

# Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service

People Strategy  
» 2024 – 2027



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## » Introduction

This Strategy was originally written and consulted on at the end of 2022. Shortly after this the whole Fire Sector came under increased scrutiny for its cultures and values. Several large Fire and Rescue Service undertook cultural reviews and His Majesty's Inspectorate Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) published a cultures and values report.

In response to this evolving landscape, we decided to pause roll out and implementation. We subsequently spent the whole of 2023 engaging with and listening to the Service. The original Strategy has been revised to reflect what we have heard and learnt and we intend to now deliver the eight objectives across a three-year period (2024-2027). This will align implementation of our current Corporate Plan and Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).

The eight objectives are broad in nature and the intent is to develop delivery plans for each one. This will result in a number of different work streams and work packages making it a key thread of the RBFRS Development Programme.

Details of the evidence base used to develop the Strategy can be found in Appendix one.

## Context

The Purpose of RBFRS is to create safer more resilient communities by:



preventing incidents



protecting homes and businesses



responding to emergencies



## » Our Vision

Our Vision is to create safer more resilient communities by preventing incidents, protecting homes and businesses and responding to emergencies by placing community service at the heart all we do and deliver the service through our four overarching principles:

- Culture
- Capability
- Sustainability
- Risk Management

Our conduct and behaviours are driven by the sector's Core Code of Ethics which drives our Values of Community first, Integrity, Dignity & Respect and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

Our Purpose, our Vision and our Values provide the context for this People Strategy.

## The Purpose of the People Strategy

The purpose of the RBFRS People Strategy is to create a professional, flexible workforce that is diverse in thought and representation that can create safer more resilient communities by preventing incidents, protecting homes and businesses and responding to emergencies.

The intent is to develop delivery plans for each objective. This will result in a number of different work streams and work packages making it a key thread of the RBFRS Development Programme.

However, there are a number of delivery mechanisms which are already active or planned. These are summarised in the table in Appendix Two, along with an indication of where progress will be monitored.





## » People Strategy Objectives

1

We are one team and we all contribute to the delivery of our services to the public, all staff should feel safe to come to work and maintaining public trust and confidence is essential. How we work together is important. We will maintain our zero tolerance to harassment, bullying and we extend that to include victimisation. We will increase ways to make staff feel safe and provide tools and support to help staff to speak out. We will review and further embed the use of behavioural competencies making it easier to understand and more widely use.



## » People Strategy Objectives

2

We will seek to attract and retain a professional, talented and diverse workforce. We will work with employees and representative bodies to make our workplaces inclusive for all, ensuring we balance the needs of the individual with managing risk to the community.



## » People Strategy Objectives

3

We will increase the diversity of our operational workforce by 100%\* in the next three years to better reflect the communities we serve. We recognise that diversity is not just related to gender and ethnicity, we want to improve diversity of thought and experience ensuring we are an inclusive employer for all. This will help improve equality of access to services for all our communities. (\*baseline staff data January 2024)

## » People Strategy Objectives

4

We will empower our staff to develop, grow and understand their role in the organisation. We will recognise good performance, and effectively manage poor performance. We will create pathways for career progression for all staff groups and develop tools to manage talent.



## » People Strategy Objectives

5

We recognise the value of the on-call duty system. We will ensure our process and procedures support the attraction and retention of staff, which will enable us to better manage risk across Berkshire.

## » People Strategy Objectives

6

We will continue to invest in leadership across the organisation. We will increase opportunities to bring together leaders from across the Service to close the gaps and improve levels of trust. We will share leadership experience and learning widely inside and outside the sector.



## » People Strategy Objectives

7

Developing and maintaining skills and knowledge across our operational workforce is a priority. We will increase the variety of training delivery methods available to make it easier to access resources. We will improve tracking tools for learners and increase capacity to provide greater assurance that learning objectives are being met.

## » People Strategy Objectives

8

Health, Safety and Wellbeing remain a priority for us. We will work with staff, representative bodies and experts, to implement our new Safety, Health and Wellbeing Strategy to deliver safe and healthy people, places and processes.



## » Appendix One

### Knowledge Base

The RBFRS People Strategy 2024-2027 is based on data and evidence collected both in the Service and across the sector. This knowledge base is listed below for reference.

1. [NFCC People Strategy 2017-2022](#)
2. [RBFRS People Strategy 2018-21](#)
3. [HMICFRS RBFRS Inspection Report June 2019](#)
4. [HMICFRS RBFRS COVID Inspection Report January 2021](#)
5. [NFCC/LGA fit for the future programme](#)
6. [Berkshire Local Economic partnership data](#)
7. [NFCC Core Code of Ethics](#)
8. [RBFRS Behavioural Competency Framework](#)
9. [RBFRS Employee Code of Conduct](#)
10. [Feedback from RBFRS staff engagement sessions Sept 2021-Feb 2022](#)
11. [RBFRS Staff Survey March 2022](#)
12. [RBFRS COVID learning data](#)
13. [HMICFRS State of Fire Report 2022](#)
14. [RBFRS Health, Safety and Wellbeing Plan](#)
15. [New RBFRS Purpose and Vision](#)
16. [RBFRS EDI Objectives](#)
17. [Independent Culture Review of London Fire Brigade](#)
18. [HMICFRS Values and Cultures in Fire and Rescue Services](#)
19. [NFCC Culture and Values Action Plan](#)
20. [Staff Engagement Forum feedback November 2023](#)

## » Appendix Two

<p>1. We are one team and we all contribute to the delivery of our services to the public, all staff should feel safe to come to work and maintaining public trust and confidence is essential. How we work together is important, we will maintain our zero tolerance to harassment, bullying and we extend that to include victimisation. We will increase ways to make staff feel safe and provide tools and support to help staff to speak out. We will review and further embed the use of behavioural competencies making it easier to understand and more widely use.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CRMP</li> <li>• Revised Consultation Strategy</li> <li>• Review of ARAs (not yet scheduled)</li> <li>• New Flexible working policy</li> <li>• New efficiency and Productivity plan</li> <li>• Workforce Planning</li> <li>• Medium Term Financial Plan</li> <li>• Positive Action Plan</li> <li>• EDI Objectives</li> </ul>	<p>Strategic Performance Board          Programme Board          SLT          Workforce Planning          Future Staff Surveys          Audit &amp; Governance Quarterly          Fire Authority Annually</p>
<p>2. We will seek to attract and retain a professional, talented and diverse workforce. We will work with employees and rep bodies to ensure our estate can support all staff equally, ensuring we balance the needs of the individual with managing risk to the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PDRs</li> <li>• Behavioural Competency Framework</li> <li>• Employee Code of Conduct</li> <li>• Coaching and Mentoring Strategy (not yet implemented)</li> <li>• Talent Management Plan</li> <li>• Review of ARAs (not yet scheduled)</li> <li>• Merit Payments</li> <li>• Employee Reward schemes</li> <li>• CRMP</li> </ul>	<p>Workforce Planning          HMICFRS data returns          Future Staff Surveys          EDI Forum          Audit &amp; Governance Quarterly          Fire Authority Annually          Gender pay Gap report          Ethnicity Pay Gap Reports</p>



<p>3. We will increase the diversity of our operational workforce by 100%* in the next three years to better reflect the communities we serve. We recognise that diversity is not just related to gender and ethnicity, we want to improve diversity of thought and experience ensuring we are an inclusive employer for all of this will help improve equality of access to services for all our communities. (* baseline staff data Jan 2024)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive Action Plan</li> <li>• EDI Objectives</li> <li>• Workforce Planning</li> <li>• PDRs</li> <li>• RBFRS Development Programme</li> </ul>	<p>PDRs  Workforce Planning  HMICFRS data returns  Future Staff Surveys  EDI Forum  Audit &amp; Governance Quarterly  Fire Authority Annually  Gender Pay Gap Report  Ethnicity Pay Gap Reports</p>
<p>4. We will empower our staff to develop, grow and understand their role in the organisation. We will recognise good performance, and effectively manage poor performance. We will create pathways for career progression for all staff groups and develop tools to manage talent.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RBFRS Development Programme</li> <li>• PDRs</li> <li>• Behavioural Competency Framework</li> <li>• Employee Code of Conduct</li> <li>• Coaching and Mentoring Strategy</li> <li>• Talent Management Plan</li> <li>• Review of ARAs</li> <li>• Merit Payments</li> <li>• Employee Reward Schemes</li> </ul>	<p>Workforce Planning  HMICFRS data returns  Future Staff Surveys  Service Delivery Management Team Meeting  Audit &amp; Governance Quarterly  Fire Authority Annually</p>
<p>5. We recognise the value of the on-call duty system. We will change our processes and procedures to make it easier to attract and retain more people to support this way of working which will enable us to better manage risk across Berkshire.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CRMP</li> <li>• Revised Consultation Strategy</li> <li>• Review of ARAs (not yet scheduled)</li> <li>• Workforce Planning</li> <li>• Medium Term Financial Plan</li> <li>• Efficiency and Productivity programme</li> <li>• Firewatch App</li> <li>• RDS Working Group</li> </ul>	<p>PDRs  Workforce Planning  HMICFRS data returns  Future Staff Survey  Fire Authority Annually</p>

<p>6. We will continue to invest in leadership across the organisation. We will increase opportunities to bring together leaders from across the Service to close the gaps and improve levels of trust. We will share leadership experience and learning widely inside and outside the sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behavioural Competency Framework</li> <li>• Employee Code of Conduct</li> <li>• EDI Objectives</li> <li>• Coaching and Mentoring Strategy</li> <li>• Middle Manger Development Programme</li> <li>• Supervisory Development Programme</li> <li>• Leadership Forum</li> </ul>	<p>PDRs  Future Staff Surveys  EDI Forum  Workforce Planning  Fire Authority Annually</p>
<p>7. Developing and maintaining skills and knowledge across our operational workforce is a priority. We will increase the variety of training delivery methods available to make it easier to access resources. We will improve tracking tools for learners and increase capacity to provide greater assurance that learning objectives are being met.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NOG implementation</li> <li>• BEP Implementation</li> <li>• Operational Training Planner (OTP) Refresh</li> <li>• Three Operational Fire Standard action plans</li> <li>• Ops Assurance</li> <li>• Operational exercise plan</li> <li>• DAPS</li> <li>• LMS pipeline</li> </ul>	<p>Workforce Planning  Service Delivery Management Team Meeting  Operational Learning and Assurance  Fire Authority Annually</p>
<p>8. Health, Safety and Wellbeing remain a priority for us. We will work with staff, representative bodies and experts, to implement our new Safety, Health and Wellbeing Strategy to deliver safe and healthy people, places and processes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety, Health and Wellbeing Strategy</li> <li>• Employee Assist programme</li> <li>• Gyms</li> <li>• MSK Specialist</li> <li>• The Fire Fighters Charity</li> </ul>	<p>Health &amp; Safety Woking Committee  Strategic Performance Board  Programme Board  SLT  Future Staff Surveys  EDI Forum  Fire Authority Annually</p>



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