

TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Item No: 7

FIRE AUTHORITY: 18 FEBRUARY 2019

SUBJECT: STONEWALL WORKPLACE EQUALITY INDEX UPDATE

JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER / CHIEF EXECUTIVE (CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY), STRATEGIC FINANCE MANAGER AND PERSONNEL ADVISOR

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report is to provide members with an update regarding the submission to enter the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index 2018 (WEI).

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Authority first entered the Stonewall WEI in 2011 to benchmark and evaluate its performance in relation to LGBT equality and inclusion.
- 2.2 In 2014, the Authority achieved 8th place and became the first FRS to make it into the top 10. That was the 4th consecutive year the Service has been hailed as the top FRS in the country, ranked 4th in the top public sector employers list and sector leader. Our LGBT Network was also selected as a Star Performing Network on Stonewall's list of 75 networks across the country.
- 2.3 In 2015, Stonewall launched a new framework assessment and questionnaire, which has been implemented over a 3-year period. In the 2015 WEI the Authority achieved 37th place. During 2016 the Authority did not submit an entry, as the focus of resources was directed towards the Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework Assessment (FRSEF). The Authority successfully gained the award at 'Excellent' Level for the second time in 2016.

3. STONEWALL WEI 2018/19

- 3.1 Following on from the FRSEF, the Authority has focused capacity on a 2018/19 WEI submission. Taking part in the WEI involves completing a comprehensive on-line questionnaire including supporting evidence. The questionnaire is divided into specific categories and requests information and evidence regarding; policy and practice, staff engagement, staff development and support, monitoring, community engagement, procurement and innovative development of LGBT related initiatives. (Each section is allocated a percentage of marks with some weighted more heavily than others).

- 3.2 As part of the process, staff from across the Service will take part in a survey about attitude towards culture, diversity and inclusion. Responses are completed on-line anonymously and submitted directly to Stonewall.
- 3.3 The submission process is extremely thorough and a record number of 445 employers submitted entries to the 2019 Workplace Index. These 445 employers collectively employ over 3.7 million people. Entries are marked by two teams and those organisations in the Top 100 are marked a third time to verify their score.
- 3.4 The results were announced on 21 January 2019 and the Authority were ranked 84th and one of only three fire and rescue services and only one of eight emergency services to be successful. This represents a significant achievement to maintain our status as a Top 100 Inclusive Employer.
- 3.5 Whilst Appendix A lists the full Top 100 Employers it is worth highlighting to members, the success of inclusivity of employers in the North East Region.

Ranking	North East Employer
88 th	Northumbria Police
88 th	NHS Business Services Authority
86 th	Northumberland County Council
84th	Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service
77 th	Your Homes Newcastle
76 th	Sunderland City Council
58 th	North East Ambulance Service
17 th	Home Group
5 th	Newcastle City Council

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 A risk assessment has been undertaken to ensure that the risk to the Authority has been minimised as far as practicable. The assessment has considered an appropriate balance between risk and control, the realisation of efficiencies, the most appropriate use of limited resources and a comprehensive evaluation of the benefits. The risk to the authority has been assessed as low utilising the standard risk matrix based on control measures being in place.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Authority contributes £2,000 per annum as corporate members of Stonewall. There is no additional fee to enter into the WEI however there are costs associated with employee time.

6. EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Taking part in the WEI demonstrates that the Authority is clearly committed to LGBT equality and inclusion. Participation leads to improved equality outcomes both in the workplace and in the community.

7. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no health and safety implications in respect of this report.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 Members are recommended to:
- a) Note the contents of this report;
 - b) Receive further reports as appropriate.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The under mentioned background paper refer to the subject matter of the above report:

<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/our-work/campaigns/top-100-employers-2019>

