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Agenda item: 06

Training Centre Growth

People and Culture Committee

Date: 2 October 2026

Submitted by: Director of Service Support

Purpose: The purpose of this paper is to secure ratification of the decision made by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) to grow Training Centre establishment, enabling progression towards a 7-day working model.

Recommendations: That Members note the content of the report and approve the increase to the WYFRS Training Centre establishment.

Summary: The report details the requirement to grow the Training Centre establishment, enabling a 7-day working model.

Local Government (Access to information) Act 1972

Exemption Category: None

Contact Officer: Christopher Kovacs. Training GM
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Background papers open to inspection: Workload Demand and Growth

Annexes: N/A

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This paper aims to highlight the increase of the Training Centre establishment by eight Crew Manager posts.
- 1.2 A capacity review for operational training delivery has been completed and has confirmed that the current instructor's capacity within training center is insufficient to meet the safety-critical training course demand. The review identified a shortfall across Breathing Apparatus, Technical Rescue and Command before allowing for essential activity, including administration, continuing professional development, course development, peer review and travel.
- 1.3 In addition to the capacity review, the other factors requiring establishment growth are the Training Centre resource needed to support the Organisational Readiness Programme and developments in our approach to tactical firefighting; bolstering hazardous material training where there is only one member of staff, and the move towards a new delivery model that supports more regular training on a weekend.
- 1.4 The People and Culture Committee is asked recognise:
- 1.5 The increase to the WYFRS Training Centre establishment by eight Crew Manager posts to address the evidenced capacity deficit, strengthen resilience across safety-critical training functions and move towards more operational training delivery at weekends.
- 1.6 Implementation and benefits will be monitored through established governance and a further workload demand review.

2. Information

- 2.1 The Capacity Review assessed measurable workload demand against available instructor days to establish whether Training Centre departments had sufficient resources to deliver their existing commitments. It quantified workload, instructor requirements per activity, total demand days and available days after accounting for weekends, bank holidays, sickness and leave.
- 2.2 The review found that demand already exceeds instructor capacity in Breathing Apparatus, Technical Rescue and Command. For the existing scheduled programme alone, it identified a shortfall of two Breathing Apparatus instructors, three Technical Rescue instructors and one Command instructor, a total quantified deficit of six posts.
- 2.3 This is a minimum position. The analysis excluded administration, personal development, continuing professional development, course development, peer review and travel. It identified that instructor numbers are broadly comparable with those of ten years ago despite increased workloads. Consequently, there is little or

no protected capacity for the activity needed to maintain instructional quality, staff competence, course currency and effective governance.

- 2.4 Previous measures, including instructor pool reform and cross-skilling, were intended to improve workforce flexibility and resilience. Whilst these initiatives provide benefits, they do not address the underlying establishment deficit or provide the sustainable capacity required to meet current safety-critical training demand.
- 2.5 Cross-skilling is now commencing, with most participating instructors drawn from the Trainee Firefighter Department. However, the continuous delivery of trainee courses significantly limits the Service's ability to release these instructors for alternative training commitments, restricting the immediate capacity benefit.
- 2.6 Further BA pool reform remains a longer-term objective. Existing BA instructor vacancies, the requirement for formal negotiation with the FBU, and the potential need to ring-fence funding for future operating models limit the ability to implement changes at pace. Additionally, progressing BA pool reform at this stage carries a significant operational risk, as any reduction in pool instructor availability could compromise the Service's ability to deliver mandatory BA reassessments and other safety-critical training.
- 2.7 Consequently, whilst flexibility initiatives will continue, establishment growth remains necessary to align staffing capacity with evidenced workload demand.
- 2.8 The Tactical Firefighting Programme is an additional demand. Commissioned under the Organisational Readiness Programme, it requires the Training Centre to develop and deliver updated guidance, learning products, practical training and assurance while continuing to deliver existing courses and assessments.
- 2.9 The programme requires input across Firefighter Safety, Breathing Apparatus and Command. This includes development and maintenance of operating guidance and the Tactical Firefighting Playbook, e-learning and district delivery packages, practical scenarios and exercises, instructor upskilling, updates to trainee and maintenance-of-competence training, and assurance that learning is understood and applied across the operational workforce. This work will then need to move into BAU status ensuring WYFRS doesn't find its position lacking in future years.
- 2.10 The Hazmat Department creates a further resilience requirement. It currently has only one member of staff and is therefore a single point of failure. Absence, competing duties or loss of that individual's availability would leave limited internal resilience for Hazmat course development, delivery and assurance. The establishment increase provides the opportunity to broaden capability and reduce reliance on one individual and a third-party provider.
- 2.11 The proposed growth is therefore required to address existing safety-critical course demand. It will provide the additional resilience needed to support Tactical

Firefighting and reduce the Hazmat single point of failure without displacing business-as-usual delivery.

- 2.12 Once these immediate requirements are met, the increased establishment will provide an opportunity to trial alternative rota patterns within the Training Centre. This would test the potential for delivery over seven days, create additional delivery opportunities and seek to reduce the impact on appliance availability during the working week. Operation of the training centre seven days a week would require further consultation, safe staffing arrangements and evaluation.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 The proposal requires eight additional Crew Manager instructor posts as recurring establishment growth. Based on costs provided by Finance the annual staffing cost is approximately £510,312. With the Additional Responsibility Allowance increased to 10%, the indicative annual staffing cost would be approximately £520,832.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 The Monitoring Officer has considered this report and is satisfied it is presented in compliance with the Authority's Constitution.

5. People and Diversity Implications

- 5.1 The primary benefit in increasing the Training Centre establishment by eight Crew Manager posts is a more sustainable staffing position for current critical course demand, reducing pressure on an establishment that is under resourced.
- 5.2 The growth will create development and promotional opportunities and provide greater scope to allocate time for continuing professional development, peer review, course development and quality assurance. It will broaden resilience within specialist functions, including Hazmat, and support knowledge transfer rather than reliance on a single individual.
- 5.3 Any trial of alternative rota patterns or movement towards seven-day working will require workforce planning, consultation and negotiation. Consideration will need to be given to work-life balance, flexible working, wellbeing, weekend availability, role expectations and fair access to opportunities before permanent arrangements are considered.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 Are the recommendations within this report subject to Equality Impact Assessment as outlined in the EIA guidance? No
- 6.2 Date EIA Completed: July 26

6.3 Date EIA Approved: TBC

The EIA is available on request from the report author or from
diversity.inclusion@westyorksfire.gov.uk

7. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Implications

- 7.1 The proposal supports health, safety and wellbeing by increasing capacity in safety-critical training functions where current course demand already exceeds available instructor resource.
- 7.2 Additional establishment will improve the resilience of Breathing Apparatus, Technical Rescue, Command and Hazmat delivery and provide capacity for instructors to maintain competence, undertake continuing professional development, complete peer review and update course content. Reducing the single point of failure in Hazmat is particularly important to sustaining specialist training and assurance.
- 7.3 The growth will support the Tactical Firefighting Programme, which is intended to improve firefighter safety, standardise operational tactics and strengthen evidence-based decision-making.
- 7.4 Workload and wellbeing impacts will be monitored, including during any trial of alternative rota arrangements.

8. Environmental Implications

- 8.1 N/A

9. Risk Management Implications

- 9.1 The principal risk of not driving the establishment increase is that the evidenced deficit against current safety-critical course demand remains unresolved. The Capacity Review identified a shortfall in instructors before several essential workload components were included.
- 9.2 Continued under-resourcing increases the risk of constrained course capacity, reduced ability to manage demand peaks, insufficient protected time for course development and continuing professional development, and reliance on a staffing model with limited resilience.
- 9.3 Without additional resources, Tactical Firefighting development, delivery and assurance will continue to compete with an already over-subscribed core programme. This creates risks of further delay, loss of continuity and insufficient capacity to embed the programme into routine training and assurance.

- 9.4 The Hazmat Department currently relies on one member of staff, creating a single point of failure and a risk to continuity of specialist delivery and assurance. Establishment growth will allow capability and knowledge to be broadened.
- 9.5 Implementation risks include recruitment, affordability, workforce consultation, allocation of additional posts and demonstrating benefits. Any alternative rota trial must also manage safe staffing, support arrangements and workforce impacts. These risks will be controlled through governance, monitoring and a follow-up workload demand review.

10. Duty to Collaborate Implications (Police and Crime Act 2017)

10.1 N/A

11. Your Fire and Rescue Service Priorities

- 11.1 This report links with the Community Risk Management Plan 2025-28 strategic priorities below:
- Provide a safe, effective and resilient response to local and national emergencies.
 - Enhance the health, safety, and well-being of our people.
 - Prioritise a people first mindset through ethical and professional leadership and management.
 - Use resources in an innovative, sustainable, and efficient manner to maximise value for money.
 - Further develop a culture of excellence, equality, learning, and inclusion.

12. Conclusions

- 12.1 The Capacity Review provides the primary case for growth. It confirms that current instructor capacity is insufficient to meet existing safety-critical course demand and identifies a shortfall.
- 12.2 The requirement is strengthened by the additional resources needed to support the Tactical Firefighting Programme and by the current single point of failure within Hazmat. These demands cannot be sustainably absorbed by an establishment that is already operating below the level required for its existing programme.
- 12.3 Ratification of eight additional Crew Manager posts will address the capacity gap evidenced, strengthen resilience across safety-critical functions and provide the capability to progress priority organisational work. It will also create an opportunity to trial alternative rota patterns and assess the benefits of a potential seven-day working arrangement, including broader delivery opportunities and reduced impact on appliance availability.

12.4 Implementation will be supported by workforce consultation, clear governance, benefits monitoring and a further workload demand review.

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Agenda item: 7

Overview of organisational growth

People and Culture Committee

Date: 02 October 2026

Submitted by: Director of People and Culture

Purpose: To provide an overview to Members of organisational growth requirements across WYFRS and seek approval.

Recommendations: That Members note the report and approve the recommended organisational growth.

Summary: WYFRS Executive Leadership Team (ELT) have approved establishment growth within Service Delivery, Service Support, Finance and People and Culture Directorates. This paper asks the People and Culture Committee to approve the recommended established posts.

Local Government (Access to information) Act 1972

Exemption Category: None

Contact Officer: GM Employee Resourcing, Richard Hawley

Background papers open to inspection: None

Annexes: None

1. Introduction

Building on the Investment and Efficiencies Opportunities 2025-28 paper presented to Executive Committee members on the 17th of April 2026, this paper has been developed to provide a more comprehensive overview of the growth options progressed by ELT in key service areas for consideration and decision on.

The below changes have been considered within the available financial envelope and would build greater organisational resilience, improve accountability for delivery and create stronger continuity for priority transformation activity.

2. Decision

To approve the organisational growth detailed within. Taking the operational establishment from 939 to 949.

3. Information

Service Support - Operational Policy, Guidance, Learning and Assurance Resources

The Policy, Guidance, Learning and Assurance function provides an integrated approach to policy development, learning, assurance and continuous improvement. The function is responsible for ensuring that learning from incidents, national developments and organisational assurance activity is reflected within operational guidance, training and competence frameworks. Key responsibilities include maintaining policy and guidance, undertaking National Operational Guidance (NOG) strategic and training gap analysis, delivering Tactical Risk Assessments, co-ordinating operational learning, strengthening assurance arrangements, embedding reality testing and developing the Ops Hub.

Alongside policy and guidance responsibilities, the function is developing a more integrated organisational learning system that captures learning from operational debriefs, Joint Organisational Learning (JOL), National Organisational Learning (NOL), NFCC products and wider operational assurance activity. Current arrangements have established governance structures for capturing learning; however, further work is required to strengthen assurance, tracking, organisational reporting and evidence of implementation.

To support delivery of this activity, ELT approved a two-year extension of three temporary Watch Manager posts. These posts will focus on closing NOG gaps, reviewing and updating policy and guidance, improving document governance, supporting implementation of learning outcomes, strengthening consultation arrangements and embedding the Ops Hub as the primary source of operational information.

ELT also considered the longer-term sustainability of the function. The temporary Group Manager post was initially introduced to support the transition of Policy and

Guidance into Service Support. However, the breadth of responsibilities now associated with Policy, Guidance, Learning and Assurance has demonstrated the need for enduring leadership, governance and accountability. Consequently, establishment growth of a permanent Group Manager post was approved in principle to provide strategic oversight, organisational learning governance, assurance leadership and continued alignment between policy, guidance, competence and Fire Standards.

People and Culture - Watch Manager Apprenticeships, Learning & Development

In February 2025, the business case to transition from the existing NVQ model to the Firefighter Apprenticeship model was tabled and approved. That report identified the business imperative for change: maintaining and improving the quality of competent firefighters, simplifying assessment, reducing workload for line managers and generating apprenticeship levy income.

Currently there is a non-established WM post, working with the Apprenticeship Manager to implement the transition.

Establishing the post of Watch Manager - Apprenticeships, Learning & Development on the structure provides the operational credibility, rank, competence and accountability required to support successful delivery of Firefighter Apprenticeships.

This established post is necessary because apprentice firefighter development will require planned, ongoing and repeatable activity for every cohort. The work includes assessor support, apprentice support, Quality Assurance coordination, clear evidence standards, standardisation and ongoing improvement, stakeholder engagement, progress capturing and reporting, operational subject matter input and assurance that apprentice firefighters develop towards both the apprenticeship standard and WYFRS operational competence expectations.

Service Support – Crew Manager x8 Training

Full details of these posts can be found in agenda item 6 – Training Centre Growth.

Service Delivery – Watch Manager (Control) Training

Control currently have a single WM who has responsibility for:

- New trainees
- Maintenance of competence
- Review and gap analysis of NOG
- Debriefing and improvement
- Assurance

This role is currently supported by an additional secondment post from a watch on a rolling 6 month basis. This has staffing implications such as impacting on resilience, OT backfill costs, reduced opportunity for leave, instability for the person in the secondment role and lack of consistency for trainee control operators. The HMI have recognised the increasing demands placed on control operators and performance required to meet the Control Fire Standard. For this reason it is recommended that a permanent post is created.

Service Delivery – Corporate Communications

Following ELT agreement in principle to the Corporate Communications business case, this growth will enable implementation of the agreed Communications & Engagement structure. This will deliver increased communications and engagement capacity, dedicated internal communications and community engagement functions, enhanced digital content capability, improved resilience for incident and crisis communications, and greater ability to support delivery of the Community Risk Management Plan, major organisational programmes and day-to-day operational activity.

The funding will provide a resilient Communications & Engagement function with dedicated capacity for media relations, incident and crisis communications, community engagement and insight, internal communications, digital content production, campaigns, stakeholder engagement and evaluation. This will address current capacity gaps, reduce reliance on reactive delivery and temporary arrangements, and improve the Service's ability to plan, deliver and evaluate communications activity aligned to organisational priorities.

The proposed investment supports delivery of the Community Risk Management Plan and the Authority's strategic priorities by ensuring the Service has the communications and engagement capacity required to effectively inform, engage and influence colleagues, communities, partners and stakeholders. The Communications & Engagement function plays a key role in supporting prevention, protection, response and organisational resilience activity through the planning and delivery of campaigns, community engagement, incident communications, leadership communications and digital engagement.

The proposal will strengthen the Service's ability to engage with communities most at risk, support behaviour change and risk reduction activity, improve colleague engagement and organisational communications, enhance leadership visibility, and ensure communications activity is insight-led, measurable and aligned to organisational priorities. It will also improve resilience during incidents and periods of peak demand, supporting the Service's commitment to delivering trusted, accessible and timely information to the public, colleagues and partners.

The structure also responds directly to the findings and recommendations of the independent WESTCO Communications Review, supporting improved governance,

planning, evaluation, stakeholder engagement and communications capability across the organisation.

Finance and Procurement – Payroll Assistant

The introduction of mandatory payrolling of benefits from 1 April 2027 will require additional payroll capacity to ensure monthly benefit inputs are completed accurately and within statutory deadlines.

The additional part-time post will provide the capacity needed to deliver the new monthly payrolling of benefits process accurately and on time. It will support compliance with HMRC requirements, reduce the likelihood of payroll errors, and help ensure that officer remuneration is processed correctly under the new statutory arrangements.

4. Financial Implications

Post	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30	30/31
WM L&D (Firefighter Cost)	£62,582	£65,086	£66,387	£67,715	£69,069
1 GM	£123,346	£128,280	£130,845	£133,462	£136,132
3 WM	£120,622	£241,324	£0	£0	£0
8 CM	£247,595	£617,998	£630,358	£642,965	£655,824
WM (Fire Control)	£20,359	£50,816	£51,833	£52,869	£53,927
Comms Officer Grade 8	£24,791	£63,921	£65,199	£66,503	£67,833
Comms Officer Grade 3	£15,351	£39,580	£40,372	£41,179	£42,003
Payroll Assistant Grade 3	£6,109	£19,171	£19,555	£19,946	£20,345
Total annual cost	£620,755	£1,226,176	£1,004,549	£1,024,639	£1,045,133

Projections based on 4% increase on total year 27/28, then 2% for each subsequent year.

5. Legal Implications

The Monitoring Officer has considered this report and is satisfied it is presented in compliance with the Authority's Constitution.

6. People and Diversity Implications

There are a number of potential diversity implications from approval of these posts, in particular continuation of outreach and engagement activities through apprenticeships and promotions which are supporting improved diversity across applicants.

Existing interventions designed to support females and minority ethnic candidates to be in the strongest position to compete for firefighter roles have already seen a sharp increase in the number of successful female candidates and will be strengthened by the establishment of the Watch Manager Apprenticeship post. There is significant further work to deliver to repeat this success with other underrepresented groups, in particular candidates from minority ethnic backgrounds.

7. Equality Impact Assessment

Are the recommendations within this report subject to Equality Impact Assessment as outlined in the EIA guidance?

No, though approving this post supports the implementation of EIAs in other key areas, such as recruitment and promotion

8. Environmental Implications

There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report.

9. Risk Management Implications

There are no direct risk management implications arising from this report

10. Duty to Collaborate Implications (Police and Crime Act 2017)

N/A

11. Your Fire and Rescue Service Priorities

This report links with the Community Risk Management Plan 2025-28 strategic priorities below:

- Provide a safe, effective and resilient response to local and national emergencies.
- Focus our activities on reducing risk and vulnerability.
- Enhance the health, safety, and well-being of our people.
- Prioritise a people first mindset through ethical and professional leadership and management
- Work with partners and communities to deliver our services.
- Use resources in an innovative, sustainable, and efficient manner to maximise value for money.
- Further develop a culture of excellence, equality, learning, and inclusion.

12. Conclusions

ELT has approved investment in workforce arrangements intended to provide both immediate delivery capacity and long-term organisational leadership.

People and Culture Committee are requested to approve organisational establishment growth of:

- 1 x Group manager – GM Operational Policy and Guidance
- 1x Watch Manager - Apprenticeships, Learning & Development
- 1x Watch Manager(Control) - Training
- 1x Grade 3 Payroll Assistant (0.5FTE)
- 1x Grade 8 Marketing & Communications Manager
- 1x Grade 3 Communications Officer

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Agenda item: 08

People and Culture Activity Report

People and Culture Activity Report

Date: 2 October 2026

Submitted by: Director of People and Culture

Purpose: To inform Members of recent HR activity

Recommendations: That Members note the content of the report

Summary: This report informs Members of key data relating to the functional areas within the People Directorate

Local Government (Access to information) Act 1972

Exemption Category: None

Contact Officer: Head of People and Culture, Joanne Hardcastle
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Background papers open to inspection: None

Annexes: Annex A – Workforce Ethnicity Table

1. Introduction

This report provides Members with an update on organisational people data and People and Culture Directorate activities. It presents workforce and attendance information to support assurance on capacity, resilience and emerging people priorities. The report format has been updated to provide Members with more up to date and relevant information.

2. Information

The report summarises workforce and diversity indicators and sickness absence trends across the Service, supported by commentary on key themes and areas of improvement focus.

Workforce Overview

Workforce – Headcount by Directorate and Role (Q4 2025/26 to Q1 2026/27)

The workforce headcount position provides an overview of movement between Q4 2025/26 and Q1 2026/27. Average headcount increased from 1,472 to 1,492, representing an overall increase of 20 employees across the reporting period. The proportional split across the main workforce groups remained broadly consistent, indicating limited movement in the overall workforce profile.

However, the headcount data provides an overview of workforce movement only. It does not, in isolation, provide assurance on workforce capacity, as this requires comparison against FTE establishment requirements and current vacancy levels.

The Q1 position shows Wholetime roles remaining the largest employee group, increasing by 13 employees from 948 to 961. Enabling roles increased by 6 employees, Fire Control increased by 2 employees and On Call reduced by 1 employee. This information should therefore be used to understand workforce movement, with full assurance on capacity to be supported through establishment, FTE requirement and vacancy data in future reporting.

Employee Group	Q4 2025/26 Avg Headcount	Q4 %	Q1 2026/27 Avg Headcount	Q1 %	Change
Control	44	2.99%	46	3.08%	+2
Enabling	340	23.08%	346	23.17%	+6
On Call	140	9.49%	139	9.32%	-1
Wholetime	948	64.44%	961	64.42%	+13
Total	1,472	100.00%	1,492	100.00%	+20

On Call Workforce – Snapshot Headcount (Q1 2026/27)

The On Call workforce remains broadly stable, reducing slightly from 140 in Q4 2025/26 to 139 in Q1 2026/27. The overall station profile continues to show a distributed workforce across ten stations, with most locations remaining within a consistent operating range.

The small overall reduction is not considered material and continues to reflect local availability and operational demand.

Overall, the position indicates a broadly stable On Call workforce based on snapshot headcount, while recognising that full assurance on resilience requires comparison against

establishment requirements, vacancies and availability. Local recruitment and availability will therefore continue to require active monitoring.

Average Snapshot Headcount	Ranks				
Station	FF	FFT	CM	WM	Grand Total
Featherstone Station	7	0	2	1	10
Holmfirth Station	10	1	2	1	14
Ilkley Station	8	1	3	1	14
Meltham Station	8	0	3	1	12
Mirfield Station	14	1	3	1	19
Mytholmroyd Station	10	1	4	1	16
Operational Training	0	0	0	0	0
Otley Station	12	1	1	1	15
Silsden Station	7	0	2	0	9
Skelmanthorpe Station	13	1	3	1	17
Slaithwaite Station	9	1	3	1	14
Grand Total	98	7	25	9	139

Enabling Teams Headcount – Snapshot Headcount (Q1 2026/27)

The Q1 snapshot shows an enabling workforce of 346 employees, providing important support to Service delivery and wider Service priorities.

The largest areas are Service Delivery (138) and Service Support (118), with People and Culture (47), Corporate Services (21), Finance and Procurement (20), and Unknown (2) making up the remaining profile.

Directorate	Average Headcount
Corporate Services	21
Finance & Procurement	20

People and Culture	47
Service Delivery	138
Service Support	118
Unknown	2
Total	346

Fire Control Headcount – Snapshot Headcount (Q1 2026/27)

Fire Control records a Q1 2026/27 snapshot headcount of 45 employees. The workforce is primarily made up of Firefighter and Crew Manager roles, with 22 Firefighters and 14 Crew Managers providing the core operational capacity.

This is supported by 8 Watch Managers and 1 Group Manager, with no Station Manager posts recorded in the Q1 snapshot.

Quarterly Headcount	FF	CM	WM	SM	GM	Grand Total
Q1 2026/27	23	14	8	0	1	46

Operational Headcount – Snapshot Headcount (Q1 2026/27)

The Q1 2026/27 operational/service delivery snapshot records an average headcount of 956 employees across operational roles. The profile is overwhelmingly concentrated within Service Delivery, which accounts for 878 employees, representing the main operational establishment and the core capacity for frontline response, supervision and service command.

Firefighters remain the largest role group, with 595 employees, followed by 192 Crew Managers. Watch Manager capacity is recorded across two categories, with 53 Watch Managers and 61 employees captured under the 224 Watch Manager category. This reflects the breadth of supervisory cover across the Grey Book workforce, alongside 38 Station Managers and 11 Group Managers.

Directorate	FF	CM	WM	224 WM	SM	GM	AM	ACO	DCFO	CFO	Total
Corporate Services	0	0	1	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	5
People and Culture	5	0	3	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	10
Service Delivery	569	167	40	61	30	7	2	0	1	1	878
Service Support	27	25	8	0	3	2	1	1	0	0	67
Total	601	193	52	60	38	11	3	1	1	1	956

Workforce Ethnicity – Whole Workforce (Q4 2025/26 to Q1 2026/27)

The workforce ethnicity profile remains broadly stable between Q4 2025/26 and Q1 2026/27, with total average headcount increasing from 1,472 to 1,492. The overall distribution across ethnic origin groups shows only limited movement, indicating a consistent workforce profile during the reporting period.

Asian/Asian British representation increased from 40 to 44 employees, rising from 2.74% to 2.97% of the workforce. The Other Ethnic Group category also increased slightly from 6 to 7 employees. Black/African/Caribbean/Black British representation reduced from 10 to 9 employees, while Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups reduced from 43 to 41 employees.

Ethnic Origin Not Stated remained unchanged at 75 employees, reducing slightly as a proportion of the workforce from 5.10% to 5.03% due to the increase in overall headcount. White employees remained the largest group, increasing from 1,297 to 1,315, with the proportional share remaining stable at 88.13% in Q4 and 88.13% in Q1.

Ethnic Origin Group	Q4 2025/26 Avg Headcount	Q4 %	Q1 2026/27 Avg Headcount	Q1 %	Change
Asian/Asian British	40	2.74%	44	2.97%	+4
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	10	0.70%	9	0.60%	-1
Ethnic Origin Not Stated	75	5.10%	75	5.03%	0

Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups	43	2.92%	41	2.77%	-2
Other Ethnic Group	6	0.41%	7	0.47%	+1
White	1,297	88.13%	1,315	88.13%	+18
Total	1,472	100.00%	1,492	100.00%	+20

Full table displayed in Annex A

Attendance and Sickness Absence Overview

This section summarises sickness absence trends across the Service, providing insight into attendance levels, absence impact, and key themes relevant to workforce wellbeing, operational resilience and service delivery.

WYFRS Total Absences (Q1)

Theme: Q1 absence volumes show a small overall reduction compared with Q1 2025/26, with targeted monitoring continuing through the Supporting Good Attendance project.

Total absence levels in Q1 have reduced slightly compared with the same period in the previous financial year, decreasing from 827 in Q1 2025/26 to 815 in Q1 2026/27. This represents a modest overall reduction of 1.45%, indicating a broadly stable position while recognising that variation remains across workforce groups.

The overall reduction is driven by fewer recorded absences within Wholetime and On-Call groups, with Wholetime reducing from 579 to 526 and On-Call reducing from 88 to 77. These reductions offset increases within Fire Control and Enabling, where absence volumes rose from 26 to 37 and from 134 to 175 respectively.

Overall, the data shows that total absence volumes remain broadly controlled, while highlighting the need for continued targeted analysis by workforce group. The Supporting Good Attendance project provides the framework for this activity, supporting early intervention, consistent attendance management and a fair, people-centered approach across the Service.

Employee Group	Current FY Q1	Previous FY Q1	% Difference
Fire Control	37	26	42.31%
Enabling	175	134	30.60%
On Call	77	88	-12.50%
Wholetime	526	579	-9.15%
Total	815	827	-1.45%

WYFRS Days Lost

Total days lost increased from 3,129 in Q1 2025/26 to 4,168 in Q1 2026/27, representing a rise of 33.21% when comparing the same quarter across the two financial years. This shows that while overall absence volumes remain broadly controlled, the duration and impact of sickness absence increased during Q1 2026/27.

The largest increases are within Fire Control and Enabling, where days lost rose by 86.08% and 67.53% respectively. Wholetime also increased by 27.49%, while On Call remained comparatively stable with a smaller increase of 2.74%.

Overall, the data supports continued targeted monitoring of days lost, particularly where absence duration is increasing. The Supporting Good Attendance project provides a clear framework for early intervention, consistent management action and support for employees returning to work.

Employee Group	Current FY	Previous FY	% Difference
Control	147	79	86.08%
Enabling	970	579	67.53%
On Call	412	401	2.74%
Wholetime	2,639	2,070	27.49%
Total	4,168	3,129	33.21%

Monthly Breakdown (Q4 2025/26 vs Q1 2026/27)

Q1 2026/27 recorded 422 absences, compared with 463 in Q4 2025/26. This shows a positive reduction in overall absence volume, despite a gradual month-on-month increase within Q1 from April to June.

Days lost increased from 3,785 in Q4 to 4,168 in Q1, indicating that absence impact was driven more by duration than by the number of absence episodes. Average headcount remained stable across both periods, moving from 1,472 to 1,492.

Long-term absences increased from 101 to 116, while short-term absences reduced from 362 to 306.

Financial Year	Quarter	Month	Total Absences	Total Days Lost to Absence	Total Long Term Absences Total Long- Term Absences	Total Short Term Absences Total Short- Term Absences	Average Headcount
2025-26	Q4	January	210	1,290	67	143	
2025-26	Q4	February	169	1,104	58	111	
2025-26	Q4	March	204	1,391	69	135	
2025-26 Total			463	3,785	101	362	
2026-27	Q1	April	184	1,264	75	109	
2026-27	Q1	May	203	1,417	81	122	
2026-27	Q1	June	207	1,487	85	122	
2026-27 Total			422	4,168	116	306	

Sickness Reason Analysis (Q4 2025/26 vs Q1 2026/27)

Sickness absence reduced from 463 absences in Q4 2025/26 to 422 in Q1 2026/27, while days lost increased from 3,785 to 4,168. This shows an improved position on absence volume, with the main area of focus now being the duration and impact of absence.

The largest Q1 contributors to days lost are musculoskeletal conditions, mental health, surgery/operation and gastrointestinal absence. Musculoskeletal absence increased to 108 absences and 1,375 days lost, while personal mental health increased to 59 absences and 690 days lost.

Respiratory illness reduced significantly from 119 absences and 378 days lost to 46 absences and 181 days lost, suggesting seasonal pressures eased during Q1. Overall, the data provides assurance that absence episodes have reduced, while supporting continued focus on longer-duration absence, well-being support and consistent attendance management through the Supporting Good Attendance project.

Primary Reason	Q4 Absences	Q4 Days Lost	Q1 Absences	Q1 Days Lost
Blood Disorder	1	1	0	0
Cancer & Tumours	3	110	3	38
Cardiovascular	4	37	7	78
Dermatological	3	13	2	6
Endocrine & Metabolic	3	52	5	95
ENT & Dental	11	27	20	94
Eye Problems	2	6	9	126
Gastrointestinal	105	425	76	396
Genitourinary	2	5	4	16
Gynaecological	1	7	5	9
Infectious Diseases	1	4	4	22
Injuries & External Causes	2	4	4	39
Mental Health (Personal)	42	545	59	690
Mental Health (Work)	12	352	10	306
Musculoskeletal	92	1,091	108	1,375
Neurological	16	241	17	244
Pregnancy Related	2	13	2	9
Respiratory Illness	119	378	46	181
Surgery/Operation	34	377	35	390
Unknown/Not Disclosed	8	97	6	54
Total	463	3,785	422	4,168

Long-Term Sickness

Long-term sickness increased between Q4 2025/26 and Q1 2026/27, rising from 101 to 116 absences. Total days lost also increased from 2,517 to 3,017, an increase of 500 days. This indicates that long-term sickness has increased in both volume and overall impact, reinforcing the need for continued focus on early intervention, occupational health engagement, structured case management and return-to-work planning.

The main areas of long-term sickness impact in Q1 are musculoskeletal conditions, mental health, surgery/operation and neurological absence. Musculoskeletal absence remains the largest overall contributor when all related categories are combined, with increases in back pain, fractures, joint disorders and limb injuries. Personal mental health absence also increased, particularly stress, which rose from 1 absence and 4 days lost in Q4 to 11 absences and 189 days lost in Q1.

Some categories show a reduction in days lost, including Cancer & tumours and work-related mental health, while the number of records where the musculoskeletal secondary reason was not known also reduced. However, the overall Q1 position demonstrates a higher long-term sickness burden. The data highlights the importance of consistent case management, timely referral routes, wellbeing support and improved recording of absence reasons so that interventions can be targeted effectively.

Primary Reason	Secondary Reason	Q4 Absences	Q4 Days Lost	Q1 Absences	Q1 Days Lost
Cancer & Tumours	Cancer	2	105	1	21
Cancer & Tumours	Treatment/Recovery	0	0	2	17
Cardiovascular	Circulatory	1	21	1	15
Cardiovascular	Hypertension/Hypotension	0	0	1	24
Cardiovascular	Not Known	0	0	1	21
Endocrine & Metabolic	Not Known	1	22	1	61
ENT & Dental	Not Known	1	0	0	0
ENT & Dental	Sinusitis	0	0	1	36
Eye Problems	Not Known	0	0	1	36
Eye Problems	Vision Issues	0	0	2	74

Gastrointestinal	Abdominal Pain	0	0	2	46
Gastrointestinal	Bowel Disorder	1	63	1	61
Gastrointestinal	Liver/Gallbladder issues	0	0	1	28
Gastrointestinal	Not Known	1	56	1	61
Gastrointestinal	Sickness & Diarrhoea	1	17	0	0
Infectious Diseases	Hepatitis	0	0	1	7
Injuries & External Causes	Burns	0	0	1	17
Mental Health (Personal)	Anxiety	0	0	2	42
Mental Health (Personal)	Bereavement	1	12	1	2
Mental Health (Personal)	Depression	1	12	2	62
Mental Health (Personal)	Not Known	19	416	11	239
Mental Health (Personal)	Stress	1	4	11	189
Mental Health (Work)	Not Known	10	347	8	286
Musculoskeletal	Back Pain	6	134	10	266
Musculoskeletal	Fracture	3	32	6	100
Musculoskeletal	Joint Disorder	5	135	7	158
Musculoskeletal	Limb Injuries	1	5	8	244
Musculoskeletal	Not Known	18	513	6	290
Musculoskeletal	Shoulder Problems	0	0	1	24
Neurological	Nervous System Disorders	0	0	2	75

Neurological	Not Known	2	153	2	97
Neurological	Severe Headache/Migraine	1	60	1	44
Respiratory Illness	Cold/Cough/Flu	0	0	2	51
Surgery/Operation	Surgery/Operation	21	316	17	283
Unknown/Not Disclosed	Did not disclose	4	94	1	40
Total		101	2,517	116	3,017

Note: Table compares long-term sickness absence by primary and secondary reason for Q4 2025/26 and Q1 2026/27.

Committee Assurance Summary

The Attendance and Sickness Absence Overview provides Members with assurance that absence levels continue to be actively monitored through the Supporting Good Attendance approach. Total absence volumes in Q1 2026/27 dropped slightly when compared with Q1 2025/26, falling from 827 to 815 absences. This indicates a broadly stable position overall, while recognising that the pattern varies across workforce groups.

Although absence volumes have reduced overall, days lost increased from 7,074 to 7,953 across the same period. This demonstrates that the operational impact of sickness absence is being driven more by duration than by the number of absence episodes. Increased days lost within Fire Control, Enabling and Wholetime groups will therefore require continued targeted analysis, with particular focus on longer-duration absence and areas where impact is rising.

The monthly Q1 profile shows increasing absence volumes and days lost across April, May and June. Long-term absence increased when compared with Q4 2025/26, while short-term absence reduced. This provides assurance that short-term absence remains broadly controlled but also highlights the importance of sustained management attention on longer-duration absence, occupational health engagement, return-to-work planning and consistent case management.

The sickness reason analysis identifies musculoskeletal conditions, surgery/operation and mental health as the main drivers of absence impact. Long-term sickness for 2026/27 currently records 151 cases and 5,483 days lost, with the greatest impact linked to Surgery/Operation, Musculoskeletal conditions and Mental Health. Continued oversight should focus on early intervention, well-being support, occupational health advice and timely return-to-work planning, particularly where absence reasons are recorded as not known or where absence duration is increasing.

Occupational Health and Safety Key Performance Indicators

Occupational Health Performance: 1 April 2026 to 30 June 2026

Ref No.	KPI	Target	Quarter 1 ST April 2026 – 30 th June 2026	YTD 1 st April 2026 – 31 st March 2027	Target achieved for present quarter
1	Authority Medical Adviser (AMA) report issued to management within 48 hours of consent	90%	100%	100%	YES
2	No. of Did Not Attends (DNA's) or cancellation <48 hr notice*	N/A	0 Nurse 0 AMA	0 0	N/A
3	No. of physiotherapy referrals	N/A	45	45	N/A
4	No. of counselling referrals	N/A	48	48	N/A
5	No. of management referrals	N/A	5	5	N/A
6	No. of health screenings	N/A	155	155	N/A
7	No. of self-referrals	N/A	2	2	N/A
8	No of OHU consultations	N/A	236	236	N/A

The Q1 Occupational Health activity data shows both performance against agreed targets and wider service demand during the period 1 April to 30 June 2026. The AMA reporting target was achieved, with 100% of reports issued to management within 48 hours of consent against a 90% target. There were no recorded DNAs or cancellations with less than 48 hours' notice for either nurse or AMA appointments. The remaining indicators reflect activity levels rather than target-based performance and show continued demand across occupational health services, including physiotherapy, counselling, health screening, self-

referral and OHU consultation activity. Overall, the data provides assurance that occupational health activity is being delivered in line with reporting expectations, while also highlighting the breadth of support accessed during Q1.

Health and Safety Performance: Q1 2026/27

Measure	Actual performance Q1 2026/27	Target 2026/27
Lost time up to 3 days	3	19
Lost time over 3 days	10	28
RIDDOR Major injury/disease	1	No target set

The Q1 Health and Safety performance data shows recorded lost time incidents during the period 1 April to 30 June 2026 against the 2026/27 targets. Lost time incidents of up to three days remain below target, with 3 incidents recorded against a target of 19. Lost time incidents over three days also remain below target, with 10 incidents recorded against a target of 28. One RIDDOR major injury or disease was recorded during the quarter; no target has been set for this measure. Overall, the data provides assurance that lost time performance is currently within target levels, while the RIDDOR incident should continue to be reviewed through established health and safety monitoring arrangements to ensure any learning is identified and acted upon.

Discipline and Grievance Cases

Discipline Cases: Q1 2026/27

There were 25 discipline (misconduct) cases open at some point within the reporting period.

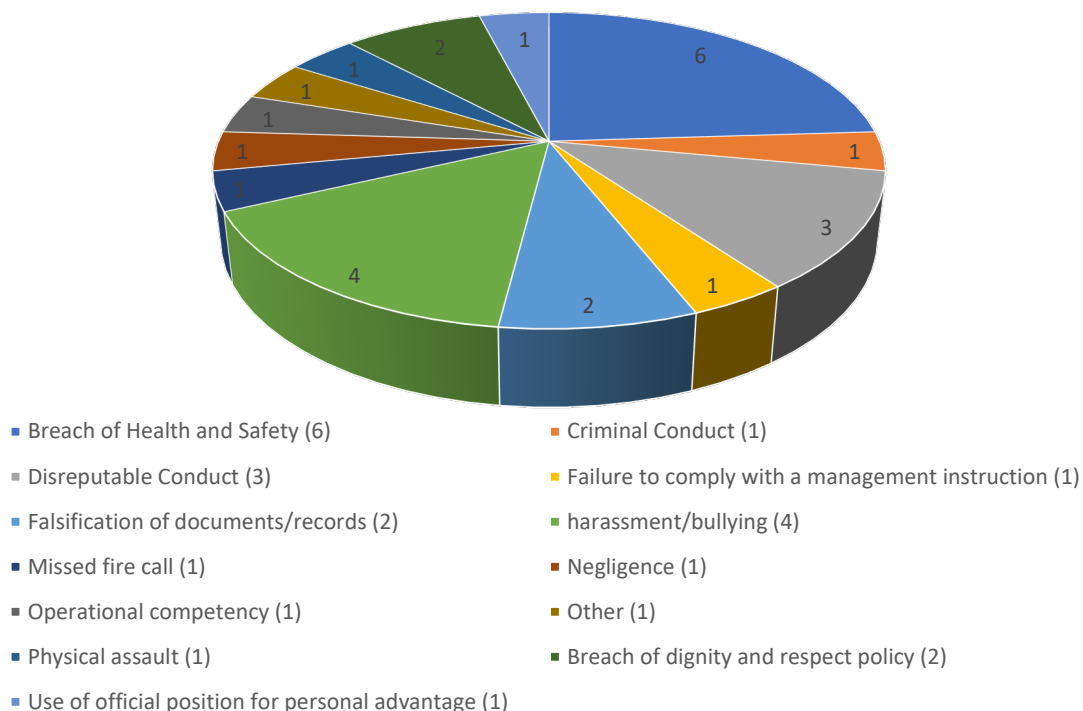
Of these, 5 were enabling colleagues and 20 operational colleagues.

2 were investigated as gross misconduct cases and 23 as misconduct cases.

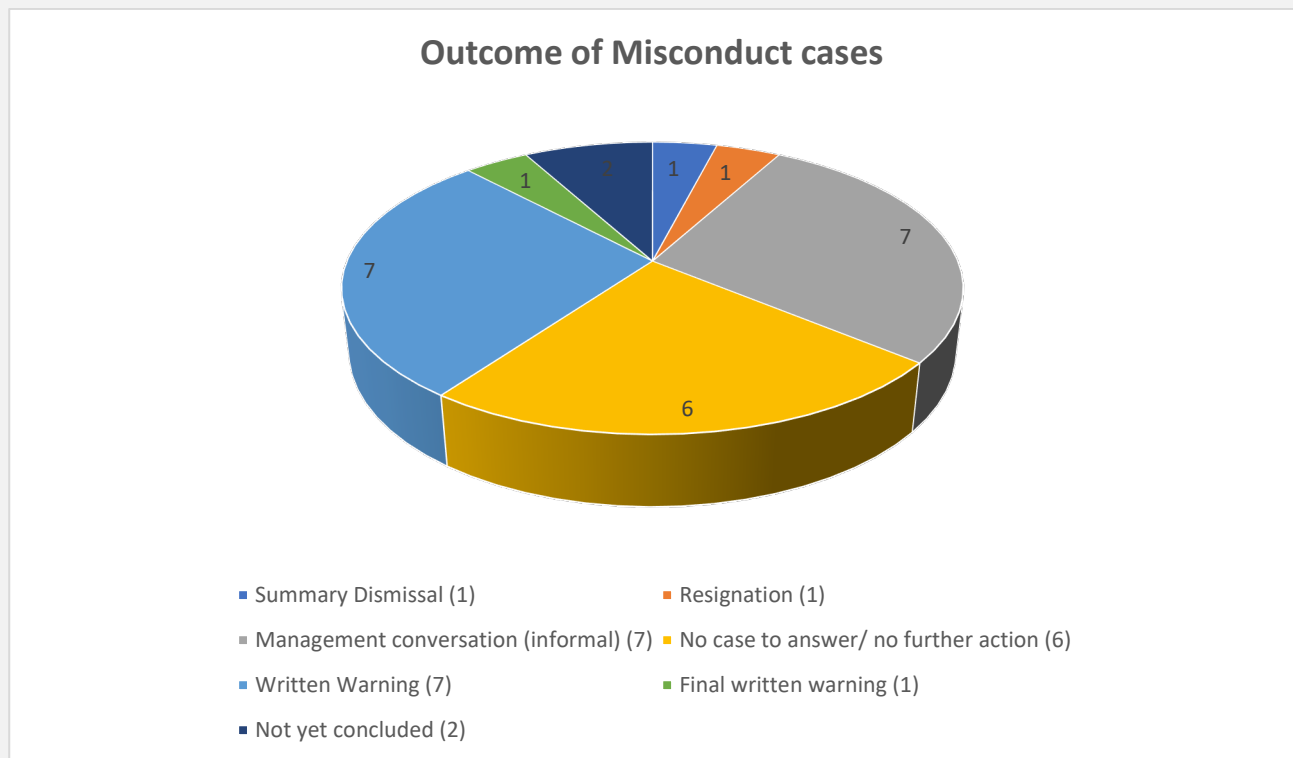
The graphs below show the reasons for discipline action during this period and also the outcomes of the cases.

The large percentage of cases resulting in management discussions (dealt with informally) is testament to our desire to deal with issues at the lowest level possible and by the lowest level of management. However, where misconduct is serious, and proven as part of a thorough investigation, we ensure action is taken at the appropriate level up to and including dismissal.

Number of Incidents of Misconduct by Category



Outcomes of Disciplinary cases for cases that were live at some point between 1 April 2026 and 30 June 2026



Grievances: Q1 2026/27

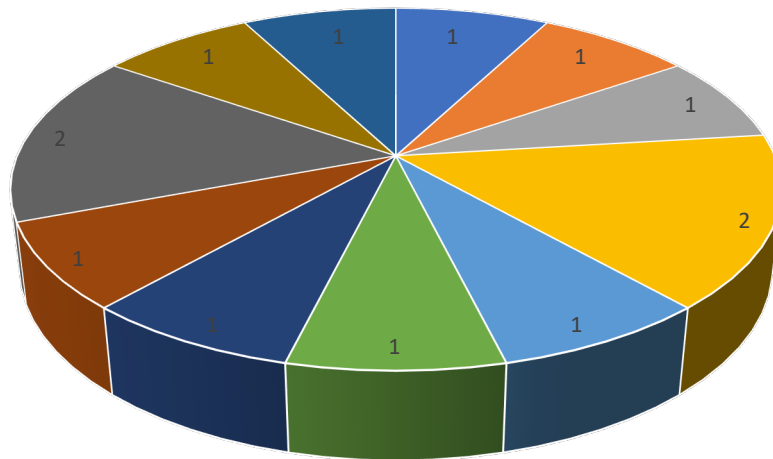
There were 13 grievance cases open at some point within the reporting period.

Of these, 2 were submitted by enabling colleagues and 11 by operational colleagues.

The graphs below show the reasons for the grievances during this period and also the outcomes of the cases.

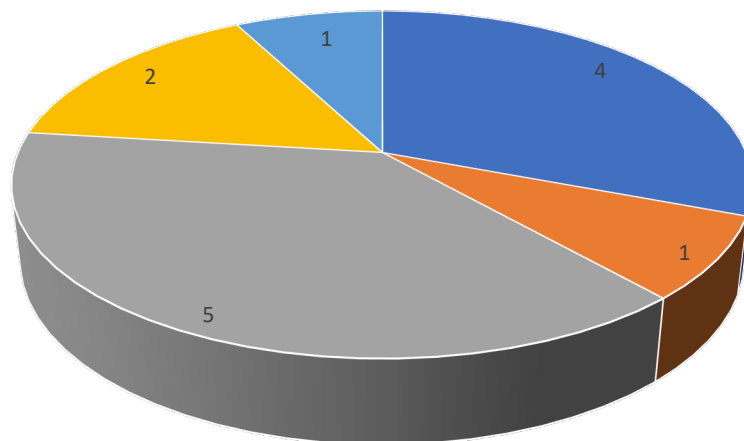
The large percentage of cases that we managed to resolve informally is testament to our desire to deal with issues at the lowest level possible and by the lowest level of management.

Grievance Reasons



- Unfair recruitment process (1)
- Unfair treatment whilst off sick and RTW (1)
- Staffing issue (1)
- Refusal of relocation grant (1)
- Discrimination (2)
- Loss of leave (1)
- Unfair treatment on training course (1)
- Issues around TOIL (2)
- Inappropriately spoken to by manager (1)
- WT/On-call rest period (1)
- Unfair medical suspension (1)

Grievance Outcomes



- Still unresolved/appeal process (4)
- Not upheld (1)
- Resolved informally (5)
- Upheld (2)
- Partially upheld (1)

Say so submissions

Say so is a reporting tool for employees to report workplace issues and concerns anonymously.

The reporting tool allows us as an organisation to look at reported issues, policy, procedure and behaviours impacting our staff and how they can be resolved.

Reporting matters via Say So go directly to Dave Walton (Deputy Chief Fire Officer) and Sonia Pawson (Director of People and Culture) to deal with the concern – no other individuals have access to this information.

During the period from 1 April 2026 to 30 June 2026, we received 9 concerns through this platform. The table below summarises the themes recorded against the 9 Say So submissions received during the reporting period.

Number	Theme
0	Recruitment and Selection
1	Management/Supervision
3	Equality
0	Theft
0	Data and Digital
1	Performance or Efficiency
1	Process, Policy or Procedure
0	Abuse – alcohol/substance
0	Abuse – emotional/mental/psychological
0	Abuse - verbal
0	Training
0	Health & Safety
3	Code of Conduct

Recruitment Statistics

Recruitment as of 7 September 2026

LIVE VACANCIES

Vacancy	Date opened	Closing date	Number of applications to date
Area Manager	17/08/2026	14/09/26	2
Organisational Assurance Officer	13/08/26	13/09/26	7
WM (Fire Investigation) internal only	27/08/26	20/09/26	0

RECENTLY CLOSED VACANCIES

Vacancy	Number of Applicants	Number shortlisted/interviewed	Appointment made
Data Engineer	33	6	1
Training Centre Instructor	4	1 shortlisted	Yes
DDat Support Analyst	46	TBA	
Digital Transformation Manager	63	8	Interview not taken place
Director of Finance and Procurement	13	3	Yes
Fire Protection Apprentice	354	47 (for 8 positions)	Interviews not taken place
FF Control	159	7	Interviews not taken place
On call CM process	16	11	NA
Ops Policy Co-ordinator	40	8	Interviews not taken place
Personal Assistant	22	1	Yes
Prevention Trainer	48	TBA	

Procurement Officer	73	6	Yes
Service Delivery Administrator	143	10 (for 2 posts)	Yes
SM internal promotion process	12	10	NA

Recruitment Update

Application numbers are very healthy for most positions, particularly generic positions (administration type roles) although the quality of applications does not always match the quantity. Quantity and quality are both less positive for specialist, technical and professional level roles.

One post we have particularly struggled to recruit for, is the Senior Occupational Health Advisor. The post was graded generously and a market supplement applied but we still failed to recruit. This is due to a shortage of qualified Occupational Health nurses, and we believe the nature of our business, which means we need an on- site presence, is less attractive to those who prefer to work remotely. We are currently engaging with an organisation who are specialists at reaching out and proactively finding and attracting potential applicants who may currently be passive in the job market

Recent campaigns for Firefighter Control (159), Service Delivery Administrator (143) and Fire Protection Apprentice roles (354) have attracted particularly large numbers of applicants.

Recruitment for Whole time Fire Fighters is ongoing, on a rolling programme of continual recruitment. We are currently in the early stages of a process of recruiting for a March 2027 trainee course. The August trainee course has just commenced with 21 trainees.

3. Legal Implications

The Monitoring Officer has considered this report and is satisfied it is presented in compliance with the Authority's Constitution.

4. People and Diversity Implications

This report concentrates on People and Diversity implications.

5. Equality Impact Assessment

Are the recommendations within this report subject to Equality Impact Assessment as outlined in the EIA guidance? No

6. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Implications

This report considers health and safety and wellbeing as part of the content and narrative

7. Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications arising from this report

8. Risk Management Implications

There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

9. Duty to Collaborate Implications (Police and Crime Act 2017)

There are no specific Duty to Collaborate implications arising directly from this report. The report provides workforce, attendance, health and safety, employee relations and recruitment assurance information for West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service. Where relevant, People and Culture activity continues to support wider Service collaboration through established governance arrangements and partnership working, but no new, additional or specific collaboration implications are identified within this reporting period.

10. Your Fire and Rescue Service Priorities

This report links with the Community Risk Management Plan 2025-28 strategic priorities below:

- Provide a safe, effective and resilient response to local and national emergencies.
- Focus our activities on reducing risk and vulnerability.
- Enhance the health, safety, and well-being of our people.
- Prioritise a people first mindset through ethical and professional leadership and management

- Work with partners and communities to deliver our services.
- Use resources in an innovative, sustainable, and efficient manner to maximise value for money.
- Further develop a culture of excellence, equality, learning, and inclusion.

11. Conclusions

This report provides Members with an overview of key People and Culture activity across workforce profile, attendance, occupational health, health and safety, employee relations and recruitment. Overall, the data provides assurance that the Service continues to maintain a broadly stable workforce profile, with core operational capacity supported by enabling functions, Fire Control and On Call provision.

Sickness absence remains an area of continued focus. While overall absence volumes remain broadly controlled, the increase in days lost and long-term sickness highlights the importance of sustained management attention, timely occupational health support, effective return-to-work planning and continued delivery of the Supporting Good Attendance approach.

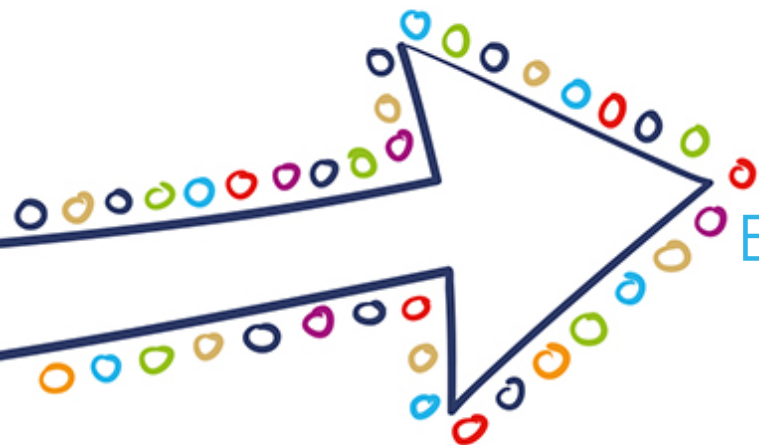
Occupational Health and Health and Safety performance provide positive assurance in relation to service delivery and lost time performance, while discipline, grievance and Say So activity continue to be managed through established processes with a focus on early resolution where appropriate. Recruitment activity demonstrates continued interest in Service roles, with several campaigns attracting strong applicant numbers.

Taken together, the report demonstrates active oversight of key people risks and priorities, while recognising the need for continued monitoring of absence impact, workforce resilience, inclusion, recruitment outcomes and employee relations themes. Members are asked to note the content of the report and the ongoing assurance provided through regular People and Culture reporting.

Annex A – Workforce Ethnicity Table

Ethnic Origin Groups	Ethnic Origin	Q1 2026/27 Avg Headcount	Q1 %
Asian/Asian British	Total	44	2.97%
	Any other Asian/Asian British Background	23	1.54%
	Chinese	5	0.31%
	Indian	7	0.47%
	Pakistani	10	0.65%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	Total	9	0.60%
	African	2	0.13%
	Any other Black / African / Caribbean Background	7	0.47%
Ethnic Origin Not Stated	Total	75	5.03%
	Ethnic Origin Not Stated	75	5.03%
Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups	Total	41	2.77%
	Any other Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Background	18	1.21%
	White and Asian	6	0.40%
	White and Black African	4	0.29%
	White and Black Caribbean	13	0.87%
Other Ethnic Group	Total	7	0.47%
	Any other Ethnic Group	6	0.40%
	Arab	1	0.07%

White	Total	1,315	88.13%
	Any Other White	20	1.34%
	Gypsy or Irish Traveller	1	0.07%
	Irish	1	0.09%
	White English/Welsh/Scottish/NI/British	1,292	86.64%
Total		1,492	100.00%



Spotlight on...

Employee Networks & Inclusive Practice



LGBTQ+U network

WYFRS were pleased to host the delivery of an LGBTQ+U Lunch and Learn event at Fire Service Headquarters. The session featured guest speaker Junior Beaman and was well attended by colleagues from across the Service. The event was supported by Chris Kovacs, Chair of the LGBTQ+U staff network, and provided an opportunity to promote awareness, inclusion and meaningful discussion on



"Days like this are so important. It was great to see so many people come together to listen to Junior speak. It's really important that, as colleagues, we support one another and make sure events like this are attended and promoted. They provide a safe space for people to learn, ask questions, share experiences and meet colleagues from across the Service."

Chris Kovacs, LGBTQ+U Chair

FireWAW (women's network)

LGBTQ+ experiences and allyship within the workplace.

WYFRS is pleased to be hosting the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Making Connections Day at Fire Service Headquarters. The event, taking place on 29 September 2026, will bring together colleagues from across the sector and provide opportunities for professional development, networking and knowledge sharing. The programme will include sessions focused on incident command, fire investigation and leadership, alongside opportunities to build and strengthen professional connections. The event is being coordinated by George Ralph, Chair of our Fire Women at Work (WAW) employee network, and reflects the Service's ongoing commitment to supporting inclusion, development and representation across the fire and rescue sector.

In addition, the Service is seeking to secure recognition on the Women Friendly Leeds Recruiter Friendly List, further demonstrating our commitment to attracting, supporting and retaining women within our workforce. We intend to achieve this accreditation within West Yorkshire before promoting and sharing learning with partner organisations across other districts.

FireREACH (race network)



Leeds West Indian Carnival provided an excellent opportunity to engage with communities that are currently underrepresented within the fire and rescue service workforce. The event supported our positive action and

recruitment activity, with recruitment literature, careers information and advice shared with a wide range of attendees.

The WYFRS stall was busy throughout the day and benefited from the addition of prevention activities, including the e-scooter and burn prevention equipment, which generated significant interest and created valuable opportunities for

"It was my first Leeds Carnival representing WYFRS. It's a great opportunity to showcase that we are an inclusive organisation and the community are able to see role models and ask for recruitment advice. It was also fantastic to see people from so many different backgrounds coming together to celebrate Caribbean culture and engaging so openly with firefighters. The fire engine was very popular with the children and most importantly we delivered key home fire safety messages to ensure our communities have the knowledge to keep themselves and their families safe. I can't wait for next year's event"
Savannah Andrade, FF, Fairweather Green.

engagement.

Prevention officers delivered a range of home fire safety advice, while firefighters interacted positively with members of the community, helping to build trust, raise

awareness and showcase the role of the Service. It was particularly encouraging to reconnect with community members who had previously participated in our Have a Go sessions, summer schools and other community engagement initiatives, demonstrating the value and lasting impact of our outreach work. Overall, the event was highly successful, providing meaningful engagement opportunities, promoting fire safety and prevention messages, and strengthening relationships with the diverse communities we serve.



FireMAGNET (menopause network)

MAGNet has been progressing the implementation of the Black Cardi initiative at Fire Service Headquarters. The initiative is currently in the final stages of preparation, with communications and promotional materials being developed to support its launch and raise awareness

across the organisation. In addition, handheld fan libraries are being established on each floor of Fire Service Headquarters to provide practical support for colleagues experiencing menopause-related symptoms.

Further arrangements are also being made to support the ongoing delivery and promotion of menopause awareness initiatives, reinforcing the Service's commitment to creating an inclusive and supportive working environment for all

FireDAW (disability/wellbeing)

employees.

FireDAW are currently inactive due to co-chair availability. The terms of reference and objectives of the network are being reviewed with the aim to relaunch during Disability History Month (Nov/Dec).

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

EIA monitoring and review has been added to the Inclusive Practice Board Meeting (previously DEIB) as a standing agenda. The first EIA author presented at our June meeting where a colleague from DDaT

talked about the EIA work they carried out for the competency dashboard project.

National Inclusion Week

National Inclusion Week will run from 14th to 18th September with the theme 'Break Barriers, Navigate Change'. Events will include lunch and learn sessions presented by our colleagues with lived experience and webinars from external speakers on various topics.

We could add more here including photos / quotes following the events and before P&C committee.

Conferences

AFSA Summer 2 day Conference

5 colleagues travelled to Gloucester in July to attend the summer conference with the theme of Culture, Courage, Community and United in Service.

AFSA National Summer Conference 2026, which provided valuable insight into the strong connection between organisational

culture, workforce wellbeing, community trust and service performance.

A consistent theme throughout the conference was the importance of visible and inclusive leadership, ensuring employees feel safe to speak up, and moving beyond policy commitments to meaningful action. There was significant focus on employee wellbeing, psychological safety, early intervention to address conflict, and the role of belonging and representation in creating positive workplace cultures.

The conference also highlighted the benefits of community engagement, co-production and partnership working in improving prevention activity, tackling inequalities and building trust with diverse communities.



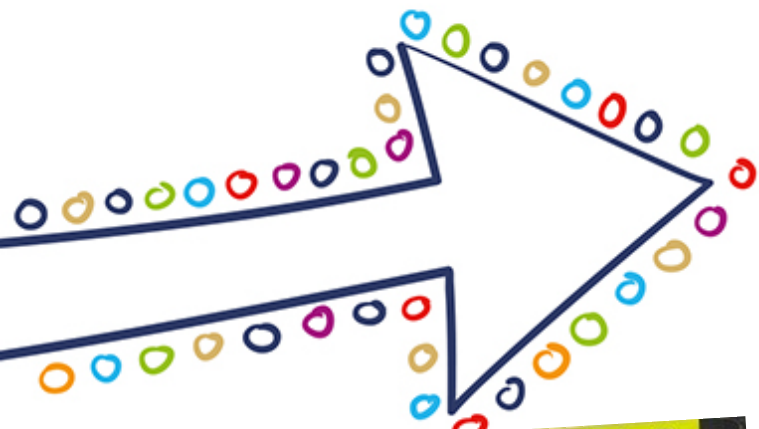
Contact



Gill Cockburn and Natasha Logan,



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Spotlight on...

Positive Action & Community Engagement

June – September 2026



What was the need, how was it identified?

In this quarter, the Positive Action team continued to develop their engagement activities with young people. This forms part of our long-term goals of breaking down barriers and stereotypes around becoming a firefighter from a young age as well as providing experiences to build young people's knowledge of WYFRS.



What did we do?

Work Experience

The team reintroduced a work experience programme for Uniformed Public Services students across West Yorkshire, the first work experience post COVID hosted by WYFRS. The week-long programme welcomed thirteen students to all districts as well as HQ. During the programme, students took part in a range of activities and gained a valuable insight into the day-to-day role of a firefighter, as well as learning about enabling team roles that

support frontline crews and the importance of delivering key prevention messages.

'Have a Go' Days

The team continue to run 'Have a Go' days to maintain interest from underrepresented groups outside of recruitment processes. The team plan to deliver the latest one at Dewsbury Fire Station on 5th September alongside Dewsbury White Watch. 20 individuals are signed up for the session and will experience activities aimed at giving them an insight into the role of a firefighter. They will also receive an informative presentation covering a realistic job preview, pay structures, progression opportunities and shift patterns.

Community Events

We continue to attend community careers events across the districts. The Positive Action officers attended at Bangladeshi Community Centres in Bradford and Leeds, where they engaged with the local



community and raised awareness of job roles.

PA Officers also attended the annual Huddersfield Sikh Mela – the event had thousands of people in attendance and firefighters were kept on their toes showing youngsters around the fire engine, as well as delivering key prevention and recruitment advice.

WT Female fitness development sessions

PA officers along with the Training Team have begun the weekly 2-hour fitness development sessions hosted at HQ for females within the current wholetime recruitment process to help them to develop their fitness in preparation for the upcoming fitness assessments. 24 females signed up to attend at least one of the five planned sessions.

Killingbeck Girls' Summer Sessions

Our award winning Killingbeck Girls Summer Sessions were back for the summer. We held a fun filled taster day on 5th July which was attended by 12 girls aged 11-16, with approximately 15 girls attending the following sessions.

We had a high number of girls from Black African backgrounds attend the sessions, which shows we are continuing to break down barriers.

Ethnic diversity in female firefighters is low, and we hope that this contributes to changing that. The sessions aim to increase confidence, inspire and raise awareness; so that more girls can believe that they too can be firefighters.

Batley Girls Visit to HQ

On 9th July we welcomed 20 year 10 girls from Batley Girls school to HQ as part of national Careers Day. The students were given a tour of HQ and visited Spen Valley fire station where they had the opportunity to look around the technical rescue fire engine and ask questions.



What are we doing next?

September will see the PA Officers focus on return to schools for the new academic year, including meeting the new first year Uniformed Public Services students across

West Yorkshire and attending careers events and talks.

There will be a renewed focus on data, with the team focusing on aligning data with People and Culture teams to improve our positive action offer.



Contact

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OFFICIAL

Agenda item: 10

Annual Accident Analysis Report 2025/26

People & Culture Committee

Date: 2nd October 2026

Submitted by: Director of People & Culture

Purpose: To present the annual accident analysis data

Recommendations: That committee note the accident performance of the Authority for the year April 2025 – March 2026

Summary: Every year, the H&S team undertake an analysis of reported accidents. The purpose of this report is to identify the long term accident trends and also to highlight any patterns in activity and/or cause to assist in identifying any possible actions to reduce similar accidents in the future.
This report analyses all accidents which have occurred between April 2025 and March 2026.

Local Government (Access to information) Act 1972

Exemption Category: None

Contact Officer: Mark Dixon, Head of Occupational Health, Safety & Wellbeing. Mark.dixon@westyorksfire.gov.uk

Background papers open to inspection: None

Annexes: Appendix 1 – Annual accident analysis report – 2025_26
Appendix A – Accident trends 2005_6 to date
Appendix B – Priority topics 2025_26

Making West Yorkshire Safer
www.westyorksfire.gov.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Reactive, as well as proactive monitoring of H&S performance is an important element of any H&S management system. This attached report (Appendix 1) reviews all employee accidents and also accidents which occurred to non employees either on our premises or which were caused or affected by our undertakings, for the period April 2025 – March 2026

2. Information

- 2.1 The total number of accidents reported in the period April 2025 – March 2026 was 128. This is an increase of 7 (6%) in comparison with the previous year and is the 2nd consecutive year we have seen a slight rise in total accidents, which over the last 2 years, is a 15% increase. Whilst this is not good, the long term trend remains downward and since the peak in 2005_06, represents a reduction of 58%, which is a significant reduction.
- 2.2 When looking at severity, the long term trend continues to fall for both WY Majors (lost time) and RIDDORs, however WY Majors saw a small increase of 5 (10%) compared to the previous year, whilst RIDDORs remained unchanged. Whilst any increase in accidents is unwelcome, the fact that there has been no increase in the most serious category (RIIDDORs) is good.
- 2.3 Whilst the total number of accidents to operational staff on the incident ground has reduced, the number of serious accidents has risen, a trend now evident over the last 4 years. This issue will be considered by SOT. A number of workstreams already exist that can be used to deliver any identified improvements.
- 2.4 The costs associated with accidents have seen a reduction, dropping by £59,349 to £160,281. This has been due to the reduction in legal claims costs.
- 2.5 Whilst their order shifts from year to year, the “top 5” priority topics remain consistent with previous years, with the causes being well known to WYFRS.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no direct costs associated with this report. The report does however attempt to calculate the cost of accidents and these are detailed within the main report.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 The Monitoring Officer has considered this report and is satisfied it is presented in compliance with the Authority’s Constitution.

5. People and Diversity Implications

5.1 There are no direct people or diversity implications arising from this report.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 Are the recommendations within this report subject to Equality Impact Assessment as outlined in the EIA guidance? No

([EIA Template and Guidance](#))

6.2 Date EIA Completed: NA

6.3 Date EIA Approved: NA

6.4 The EIA is available on request from the report author or from diversity.inclusion@westyorkshire.gov.uk

7. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Implications

7.1 Contained within the main report.

8. Environmental Implications

8.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

9. Risk Management Implications

9.1 There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

10. Duty to Collaborate Implications (Police and Crime Act 2017)

10.1 NA

11. Your Fire and Rescue Service Priorities

11.1 This report links with the Community Risk Management Plan 2025-28 strategic priorities below:

- Provide a safe, effective and resilient response to local and national emergencies.
- Enhance the health, safety, and well-being of our people.

12. Conclusions

12.1 Due to the small numbers of accidents we are seeing, the identification of trends in terms of cause groups is becoming increasingly difficult, however it is still a worthwhile exercise. Whilst the long term trend for total accidents is down, we have

seen a slight increase over the last 2 years, which the H&S team will continue to monitor.

- 12.2 The analysis has identified a year on year increase in the more serious accidents occurring on the incident ground (albeit in small numbers). It is important this trend is considered by SOT, who are well placed to identify and action any recommended actions to hopefully reverse this trend.

Annual Accident Analysis Report – April 2025 – March 2026

1. Introduction

Reactive, as well as proactive monitoring of H&S performance is an important element of any H&S management system. This document reviews all employee accidents and also accidents which occurred to non employees either on our premises or which were caused or affected by our undertakings, for the period April 2025 – March 2026.

The purpose of this report is to identify the long term accident trends and also to highlight any patterns in activity and/or cause to assist in identifying possible actions to reduce similar accidents in the future.

2. Analysis of 2025/26 data

The total number of accidents reported in the period April 2025 – March 2026 was 128. This is an increase of 7 (6%) in comparison with the previous year. Whilst the long term trend is down, this is the 2nd consecutive year we have seen a slight rise in total accidents, which over the last 2 years, is a 15% increase.

The total accidents include accidents to non employees such as visitors, contractors and young firefighters as well as to staff..

Two factors which can affect accident rates are the number of staff we employ and the number of operational incidents we attend. There was a slight increase in staffing (4%), and also an increase (8%) in operational incidents. Increased staffing may go some way to explaining the increase in accidents, however the increase in operational incidents is unlikely, given the number of accidents occurring on the incident ground decreased, compared to the previous year.

When looking at severity, the long term trend continues to fall for both WY Majors (lost time) and RIDDORs, however WY Majors saw a small increase of 5 (10%) compared to the previous year, whilst RIDDORs remained unchanged. Whilst any increase in accidents is not good, the fact that there have been no increase in the most serious category (RIIDDORs) is good.

This year's performance continues the long term downward trend, as can be seen in Appendix A.

a) Accidents to non employees

There were 4 accidents in 2025-26 which occurred to non-employees, which is a decrease of 3 in comparison to the previous year, which is about average. Given the low numbers this year, identifying a trend is difficult. 2 of the accidents involved contract cleaners, either tripping up or cutting themselves whilst using equipment. One accident worthy of note related to an RTC involving a fire

appliance responding to an emergency, which collided with a third party. The occupant of the car received slight injuries and was taken to hospital for a precautionary check up.

b) Operational V Enabling staff accidents

Excluding accidents to non-employees, there were 108 (87%) accidents to operational staff and 16 (13%) to enabling staff, which is within 1% of the previous years analysis. This was in comparison to 93% and 7% respectively in 24/25. Having analysed the figures over the last 5 years, the previous years was unusual and this years performance has now returned to a more expected performance. The 5 year average for operational accidents is 86% and 14% for enabling staff, making this years performance very close to the 5 year average. The percentage make up of our workforce has remained constant (within 1%, at 78% & 22% respectively). It is foreseeable that operational staff will have more accidents than enabling staff due to the nature of their roles. We will continue to monitor this trend.

Traditionally, analysis of operational staff accidents has found there to be a split of 2/3 whilst training and performing routine duties and 1/3 on the incident ground. Through covid, this changed towards more accidents during operational incidents due to routine duties and training largely being suspended. As we got back to normality, 2021-22 saw a swing back towards more of a 50/50 split. 2022-23 saw a continued trend towards operational incidents with only 43% occurring during routine duties & training and 57% during operational incidents. This was the result of the spike in accidents in Q2 due to spate (hot) conditions. 2023-24 has seen a slight swing back towards accident during routine duties & training, with a 50/50 split (ops;50%, training;28% & routine duties;22%). 2024-25 saw a slight shift back towards accidents at operational incidents with 54% occurring at incidents and 46% during routine duties and training (19% & 27% respectively).

Whilst there is a lot of data above, in summary (excluding the effects of covid), the figures in recent years generally show a 50/50 split, with single digit variance either way. The 25/26 data is no different, with a slight shift to more accidents whilst performing routine duties (26%) and training (30%) compared to accidents on the incident ground (44%).

Accident stats are reviewed on a regular basis throughout the year, including at our Senior Operations Team (SOT). Last year, SOT noticed what appeared to be an increase in serious accidents at operational incidents and so some additional analysis was undertaken. The table below was produced, and has been updated to add the 2025/26 figures:

Severity ratings	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26
Hospital attended	5	2	2	4
Over 3 day	3	6	7	7
RIDDOR over 7 days	5	7	9	7
RIDDOR Major injuries	1	2	0	1

TOTAL	14	17	18	19
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As the table shows, the steady increase that was identified in last years report, has continued, whilst the total number of accidents on the incident ground had reduced [55 (54%) in 24/25 and 48 (44%) in 25/26], which is a concern.

A paper will be presented to a future SOT meeting to review the data and make recommendations. There are already a number of workstreams ongoing within the wider Organisational Readiness Programme, that could be used as vehicles to initiate any identified improvements:

Workstream & Objective

- **Operational Policy and Guidance:** Develop and implement the necessary policies and procedures to support effective delivery of the Service.
- **Developing and Training People:** Ensure all staff receive comprehensive training and continuous development to maintain high standards of competence and readiness.
- **Organisational Standards & Ways of Working:** Enhance departmental capacity in alignment with the Organisation's strategic direction, focusing on organisational preparedness. This includes maintaining high professional standards across all services to ensure excellence and integrity in service delivery.
- **Operational Assurance and Learning:** Evaluate the Organisation's performance to ensure ongoing improvement and effective risk mitigation. Promote continuous improvement through structured learning and the sharing of knowledge.

Additionally, and whilst only focusing on one specific area of operational response, the Tactical Firefighting Programme is concerned with the competence and operational preparedness of our operational staff whilst structural firefighting and therefore many of the outcomes of the review could be woven into the input and training that falls out of this programme.

When looking at the split between wholetime and on call, the findings are unremarkable.

c) Costings

The cost of accidents is not an exact science; however, it can be helpful to quantify what accidents are costing the Authority. Whilst the majority of the costs do not come off the "bottom line", they should be viewed as an indirect cost, or as a missed opportunity to making West Yorkshire safer. The five most recent years costs are detailed below:

	Claims costs	Investigation costs	Physio costs	Days lost cost	TOTAL
2021-22	£51,092	£4,201	£1,055	£27,568 (298 days)	£83, 916
2022-23	£95,664	£5,365	£1, 277	£48,570 (491 days)	£150,876
2023-24	£179,466	£5,149	£1,197	£102,405 (995 days)	£288,217

2024-25	£147,302	£5,858	£1,705	£64,765 (613 days)	£219,630
2025-26	£87,192	£6,492	£1,051	£65,546 (588 days)	£160,281

As the table above shows, there has been an overall reduction of £59,349, which comes on the back of a reduction of £68,587 the previous year. Investigation, physio and days lost to sickness costs have all remained largely consistent, with legal costs accounting for the reduction. In this reporting period there was one more claim than last year (6) with an average cost of £14,500. In 2024-25 there were 5 claims with 4 being quite low value, however one relating to an MSK injury had a value of £108k, which significantly increased the overall legal cost.

d) Top 5 Priority Topics

Excluding accidents which result in first aid only and no lost time, the top 5 most common causes of accidents have been identified. Breakdown of these priority topics are included in Appendix B. Whilst the positions within the top 5 fluctuate, they remain the same year on year. These have been analysed to identify cause and any contributing factors.

Top 5 Priority Topics:

1. Musculoskeletal disorders (14)
2. Slips, trips & falls (14)
3. Contact with (9)
4. Struck by/against (9)
5. Exposure to (6)

1. Musculoskeletal Disorders

There were a total of 30 accidents in this period (14 [47%] majors and 16 (53%) minors), which is an increase of 9 (43%) compared to the previous year, which is disappointing, however comes on the back of a 9% reduction for the previous two year, which takes us back to a more average performance. The severity of the injuries has however reduced (from 57% to 47% majors), which is encouraging.

At 47%, musculoskeletal disorders account for the second biggest percentage ratio of major injuries, after slips, trips & falls, so have the potential to cause significant injury and lost time. Further analysis of those accidents that have occurred to operational staff, has shown that 60% of them occurred whilst performing routine duties and training (compared to 50% the previous years). Arguably, there is no “civil imperative” when it comes to routine duties and training and therefore we should be able to manage the risks well, however operational staff spend a significant amount of time performing these tasks, when compared to operational incidents, and so probability would suggest there is an increased risk given the amount of time spent performing these duties. There were no MSK injuries reported to enabling staff, which is encouraging.

With one exception, there were no trends identified with injuries spread across a variety of activities in twos and threes. Examples include: casualty handling, gaining entry and water rescue training. There were 5 reported accidents

involving handling hose/hosereels, however these activities are foreseeable and therefore no recommendations are made.

The emphasis therefore in terms of reducing the risk of injury needs to be on using the correct manual handling techniques to prevent any acute injuries, but also to prevent cumulative injuries that build up over time, due to poor posture/lifting techniques. The approach taken to manual handling training was recently reviewed with a move away from watch based instructors to a Training Centre, crew based delivered model. The sessions are delivered by specialists within the Trauma Team at Training Centre and include practical application and assessment of correct techniques, including team lifting, which is an important part of the role. So far, approx. 200 staff have been through the new training programme, therefore realistically, unlikely to have had a positive effects on the accident rate. It is therefore a recommendation to continue to roll out the revised manual handling training programme.

2. Slips, trips & falls

There were 27 accidents in total attributed to slip, trips & falls in 2025-26, which is an increase of 1 (4%) on the previous year. Of the total, 14 (52%) were majors, which is within 2% of last year.

Analysis has found that the weather had quite an effect on this category of accident. In 2024-25, we saw 23% of accidents resulting in slips on ice/snow, however this year we only saw 4%, due to the relatively mild winter. In contrast we saw 22% of accidents at wildfire/fires in open, due to the relatively dry and hot summer. Walking on moorland, is difficult due to its uneven nature and can result in trips, falls and “going over on ankles”. PPE in recent years has been improved for wildfires, away from traditional fireboots, to dedicated wildfire boots, which provide improved ankle support, however whilst this is an improvement, will not eliminate such injuries. Given the trend of warmer summers and wetter, milder winters, this is a trend that is set to continue. Accidents reported so far in 2025-26 support this. Analysis has seen no other trends with injuries spread across such things as falling off chairs, tripping up/down internal stairs and one fall off a short extension ladder, whilst gaining entry over a fence at an incident. 2 (7%) occurred whilst dismounting the appliance, which is the same as the previous year. Traditionally this has been a cause for lots of accidents and the new appliances now have steps that automatically fold out to make coming down from the rear crew cab easier and safer. However the 2 reported injuries were not due to falling/missing their step whilst dismounting but rolling their ankles once they had left the cab, stepping on uneven curbs or charged hose.

The rest of the accidents were spread in low numbers across various causes with no patterns identified and therefore no recommendations are made in relation to slips, trips & falls.

3. Contact with

This category includes contact with sharp objects, animals/insect bites, hot surfaces, airborne particulate and electricity. There were in total 26 accidents for the period, which is an increase of 4 (18%) compared to the previous year, which was an increase of 7 compared to the previous year. This is quite an increase above the 5 year average (19) and something the H&S team will monitor. With

only 35% of injuries being majors, this indicates they were relatively low severity in nature.

With one exception, the causes of these accidents are spread across a range of activities in small numbers, many in ones and twos. Examples include: knife cuts to fingers whilst preparing food, a couple of cat bites/scratches whilst rescuing them from house fires and nails penetrating fire boots. The one exception was 4 (15%) scalds from hot water boilers, located next to kitchen sinks. These occurred in the new HQ and Spen station. Some were operator error (e.g. accidentally catching the lever with their arm or hand was underneath), however some were due to an intermittent fault where they would discharge small amounts of water. These were inspected with no faults found, a couple were relocated to reduce the risk of accidental operation. There have been no recent cases.

Again, due to the small numbers, analysis has identified no trends and therefore there are no recommendations for this category of accident.

4. Struck by/against

This category includes being struck by flying/falling objects and struck against fixed or stationary objects (banging into things) and traps. Last year this was the number 1 priority topic. There was a total of 24 accidents (9 lost time and 15 minors) in the period which is a decrease of 9 (27%) on the previous year. The previous year was particularly high with the 5 year average sitting at 27, so this years performance is slightly better than the 5 year average.

Analysis has found the accidents to be spread across fewer causes than other priority topics, with 3's and 4's per subgroup as opposed to 1's and 2's, however, they are foreseeable and not really noteworthy. Examples include staff bending down and hitting their heads on items of furniture / equipment (4), striking submerged obstructions whilst water rescue training (3) and fitness training (3).

There are a couple of things worthy of note. Last year there were 8 accidents resulting in items of operational equipment becoming dislodged during transit in fire appliances and falling from operational lockers when opened, striking Firefighters. The majority of these involved the new appliances which had recently been introduced. Some were operator error as they were not as familiar with their operation as the old appliances. However in other cases, improvements were made to the stowage design to reduce the risk. As a result, there was only 1 such accident in 25-26. This is a great example of learning lessons from safety events and using them to make improvements.

The second point worthy of note is the continued low number of accidents caused whilst gaining entry (1, and only 1 the previous 2 years) which has been raised as a concern in previous reports and suggests the gaining entry training, along with new equipment, continues to have a positive effect.

As the locker theme has already been addressed, no other recommendations are made in relation to this category of accidents.

5. Exposure to

This category includes exposure to hazardous substances, heat/fire, explosion, & noise and a new category of exposure to trauma. There were 17 reported incidents in total, with 6 (35%) majors and 11 (65%) minors. This is an increase of 6 (55%), however is bang on the 5 year average.

Analysis has identified a few trends. The first is one which has been identified in previous reports; that of burns during breathing apparatus (BA) training at HQ. The training centre have worked hard in previous years to review their safe systems of work which has reduced the numbers considerably:

- 2020/21 = 1
- 2021/22 = 8
- 2022/23 = 6 (5 burns and 1 heat exhaustion).
- 2023/24 = 0
- 2024/25 = 2 (1 burn and 1 heat exhaustion).
- 2025/26 = 3

BA training is one of the most high risk training scenarios we provide and must strike the balance between safety and exposing staff to realistic scenarios, which brings a level of risk. As a percentage of Firefighters who undertake the training, the number of injuries is very low and so we may well be at the “acceptable risk” level. However, a review of the BA departments safe system of work (SSW) has been commenced, working closely with the H&S team and the FBU.

There were 4 reports of smoke ingress within the HQ building and Spen Vally station. This occurs when the MPTC (Multi Purpose Training Centre) is in use for BA training and the wind is blowing in a certain direction. Additional carbon filters have been fitted into the air handling units and a feasibility study is ongoing to see if there are other options that would help. Workplace monitoring has identified the levels to be very low, well below occupational exposure levels set by the HSE

There was also one event that resulted in 5 staff being exposed to a minor skin irritant whilst inspecting a fire blanket. All these explain the increased we have seen this year.

The final point worthy of note is that of people becoming ill following water rescue training, which has been an ongoing problem for a number of years. Last year, working together, the H&S team and Training Centre implemented a water testing strategy to reduce the risk of crews training in contaminated water, which was the cause of previous illnesses. I am pleased to report there has not been any reported water rescue illness in this reporting period.

The remaining accidents are spread in 1's and 2's with no trends, therefore no other recommendations are made in relation to exposure to injuries.

6. Conclusions

In terms of the total number of accidents reported, for various reasons explained in the report, there has been much fluctuation over the last 5 years. This reporting period has seen 128 reported accidents which is an increase of 7 (9%) in comparison with the previous year. This is the 2nd consecutive year we have

seen a slight rise in total accidents, which over the last 2 years, is a 15% increase, however the long term trend is downward and represents a 58% reduction in comparison to 2005-06, when accidents peaked at 305. This is a real achievement.

The number of staff we employ and the number of operational incidents we attend, given the majority of accidents occur to operational staff, can have an impact on the number of accidents we see reported, and in this reporting period, our total staff employed rose by 4% and the number of operational incidents rose by 8%. It is impossible to attribute the increase to these factors, although unlikely to be attributed to the increased in incidents, given the number of accidents occurring on the incident ground decreased, compared to the previous year.

When looking at severity, the long term trend continues to fall for both WY Majors (lost time) and RIDDORs, however WY Majors saw a small increase of 5% compared to the previous year, whilst RIDDORs remained unchanged. Whilst any increase in accidents is not good, the fact that there have been no increase in the most serious category (RIIDDORs) is good.

Whilst the total number of accidents to operational staff on the incident ground has reduced, the number of serious accidents has risen, a trend now evident over the last 4 years. This issue will be considered by SOT. A number of workstreams already exist that can be used to deliver any identified improvements.

The costs associated with accidents have seen a reduction, dropping by £59,349 to £160,281. This has been due to the reduction in legal claims costs.

Whilst their order shifts from year to year, the “top 5” priority topics remain consistent with previous years, with the causes being well known to WYFRS.

With 60% less accidents to analyse now than when such reporting started (in 2005), identifying trends and subsequent recommendations becomes a challenge and whilst the analysis of the data and production of the report is time consuming, it is still felt a valuable exercise. The small number of accidents suggests that H&S continues to be well managed within West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service, given the nature of its work.

7. Recommendations

The following recommendations are made:

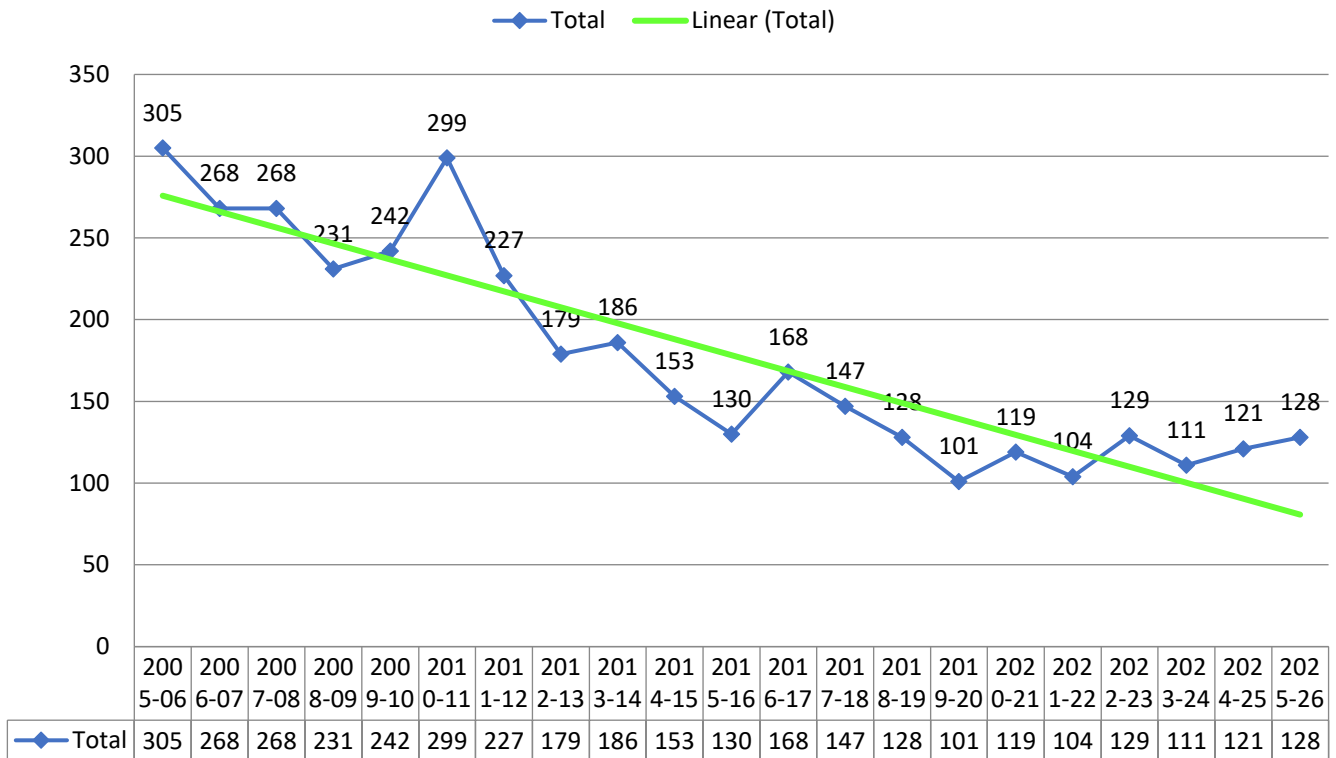
1. Continue to roll out the crew based manual handling training course, delivered by specialist Training Centre staff.
2. Review the BA depts safe systems of work to provide reassurance the risk of burns are as well managed as possible, whilst still providing a realistic training experience.
3. Present a paper to SOT to consider the increased severity of incident ground accidents and develop an action plan to take forward their recommendations.

August 2026

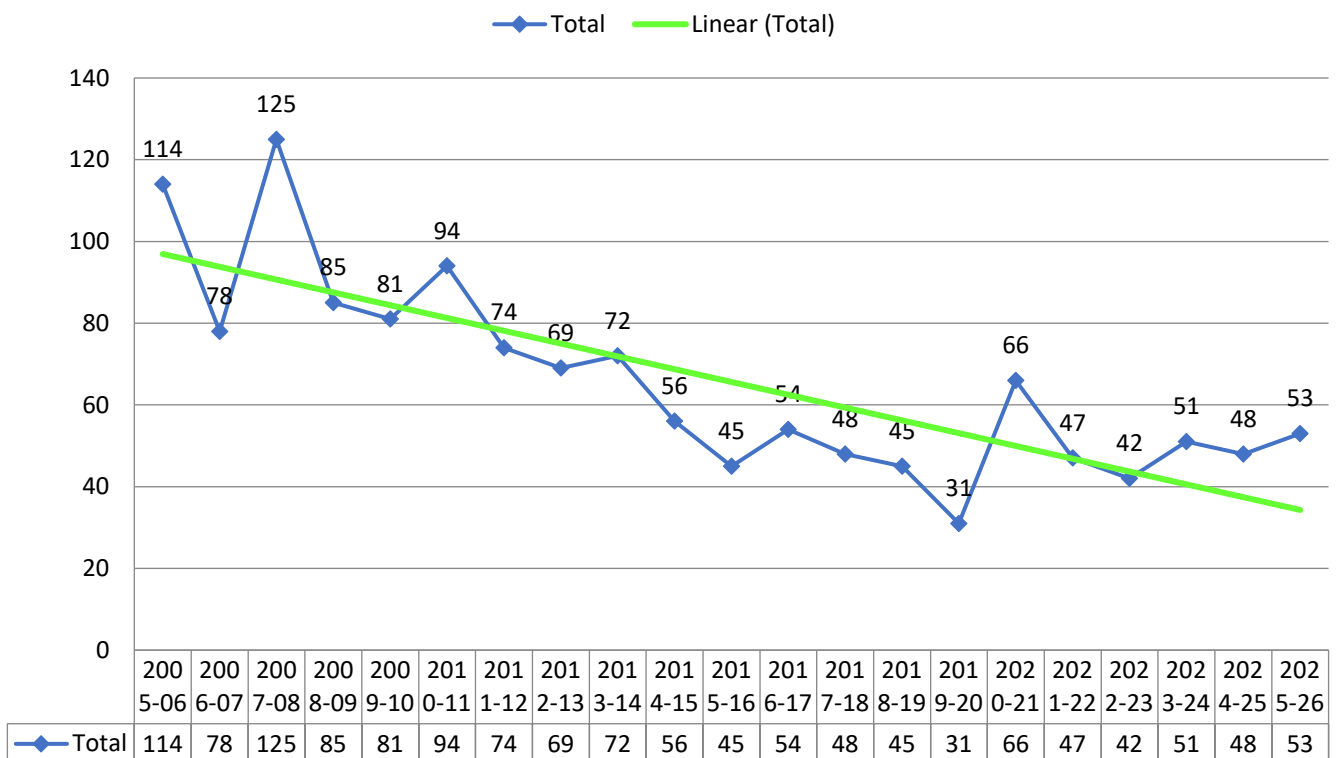


Appendix A 2025/26

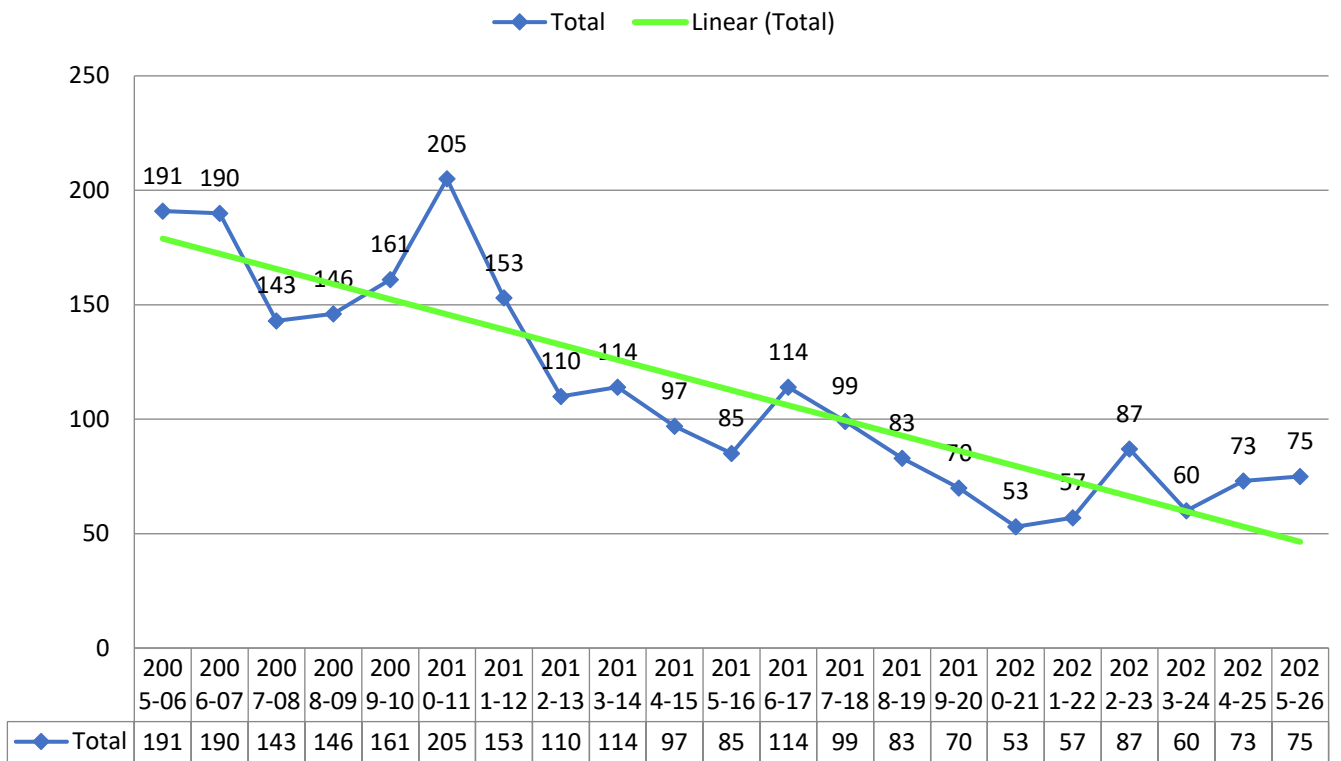
Total Accidents



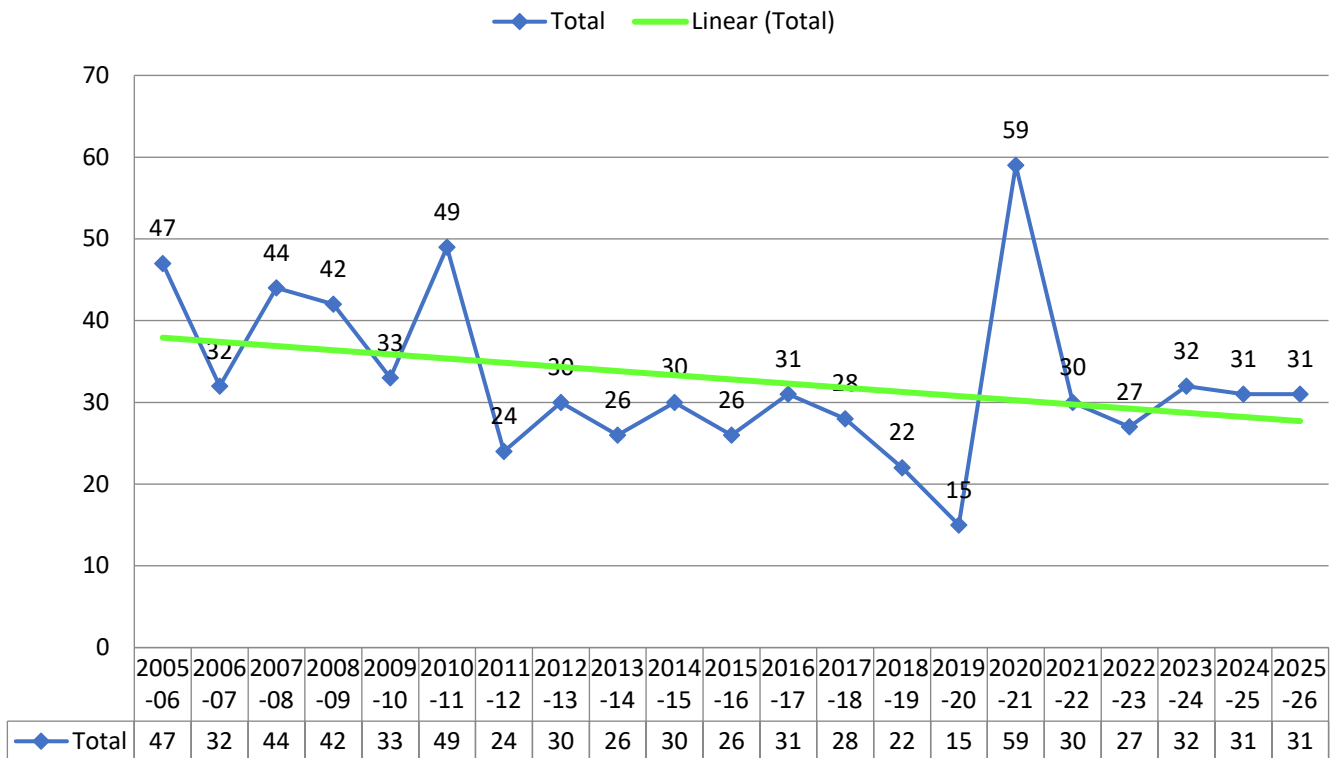
Total Accidents WY Major Only



Total Accidents WY Minor Only



Total Accidents RIDDOR (old over3 day)



Appendix B Financial Year 2025-26				Severity			Duty System				OPS Activity				OPS Split			
Cause Group	1 - Minor	Lost Time	Total	Enabling Staff	OPS	Non-Emp	Total	Routine	Training	Incident	Total	WT	RET	TRAIN	Total			
Exertion	5	5	10		10		10	2	6	2	10	9		1	10			
Manual Handling	11	9	20		20		20	6	4	10	20	19	1		20			
Musculoskeletal Disorder Total	16	14	30	0	30	0	30	8	10	12	30	28	1	1	30			
Difference to previous year	-3	0.	-3	-2	+1	-2	-3	0.	+4	-3	+1	+1	-1	+1	+1			
Percentage split	53%	47%		0%	100%	0%		27%	33%	40%		93%	3%	3%				
STF From Height	2	3	5		5		5	1		4	5	5			5			
STF From Stairs/steps	5	6	11	3	8		11	2		6	8	8			8			
STF On Same Level	6	5	11		10	1	11	3	1	6	10	10			10			
Slip, Trip, Fall Total	13	14	27	3	23	1	27	6	1	16	23	23			23			
Difference to previous year	+4	+2	+6	+2	+3	+1	+6	+2	-9	+10	+3	+5	-2	0.	+3			
Percentage split	48%	52%		11%	85%	4%		26%	4%	70%		100%	0%	0%				
Animal		2	2		2		2			2	2	2			2			
Hot Liquid/vapour/gas	4		4	1	3		4	3			3	3			3			
Hot Solid/surface/object	2		2		2		2			2	2	2			2			
Insect (Bite/stings)	1		1	1			1											
Object - Sharp	10	7	17	5	11	1	17	4	3	4	11	11			11			
Contact With Total	17	9	26	7	18	1	26	7	3	8	18	18			18			
Difference to previous year	0.	+4	+4	+2	+2	0.	+4	+6	0.	-7	-1	0.	-1	0.	-1			
Percentage split	65%	35%		27%	69%	4%		39%	17%	44%		100%	0%	0%				
Struck - Against	5	6	11		11		11	2	6	3	11	9		2	11			
Struck - By	10	3	13	1	11	1	13	2	3	6	11	11			11			
Struck Total	15	9	24	1	22	1	24	4	9	9	22	20		2	22			
Difference to previous year	-4	-5	-9	-1	-7	-1	-9	-1	+7	0.	+6	+5	0.	+1	+6			
Percentage split	63%	38%		4%	92%	4%		18%	41%	41%		91%	0%	9%				
Airborne Particulate		1	1		1		1			1	1	1			1			
Extreme Ambient Temperature		1	1		1		1		1		1	1			1			
Hazardous Substance	10		10	4	6		10	1	5		6	6			6			
Heat / Fire	1	2	3		3		3		3		3	3			3			
Noise		1	1	1			1											
Traumatic Situation	4	1	1		1		1			1	1	1			1			
Exposure To Total	11	6	17	5	12		17	1	9	2	12	12			12			
Difference to previous year	+4	+2	+6	+5	+1	0.	+6	0.	+3	-2	+1	+3	0.	-2	+1			
Percentage split	65%	35%		29%	71%	0%		8%	75%	17%		100%	0%	0%				
Vehicle Collision Struck Against - Vehicle		1	1			1	1											
Vehicle Collision Struck By - Vehicle	2		2		2		2	2			2	2			2			
Vehicle Collision Total	2	1	3		2	1	3	2			2	2			2			
Difference to previous year	-1	0.	-1	0.	-1	0.	-1	+2	0.	-3	-1	-1	0.	0.	-1			
Percentage split	67%	33%		0%	67%	33%		100%	0%	0%		100%	0%	0%				
Violence																		
V- Physical Attack With Weapon	1		1		1		1					1			1			
Violence Total	1		1		1		1			1	1	1			1			
Difference to previous year	-2	-1	-3	-1	-2	0.	-3	0.	0.	-2	-2	-2	0.	0.	-2			
Percentage split	100%	0%		0%	100%	0%		0%	0%	100%		100%	0%	0%				
Grand Total	75	53	128	16	108	4	128	28	32	48	108	104	1	3	108			
	+2	+5	+7	+3	+7	-3	+7	+9	+5	-7	+7	+11	-4	0.	+7			
	59%	41%		13%	84%	3%		26%	30%	44%		96%	1%	3%				

Appendix B 2026 — Incident Dashboard Demo

Total Incidents
128
YoY +7

Minor Injuries
75
59% of total

Lost Time
53
41% of total

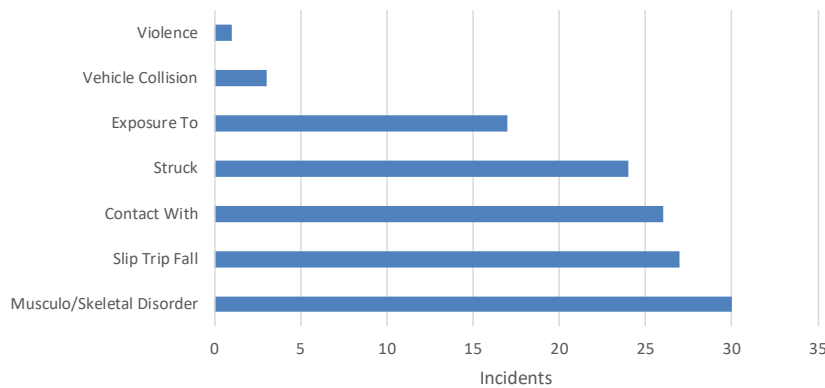
OPS Cases
108
84% of total

Cause Group	Total	YoY Change
Musculo/Skeletal Disorder	30	-3
Slip Trip Fall	27	6
Contact With	26	4
Struck	24	-9
Exposure To	17	6
Vehicle Collision	3	-1
Violence	1	-3

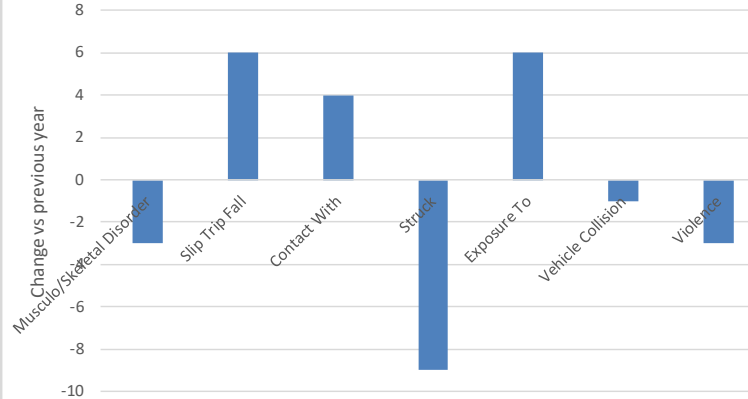
Key insights

- Total incidents increased by 7 to 128.
- OPS accounts for 108 incidents, 84% of all cases.
- MSK is the largest cause group at 30 cases.
- Slip/Trip/Fall rose by 6 year-on-year.
- Incident activity is the largest OPS activity type at 48 cases.

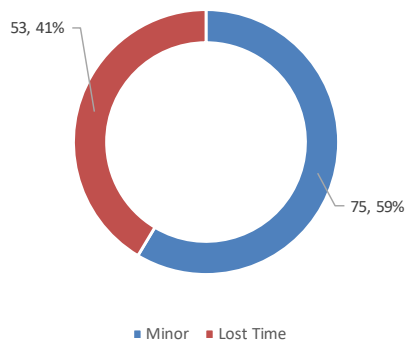
Incidents by Cause Group



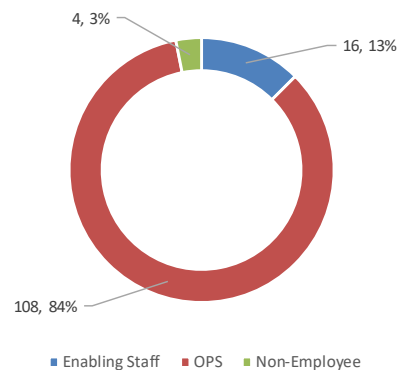
Year-on-Year Change by Cause Group



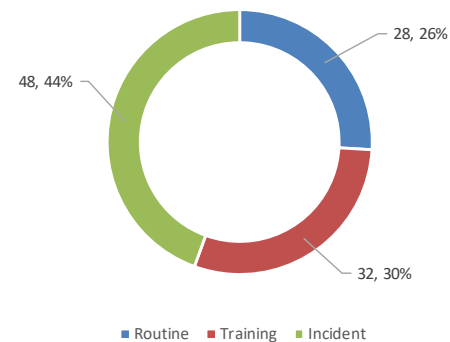
Severity Split



Duty System Split



OPS Activity Split



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Agenda item:11

Effectiveness of Inclusion Practices

People and Culture Committee

Date: 2 October 2026

Submitted by: Director of People and Culture

Purpose: A report for People and Culture Committee to provide members with an overview of the impact of inclusive practice on productivity and statistics on progression from “Have a Go” days.

Recommendations: Members note the report

Summary: This report provides members with information on the impact of inclusion activities and interventions. The report highlights the ways in which initiatives support delivery of WYFRS’s legal duties, demonstrate compliance, support public confidence, enhance workforce wellbeing, and showcase the impact of work to ensure fair access to opportunity through recruitment related activities.

The report draws on commercial, public-sector, practitioner and fire-sector evidence, highlighting that inclusive actions support organisations ‘bottom line’, through opportunities to contribute, psychological safety, diverse thinking and decision-making; and supporting better workforce and service outcomes. All contribute to the strategic objective of keeping West Yorkshire safer.

WYFRS data focuses on firefighter recruitment and related inclusion work, identifying barriers experienced by female and ethnic minority candidates and showing how targeted activities such as ‘have a go days’, application workshops, female fitness sessions and interview workshops are supporting underrepresented

Making West Yorkshire Safer
www.westyorkshire.gov.uk

candidates to apply, prepare and progress while maintaining the same high quality recruitment and fitness standards for all.

Local Government (Access to information) Act 1972

Exemption Category: None

Contact Officer: Ian Stone, Head of Organisational Development, Skills & Talent.

ian.stone@westyorksfire.gov.uk

Background papers open to inspection: None

Annexes: None

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report is provided at the request of members of the People and Culture Committee to provide an evidence base for the inclusive practice work that is undertaken and embedded in our strategic priorities. The report shares research carried out nationally and internationally which provides data from commercial and public sector studies.
- 1.2 Diversity and inclusion practices are essential to West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service because they directly support our ability to serve all communities fairly, maintain public confidence, attract and retain a skilled workforce, and create a workplace where everyone can contribute safely and effectively.
- 1.3 As a public service, WYFRS must demonstrate compliance with its statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. Within the fire and rescue sector, these responsibilities are reinforced through HMICFRS inspection expectations on values, culture, fairness, diversity (including positive action), leadership and the handling of bullying, harassment and discrimination. Furthermore, the National Fire Chiefs Council People, Culture and Leadership annual delivery plan has a pillar focused on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, this sets a framework of best practice for FRSs.
- 1.4 In addition, the National Fire Chiefs Council set Fire Standards and issue guidance to reinforce this requirement. Key standards and frameworks, include Core Code of Ethics, (Developed in association with the Local Government Association and NFCC), which requires fire and rescue services to promote dignity and respect, challenge inappropriate behaviour, create equal opportunities and embed equality, diversity and inclusion into everyday practice.
- 1.5 Strong inclusion practices provide assurance of legal compliance (Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty within) and are central to organisational credibility and organisational effectiveness, workforce wellbeing, operational credibility (HMICFRS) and the delivery of a trusted, modern fire and rescue service for the people of West Yorkshire through the organisations Community Risk Management Plan (Your Fire and Rescue Service 2025-2028).
- 1.6 The definition of workforce diversity is much wider than protected characteristics and seeks to harness diversity of experience, creativity, thinking, emotional intelligence, intellect and expertise and how people approach and solve problems to deliver organisational benefits.

2. Research insights

- 2.1 The evidence base for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is strongest when inclusion is framed as an organisational effectiveness and productivity issue, rather than only as compliance or a values-based activity. Inclusive workplaces remove avoidable barriers to contribution, improve the quality of decision-making and create conditions where people are more able to perform well. Across commercial, public-sector and practitioner research, the strongest benefits are seen when inclusion is embedded into everyday systems, leadership practice and management behaviour,

and when progress is measured through workforce, service and performance outcomes.

- 2.2 Commercial evidence provides a useful way of describing productivity benefits in measurable terms. Accenture, Disability:IN and the American Association of People with Disabilities reported (November 2023) that companies identified as leaders in disability inclusion achieved stronger financial outcomes than comparison organisations, including higher revenue, net income and economic profit margins. Their later analysis also reported that disability inclusion leaders were more likely to outperform peers on productivity, measured as revenue per employee. This evidence does not prove that inclusion alone causes improved performance, but it does provide an externally verifiable association between removing barriers, enabling full workforce contribution and stronger organisational outcomes.
- 2.3 The UK public-sector evidence places inclusion within the wider delivery of public value. The GOV.UK Inclusion at Work Panel report (March 2024) emphasises activity that is evidence-informed, targeted and measurable, rather than inclusion work that only signals intent. For public services, this means being able to show how inclusion improves fair access, workforce confidence, decision-making, service legitimacy and accountability for outcomes.
- 2.4 This perspective is particularly relevant to WYFRS because inclusion supports both workforce effectiveness and public confidence. The Teal Book and Local Government Association material link equality, diversity and inclusion to fair access, inclusive service design, risk reduction, legal compliance, better decision-making and stronger legitimacy. In fire and rescue terms, this connects inclusion to staff confidence, organisational credibility, community trust and the ability to demonstrate that public duties are being met in practice.
- 2.5 From an academic practitioner perspective, Binna Kandola's work strengthens the productivity argument by focusing on the psychological conditions that enable people to perform well. In *Free to Soar: Race and Wellbeing in Organisations*, Kandola links exclusion to reduced self-confidence, creativity, emotional wellbeing and performance. The productivity logic is clear: exclusion creates an additional cognitive and emotional load, which can drain energy, reduce participation and limit contribution. Inclusive environments reduce that load and make it more likely that people can focus on collaboration, problem-solving, creativity and high-quality performance.
- 2.6 Kandola's wider business psychology perspective also reinforces that productivity is shaped by behaviour and workplace climate, not just formal policy. Prejudice, bias and exclusion can operate through everyday assumptions and interactions, affecting whether people feel able to speak honestly, challenge constructively and contribute fully. Inclusion therefore becomes a practical route to improving psychological safety, engagement, discretionary effort and team effectiveness.
- 2.7 Taken together, the evidence suggests that inclusion has the greatest positive impact when it is treated as a core organisational effectiveness issue. The commercial evidence links inclusion to productivity and performance outcomes; the public-sector evidence links it to legitimacy, service quality and accountable delivery; and Kandola's work explains why inclusion matters at the level of individual contribution, wellbeing, creativity and performance. For WYFRS, the key test is not only whether inclusion activity has taken place, but whether it is

improving workforce experience, removing barriers to contribution, strengthening management practice and supporting better organisational and community outcomes.

3. Fire and Rescue Sector Insights

- 3.1 West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service is inspected by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS). Equality, diversity and inclusion forms part of the people assessment within the inspection framework, requiring services to demonstrate positive practice, inclusive culture, fair treatment and evidence that expectations are being met in practice. In addition, we are required to uphold the Fire Standards which are developed by sector expertise and approved through the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC).
- 3.2 HMICFRS concluded that when equality, diversity and inclusion are incorporated well into a service, staff are more likely to feel included, valued and able to speak freely. This supports a positive professional and psychologically safe culture in which staff can provide a safe and effective service for the public.
- 3.3 The NFCC Culture Action Plan, launched in 2023 and closed in 2025 makes a similar connection between inclusion, workforce wellbeing and public trust. It describes inclusive and safe workplaces as places where people are valued, supported and able to thrive, and links this to fire and rescue services providing professional, inclusive services that inspire confidence and trust.
- 3.4 The NFCC Fire Standards Board Code of Ethics and associated Fire Standard also identifies practical benefits from embedding ethical and inclusive behaviour. These include more consistent professional behaviour, a more positive and accountable culture, improved trust and reputation, better recruitment and retention, stronger governance and a working environment where inappropriate behaviour can be challenged.
- 3.5 For WYFRS, these sector sources strengthen the case that inclusion should be understood as core business rather than a separate workforce initiative. The benefits are most clearly linked to staff voice, psychological safety, leadership accountability, fair treatment, workforce confidence, public legitimacy and the ability to provide a safe, effective and trusted service to the communities of West Yorkshire.
- 3.6 Research from Women in the Fire Service (WFS - A group of female firefighters supporting, developing and advocating for women in fire) and global sector studies shows female firefighters overwhelmingly support identical, task-justified physical standards. However, research highlights that standard commercial fitness sectors (Gyms etc) frequently misguide women developing their fitness. WFS encourages services to run specialised, physical "Taster Days" and localised structured fitness programs (such as the 2026 West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue female development sessions) to pivot women away from generic gym routines which fail to develop the tactical strength required to be firefighter fit.
- 3.7 Research from the NFCC and Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA – minority ethnic firefighters organisation) demonstrates minority ethnic candidates frequently apply for firefighter roles but drop out disproportionately during the written

assessments, applications, psychometric tests, verbal reasoning, and administrative stages with fewer issues at physical tests.

4. WYFRS Data Insights

Outreach - Impacts

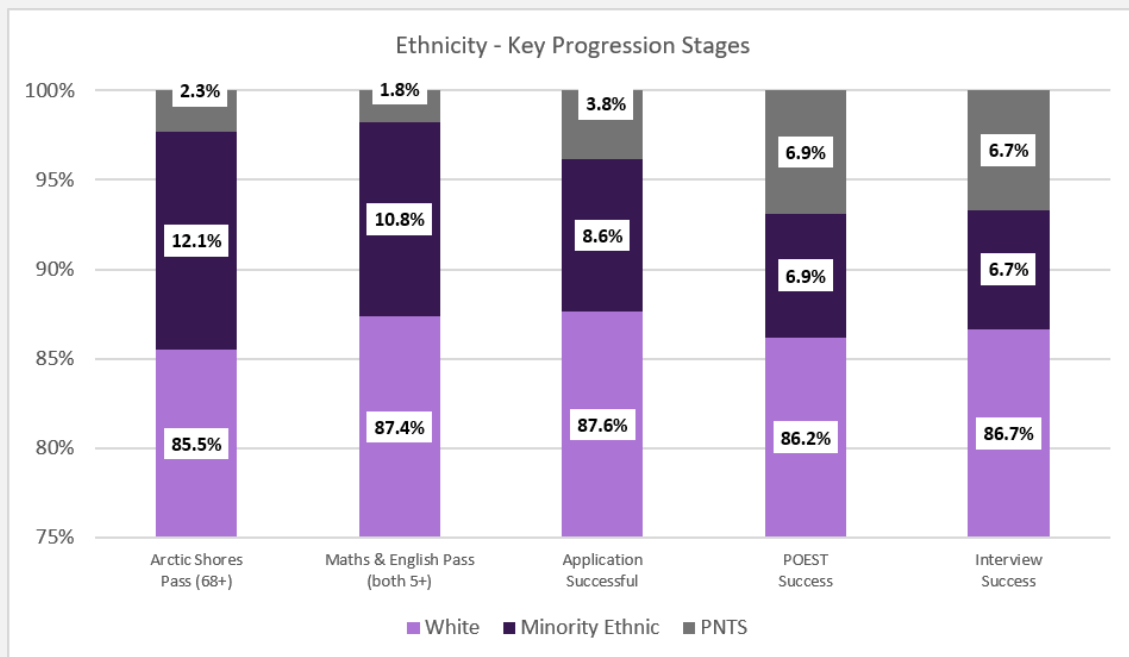
- 4.1 The Inclusion team undertake a programme of outreach and intervention activities to encourage people who are currently underrepresented in the workforce to apply for roles. Support varies depending on the specific recruitment campaign and whether there are groups significantly underrepresented.
- 4.2 For all recruitment, information on success criteria is made available to all candidates and, for larger campaigns, examples are shared.
- 4.3 For wholetime recruitment, data analysis for underrepresented groups shows two key areas where female and minority ethnic candidates tend to fare less well.
- 4.4 Female Fitness: data shows that typical training regimes do not always develop the specific fitness and strength areas required of firefighters. Workshops are therefore delivered to clarify the standards required and support development of appropriate fitness and strength.
- 4.5 Ethnic Minority Candidates Interview Skills: data shows minority ethnic candidates tend to disproportionately struggle at interview. Workshops developed by the Inclusion team support candidates with interview techniques.
- 4.6 None of the interventions are a guarantee of success and the materials covered and support delivered are made available to all candidates in different formats.
- 4.7 Data from recent initiatives between late 2025 and August 2026 shows targeted outreach is supporting candidates to apply and progress across firefighter recruitment. The data tagged as 'successful' relates to the next stage in the process, not necessarily people recruited into the post of firefighter in training.
- 4.8 Across 'Have a Go Days', 86 people attended, 55 are known to have applied, and 9 have progressed to the final stages.
- 4.9 Application workshops show strong results. Across the two recorded workshops, 26 people attended, 24 decided to apply, and 15 successfully progressed to the next stage in the process. This suggests practical support with written applications is effective.
- 4.10 Female fitness sessions also show positive progression. Across three cohorts, 43 people attended, 24 applied or progressed, and 6 were successful or recruited. The August 2026 process recorded the largest cohort, with 27 attendees, 15 reaching the Point of Entry Selection Test stage, 9 passing that stage and 4 achieving the required standard.
- 4.11 Interview workshops involved smaller numbers but still produced successful outcomes. Across the two recorded 2026 workshops, 11 people attended, all 11 progressed, and 2 were recruited. This indicates that focused support at later

recruitment stages can contribute to successful outcomes for candidates who meet the required standard.

- 4.12 Overall, the data provides a positive but proportionate outcome from targeted positive action activity. Work is underway to collect updated data to consider current and potential new impacts as the recruitment process evolves.
- 4.13 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, targeted support uses data to establish gaps and deploy interventions to narrow them. The interventions do not guarantee success and WYFRS high standards are maintained throughout. Candidates who cannot meet the required standard do not progress. The data indicates that interventions can reduce avoidable barriers by improving understanding, confidence and readiness at key stages of the process, while materials are also available to majority group applicants to support their application journey.

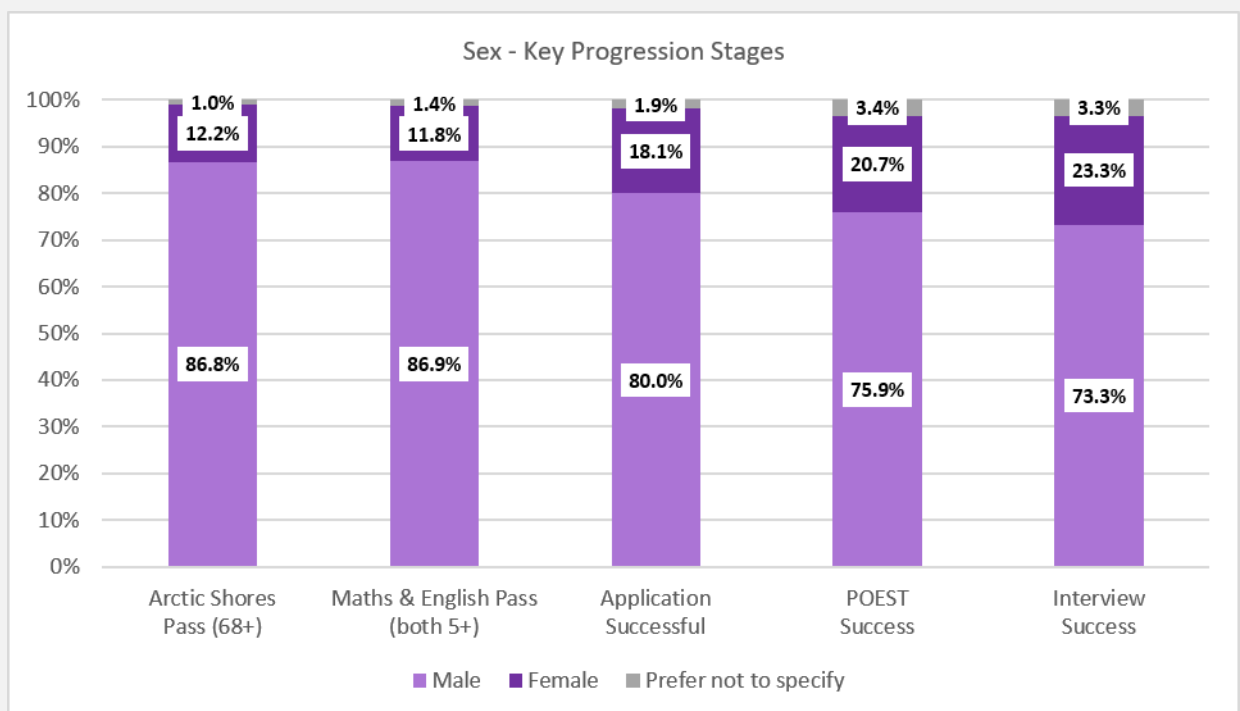
Firefighter Recruitment

- 4.14 A review of the 'end to end' process for recruitment of Firefighters carried out in 2024 demonstrated evidence of adverse impact on some groups across the process. Females and ethnic minority candidates were most consistently adversely impacted across the campaigns reviewed (2023/2024). Females were impacted in the bleep test / point of entry tests (POET); ethnic minorities in written application, POET and functional skills tests. Females also had the highest withdrawal rate of any group of candidates prior to the bleep test stage (33.0%).
- 4.15 The recommendations from this review led to improvements which in turn reduced inequality whilst retaining and building on the high standards WYFRS requires of people joining as Firefighters. The adverse impact measures highlighted that female candidates withdrew at the highest rate before the bleep test; of those who completed the bleep test 21% of female candidates passed compared with 60% of male candidates assessed at the time.
- 4.16 There was no indication of female candidates being generally less fit, but the specific measure of the Bleep Test led more females not meeting the 42.3 VO₂ max. Research identified another widely used sector test measured the same level but in a more inclusive manner. The service therefore removed the Bleep Test as an early-stage measure replacing with the Chester Treadmill incremental walking test which verifies the same measure.
- 4.17 Actions to address inequality, as outlined in 4.1 to 4.8 are focused on early intervention such as engagement activities with secondary and tertiary education talking about job opportunities at WYFRS, and interventions to support and enable underrepresented groups to apply and progress
- 4.18 Further recent analysis of progression across two recruitment campaigns in 2025/6 highlighted the following:



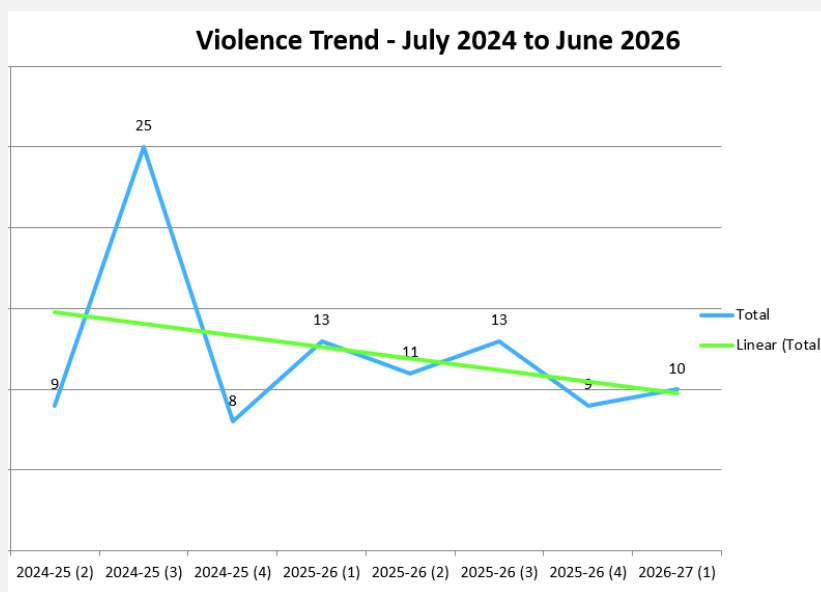
4.19 As can be seen from the data in the table above, 12.1% of people who achieved a pass at the first main stage (Arctic Shores) were from minority ethnic groups, compared with 85.5% from a White background. Applicants who achieved the required standard at interview and were therefore eligible to be offered a contract (subject to eligibility, health and fitness), 6.7% of successful applicants were from a minority ethnic background compared with 86.7% who are white.

4.20 Applications from minority ethnic candidates are consistently well below the proportion of people in West Yorkshire from minority ethnic backgrounds. This data echoes research carried out by the NFCC and AFSA showing barriers before fitness is assessed.

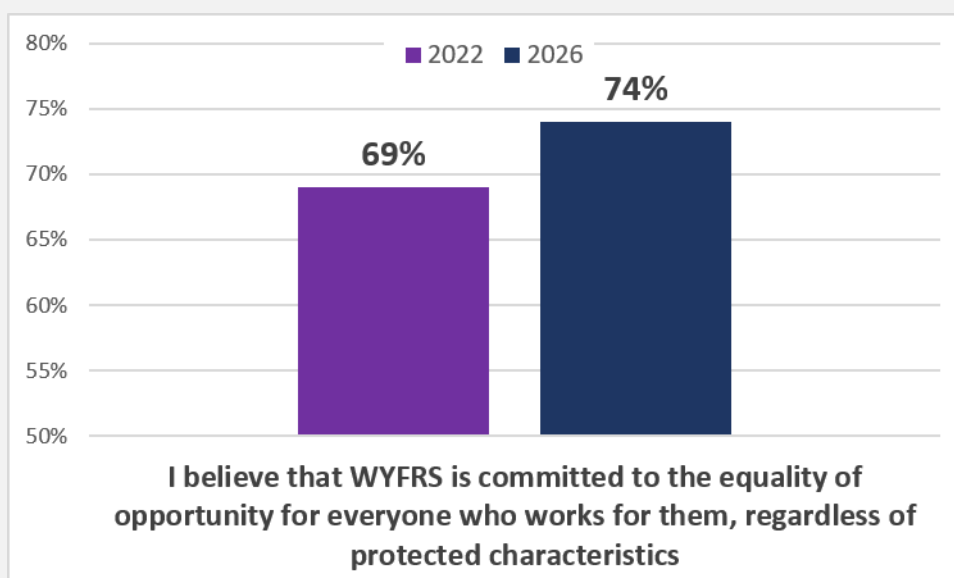


5. Impacts

- 5.1 A direct causal relationship between inclusion activity and wider organisational performance cannot be proven in isolation. However, WYFRS holds a range of workforce, engagement, recruitment and community measures that, when considered together, provide useful evidence of positive organisational outcomes alongside sustained investment in diversity and inclusion practice.
- 5.2 **Firefighter attacks:** The graph below shows a reduction in attacks on firefighters. Although this cannot be directly attributed to increased workforce diversity, it may indicate wider benefits from improved community engagement, communication and trust as WYFRS becomes more representative of the communities it serves..



- 5.3 **Employee engagement:** The 2026 engagement survey found no statistically significant difference in overall engagement scores between majority and underrepresented employee groups, including minority ethnic, female and disabled colleagues. The data shows the whole workforce is more positive about the organisational commitment to equality of opportunity for everyone in 2026 (74%) than in 2022 (69%).



- 5.4 The overall engagement evidence suggests progress towards a more inclusive employee experience, alongside wider improvements across other engagement metrics, such as pride and wellbeing. While the data does not provide inclusion activity caused these improvements, it provides a positive indication that progress on inclusion is being reflected in the lived experience of employees across the workforce.
- 5.5 **Community Outreach & CRMP:** WYFRS prevention activity supports delivery of the Community Risk Management Plan by using risk and vulnerability information to target resources and by engaging communities that may otherwise be harder to reach. Annual Delivery Plan data reports that WYFRS engaged more than 87,000 people through prevention activity and completed over 10,700 Safe and Well Visits. Improving workforce diversity can further support this work by strengthening communication, community insight and trust, including through partnership working with community groups and visible representation.
- 5.6 **Workforce Diversity:** Workforce diversity has improved significantly over the last eight reporting years. Female representation within wholetime operational roles has increased from 4% in 2017/18 to 10% in 2025/26, whilst ethnic minority representation has increased from 4% to 7% over the same period. The most notable acceleration in ethnic minority representation has occurred since 2022/23. These improvements have been achieved alongside targeted positive action, community engagement and recruitment outreach designed to showcase WYFRS as an employer and reduce barriers to entry to fire service careers. The data demonstrates sustained progress over time rather than short-term fluctuation and provides evidence that inclusion activity is contributing to a more representative workforce.

Characteristic	Workforce group	2017/ 2018	2018/ 2019	2019/ 2020	2020/ 2021	2021/ 2022	2022/ 2023	2023/ 2024	2024/ 2025	2025/ 2026
Gender	Wholetime female employees	4%	5%	6%	6%	7%	8%	9.5%	10.3%	10.0%
Gender	On-call female employees	4%	5%	6%	7%	5%	7%	7%	8%	9%
Gender	Control female employees	72%	71%	71%	71%	70%	69%	68%	67%	68%
Gender	Enabling female employees	53%	54%	56%	54%	56%	56%	55%	55%	55%
Ethnicity	Wholetime ethnic minority employees	4%	5%	5%	4%	5%	4%	6%	6%	7%
Ethnicity	On-call ethnic minority employees	0.7%	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%	2%	2%	3%
Ethnicity	Control ethnic minority employees	2%	3%	5%	5%	4%	4%	4%	0%	2%
Ethnicity	Enabling ethnic minority employees	8%	9%	6%	8%	11%	6%	7%	9%	9%

- 5.7 Overall, section 5 demonstrates that WYFRS has become progressively more representative while also improving employee engagement, maintaining broad parity of employee experience across demographic groups and increasing its reach into communities through prevention activity. While causation cannot be proven, the available evidence shows a positive and sustained association between inclusion activity and wider organisational outcomes, including workforce confidence, community reach and public service effectiveness.

6. Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Any future actions associated with the development or delivery of inclusion activity will be considered through normal budget planning and governance arrangements.

7. Legal Implications

The Monitoring Officer has considered this report and is satisfied it is presented in compliance with the Authority's Constitution.

8. People and Diversity Implications

The report directly considers people and diversity implications by setting out evidence on the impact of inclusive practice on the workforce, compliance with legislation including the Equality Act and supports the People aspect of the HMICFRS inspection framework.

9. Equality Impact Assessment

Are the recommendations within this report subject to Equality Impact Assessment as outlined in the EIA guidance? No

10. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Implications

The report identifies positive links between inclusion, psychological safety, wellbeing, confidence, participation and performance. These issues are relevant to the health, safety and wellbeing of staff and to the creation of a respectful working environment.

11. Environmental Implications

There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report.

12. Risk Management Implications

Failure to maintain effective inclusion practice may increase risks relating to legal compliance, workforce confidence, employee relations, staff wellbeing, recruitment and retention, culture, public trust and organisational reputation.

13. Duty to Collaborate Implications (Police and Crime Act 2017)

There are no direct duty to collaborate implications arising from this report.

14. Your Fire and Rescue Service Priorities

- Enhance the health, safety, and well-being of our people.

- Prioritise a people first mindset through ethical and professional leadership and management.
- Work with partners and communities to deliver our services.
- Further develop a culture of excellence, equality, learning, and inclusion.

15. Conclusion

- 15.1 The evidence shows that inclusion helps WYFRS attract talented people including people who may not have previously considered a career in Fire; we are widening the talent pool, removing avoidable barriers and strengthening decision-making to harness diverse experiences, thinking, insights and skills, while maintaining and building on our high standards and expectations.
- 15.2 Through evidence-led action, WYFRS continues to expand access to opportunity and support a broader talent pool, helping to build and sustain strong performance and delivery of its core purpose.
- 15.3 This report provides Members with assurance that WYFRS is using data and targeted activity to identify barriers, support candidates and improve fairness within recruitment processes.
- 15.4 This work delivers increasing confidence in the process by removing unnecessary barriers, building on strong foundations and maintaining high standards. This in turn supports WYFRS to deliver a workforce that better reflects communities of West Yorkshire.
- 15.5 Overall, WYFRS data shows that proportionate, targeted positive action can reduce avoidable barriers in recruitment while maintaining the high standards required of all candidates. Firefighting requires a unique combination of strengths, skills and judgement, and WYFRS will continue to select excellent people who share our values and ethics and possess the qualities to protect the communities of West Yorkshire, reduce risk and harm, prevent where possible, and respond effectively to fires and other emergencies.

16. Sources reviewed

Commercial and productivity evidence

Accenture, Disability:IN and the American Association of People with Disabilities. *The Disability Inclusion Imperative* (2023). Used to evidence the reported association between disability inclusion, financial performance and productivity, including productivity measured as revenue per employee.

<https://www.accenture.com/content/dam/accenture/final/accenture-com/document-2/Disability-Inclusion-Report-Business-Imperative.pdf>

Accenture Newsroom. *Companies leading in disability inclusion have outperformed peers, Accenture research finds* (2018). Used as an earlier commercial evidence source on the relationship between disability inclusion and organisational performance.

<https://newsroom.accenture.com/news/2018/companies-leading-in-disability-inclusion-have-outperformed-peers-accenture-research-finds>

Accenture Newsroom. *Companies that lead in disability inclusion outperform peers financially, reveals new research from Accenture* (2023). Used to support the updated commercial productivity evidence, including the reported 25% productivity outperformance among disability inclusion leaders.

<https://newsroom.accenture.com/news/2023/companies-that-lead-in-disability-inclusion-outperform-peers-financially-reveals-new-research-from-accenture>

UK public-sector and local government evidence

Cabinet Office, Equality Hub and Race Disparity Unit. *Inclusion at Work Panel: Report on improving workplace diversity and inclusion* (2024). Used to support the need for evidence-informed, targeted and measurable inclusion practice.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inclusion-at-work-panel-report-on-improving-workplace-diversity-and-inclusion>

Government Project Delivery. *The Teal Book: Chapter 5: Equality, diversity and inclusion* (2024, updated 2026). Used to frame inclusion as part of public-sector delivery, legal compliance, public value, diverse thinking and effective project and programme outcomes.

<https://projectdelivery.gov.uk/teal-book/home/part-a-project-delivery-in-government/chapter-5-equality-diversity-and-inclusion/>

Local Government Association. *The business case for equality*. Used to support the public-sector case for inclusion, including fair access, community outcomes, better decision-making, stronger workplace contribution and enhanced productivity.

<https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/workforce%20-%20equalities%20and%20inclusion%20-%20The%20business%20case%20for%20equality%20%281%29.pdf>

Practitioner and workplace psychology evidence

Kandola, B., Kinouani, G., Moggeridge, T., Proto, R., Taylor, J., Weston, L., and Yardley, L. *Free to Soar: Race and Wellbeing in Organisations* (2020). Used to support the relationship between belonging, wellbeing, confidence, creativity and performance at work.

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Free-Soar-Race-Wellbeing-Organisations/dp/1527267725>

Kandola, B. *Designing for Diversity: Developing Inclusive and Equitable Talent Management Processes* (2025). Retained as a supporting source where the report considers fair systems, bias reduction, recruitment, progression or wider organisational processes. Kogan Page.

People management and implementation guidance

Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. *Inclusion at work 2022* (2022). Used to support evidence-informed inclusion practice, data-driven planning, leadership

commitment, manager capability and long-term impact measurement.

<https://www.cipd.org/uk/knowledge/reports/inclusion-work/>

Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. *Inclusive recruitment: Guide for people professionals* (2024). Used to support practical inclusive recruitment actions, including structured, objective and transparent recruitment processes.

<https://www.cipd.org/en/knowledge/guides/inclusive-employers/>

Bosley, A. and Gifford, J. *Effective people managers: An evidence review* (2023). Used to support the importance of line manager behaviour, workforce climate and people-manager capability in shaping organisational outcomes and performance.

<https://www.cipd.org/globalassets/media/knowledge/knowledge-hub/evidence-reviews/2023-pdfs/8424-effective-people-managers-practice-summary.pdf>

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Agenda item: 12

Staff Sickness Absence Targets

People and Culture Committee

Date: 2 October 2026

Submitted by: Director of People and Culture

Purpose: A report for the People and Culture Committee to provide members with an overview of the approach to sickness absence monitoring.

Recommendations: Members note the report

Summary: This report is to provide an overview of our approach to sickness absence monitoring, and more specifically to address the question of why key performance indicator (KPI) targets are not recommended in relation to sickness absence.

Local Government (Access to information) Act 1972

Exemption Category: None

Contact Officer: Ian Stone, Head of Organisational Development, Skills & Talent. ian.stone@westyorkshire.gov.uk

Background papers open to inspection: None

Annexes: None

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report is provided at the request of members of the People and Culture Committee to provide an overview of our approach to sickness absence monitoring, and more specifically to address the question of why key performance indicator (KPI) targets are not recommended in relation to sickness absence.
- 1.2 Sickness absence is an important workforce measure. It provides information about lost working time, workforce capacity and patterns that require further investigation. However, research does not support a conclusion that a low sickness absence rate, by itself, is evidence of a healthy, motivated or operationally effective workforce
- 1.3 In order to become a firefighter, there are rigorous tests, including fitness. Throughout their career, firefighters will sometimes experience periods of sickness which would mean that they are temporarily unable to meet the required level of fitness to complete their job effectively. They are able to use their professional judgment to determine whether they are too unwell to work, followed by the usual process of seeking a medical note.
- 1.4 Being fit and well for work, therefore, is likely to have a higher criterion than for other jobs which do not require a high level of fitness. Firefighters are also exposed to greater risks than other professions, for example in relation to disruption to sleep, exposure to cancer-causing contaminants Musculo-skeletal disorders (MSK), and mental health, including trauma exposure.
- 1.5 Reported rates of sickness absence have been noted by those across different sectors as having increased (ONS, 2025).
- 1.6 The majority of sickness absence within the service is long-term sickness absence. Internal data also notes that there are some triggers for return to work, such as a reduction to half pay or possible retirement on medical grounds. It is recognised that this indicates that there are other discretionary factors than simply health in long term sickness.

2. Research insights

- 2.1 Sickness absence remains an important workforce measure. It provides information about lost working time, workforce capacity and patterns that may require further examination. However, the research does not support interpreting a low sickness absence rate, by itself, as evidence of a healthy, motivated or operationally effective workforce.
- 2.2 The central limitation is that sickness absence is an outcome measure with multiple possible causes. Recorded absence is influenced by health, exposure to occupational risks, work demands, staffing, access to treatment and adjustments, management practice, reporting culture and the perceived consequences of taking

time off. The same recorded rate can therefore represent very different underlying conditions.

- 2.3 Research has devoted disproportionate attention to motivational explanations of sickness absence, although most absence-inducing situations arise from ill health. Warr and Yearta's (1995) review and analysis is important because it brings health back into a literature that had often treated absence principally as motivated behaviour, distinguishing between absence attributable to ill health, attendance motivation, and a combination of the two. Johansson and Lundberg (2004) subsequently stated the underlying point explicitly: "most absence-inducing situations will be due to ill health". This does not exclude a discretionary or contextual element. Workplace conditions can influence whether ill health results in absence, adjusted work or attendance while ill. In Johansson and Lundberg's study of 4,924 people, stronger attendance requirements were associated with both lower absence and greater attendance while ill.
- 2.4 This creates an important measurement problem. A reduction in recorded absence may reflect improved health, but it may also reflect employees working while unwell - presenteeism. A systematic review of longitudinal research found that most included studies associated sickness presenteeism with subsequent sickness absence and poorer self-rated health (Skagen and Collins, 2016). Reduced absence in the short term may therefore coexist with poorer health or additional absence later.
- 2.5 The economic evidence also indicates that absence captures only part of the organisational effect of ill health. Deloitte's 2024 analysis estimated that poor mental health cost UK employers approximately £51 billion annually. Presenteeism was the largest component, at approximately £24 billion, compared with £7 billion attributed to sickness absence. Deloitte's 2022 analysis estimated that mental-health-related presenteeism cost around four to four-and-a-half times as much as mental-health-related absence (Deloitte, 2024, Deloitte, 2022). These are modelled UK-wide mental-health costs rather than fire-sector estimates, but they illustrate why recorded absence alone is an incomplete measure of the effect of ill health.
- 2.6 Consequently, a sickness absence KPI can reliably describe how much recorded absence occurred. It cannot, without supporting evidence, establish:
- whether the workforce has become healthier;
 - whether employees are attending while unwell;
 - whether someone returning to work has recovered sufficiently to perform safely;
 - whether underlying work-related causes have been addressed; or
 - whether a difference between teams reflects performance rather than differences in role, exposure, workforce composition or a small number of long-term cases.

For these reasons, the Service uses sickness absence data as part of its workforce intelligence rather than treating the aggregate figure as the principal indicator of workforce health or management performance.

- 2.7 The emphasis is on understanding and managing the conditions that influence health, workability and sustainable attendance. This is consistent with Affinity Health at Work's COMPASS framework, which describes absence and return to work as complex and supports an integrated, systemic approach. The framework was informed by evidence reviews, professional guidance, stakeholder interviews and testing across 43 organisations. Affinity's review model combines organisational data with examination of policy, employee and manager experience, root causes, at-risk groups and return-to-work arrangements (Affinity at Work, accessed 16/09/2026).
- 2.8 The Service's wider and proactive focus therefore includes:
- Clear policies and procedures that sets out responsibilities and a framework for managing and supporting absence management;
 - Training for managers;
 - Regular monitoring;
 - preventing avoidable physical and psychological harm;
 - understanding the causes and patterns of absence rather than the total alone;
 - fitness and workability, including whether people can undertake their role safely;
 - appropriate occupational-health support and workplace adjustments;
 - the quality and sustainability of return to work;
 - employee confidence to disclose ill health and seek support promptly;
 - fatigue, recovery and attendance while unwell; and
 - the organisational conditions associated with health, including demands, control, support, relationships, role and change, as reflected in the HSE Management Standards. (HSE, accessed, 16/09/2026)
- 2.9 This does not mean that sickness absence is ignored or that appropriate attendance management is unnecessary. Absence rates, days lost, frequency, duration and causes remain useful descriptive and diagnostic information. The distinction is between monitoring absence and treating a lower aggregate number as sufficient evidence of improvement.

3. Employment Law and WYFRS v Sector Monitoring

WYFRS Attendance Assurance Framework

Whilst the Service does not utilise a numerical sickness absence reduction target, sickness absence is subject to extensive monitoring, governance and management oversight. Through the Supporting Good Attendance Programme, the Service now undertakes regular analysis of absence duration, absence reasons, operational impact, modified duties, occupational health interventions and long-term case progression. Weekly executive reporting identifies areas of pressure, emerging trends, priority cases, operational resilience risks and required management actions.

Current analysis consistently demonstrates that long-term absence accounts for the overwhelming majority of sickness days lost, typically between 88% and 96% of all absence days. This highlights the importance of focusing on effective case management, occupational health support, modified duties and sustainable return-to-work arrangements rather than applying a simple reduction target. In September 2026, for example, 77 long-term cases accounted for 9,734 of 10,176 sickness days lost, equating to 95.7%, while a further 37 employees were being actively supported through modified duties arrangements. This resulted in 143 live sickness or modified duties cases requiring management oversight across the Service.

Fire and Rescue Sector Comparison

Comparative sickness absence benchmarking across the Fire and Rescue sector provides useful context but should be interpreted cautiously due to differences in workforce profiles, operational demand, demographics, absence recording arrangements and the disproportionate impact of relatively small numbers of long-term cases.

WYFRS uses sector benchmarking data alongside internal workforce intelligence held within SPARK to understand relative performance rather than to set absence reduction targets. Internal analysis demonstrates that the Service has a detailed understanding of the main drivers of absence, with musculoskeletal conditions, mental health-related absence and surgical recovery representing the most significant causes of sickness absence. This allows the Service to focus resources on prevention, rehabilitation, occupational health support, modified duties and long-term case management, rather than focusing solely on aggregate absence figures.

Employment law requires employers to manage sickness absence fairly and consistently. Legal considerations include:

- 3.1 Equality Act (2010): Ensuring that absence management policies (including targets) do not discriminate against employees with disabilities.
- 3.2 Health and Safety at Work Act 1974: Providing a safe and healthy working environment to prevent work-related illnesses.
- 3.3 Employment Rights Act 1996: Ensuring that employees rights are protected during periods of sickness absence, including the right to statutory sick pay.
- 3.4 WYFRS currently use the Bradford Factor measure of sickness absence. The Bradford Factor measures the number of spells of absence and identifies persistent short-term absence. Our policy ensures that:
 - 3.5 sickness absence is managed in a fair, consistent and professional manner,
 - 3.6 Clear good attendance expectations are set,
 - 3.7 Attendance is managed and monitored robustly.

4. Fire and Rescue Sector Insights

- 4.1 As noted, fire and rescue work makes this distinction particularly important because attendance and operational readiness are not synonymous.
- 4.2 Litchfield and Hinckley's (2016) study of operational staff in West Midlands Fire Service identified several influences on attendance: employee health and fitness, engagement and occupational culture, leadership, shift patterns, staffing arrangements, occupational-health relationships and attendance policies. Participants also described peer pressure and financial consequences linked to absence. The authors explicitly identified presenteeism as a possible consequence of attendance-related financial incentives and suggested it might partly explain attendance among more senior staff.
- 4.3 The study identified benefits from policies tailored to the operational fire-service context and from managers understanding and implementing them properly. Its significance is that a low recorded absence rate can have several explanations and cannot automatically be equated with better health. This means that using sickness absence targets may drive unhelpful behaviour
- 4.4 The health demands of firefighting reinforce this point. Research involving UK firefighters has identified substantial occupational health risks, including sleep problems, mental-health difficulties and risks associated with fire-contaminant exposure (Wolfe, et al, 2023). These risks may affect health and performance without necessarily appearing immediately as sickness absence.
- 4.5 Operational firefighters must also maintain adequate aerobic fitness, strength and endurance. UK research into return-to-work following injury found that, although national firefighter fitness standards exist, there was no nationally agreed return-to-work assessment. A Delphi study reached agreement on job-relevant tasks for assessing readiness, with aerobic fitness regarded as the most important component, and subsequent research by Noll and colleagues (2021, 2024) developed this work further.
- 4.6 This research relates specifically to return following injury and does not quantify the average loss of fitness during all sickness absence. It nevertheless demonstrates the underlying issue: a person can be recorded as having returned to work without the absence figure itself providing evidence that operational fitness has been restored. In a safety-critical environment, the relevant consideration is sustainable and safe workability, not attendance in isolation.

5. WYFRS Data Insights

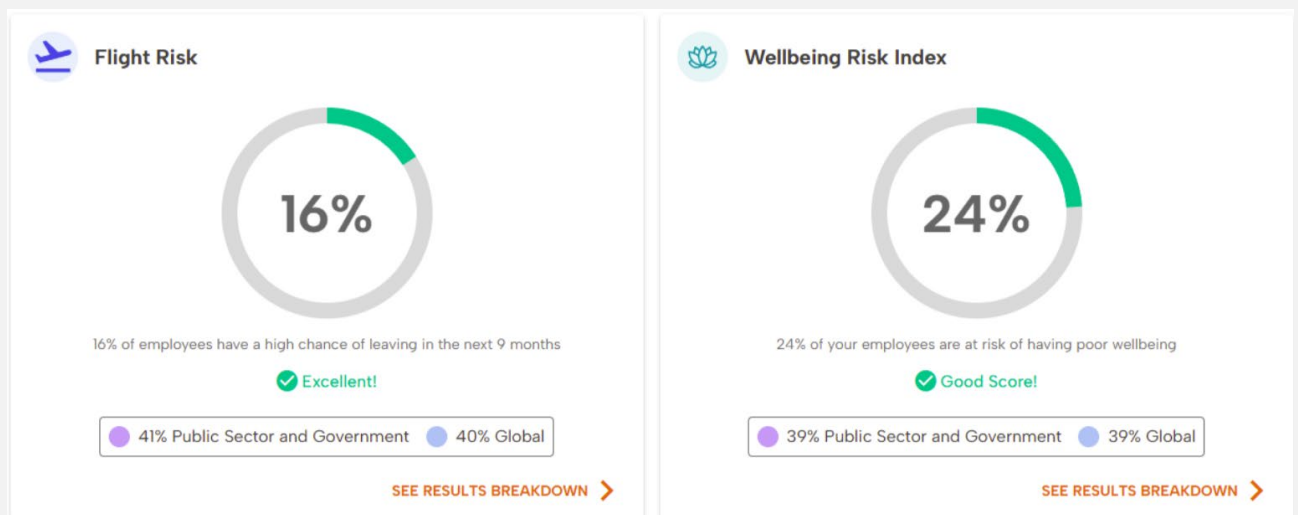
- 5.1 The available employee survey data provides useful organisational context, but it does not include direct sickness absence measures such as absence rate, days lost, frequency or duration.

Survey indicators associated with wellbeing improved between 2022 and 2026: overall wellbeing increased from 64% to 71%, The Wellbeing Risk Index reduced from 37% to 24%, Both average happiness and job satisfaction increased by seven percentage points.

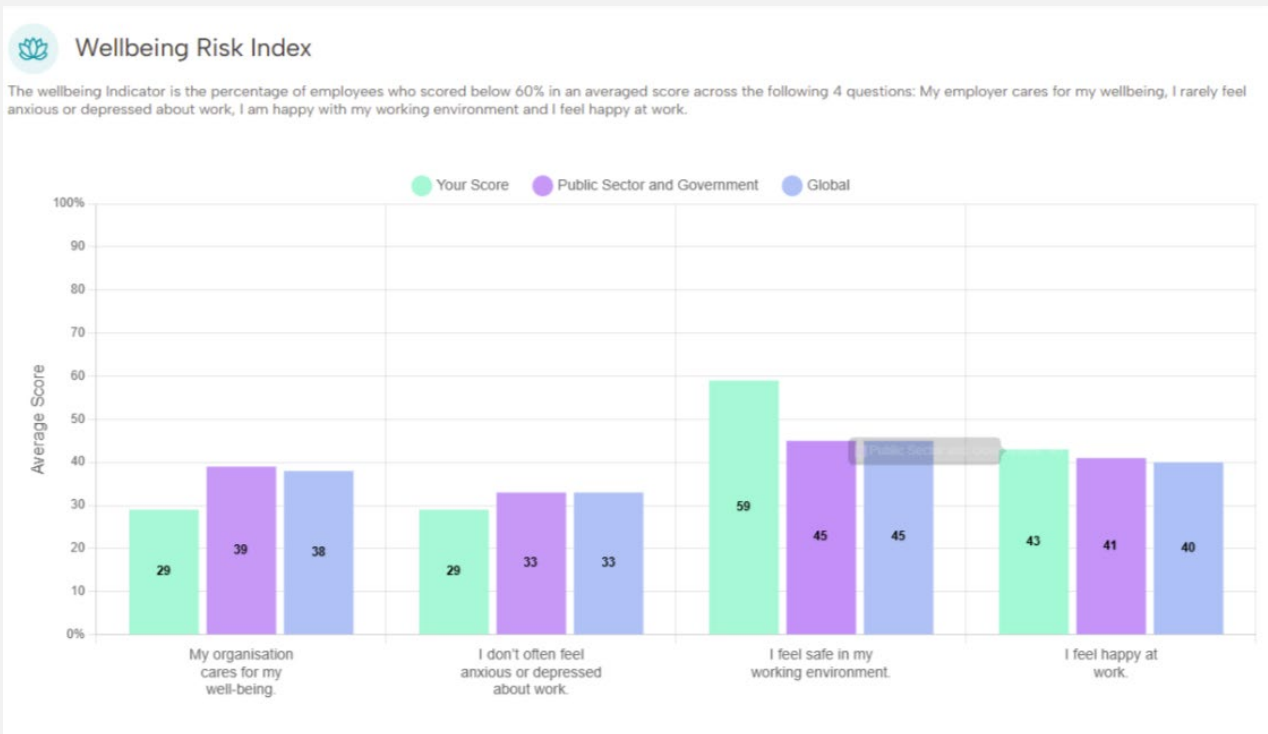
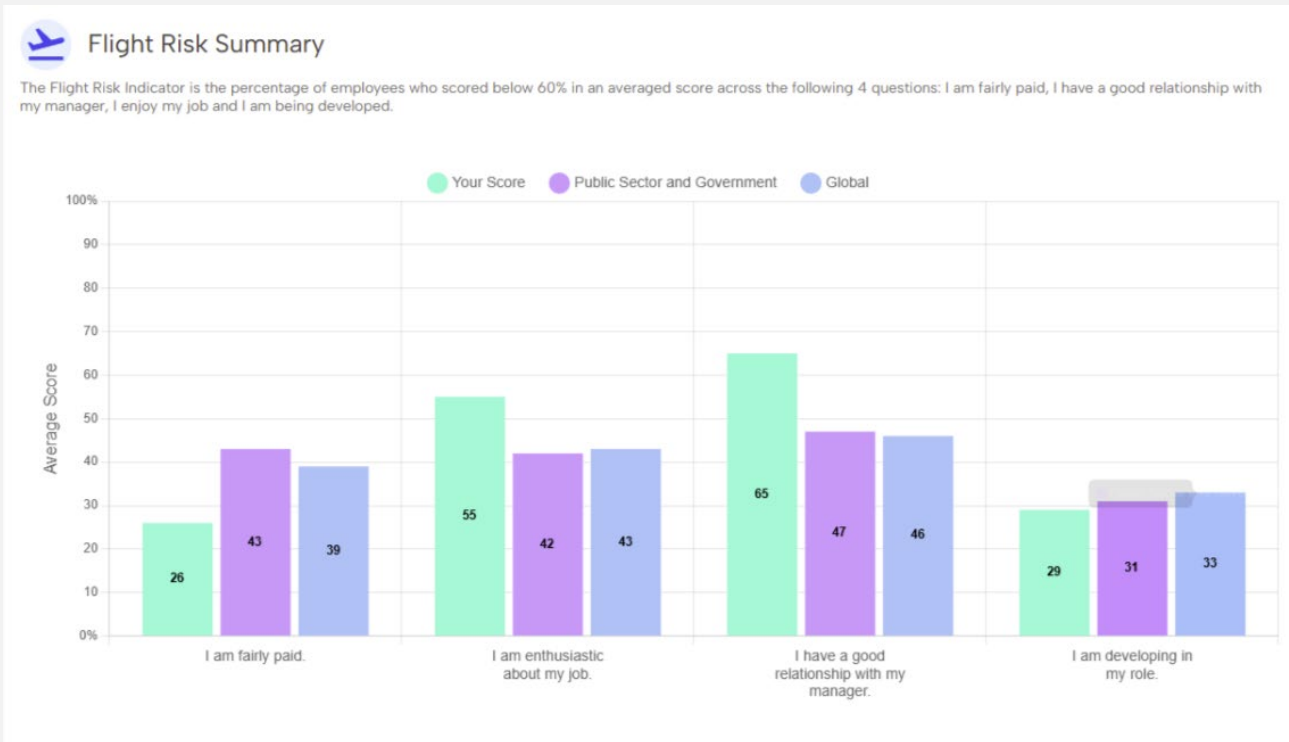
Measure	2022	2026	Change	Business interpretation
Wellbeing (overall index)	64%	71%	+7 percentage points	Employee perceptions of wellbeing improved.
Wellbeing Risk Index*	37%	24%	-13 percentage points	The reported risk index reduced; a lower score is favourable.
Average happiness	66%	73%	+7 percentage points	Overall happiness improved.
Job satisfaction	69%	76%	+7 percentage points	Overall job satisfaction improved.

5.2 In the 2026 survey, 69% of respondents agreed that the organisation provides good support for employee health, wellbeing and resilience, while 60% agreed that they feel supported in relation to mental health and wellbeing.

5.3 When compared to the wider public sector, wellbeing risk and flight risk, where employees are considering leaving, was much lower:



A breakdown of these indices shows that employees are motivated and enthusiastic about their work;



5.4 These results suggest a more positive employee experience and reduced reported wellbeing risk, but they should not be interpreted as direct evidence that sickness absence has reduced.

5.5 The data supports a diagnostic approach focused on causes, patterns, workability, occupational-health support, adjustments and sustainable return to work.

- 5.6 Monitoring should therefore consider absence rates alongside qualitative and operational information, including long-term case profiles, reasons for absence, return-to-work quality, role-specific risks and evidence of presenteeism.
- 5.7 The organisational data supports the report's position that sickness absence should be monitored carefully, but that setting a numerical sickness absence reduction target could oversimplify the issue and risk driving unintended behaviours.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Any future actions associated with the development of monitoring of sickness absence will be considered through normal budget planning and governance arrangements.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 The Monitoring Officer has considered this report and is satisfied it is presented in compliance with the Authority's Constitution.

8. People and Diversity Implications

- 8.1 The report directly considers people and diversity implications by setting out evidence on the impact of inclusive practice on the workforce, compliance with legislation including the Equality Act and supports the People aspect of the HMICFRS inspection framework.

9. Equality Impact Assessment

- 9.1 Are the recommendations within this report subject to Equality Impact Assessment as outlined in the EIA guidance? No

[\(EIA Template and Guidance\)](#)

- 9.2 Date EIA Completed: "Add EIA completed date here"

- 9.3 Date EIA Approved: "Add EIA completed date here"

- 9.4 The EIA is available on request from the report author or from
diversity.inclusion@westyorksfire.gov.uk

10. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Implications

- 10.1 There are significant health, safety and wellbeing implications arising from absence management. The creation of a key performance indicator is not supported as a measure which would positively impact the wellbeing of the workforce.

10.2 Returning to work before being fit could have safety implications. In addition a return to work before being fully fit can lead to longer-term impacts on employee health for the individual and in the case of viral or other contagious illnesses could have a knock-on impact on the wider workforce.

11. Environmental Implications

11.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report.

12. Risk Management Implications

12.1 Encouraging employees to continue to work whilst unwell may increase risks relating to health and safety including accidents and further injury, staff wellbeing, retention, culture, public trust and organisational reputation.

12.2 The risk is therefore managed through robust monitoring of absence, a focus on wellbeing and healthy working practices and a strong focus on safe methods of working. These factors combined mitigate risks whilst also providing assurance of continued monitoring of absence, factors impacting attendance and measures to improve health.

13. Duty to Collaborate Implications (Police and Crime Act 2017)

13.1 There are no direct duty to collaborate implications arising from this report

14. Your Fire and Rescue Service Priorities

14.1 This report links with the Community Risk Management Plan 2025-28 strategic priorities below:

- Provide a safe, effective and resilient response to local and national emergencies.
- Enhance the health, safety, and well-being of our people.
- Prioritise a people first mindset through ethical and professional leadership and management
- Use resources in an innovative, sustainable, and efficient manner to maximise value for money.
- Further develop a culture of excellence, equality, learning, and inclusion.

15. Conclusions

15.1 The evidence supports continuation of the Service's approach of considering sickness absence alongside health risks, workability, operational fitness, presenteeism, occupational-health support and sustainable return to work.

15.2 This report provides Members with assurance that the approach used by WYFRS is supported by evidence and that targets for reducing sickness absence are avoided in order to ensure appropriate focus on factors which drive ill-health and do not reinforce unhelpful behaviour.

16. References

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OFFICIAL

Agenda item: 13

Local Pension Board Annual Report 2025/26

People and Culture Committee

Date: 2 October 2026

Submitted by: Director of People and Culture

Purpose: To consider the Local Pension Board Annual Report 2025/26 and confirm whether the Local Pension Board is acting within its Terms of Reference and in accordance with good governance principles.

Recommendations: That Members agree that the Local Pension Board is acting within its Terms of Reference and in accordance with good governance principles.

Summary: The Local Pension Board is required to produce an Annual Report setting out activity undertaken during the course of the previous year. The Annual Report is submitted for formal ratification by this Committee

Local Government (Access to information) Act 1972

Exemption Category: None

Contact Officer: Jik Townson, Committee Services and Governance Officer
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T: 01274 682311 X 671340

Background papers open to inspection: None

Annexes: Annex 1 – LPB Annual Report 2025/26
Annex 2 – LPB Terms of Reference

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Local Pension Board is required to produce an Annual Report for formal ratification by the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority's People and Culture Committee as set out in the approved Terms of Reference. The People and Culture Committee is the responsible committee of the Fire Authority tasked with considering recommendations from the Local Pension Board

2. Information

- 2.1 The draft Annual Report 2025/26 was considered by the Local Pension Board at its meeting held on 3 July 2026.
- 2.2 A copy of the Annual Report is attached as an annex to this report and Members are invited to confirm (as appropriate) that the Local Pension Board is acting in accordance with its Terms of Reference and in accordance with good governance principles,

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 The Monitoring Officer has considered this report and is satisfied it is presented in compliance with the Authority's Constitution.

5. Human Resource and Diversity Implications

- 5.1 There are no human resource or diversity implications arising from this report.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 Are the recommendations within this report subject to Equality Impact Assessment as outlined in the EIA guidance? No

7. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Implications

- 7.1 There are no health, safety and wellbeing implications arising from this report.

8. Environmental Implications

- 8.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

9. Risk Management Implications

9.1 There are no risk management implications arising from this report

10. Duty to Collaborate Implications (Police and Crime Act 2017)

10.1 There are no duty to collaborate implications arising from this report

11. Your Fire and Rescue Service Priorities

11.1 This report links with the Community Risk Management Plan 2025-28 strategic priorities below:

- Provide a safe, effective and resilient response to local and national emergencies.
- Focus our activities on reducing risk and vulnerability.
- Enhance the health, safety, and well-being of our people.
- Prioritise a people first mindset through ethical and professional leadership and management
- Work with partners and communities to deliver our services.
- Use resources in an innovative, sustainable, and efficient manner to maximise value for money.
- Further develop a culture of excellence, equality, learning, and inclusion.

12. Conclusions

12.1 That the Local Pension Board Annual Report is ratified.

Local Pension Board

Annual Report 2025/26



Ownership:	Committee Services
Date Issued:	3 July 2026
Version:	V1
Status:	Draft for approval at P&C Committee
Protected:	OFFICIAL

Revision and Signoff Sheet

Change Record

Date	Author	Version	Comments
03.07.26	Jik Townson	V1 – initial draft	To submit to Local Pension Board on 3 July 2026 for final comment and recommendation for approval to P&C Committee
		V2 – final draft	To submit to P&C Committee on 2 October 2026 for formal ratification

Reviewers

Name	Version Approved	Position	Organisation	Date
Jik Townson		Committee Services and Governance	WYFRA	03.07.26

Distribution

Name	Position	Organisation
Local Pension Board		WYFRA
People and Culture Committee		WYFRA

Equality Impact Assessment

Are the recommendations within this report subject to Equality Impact Assessment as outlined in the EIA guidance? No

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Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this Annual report is to provide a source of information about the status of West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority Local Pension Board for Scheme members and for the Scheme Manager together with a summary of issues considered in the relevant period (1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026)

1.2 In accordance with Section 5 and s.30 (1) of the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 and Regulation 4A of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (Amendment) (Governance) Regulations 2015, the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority Local Pension Board was established in February 2015 to provide advice on the effective and efficient administration and management of the various firefighter pension schemes.

1.3 The Local Government Pension Scheme for Green Book employees is monitored by a separate Local Pension Board established by the West Yorkshire Local Government Pension Scheme and does not form part of this Annual Report.

1.4 The Report includes commentary on the following;

- A summary of the work undertaken by the Local Pension Board during 2025/26
- Detail of areas investigated and how these areas were dealt with
- Any conflicts of interest and how these were managed
- Any identified risks and other areas of potential concern
- Any expenses and costs incurred by the Board
- Gifts and hospitality received by members of the Board
- Training for Board members
- Breaches
- Scrutiny and review

Membership and Meetings of the Board

2.1 The West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority Local Pension Board comprises 6 members as follows (as approved by the Full Authority on 19 June 2025)

- 3 Scheme Member representatives (Ryan Binks, Jim Davies (FBU) and vacancy)
- 3 Scheme Manager representatives (Councillors Mike Pollard and Fozia Shaheen, and John Roberts CFO - Chair) (plus Non-voting Officer Adviser(s) as appropriate)

2.2 The Board has met on 2 occasions in the 2025/26 year. There was an attendance of 80% during the period in question

Work undertaken by the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority Local Pension Board 2025/26

3.1 The work undertaken by the Board during the course of the year has been defined by the extant Terms of Reference (initially approved at the 24 June 2016 meeting of the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority) and as amended in December 2021 with regard to the revised term of office (two years).

3.2 During the period 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026 the following items were considered by the Board;

- Updates on the work with the national Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) & its sub-committee (Ensuring the effectiveness of the Local Pension Board)
- Discretions made by the Scheme Manager
- Annual Review of Terms of Reference
- Pension Risk Register
- Compliance Deadlines and Breaches Register
- Legislative Updates
- Firefighter Pensions England bulletins
- Age Discrimination Remedy
- Matthews Remedy

3.3 The Activity report (submitted to each meeting) includes detail on the number of;

- Number of members across the various schemes
- Membership movements during the reporting period
- Number of opt-ins and opt-outs
- Number of retirements
- Estimates processed
- Number of new firefighter recruits
- Total firefighter headcount
- Number of IDRP Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints

3.4 Each agenda also includes the following standing items;

- Legislative updates
- Scrutiny and Review (including discretions, breach and risk registers)
- Pensions Ombudsman Sample Cases
- Member Training
- WY Pension Fund Key Performance Indicators

3.5 Specific Investigations and Board Resolutions

- There were no investigations or actions that required further investigation during 2025/26

3.6 Conflicts of Interest

- As statutorily required, members of the Local Pension Board complete a Declaration of Interests. The register is maintained by the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority

Committee Services section. Members of the Board reviewed their Declarations in June 2025.

- There have been no declarations made by any member, adviser or attendee at any meeting of the Board during the relevant period.

3.7 Identified Risks and Areas of Concern

- No specific risks or areas of concern were raised during the year

3.8 Expenses and Costs

- There has been no expenditure or costs incurred within the relevant periods for the administration of the Board.

3.9 Gifts and Hospitality

- There have been declarations of gifts or hospitality received by Members of the Board during the relevant period.

3.10 Training

- It is a statutory requirement of the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 that members of the Local Pension Board should have the capacity to become conversant with, and develop a knowledge of, detailed related issues in order to effectively carry out their duties.
- In this respect monthly bulletins from LGA Pension Advisory Service have been provided along with the summaries and decisions on cases dealt with by the Pension Ombudsman, which serve as a learning tool for LPB members.
- In addition members have been offered the opportunity to attend LGA LPB Training Sessions in person and via MS Teams

3.11 Legislative Updates

- As a statutory requirement, members of the Local Pension Board have been provided with regular legislative updates.
- The following have been provided during the relevant period:
 - Update to member contribution structure
 - Pensions Dashboards
 - Pension Increases
 - Budget 2025
 - Age Discrimination Remedy
 - Mathews Remedy

3.12 Scrutiny and Review

- Members are required to scrutinise areas relevant to the administration of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes.

- The following areas were scrutinised during the relevant period;
 - Discretions
 - Pensions Breaches Register
 - Pension Risk Register
 - Compliance Deadlines

How this report supports our values

WYFRS Core Values

- **Teamwork:** We recognise everyone's strengths and contributions, working effectively as one team.
- **Integrity:** We are trustworthy, act ethically, treating each other with dignity and respect.
- **Learning:** We learn all the time; we share knowledge and experiences, celebrating success.
- **Responsibility:** We are responsible, work positively and take ownership of the work we do.
- **Communication:** We share clear information, in ways everyone understands, having open discussions.

Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services – our five ethical principles:



- **Putting our communities first:** We put the interests of the public, the community, and service users first.
- **Integrity:** We act with integrity including being open, honest, and consistent in everything that we do.
- **Dignity and respect:** We treat people with dignity and respect, making decisions objectively based on evidence, without discrimination or bias.
- **Leadership:** We are all positive role models, always demonstrating flexible and resilient leadership. We are all accountable for everything we do and challenge all behaviour that falls short of the highest standards.
- **Equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI):** We continually recognise and promote the value of EDI, both within the FRS and the wider communities in which we serve. We stand against all

forms of discrimination, create equal opportunities, promote equality, foster good relations, and celebrate difference.

Monitoring and review

This is an annual report submitted to the Local Pension Board and ratified by the People and Culture Committee

Document Properties

Document Title:	Local Pension Board Annual Report
Author:	Jik Townson
Creation Date:	06 May 2026
Last Updated:	03 September 2026

West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority

Local Pension Board

Terms of Reference

Function and Responsibilities

The function of the Local Pension Board is to assist the Scheme Manager (West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority) in administering the various firefighter pension schemes. This will be achieved by providing governance and by scrutiny of policies, pension documentation, decisions and outcomes.

The Local Pension Board will also assist the Scheme Manager to:

- secure compliance with the Regulations, any other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the Schemes, and requirements imposed by the Pensions Regulator in relation to the Schemes and;
- ensure the effective and efficient governance and administration of the Schemes

Duties of the Board

The Board should at all times act in a reasonable manner in the conduct of its purpose. In support of these duties Board members:

- should act always in the interests of the Scheme and not seek to promote the interests of any stakeholder group above another
- should be subject to and abide by the Local Pension Board approved code of conduct

Frequency of meetings

The WYFRA Local Pension Board will meet six monthly (July and January in each municipal year), to review / report on previous actions and determine work streams and priorities for the future.

The Chair of the Board, with the consent of the Board membership, may call additional meetings. Urgent business of the Board between meetings may, in exceptional circumstances, be conducted via communications between members of the Board including telephone conferencing and e-mails.

Reviewed 4 July 2025. Local Pension Board

Local Pension Board membership

To comply with the regulations the Board must have a minimum of four members (two Scheme Member representatives and two Scheme Manager representatives. A Local Pension Board membership of four is the most straight forward and cost effective way of providing the Local Pension Board and complying with the Regulations.

Membership of the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority Local Pension Board will be:

3 X Scheme Member representatives (including 1 x FBU representative)

3 X Scheme Manager representatives (2 x elected Members, 1 x Officer representative)

Non-voting Officer Advisor(s) as appropriate

Scheme Manager (elected Member) representation on the Board will be determined by the Fire Authority at its Annual Meeting (or as otherwise required). The Officer representative will be nominated by the Authority's Management Board.

The Officer Advisor will be a specific officer who is to assist the Board in gathering/analysing information and writing reports. The Board will also be able to request assistance from any officer who has specific knowledge of a subject matter they are investigating.

Scheme Member representatives

Scheme Member representatives shall be appointed to the Board on an annual basis (or as otherwise required) by the Executive Committee of the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority following a formal application process.

2 x Scheme Member representatives will be active, deferred or retired members of one of the firefighter pension schemes administered by WYFRA.

1 x Scheme Member representative will be nominated by the Fire Brigades' Union.

Scheme Member representatives should be able to demonstrate

- their capacity to represent pension scheme members
- capacity to attend and complete the necessary preparation for meetings, and
- capacity to participate in training as required

Scheme Manager representatives

2 x elected Member Scheme Manager representatives shall be appointed on an annual basis to the Board at the Annual Meeting of the Authority (or as otherwise required)

1 x Officer Scheme Manager representative shall be appointed/confirmed on an annual basis by the Authority's Management Board.

Scheme Manager representatives with delegated responsibility for discharging the Scheme Manager function of WYFRA may not serve as Scheme Manager representatives on the Board.

Scheme Manager representatives should be able to demonstrate

- their capacity to represent the Scheme Manager
- capacity to attend and complete the necessary preparation for meetings, and
- capacity to participate in training as required

Appointment of Chair and Vice chair

Local Pension Board Members will act as the Chair and Vice- chair on an annual, rotational basis ie. when a Scheme Manager representative is appointed Chair of the Board, the position of Vice chair will be filled by a Scheme Member representative and vice versa on an annual basis.

Notification of appointments

On appointment to the Board, WYFRA shall publish the name of the appointees, the process followed in the appointment together with the way in which the appointments support the effective delivery of the purpose of the Board.

Objectives

WYFRA Local Pension Board should consider the following:

- Are pension statements timely and accurate?
- How long does it take between retirement and receipt of pension?
- The number of errors made by the pension administrator.
- Are relevant policies in place and of a sufficient standard?
- Are pension estimates accurate and timely?
- Is the West Yorkshire Pension Fund (WYPF) website accurate and user friendly?
- Ensure that annual CARE scheme calculations are being carried out.
- Scrutinise data quality.

Reviewed 4 July 2025. Local Pension Board

- Ensuring pension rules and regulations are being complied with, when officers are making decisions on pension matters.
- If complaints/appeals are being dealt with correctly and the correct procedures being followed.
- Review internal audit reports

This list is not exhaustive. The Local Pension Board will have the power to investigate anything it wishes in relation to the firefighters' pension schemes within WYFRS.

Conduct and Conflict of interest

Members of the Board are responsible for ensuring that their board membership does not result in any conflict of interest with any other posts they hold.

All members of the Board must declare to WYFRA on appointment and at any such time as their circumstances change any potential conflict of interest arising as a result of their position on the Board. On appointment to the Board and following any subsequent declaration of potential conflict WYFRA shall ensure that any potential conflict is effectively managed in line with both the internal procedures of WYFRA and the requirements of the Pensions Regulator's codes of practice on conflict of interest for Board members.

Members of the Board must not use their membership for personal gain.

Gifts and hospitality should only be accepted with the permission of the Authority - any gifts accepted should be reported on in the Local Pension Board's annual report.

Members of the WYFRA Local Pension Board should maintain confidentiality when discharging their duties.

The WYFRA Local Pension Board has the right to use WYFRA facilities and resources in the course of discharging its duties.

Knowledge and understanding (including Training)

Knowledge and understanding must be considered in light of the role of the Board to assist WYFRA as detailed above. The Board should establish and maintain a policy and framework to address the knowledge and understanding requirements that apply to Board members. That policy and framework shall set out the degree of knowledge and understanding required as well as how knowledge and understanding is acquired, reviewed and updated.

Board members shall attend and participate in training arranged in order to meet and maintain the requirements set out in the Board's knowledge and understanding

policy and framework. Board members shall participate in such personal training needs analysis or other processes that are put in place in order to ensure that they maintain the required level of knowledge and understanding to carry out their role on the Board.

Term of office

Term of Office should be for 2 years and in accordance with the committee cycle in WYFRA

Board membership may be terminated prior to the end of the term of office due to:

- A Scheme Member representative no longer holding the office or employment or being a member of the body on which their appointment relied
- A Scheme Manager representative no longer holding the office or employment or being a Member on which their appointment relied
- The representative no longer being able to demonstrate their capacity to attend and prepare for meetings or to participate in required training

Board Members may be re-appointed for more than one term of office following an approved appointment / nomination process.

Reporting

The West Yorkshire Local Pension Board will produce an Annual Report which will highlight areas of concern and identify good practice.

The report will also contain information on the number of retirements (natural and ill health), new starters, membership and opt-out numbers.

The Board will report to the People and Culture (formerly Human Resources) Committee.

Resourcing and funding

Members of the WYFRA Local Pension Board will be entitled to claim any reasonable out of pocket expense incurred through discharging their Local Pension Board responsibilities.

The Board will not have a dedicated budget. Requests for finance to purchase technical assistance, Board member training and anything else the Board may require to effectively discharge its duties will be made through the WYFRA Finance and Resources Committee.

Quorum

A meeting is only quorate when three Board members are present (including either the Chair or Vice chair).

Voting

The Chair shall determine when consensus has been reached. There will be no casting vote.

Where consensus is not achieved this should be recorded by the Chair.

Relationship with West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority

In support of its core functions the Board may make a request for information to WYFRA with regard to any aspect of the Scheme Manager function. Any such a request should be reasonably complied with in both scope and timing.

In support of its core functions the Board may make recommendations to WYFRA which should be considered and a response made to the Board on the outcome within a reasonable period of time.