

Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework – Self-Assessment Guidance

Knowing your communities				
Developing Understanding the importance of equality		Achieving Developing better outcomes		Excellent Making a difference
1. Collecting Information				
1.1 The service has in place plans to gather information on the profile of its communities and the extent of inequality and disadvantage within the local area, and to identify priorities across its area.		2.1 Relevant and appropriate information is gathered efficiently using a range of methods, across the service's local area, to identify key equality gaps and inform the service's Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) and other strategic documents.		3.1 The service has good quality information of the equality profile of its communities and their changing needs, which is regularly updated and used to inform planning and monitor outcomes.
How was this done and what is the evidence? Questions / issues authorities might consider:				
Is the service clear about what sources of local information might be relevant and useful?		Are different methods being deployed to gather data? How is information disaggregated and analysed on the basis of different communities?		How are changing needs identified, prioritised and met? How often is data gathered?
2. Analysis and using information				
1.2 Systems are being developed corporately to collect and analyse soft and hard data/information about its communities.		2.2 Systems are in place for the disaggregation and analysis of data/information to identify at risk communities and inform service planning.		3.2 Service planning and outcomes are reviewed and evaluated regularly at a corporate level
How was this done and what is the evidence? Questions / issues authorities might consider:				
Does the service have systems for collating and analysing the different sets of data being collected? How frequently is data gathered and analysed? Have staff been briefed on why the FRS needs to collect this data? Are safeguards in place to ensure that data is stored securely?		What information is collected? Is the service able to gauge how its communities might be changing? Is information disaggregated and analysed on a regular basis? What changes have been made as a result? How is it used to inform the objective setting?		What analysis has taken place? How has it contributed to service improvement? Is continuous improvement being achieved? What evidence is there of gaps being narrowed? Have relevant targets been set to reduce risk to communities? Are these regularly monitored?

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3.Sharing information between partners					
1.3		2.3		3.3	
Plans are in place to collect, share and use equality information with partners.		Information and data is mapped, disaggregated and used with partners, to identify at risk communities and inform service planning.		The service and partners are able to identify how communities are changing and the impact this may have on at risk communities and service planning. Service planning and outcomes are reviewed and evaluated regularly.	
<i>How was this done and what is the evidence? Questions/issues authorities might consider:</i>					
Are there protocols in place for sharing information? Is the service working with its partners to ensure information is shared effectively?		How is the information being used to inform and reduce risk and achieve service plan outcomes? How does the service demonstrate working with partners to obtain data and information on local community needs?		How is the service working with partners to manage the diverse needs of their communities? How are changing needs identified, prioritised and met? How often is data gathered?	

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Leadership, partnership and organisational commitment				
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4. Leadership, vision and commitment				
1.4		2.4		3.4
The Chief Fire Officer and Members commit publicly to the service's core values to develop an organisation which values and supports equality and any human rights considerations		Clear organisation equality and human rights priorities have been set and are owned and understood by all key stakeholders.		The service can demonstrate success in achieving a range of outcomes for at risk communities, which are reviewed on a regular basis.
<i>How was this done and what is the evidence? Questions/issues authorities might consider:</i>				
What documentation details the commitment of the service to equality, diversity and human rights? How is the 'equality story' integrated into corporate documents? Who is responsible for delivering the agenda at fire authority and service leader level? Is there a corporate equality group?		Are equality/human rights objectives integral to the corporate service plan and corporate performance management systems? How are the views and expertise of stakeholders used to inform service delivery?		What evidence is there of improved outcomes? Can employees or the local community give any good examples of improved service outcomes? What review mechanisms are in place?

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5.Integrated Risk Management Planning

1.5	2.5	3.5
The service is committed to developing an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) that takes full account of the needs of its local communities.	Arrangements are in place to review implementation of the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).	The Service has a sophisticated and segmented understanding of its local communities, which informs and influences its Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).

How was this done and what is the evidence? Questions/issues authorities might consider:

What formation has been used in the development of the IRMP? How does the service ensure that it is able identify service needs based on a constantly changing population? Who has been consulted?	What arrangements are in place to review the IRMP? How does the service scrutinise equality issues that have been embedded in the IRMP? Who is involved in the scrutiny process? How are local communities involved in this process? How challenging is the scrutiny?	How well does the service know its local communities? Is there regular engagement with local communities? What methods are used to engage with them? How does knowing the community inform and influence the IRMP?
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6.Local partnership working

1.6	2.6	3.6
Partnerships and working arrangements, such as those for the local strategic partnership are in place with the voluntary and community sector and the wider community to deliver outcomes for at risk communities.	Outcomes for at risk communities are monitored regularly by key partners and the Members and senior leadership and appropriate resources are allocated to achieving them.	The service can demonstrate success in working with a range of partners to deliver outcomes for at risk communities, which are reviewed on a regular basis.

How was this done and what is the evidence? Questions/issues authorities might consider:

What partnership arrangements are in place? Which partners does the service work with? What evidence is there of which at risk communities have been identified? What evidence is there of involvement by key stakeholders to deliver outcomes for at risk communities?	How are outcomes for at risk communities monitored, reviewed and evaluated? Are outcomes monitored through the corporate performance management framework?	What evidence is there of improved outcomes as a result of partnership working? Can employees, and/or the community or voluntary sector give examples of improved service outcomes? What review mechanisms are in place?
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7.Working with representative bodies				
1.7		2.7		3.7
The service involves representative bodies on equality issues in order to develop a constructive and collaborative working relationship.		The service enables representative bodies to be involved in the delivery of corporate service and workforce objectives.		Representative bodies are actively encouraged to fulfil a positive role in delivering a wide range of corporate service and workforce objectives.
<i>How was this done and what is the evidence? Questions/issues authorities might consider:</i>				
What arrangements are in place to involve representative bodies on equality issues?		What arrangements are in place to involve representative bodies? What contribution have representative bodies made?		What evidence is there of representative bodies being actively encouraged to fulfil a positive role? What examples of positive contribution are there by representative bodies to deliver corporate service and workforce objectives?
8.Equality analysis				
1.8		2.8		3.8
A corporate system is in place for conducting equality analysis of the potential effects of planned changes to financial plans, policy and/or service delivery on different communities and employees.		The service can demonstrate it mitigates risks as a result of equality analysis and monitors outcomes from its decision-making.		The service can demonstrate that actions taken to mitigate risks are achieving the desired outcomes.
<i>How was this done and what is the evidence? Questions/issues authorities might consider:</i>				
Is there a corporate system for equality analysis? Is guidance, training and support on equality analysis offered on a systematic basis? What potential effects have been identified?		What evidence is there of equality analysis being undertaken? What is the quality of the analysis? Are mitigating actions identified where appropriate?		What evidence is there of desired outcomes being achieved?

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9. Legal duties					
1.9		2.9		3.9	
The service complies with the Public Sector Equality Duty.		Action is taken to implement the commitments within the Public Sector Equality Duty, which is regularly monitored by senior leadership.		The service can demonstrate significant, year-on-year improvements in outcomes for employees and at risk communities as a result of the Public Sector Equality Duty.	
<i>How was this done and what is the evidence? Questions/issues authorities might consider:</i>					
Has the organisation published evidence of how it complies with the Public Sector Equality Duty? Has it published an equality objective – check wording from the Duty! Are plans in place to report at least annually?		What actions have been taken? How is progress monitored, reviewed and reported publicly?		What evidence is there of outcomes for at risk communities? Are outcomes reviewed regularly?	
10. Communication and promoting commitments					
1.10		2.10		3.10	
The service's internal and external communication strategies are designed to foster good relations across all local communities.		The service communicates effectively regarding its equality priorities, how it responds to local communities' needs and fosters good relations.		The service has gained a reputation within the community and among key partners for championing and achieving equality outcomes and fostering good relations.	
<i>How was this done and what is the evidence? Questions/issues authorities might consider:</i>					
Is the service's communication strategy designed to ensure a wide range of communities are communicated with effectively? Do the service's publications and press releases reflect a diverse community and workforce in terms of both content and images? Is the service's website accessible and informative? What is done to foster good relations across communities?		How is 'equality' success defined and communicated? What methods are used? How does the service foster good relations across the community?		Is the service approached to share information about its achievements? Can employees, the community or the voluntary and community sector give examples of how good relations is fostered?	

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11. Procurement				
1.11		2.11		3.11
Equality matters are fully considered during the procurement of goods and services.		The service ensures that the procurement process is regularly monitored and reviewed.		The service can demonstrate that procurement processes are contributing to its equality-related priorities.
<i>How was this done and what is the evidence? Questions/issues authorities might consider:</i>				
Is there corporate guidance on the equality requirements for the procurement function? Are there standard equality clauses for contracts? How do specifications take account of the different needs? Is equality analysis part of the process when procuring services? Are the outcomes reflected in the specifications for the service and in the procurement process? Does the specification set measurable criteria for contractors or suppliers?		How are equality issues addressed in the stages of the tendering process, for example when preparing the specification, pre-qualification and tender assessment? Are monitoring requirements built into contracts to ensure equality issues are addressed? How do managers ensure that suppliers have an understanding and commitment to the principles and practice of equality in what they do?		What evidence is there that procurement processes contribute to the achievement of equality priorities? How does the service ensure that contractors/suppliers continue meet changing needs? How is the contract managed over time to support good practice and continuing service improvement? Is there evidence that contracts are being monitored using quantitative and qualitative analysis, and the results considered and analysed?
12. Fostering good relations				
1.12		2.12		3.12
Structures are in place with partners to foster good relations, enable different communities/groups of people to get on well together.		The quality of relationships between different communities/groups of people are monitored and analysed.		There is evidence to support improved relationships and understanding of different communities/groups of people.
<i>How was that done and what is the evidence? Questions/issues authorities might consider:</i>				
What structures are in place to support fostering good relations within the community?		What evidence is there of partnership work to improve relations with communities/groups? How is this monitored? What does the analysis tell you?		What evidence is there to demonstrate mutual understanding and joint working of different communities/groups of people?

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Community engagement and satisfaction				
Developing Understanding the importance of equality		Achieving Developing better outcomes		Excellent Making a difference
13. Effective community engagement				
1.13		2.13		3.13
The service engages with at risk communities to identify and reduce risk.		Improved outcomes are being delivered for at risk communities as a result of efficient and effective community engagement.		At risk communities are involved in the design and delivery of interventions that deliver improved outcomes.
<i>How was this done and what is the evidence? Questions/issues authorities might consider:</i>				
What engagement structures are in place? How are at risk groups involved?		Does community engagement take place on an on-going basis? How is its effectiveness monitored? Are there targeted interventions specifically for at risk groups? What feedback has been received from stakeholders of at risk groups?		How are people from at risk communities encouraged and enabled to participate? Are a range of methodologies used? How has involving the community enabled a difference to be made to the delivery of the service?
14. Community Satisfaction				
1.14		2.14		3.14
The service consistently communicates progress on service delivery to all communities.		The service monitors and takes action on community perceptions and satisfaction.		The service has achieved measurable improvements arising from community feedback.
<i>How was this done and what is the evidence? Questions/issues authorities might consider:</i>				
How does the service communicate progress on service delivery? Is it widely accessible to local communities? Does it include targeted communication where appropriate?		How does the service gather information on the perceptions and satisfaction of the community? How are complaints dealt with?		What views and needs have been taken into account? What improvements have been delivered? Are they being measured and recorded?

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15.Human Rights				
1.15		2.15		3.15
Appropriate mechanisms are in place to ensure that human rights considerations are identified when planning services and that citizens are treated with dignity and respect.		Human rights issues are considered and addressed when delivering services to all citizens.		More people believe that they have been treated fairly and that their human rights have been respected
<i>How was this done and what is the evidence? Questions/issues authorities might consider:</i>				
Do service provision policies highlight human rights considerations? Do staff have the competence to identify potential human rights issues? What training has been provided to service planners?		How are human rights issues taken into account? What guidance is available for staff? Are manuals updated regularly with regard to changing case law?		Is there any evidence of improvement over time? Are there any examples of the different experiences of communities and are these being analysed and acted upon?
16.Evaluation and Sharing Good Practice				
1.16		2.16		3.16
The service is aware of good practice and learns from others.		The service is informed by good practice and has made changes to its practices as a result of learning from others.		The service creates and develops good practice. Other organisations look to it for information and advice.
How does the service become aware of good practice? What best practice has been considered?		What examples of good practice are used? How has it learnt from others?		Is the service approached on a regular basis to provide examples of or showcase good practice? Has it been asked to improve performance on equality in another organisation?

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A skilled and committed workforce				
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17. Workforce strategy				
1.17 The service's workforce strategy identifies key equality issues to be addressed.		2.17 The equality objectives of the workforce strategy are implemented and monitored.		3.17 A range of innovative processes are in place which deliver equality outcomes for the whole workforce.
How was this done and what is the evidence? Questions/issues authorities might consider:				
Are there a range of workforce strategies and policies?		How are the equality aspects of the workforce strategy being implemented and monitored? Are specific actions being taken? How are processes changing?		What strategic, innovative and crosscutting approaches have been considered to improve outcomes? Is there good use of opportunities for employees that deliver improved outcomes, for example flexible working? Are there career opportunities for part-time employees?
18. Workforce diversity				
1.18 The service uses effective processes for the employment, development and promotion of a diverse workforce, including understanding its local labour market.		2.18 Employment objectives have been set based on the assessment of the local labour market and barriers to employment.		3.18 The service can demonstrate significant process in improving the diversity of its workforce.
How was this done and what is the evidence? Questions/issues authorities might consider:				
What processes are in place? What progress has been made in employment, development and promotion?		What objectives have been set? Where workforce data indicates that targets or objectives are not being met, are there appropriate examples of positive action? Where there is evidence of disproportionately, what action is being taken to reverse the trends?		What evidence is there of the service improving the diversity of applicants for employment, development and promotion?

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19. Workforce monitoring				
1.19		2.19		3.19
The service ensures that all employment procedures comply with equality legislation and employment codes of practice.		The service regularly monitors, analyses and publishes employment data in accordance with its statutory duties.		The service acts promptly upon adverse trends identified from monitoring and analysis of employment data.
<i>How was this done and what is the evidence? Questions/issues authorities might consider:</i>				
Are all employment policies regularly reviewed to ensure they are compliant with the latest developments?		Is there evidence that workforce data is analysed and published to help establish targets and objectives? What information is published and where? Are trends identified? What action has been taken as a result of the monitoring?		Is the workforce profile updated regularly? Does monitoring and analysis encompass a wide range of equality matters? What action has been taken to address adverse trends?
20. HR policies and procedures				
1.20		2.20		3.20
The service has undertaken or is undertaking analysis of the potential effects of employment policies and procedures. This analysis is made public.		The effects of all employment policies and procedures have been assessed, and action has been taken to mitigate any adverse impact identified and to promote equality of opportunity.		A range of examples is readily available, of positive outcomes from mitigation action and action to promote equality of opportunity.
<i>How was this done and what is the evidence? Questions/issues authorities might consider:</i>				
Are equality analyses being undertaken when employment policies and procedures are reviewed or developed?		Have equality analyses been carried out for all people management processes? What action has been taken to ensure equality outcomes?		Have positive and tangible outcomes been delivered? Is the service maximising the potential of employees? Is there a cycle of continuous improvement?
21. Employee engagement				
1.21		2.21		3.21
The service communicates regularly with employees to raise awareness and understanding of workplace equality and the actions needed to address them.		Employees are engaged positively in service transformation and in developing new roles and ways of working.		The service has high satisfaction levels across all employee groups.
<i>How was this done and what is the evidence? Questions/issues authorities might consider:</i>				
What employee engagement structures are there? Are there any employee support networks		What evidence is there that employee have been proactively engaged? Are there any improvements arising from employee engagement?		Do employees feel engaged? Are staff surveys/communication carried out regularly? Is there any evidence of how levels of satisfaction have improved over time? Are there any examples of different staff experiences being analysed?

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22.Promoting a positive working environment				
1.22		2.22		3.22
The service has assessed all aspects of the working environment.		The service can demonstrate a range of improvements to the working environment.		The service has achieved significant improvements across a wide range of the elements of the working environment.
<i>How was this done and what is the evidence? Questions/issues authorities might consider:</i>				
Has the service carried out an assessment of its working environment for all employees? What issues have been given consideration in relation to equipment, travel, training, clothing, facilities, food, work-life balance etc? Is there a flexible working policy?		What improvements have been made?		What significant improvements have been achieved with equipment, travel, training, clothing, facilities, food, work-life balance etc?
23.Equal pay review				
1.23		2.23		3.23
The service has undertaken an equal pay audit as required by the Equal Pay Act 1970.		The service has an action plan in place on equal pay and consulted with recognised trade unions.		Action has been taken to ensure equal pay is fully implemented.
<i>How was this done and what is the evidence? Questions/issues authorities might consider:</i>				
Has the service developed an equal pay policy, set out a timetable for carrying out its pay review?		Does the service have an action plan in place for equal pay? Have the new proposals been analysed to ensure there are no detrimental effects? Has the service consulted with recognised trade unions? Have managers and employees received information about equal pay?		Overall, is there evidence that men and women are receiving equal pay? Is the situation being monitored / audited regularly?

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24. Inappropriate Behaviour					
1.24		2.24		3.24	
The service has policies and systems in place to identify, prevent and deal effectively with inappropriate behaviour in the workplace.		Incidents are regularly monitored, analysed and acted upon.		Action is taken to address the issues identified in relation to inappropriate behaviour	
<i>How was this done and what is the evidence? Questions/issues authorities might consider:</i>					
Is there a dignity at work or harassment and bullying policy? Are there any support structures for staff?		Are harassment and bullying incidents monitored? What action is being taken to address problems? What information/support is available to employees? What training provision has been made for managers (and members) on handling cases?		What issues have been identified? What actions have been taken? What evidence is there to show that managers (and members) understand the importance of equality when managing inappropriate behaviour in the workplace?	
25. Appraisals/Performance Development Reviews					
1.25		2.25		3.25	
Annual individual performance reviews, based on the relevant role for all employees include equality objectives.		All employees are delivering improvements on equality objectives based on individual annual performance reviews.		There is strong evidence of outcomes arising from individual personal reviews.	
<i>How was this done and what is the evidence? Questions/issues authorities might consider:</i>					
How do personal performance reviews processes ensure employees are aware of their responsibilities and accountabilities? Has the appraisal system been reviewed to take account of equality issues?		What improvements are being delivered? Is good performance being recognised?		What outcomes are being delivered? Is good performance being recognised?	

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Learning and development					
1.26		2.26		3.26	
The service has completed individual training needs assessment of the development required by employees to deliver equality outcomes.		The service provides all employees with training and development on equality issues		The service can demonstrate it has knowledgeable and well trained employees who are better equipped to meet diverse needs of the local communities.	
<i>How was this done and what is the evidence? Questions/issues authorities might consider:</i>					
Have the appropriate competencies been identified? Has an assessment been made as to what equality-related training, learning or development will be required? Does the learning and development plan take account of equality issues?		Is equality an integral part of all employee training and development? Are different methods used to promote learning?		Can the service demonstrate that its employees are knowledgeable and well trained? What evidence is there of employees meeting the diverse needs of local communities?	