

## **Appendix D – Equality Impact Assessment**

# **Equality Impact - Public Sector Equality Duty**

WSFRS Community Risk Management Plan 2022 – 2026

### **Public Sector Equality Duty: (PSED)**

**The duty of every public authority to give due regard to the need to:**

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
- Improve quality of opportunity between different protected groups.
- Foster good relations between different protected groups.

### **Data collection; consultation; and evidence**

A wide-ranging internal engagement process has been undertaken via staff briefings, newsletter updates and over 25 separate team visits, led by Heads of Service and members of the Operational Assurance team with a view to identifying key themes and areas of importance from a workforce perspective. Feedback from these consultations will inform the final WSFRS Community Risk Management Plan 2022-2025. The draft CRMP and proposals have taken into account the following data sources:

- Data from WSCC Insights team (West Sussex Life 2017-19)
- Service and Core measure dashboards (WSFRS metrics) as provided through the WSFRS Performance Assurance Framework
- Research and discussions with other Fire and Rescue Services
- Operational Research in Health (ORH) data analysis / analytics
- Census data for demographics
- Office for National Statistics (ONS) for fire service data

The CRMP Consultation Plan has been developed based on public consultation best practice, designed to meet accessibility standards and requirements. This provided core demographic data to help inform the PSED

### **Impact and matters arising for action and change**

Enhancing the availability of personnel in rural communities will enable more Prevention and Protection activities, such as Safe and Well visits for vulnerable people in rural communities.

Our consultation documents will be available in web accessible formats online which are compatible with digital readers as well as downloadable pdf versions for those who wish to complete paper versions.

Polish, Gujarati and Filipino translated copies (three biggest languages other than English in West Sussex)

We need to increase the availability of our retained firefighters across West Sussex and ensure that our retained capabilities are matched to our community risks, providing long term viability and resilience.

Our retained firefighters provide the most efficient and effective means for us to deliver our service in rural, low activity geographical areas. We have a challenge

with retained firefighter recruitment and retention and need to ensure that we have the right people, in the right locations, at the right time, with the right skills, equipment and training.

We will extend the current model at Day Crewing stations to provide immediate response cover, 7am to 7pm, seven day per week, with a new flexible crewing model. We will carry out internal consultation with all impacted employees and look to resolve any negative impact on a case-by-case basis.

### **Vulnerable People in Rural communities**

Historically our activity to reduce fires and resultant injury, death and damage to domestic properties has been focused in the more densely populated areas where we have the highest number of incidents. The rural community, who make up 42% of our population, often live in areas deemed to be low on our critical fire risk map. These areas are primarily covered by retained firefighters and there are ongoing challenges regarding rural retention and recruitment, leading to low availability and emergency response performance challenges, as well as limited capacity for Prevention & Protection activity.

We propose to maximise appliance availability and optimise Prevention and Protection activity in rural areas primarily covered by retained firefighters.

### **Summary and Progressing the Equality Duty**

As a result of performing this analysis, **no adverse effects** on people who share Protected Characteristics and/or local non-legislative factors are identified – no further actions are recommended at this stage.

The proposed changes to crewing models will provide an opportunity to increase and enhance the level of response, prevention and protection activity that is undertaken within our rural communities.

### **5. Action Planning**

The CRMP consultation did not identify any negative impacts to the general proposals. However, further internal WSFRS People Impact Assessments should be completed to assess the impact of the implementation of the proposals on staff as each project is defined and undertaken.

#### **Recommended Actions:**

This Equality Impact Assessment will be reviewed and updated following the various consultation activities, and ahead of the publication of the final version of the CRMP 2022-2025.