving sleep, mental health, nutrition, and hydration.
- **Organisational Development:** A revised organisational structure has been implemented to support diversity and inclusivity goals.
- **EDI Training:** All staff have undertaken mandatory training to promote an inclusive culture, focusing on the benefits of diversity and how to create a supportive and inclusive work environment.
- **Response to sector wide HMICFRS reports:** NYFRS has completed all nineteen recommendations for Chief Fire Officers outlined in the 2023 Values and Culture Report and is making good progress on all fifteen recommendations of the 2024 Standards and Behaviour Report. The Deputy Mayor monitors Service progress against these recommendations at every Online Public Meeting (OPM). The latest progress report can be accessed here: [Online Public Meeting – 21 November 2024 - NYFRS - Emergency Response Times - York & North Yorkshire Office for Policing, Fire, Crime and Commissioning](#)
- **Framework for Change Project:** The CFO is collaborating with Huddersfield University, via a formal collaboration agreement, on a project to develop a research-informed toolkit and framework for co-developed organisational change within

NYFRS. This will enable staff to be part of the change, develop the culture NYFRS want for a better service and ensure everyone feels valued.

The first phase of the project during which staff/members have shared their experiences is complete.

The second phase will build upon previous research for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and Scottish Government, to develop an innovative co-development workshop process for generating recommendations for change. NYFRS will refine this process to align with the emergency services context. NYFRS will conduct a series of eighteen workshops, organised into six cohorts. Informed by insights from the first phase, in these workshops NYFRS employees will co-design a framework for change and behavioural charter.

The final phase of the project will focus on dissemination. This stage involves implementing the toolkit and framework within the organisation and exploring opportunities for broader adoption and usage. The project will help NYFRS to embed research-informed change processes, foster a strategic relationship between the University and the Service, and commercialise the research into a consultancy-based toolkit applicable to other emergency services.

2.2 Challenges

NYFRS face challenge, like NYP, in improving EDI in the service.

- **Workforce Diversity:** Increasing the diversity of the workforce, particularly in operational roles, remains a significant challenge. The service has historically had low numbers of women and BAME individuals. NYFRS will help to address this with a new strategy set to launch in April 2025.
- **Cultural Acceptance:** There is a need for greater acceptance and understanding of the benefits of diversity among staff.
- **Education and Training:** Providing effective education and training on diversity and inclusion to all staff is essential. Ensuring that training translates into cultural change is key.
- **Infrastructure and Resources:** Ensuring that facilities and resources are inclusive and accessible to all staff can be challenging, particularly in older buildings.

3.0 PFCC/OPFCC Activity Update

3.1 Monthly Awareness Sessions

The OPFCC have introduced monthly awareness sessions for the OPFCC team that have included over the past year:

- Understanding Grief
- Neurodiversity Awareness
- Imposter Syndrome
- LBGTQ+ Awareness
- Stereotypes
- Inclusive Language Team Picnic
- Black History Month
- Financial Health

These sessions have been successful with those in attendance rating the sessions increasingly positively in terms of location, accessibility, presentation style and content.

Further information

Additionally the Temporary Director of Public confidence, the IEAB chair and the Deputy Chief Constable (DCC) have a meeting planned for the 24/1/25 to explore stronger links can be developed and another meeting is due to take place with the Staff Officer to the DCC for the NPCC National Ethics Portfolio to look at opportunities for sharing best practice.