



Meeting	Service Leadership Team	Agenda Item	5c
	Performance and Resources Board		9
Meeting Date	11 May 2021		
	26 May 2021		
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Presented By:	Colette Black, Director of People – Assistant Chief Executive		
Subject:	Annual Workforce Report		
Type of Report:	Information		

RECOMMENDATIONS

Member of the Board are asked to note the contents of the report. This paper provides an overview on the Service's workforce for the period 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021.

OVERVIEW

The Annual Workforce report provides an annual snapshot of our workforce and looks back on the previous financial year. Data is broken down into employee types (e.g. Control, On-Call, Support, Wholetime). This report provides commentary on the headline topics from the data and focuses on the areas where there has been the biggest change since the previous report.

BACKGROUND

For the purposes of this paper a series of data extracts were taken from our HR information system to drill down to the specific workforce metrics. Exit interview data and Recruitment and Selection data have also been used to provide further analysis.

Calculations for averages and percentages have been rounded to one decimal place.

Where reference is made to national statistics the source is Fire and Rescue Workforce and Pension Statistics: [England, April 2019 to March 2020 Published Oct 2020](#).

Please see overleaf for Workforce Demographics (further detailed data can be found within the Appendix).

OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS - ACTION BEING TAKEN

Workforce Demographic Actions

Whilst the Service's workforce demographics are broadly comparable to the national picture for fire and rescue services in England, there is still more we need to do.

In our People Strategy 2020-24 we gave a commitment to reviewing our Wholetime recruitment approaches and assessment and selection methodology as well as taking a digital first approach. Fairness, inclusion and diversity was a strong thread through these commitments. A fundamental change in our Candidate Attraction Strategy is the way in which we are managing our campaign to recruit Wholetime firefighters. We are taking a much longer-term approach reaching out to the widest potential candidate pools through stronger links with Fire Cadets, Local Colleges and Partner Organisations. The campaign formally launched in Quarter 2 and although our candidate profiles and conversion rates give an early indication on success, any changes to our demographics will take time. However, during 2020-21 we have seen some improvements in our demographics, specifically a small increase in female operational employees, with 44 Wholetime. We have seen the largest increase in female employee number in On-Call roles, where 8 more female employees were employed at 31 March 2021 compared with the same date a year ago.

To have a more accurate view of our workforce diversity we have reached out to our people during 2020-21 to encourage them to update their personal information within Civica to improve the data we hold. The data presented in Appendix Table 5 shows that this action has resulted in the number of employee records showing 'not recorded' ethnicity has reduced significantly from 44.5% on 31 March 2020 to 23.9% on 31 March 2021. Similarly, Appendix Table 7 show the same has been seen for sexual orientation data with 62.7% 'not recorded' on 31 March 2020 reducing to 39.1% 'not recorded' on 31 March 2021. We are now working to ensure that this data is collected via an applicant tracking system as part of the application process. Regular diversity data progress snapshot has been introduced, which is being shared with Group Managers and heads of department on a weekly basis. Alongside this, we have introduced a monthly diversity data report, which reflects the increased rates of diversity data completion across the Service.

Turnover Actions

Turnover rates remain healthy overall down by 1.5% from 9.0% to 7.5% on the turnover figure reported last year. Whilst the leaver data at its highest level provides some insights, without a narrative gained through exit interviews it has some limitations in being able to understand and subsequently information what actions may be required to help in the areas of attraction and retention, it is for this reason that an online Exit Interview form was launched in Quarter 3 which will enable us to identify reasons for leaving in a more in-depth way.

Since the launch of the online exit questionnaire in early December, there were 19 forms completed and submitted, representing 48.7% of all resignations received in the same period. The HR Support Team now review all exit questionnaires to ensure that a correct reason for leaving is captured on an employee's record, which will improve the quality of our exit data.

One area of focus is On-Call turnover which although down on last year is 11.6%. The On-Call Liaison Officers are working with HR to contact ex-colleagues, as appropriate, to understand whether they would consider returning to stations where there are ongoing availability shortfalls. The Programme Team, Operations and HR have combined their efforts under two specific On-Call workstreams to identify opportunities to explore and potentially trial different approaches, specifically at our priority stations. Work to review the On-Call recruitment process to align with Wholetime assessment approaches has resulted in a shorter-time-to-hire.

Wholetime leavers were predominantly as a result of planned retirements and approximately half of Support leavers were as the result of an organisational restructure and planned retirements. Unplanned turnover of support staff is not a concern compared to the national average for the public sector.

The workforce plan indicates that turnover will increase over the next five years, given the age profile of our Wholetime employees; this is being addressed through the programme of recruitment campaigns and talent management approaches.

Absence Actions

The People Business Partnering Team continue to focus their efforts on supporting line managers to manage cases. Fortnightly data-driven meetings with the HR People Business Partner team are now well established and ensure continued momentum in managing attendance cases. This is keeping focus on longstanding cases and pushing them towards resolution wherever possible.

The wellbeing element of the People Strategy 2020-24 has focused on mental and physical health, as well as financial health and social activity, healthy eating and fitness. During Quarter 1 a wellbeing hub was launched in addition to the introduction of wellbeing Wednesdays, featuring useful advice, tools and links across many wellbeing topics. A new Wellbeing Policy was launched in Quarter 4 which was drafted as part of the National Fire Chiefs Council's People Policy Panel. We have worked with representative bodies to adapt it so it aligns with the wellbeing activities already developed across our Service. The policy supports colleagues' health and wellbeing, provides training in good management practices, promotes a culture of open communication about health and wellbeing and addresses work-related stress.

COVID-19 related absence featured heavily throughout 2020-21. The People Business Partnering Team have worked with managers throughout the pandemic to ensure that we support health and wellbeing in the workplace. We have been working on a case-by-case basis to safely support employees, particularly those that may have additional health factors or other concerns impacting upon their return to their usual place of work. We are committed to supporting our staff throughout and will monitor this continuously throughout 2021-22.

Employee Relations Actions

We believe that every employee has the right to be treated fairly, inclusively, with kindness, equality, dignity and respect. We are committed to providing a supportive and inclusive working environment to foster such a culture. We are supporting managers to tackle bullying, harassment and discrimination in a timely and consistent way.

A new Disciplinary Policy launched in Quarter 4 to reflect current Service practice and the ACAS (Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service) Code of Conduct for Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures. It provides managers with practical procedural guidance to support colleagues in the fair and consistent management of behaviour and conduct issues.

The overall number of all cases and the duration of cases has reduced. This is because of improved housekeeping in the system and focused working with line managers to deal with issues at the lowest practicable level and to ensure that our approach supports timely and appropriate outcomes.

See Table 17 for a full breakdown of the Service's employee relations casework metrics as at 31 March 2021, with comparison to the end of the previous financial year.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

BENEFITS AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

There are no additional risk management implications.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

The Service is committed to creating an inclusive culture with a workforce that is high performing and values differences to benefit the communities it serves. Our People Strategy is our template for attracting, engaging, developing, and retaining our most valuable asset – the people that work here. It provides the components that will equip us to transform our workplace to be more agile, change able and inclusive.

This report is for information only and not for decision therefore there are no equality and diversity implications associated with this paper.

Is this decision anticipated to have an impact on any of the following protected groups as defined within the Equality Act 2010:

<i>Race</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Religion or belief</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Sex</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Gender reassignment</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Age</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Pregnancy & maternity</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Disability</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Marriage and Civil Partnership</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Sexual orientation</i>	<i>No</i>		

WORKFORCE ENGAGEMENT

We meet regularly with our representative bodies. We listen to our employees through our annual Employee Survey. There are regular opportunities for two way communications via forums such as 'Your Voice Engagement & Action Groups', 'Manager Briefing' and 'Managers Cascade'.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

There are no health and safety implications associated with the content of this paper.

APPENDIX

Table 1: Workforce Headcount / FTE					
Employee Group	31 Mar 2020		31 Mar 2021		FTE Variance
	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	
Wholetime	645	643.00	650	649.0	+ 6.0
On-Call	511	400.75	505	398.8	- 2.0
Control	37	34.2	38	35.2	+ 1.0
Support	324	301.5	329	305.2	+ 5.7
OVERALL	1517	1379.5	1522	1388.1	+ 8.65

This section covers information on five diversity characteristics – age, sex, ethnicity, disability and sexual orientation. We also look to compare our staff data to the population we serve and work within and also to national fire and rescue service data.

Table 2: Age Profile				
Employee Group	Mean	Median	Min	Max
Wholetime	43.7	44.6	20.9	62.5
On-Call	39.6	37.8	18.7	71.2
Control	41.7	40.4	23.7	63.3
Support	46.8	49.0	19.4	72.0
OVERALL	43.0	43.2	18.7	72.0

Based upon age as at 31 March 2021

Table 3: Majority Age Group				
Employee Group	31 Mar 2020		31 Mar 2021	
	Majority Group	% of Employees in Group	Majority Group	% of Employees in Group
Wholetime	46-55	41.4%	46-55	39.5%
On-Call	25-35	37.6%	25-35	36.0%
Control	25-35	35.1%	25-35	34.2%
Support	56-65	27.8%	56-65	27.5%
OVERALL	46-55	31.1%	46-55	30.0%

Table 4: Sex Distribution				
Employee Group	31 Mar 2020		31 Mar 2021	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Wholetime	93.6%	6.4%	93.2%	6.8%
On-Call	98.6%	1.4%	97.0%	3.0%
Control	16.2%	83.8%	15.8%	84.2%
Support	47.2%	52.8%	47.4%	52.6%
OVERALL	83.5%	16.5%	82.6%	17.4%

Table 4: Gender Distribution								
Employee Group	31 Mar 2020				31 Mar 2021			
	Male	Female	Other	Not Recorded	Male	Female	Other	Not Recorded
Wholetime	86.0%	6.2%	0.3%	7.4%	82.4%	6.6%	0.6%	10.3%
On-Call	86.9%	1.4%	0.2%	11.5%	88.7%	2.8%	0.4%	8.1%
Control	16.2%	81.1%	0%	2.7%	13.2%	84.2%	0%	2.6%
Support	43.8%	49.4%	0%	6.5%	45.3%	50.5%	0%	4.2%
OVERALL	75.6%	15.6%	0.2%	8.5%	74.7%	16.8%	0.4%	8.1%

'Not Recorded' figure includes 'not stated' and 'prefer not to say' responses

Table 5: Ethnicity						
Employee Group	31 Mar 2020			31 Mar 2021		
	White British	Other	Not Recorded	White *	Other	Not Recorded
Wholetime	46.2%	2.33%	51.5%	70.4%	2.6%	27.0%
On-Call	52.6%	2.35%	45.0%	70.1%	1.4%	28.5%
Control	70.3%	2.70%	27.0%	92.1%	2.6%	5.3%
Support	64.5%	3.70%	31.8%	84.3%	3.0%	12.7%
OVERALL	52.9%	2.64%	44.5%	73.9%	2.3%	23.9%

'White' includes: White British, White English, White Irish, White Scottish, White Welsh
 Significant efforts by I&D BP have resulted in dramatic increase in ethnic origins being identified by employees

Table 6: Disability				
Employee Group	31 Mar 2020		31 Mar 2021	
	Disability	Not Stated	Disability	Not Stated
Wholetime	1.4%	98.6%	4.3%	95.7%
On-Call	1.4%	98.6%	3.6%	96.4%
Control	0%	100%	0%	100%
Support	4.0%	96.0%	6.0%	94.0%
OVERALL	1.9%	98.1%	4.3%	95.7%

Table 7: Sexual Orientation			
Employee Group	Heterosexual	LGBQ+	Not Recorded
Wholetime	56.3%	3.9%	39.8%
On-Call	49.7%	2.0%	48.3%
Control	73.7%	2.6%	23.7%
Support	70.4%	4.2%	25.4%
OVERALL	57.6%	3.3%	39.1%

Not recorded figure includes “not stated” and “prefer not to say” responses

Workforce joiner diversity

Table 8: Workforce Joiner Sex		
Employee Group	Male	Female
Wholetime	88.0%	12.0%
On-Call	82.4%	17.6%
Control	0.0%	100.0%
Support	45.5%	54.5%
OVERALL	69.1%	30.9%

Table 8: Workforce Joiner Gender				
Employee Group	Male	Female	Other	Not Recorded
Wholetime	88.0%	12.0%	0%	0%
On-Call	76.5%	14.7%	2.9%	5.9%

Control	0%	100%	0%	0%
Support	42.4%	54.5%	0%	3.0%
OVERALL	66.0%	29.8%	1.1%	3.2%

Table 9: Workforce Joiner Ethnicity			
Employee Group	White *	Other	Not Recorded
Wholetime	84.0%	16.0%	0%
On-Call	91.2%	2.9%	5.9%
Control	100%	0%	0%
Support	87.9%	6.1%	6.1%
OVERALL	88.3%	7.4%	4.3%

'White' includes: White British, White English, White Irish, White Scottish, White Welsh

Table 10: Workforce Joiner Age Distribution						
Employee Group	17-24	25-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	66+
Wholetime	4.0%	56.0%	32.0%	8.0%	0%	0%
On-Call	20.6%	35.3%	38.2%	5.9%	0%	0%
Control	50.0%	50.0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Support	15.2%	30.3%	21.2%	15.2%	18.2%	0%
OVERALL	14.9%	39.4%	29.8%	9.6%	6.4%	0%

TURNOVER

Table 11: Workforce Turnover		
Employee Group	2019-20	2020-21
Wholetime	6.1%	4.3%
On-Call	13.1%	11.6%
Control	0%	0%
Support	9.8%	8.6%
OVERALL	9.0%	7.5%

Leavers

Table 12: Reasons for Leaving								
Employee Group	Transfer to other service	Retirement	Resignation	Redundancy	End of Contract	Dismissal	Death	Not Recorded
Wholetime	0%	73.5%	17.6%	0%	0%	0%	2.9%	5.9%
On-Call	0%	10.9%	58.2%	0%	0%	0%	1.8%	29.1%
Control	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Support	0%	18.8%	31.3%	15.6%	15.6%	0%	0%	18.8%
OVERALL	0%	30.6%	39.7%	4.1%	4.1%	0%	1.7%	19.8%

Table 13: Length of Service at Leaving						
Employee Group	< 1 Year	1-3 Years	4-5 Years	6-10 Years	11-20 Years	20 Years +
Wholetime	5.9%	8.8%	0%	0%	17.6%	67.6%
On-Call	10.9%	41.8%	9.1%	12.7%	14.5%	10.9%
Control	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Support	25.0%	25.0%	9.4%	15.6%	18.8%	6.3%
OVERALL	13.2%	28.1%	6.6%	9.9%	16.5%	25.6%

Joiners/Recruitment

Table 14: Joiners		
Employee Group	2019-20	2020-21
Wholetime	58	37
On-Call	83	34
Control	2	2
Support	62	33
OVERALL	205	106

ABSENCE

Table 15: Sickness Absence		
Employee Group	Working/Duty Days Lost in 2019-20	Working/Duty Days Lost in 2020-21
Wholetime	7,279	9,056
On-Call	7,546	9,535
Control	392	846
Support	2,680	2,503
OVERALL	17,898	21,941

Absence figures for 2020-21 included any time recorded as self isolating or otherwise absence from the workplace due to Covid-related reasons.
Data for both periods extract 19 Apr 2021 and are rounded to the nearest full day.

During the course of 2020-21, 51.2% of all recorded absence was for Covid-related reasons.

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS MANAGER

The following table presents the Service's employee relations casework metrics as at 31 March 2021, with comparison to the end of the previous financial year.

Table 17: Casework Volumes 2020/21												
Case Type	Number of New Cases in Year			Number of Cases Closed in Year			Average time to Close Cases (Calendar Days)			Number of Cases Open at Year End		
	2019/20	2020/21	TREND	2019/20	2020/21	TREND	2019/20	2020/21	TREND	2019/20	2020/21	TREND
Attendance	132	68	↓	148	88	↓	183	131	↓	34	16	↓
Disciplinary	5	6	↑	5	8	↑	136	296	↑	3	1	↓
Grievance	9	11	↑	7	13	↑	125	79	↓	2	0	↓
Performance	52	22	↓	42	32	↓	108	108	←	16	4	↓
OVERALL	198	107	↓	202	141	↓	164	131	↓	55	21	↓