**Freedom of Information - Humberside Fire and Rescue Service**

**2024/25 090 – Recruitment and Retention**

**The request is:**

I would like to know the recruitment and retention statistics between October 2020-October 2024 for the following groups:

a. All Women: Fire Officers and Support Staff

b. All Men: Fire Officers and Support Staff

c. Black women (British; Caribbean; African) Fire Officers and Support Staff

d. Black men (British; Caribbean; African) Fire Officers and Support Staff

e. Average length of service for all of the above groups.

f. Reasons for leaving the organisations for all of the above groups, e.g. retired, resigned, dismissed, redundancy, death in service.

**The response is:**

I can confirm that Humberside Fire and Rescue Service hold this information.

For recruitment:

a. All Women: Fire Officers and Support Staff

Total - 90

b. All Men: Fire Officers and Support Staff

Total – 255

c&d. Black women (British; Caribbean; African) Fire Officers and Support Staff /Black men (British; Caribbean; African) Fire Officers and Support Staff

We confirm that we have recruited staff from these groups, however, due to the low numbers involved we are unable to disclose actual numbers as this is likely to identity the individuals concerned and is therefore deemed to be personal data which is exempt under Section 40 (2) of the FOIA. Personal data is information that relates to an identified or identifiable individual. Please see further information on Section 40 (2) below.

There are 6 individuals who selected ‘Prefer not to say’ for their gender, and so they cannot be categorised into the groups above. Similarly, 15 individuals selected ‘Prefer not to say’ for their ethnicity – 3 of these specified their gender and so are included in either category a. or b., but are not included in c or d.

For retention:

 a. All Women: Fire Officers and Support Staff

Total leavers - 76

Average length of service – 11 years

b. All Men: Fire Officers and Support Staff

Total leavers - 314

Average length of service – 15 years

c. Black women (British; Caribbean; African) Fire Officers and Support Staff

Total leavers - 0

Average length of service – N/A

d. Black men (British; Caribbean; African) Fire Officers and Support Staff

Total leavers - 7

Average length of service – 12 years

There are also 19 individuals who selected ‘Prefer not to say’ for their gender, and so they cannot be categorised into the groups above. Similarly, 44 individuals selected ‘Prefer not to say’ for their ethnicity – 32 of these specified their gender and so are included in either category a. or b., but are not included in c or d.

e. Average length of service for all of the above groups – included above

f. Reasons for leaving include resignation, retirement, ill health retirement, deceased, end of fixed term contract and dismissal.

Again, due to the small numbers involved we are unable to disclose actual numbers for the groups requested as this is likely to identity the individuals concerned and is therefore deemed to be personal data which is exempt under Section 40 (2) of the FOI. Personal data is information that relates to an identified or identifiable individual. Please see further information on Section 40 (2) below.

**Section 40 of FOIA:**

(2) Any information to which a request for information relates is also exempt information if—

1. it constitutes personal data which does not fall within subsection (1), and
2. the first […] condition below is satisfied.

(3A) The first condition is that the disclosure of the information to a member of the public otherwise than under this Act—

1. would contravene any of the data protection principles

Section 40(2) is an absolute exemption where if the first condition is satisfied, then a public interest test is not necessary, however, public interest must be considered when judging lawfulness under principle (a).

To judge whether disclosure would contravene principle (a), consideration must be given to whether it is it lawful, fair and transparent? The most relevant lawful basis in this case would be legitimate interest and have therefore considered the public interest on this basis:

**Public interest in favour of disclosure:**

1. There is a public interest in understanding the numbers of ethnic minority groups employed at HFRS as this helps in assessing the diversity and inclusivity of the workforce.
2. There is public interest in the numbers of ethnic minority groups employed at HFRS as this provides an insight into the organisation's ability to recruit diverse talent.
3. Recruitment and retention statistics can demonstrate the organisation's commitment to transparency and accountability in its hiring practices.

**Public Interest in favour of withholding:**

1. The information is special category data and relates to the personal aspects of employees’ lives.
2. Disclosing small numbers could lead to the identification of individuals, which would be an unwarranted invasion of their personal privacy.
3. Identifying of individuals through the disclosure could expose them to harm, distress, or discrimination.
4. Ensuring that personal data is protected helps maintain public trust in public authorities and encourages individuals to engage and provide accurate meaningful information to the organisation.

We then considered whether disclosure is necessary to meet the legitimate interest.

We believe there is a legitimate interest in the information requested; whilst legitimate interest would be satisfied partially by the disclosure that we have recruited an unspecified number of staff from an ethnic minority, this would not wholly satisfy the legitimate interest.

**Balancing Test:**

It is necessary to balance the factors above whilst maintaining transparency and privacy. Withholding the required information in c,d & f above would not wholly satisfy the legitimate interest, however, disclosure of the detailed information is likely to cause harm to the individuals concerned as outlined above in the public interest reasoning. It is our belief that the legitimate interest does not outweigh the interests and rights of the individuals who have a right to personal privacy.

On balance, the public interest in withholding the requested information outweighs the public interest in disclosure and the information requested is exempt under Section 40(2) Personal information of the Freedom of Information Act.

If you are unhappy with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. A request for an internal review should be made within 40 working days of the date of this email. If you are not happy with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply direct to the Information Commissioner at [www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints](https://newsletter.ico.org.uk/c/1lULiJldYNwfIFlCf3c4BKJdO). The postal address is: Information Commissioner’s Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.