

## **HFRS Positive Action**

### **Statement of intent**

Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service aims to make life safer – and to provide the best possible service to the people of Hampshire that we can. To achieve that we will recruit the very best people to work for us in every role, both operational and non-operational.

We will employ people who are diverse in their thinking. Different backgrounds, experiences, life skills and approaches will expand our thinking and operations, and enable us to more flexibly design, plan and deliver our service.

Our aspiration is for our workforce to be more reflective of the diverse individuals and groups within the wider community we serve.

We are passionate in our belief that a diverse workforce will enable us to deliver a better service and make Hampshire even safer.

Therefore, we actively encourage diverse candidates to consider and apply for a career with us.

We will offer support to diverse applicants prior to the process, especially in operational roles where fitness is clearly a consideration given the nature of firefighting.

### **Why?**

Some people may never consider the fire service as a career. Others do not think the role of a firefighter is something they can do or worry they may not fit in.

We are changing the way we attract and recruit candidates to debunk these myths and ensure HFRS is seen as an employer of choice by, as well as for, all members of our community.

### **What is Positive Action?**

If an organisation can show it is under-represented within particular groups, under the Equality Act 2010 it can carry out what is known as 'positive action' to encourage applications from people in those groups.

Positive action is very different from positive discrimination, which gives preferential treatment to people from particular groups, to ensure greater numbers of those people succeed. Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service does not advocate or participate in such activities, which are unlawful in the UK.

However, we can and will target our communications to underrepresented groups to encourage them to apply for employment. In our case women are significantly under represented among our firefighters as are people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) groups.

We can also run events like Have a Go days, to encourage underrepresented groups to have a go at key firefighting skills, as well as supporting skills in completing application forms and developing interview techniques.

When any recruitment process opens then all candidates, including those who have been involved in positive action events and activity, must apply for roles at the same time and be considered with all other applicants.

Our recruitment will always be open to everyone – and all who apply will have to go through the same selection processes and reach the same standards.

**All Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service staff are, and always will be, the very best candidates available, and are appointed absolutely and solely on merit.**