

Agenda Supplement – Equality and Social Justice Committee

Meeting Venue:	For further information contact:
Remote meeting via Zoom	Rhys Morgan & Mared Llwyd
Meeting date: 16 March 2026	Committee Clerk
Meeting time: 13.30	0300 200 6565
	SeneddEquality@senedd.wales

Supplementary pack 2

Please note the documents below are in addition to those published in the main Agenda and Reports pack for this Meeting

2.7 Correspondence from Chief Fire Officer Fin Monahan of the South Wales Fire & Rescue Service to the Chair regarding training progress

(Pages 1 – 22)

Attached Documents:

Email from Chief Fire Officer Fin Monahan

Attachment 1 – Year in Review infographic

Attachment 2 – Diversity and facilities update

Attachment 3 – Ethics, Values and Standards update

Attachment 4 – Leadership update

Attachment 5 – Plan on a page

Attachment 6 – Training, development and leadership update

Attachment 7 – Connecting People and speaking up infographic

Attachment 8 – Diversity and Inclusion infographic

Attachment 9 – Ethics, values and behaviours infographic

Attachment 10 – Leadership infographic

Attachment 11 – Media and Communications infographic

Attachment 12 – Training and development infographic



4 Briefing from Welsh Government officials regarding the Welsh Benefits Charter

(13:30–14:15)

(Pages 23 – 32)

Claire Germain, Deputy Director Tackling Poverty and Supporting Families,
Welsh Government

David Willis, Head of Tackling Poverty, Welsh Government

Paul Neave, Head of Social Welfare, Advice and Department for Work and
Pensions Policy, Welsh Government

Attached Documents:

Presentation by Welsh Government

Agenda Item 2.7

Received via email

Dear Member of the Senedd Rathbone,

It was a pleasure to host you at our HQ and to discuss SWFRS progress with you. I mentioned in a meeting yesterday at the Welsh Government with officials that we had met and that I was ready to pass information to you for your Committee work. It was highlighted to me that there is a formal process that should be followed for this. I have cc'd [NAME OF OFFICIAL] who will be able to provide more detail and to allow me to formally release the documents to you.

I have gathered some useful information for you that demonstrates the progress that has been made, so hopefully this will be a fairly straightforward process.

Kind regards

Fin Monahan

CFO Fin Monahan OBE DFC PhD

Pencadlys Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub De
Cymru
Parc Busnes Forest View
Llantrisant
CF72 8LX

CFO Fin Monahan OBE DFC PhD

South Wales Fire & Rescue Service HQ
Forest View Business Park
Llantrisant
CF72 8LX

Attached documents:

- Attachment 1 - Year in Review infographic
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YEAR IN REVIEW 2025

Key achievements 2024

- JAN/FEB** Culture report published and Commissioners appointed.
- MARCH** Dominic Mika appointed, Director of Strategic Change and Transformation
- APRIL** Introduced changes to maternity pay and leave
- MAY** New DBS and Right to Work checks to include Enhanced with Barring checks
- JUNE** Middle Leader sessions launched
- JULY** Introduced a more open and transparent interview process for senior leadership appointments
- AUGUST** ICT replacement of all handheld airwave radios and car kits
- SEPTEMBER** Middle leaders just culture session
- OCTOBER** New Chief Fire Officer appointed
- NOVEMBER** Introduced use of LinkedIn to advertise professional roles
- DECEMBER** HMICFRS inspection started, to assess operational effectiveness, particularly in response to domestic dwelling fires
- JAN 2025** Community engagement events - National Eisteddfod and Pride Cymru
- FEB 2025** Series of Transformation roadshows to brief colleagues on the plan for Transformation
- MARCH 2025** Service hosted first ever Women in the Fire Service Cymru event
- APRIL 2025** Review of Operational Effectiveness report shared by Dan Stephens QFSM that assessed the operational effectiveness when responding to domestic dwelling fires
- MAY 2025** Service wide Speak Up campaign launched
- JUNE 2025** HMICFRS assessment
- JULY 2025** Air Vice Marshal Fin Monahan OBE DFC PhD took up role as new CFO of SWFRS
- AUGUST 2025** Treorchy station opens after a refurbishment that saw the station modernised after over 50 years of operation
- SEPTEMBER 2025** Appointed a cyber security specialist, who worked with the learning and development team to create bespoke training for all staff.
- OCTOBER 2025** CFO confidential email address launched, so anyone could contact the CFO with an issue
- NOVEMBER 2025** Rhian Moore, Head of Communications and Engagement joined the Service
- DECEMBER 2025** Middle Leaders review values and new uniform trial session
- "Our Service, Our Values" project launched across the service to build new Vision, Mission and Values

36,034 CALLS RECEIVED/ INCIDENTS

DELIBERATE FIRES

3,820 TOTAL 2,521 REFUSE 591 WILDFIRES

ROAD TRAFFIC COLLISIONS

947 TOTAL 120 INVOLVED EXTRICATION OF PERSONS

FIRES

5,408 TOTAL 3,333 SPECIAL SERVICE CALLS 940 FALSE ALARMS

DWELLING FIRES

632 TOTAL 582 ACCIDENTAL 50 DELIBERATE

CALLS AND ENGAGEMENT

HOAX CALLS	379 TOTAL	239 UNNECESSARY MOBILISATIONS	HOME SAFETY CHECKS	15,378 TOTAL	11,503 WITH ONE OR MORE RISK FACTORS
SAFETY TALKS	36,065 TOTAL	1,038 KEY STAGE 1-4 LEARNERS VIA EDUCATIONAL SAFETY TALKS	FIRE SAFETY AUDITS	594 TOTAL	18 ENFORCEMENTS

Key Achievements by Month

- JAN 2025**
 - Culture Statement agreed and launched
 - A DICE champions working group established
 - Launched a new model for response to Automatic False Alarms
 - ICT replaced core network
 - Hydra 10kV conversation learning event
 - Middle Leaders cover code of ethics
- FEB 2025**
 - New Governance Framework approved
 - Introduction of new Employee Benefits Scheme - VivUp
 - Preventing Workplace Sexual Harassment added to Strategic Risk Register
- MARCH 2025**
 - New Service Strategy launched with 60 work streams
 - New High-Rise Team set up to deliver the recommendations of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry
 - Signed the Charter for Families Bereaved by Public Tragedy.
 - Newest whole-time recruits joined other volunteers in a successful river bank clean Guinness World Record
 - Introduced a Future Fire Think Tank
 - Consultation sessions on the new Service Mission, Vision and Values
 - Conflict Resolution training introduced for all people managers
 - Participated in consultations on Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan
 - Supported firefighters in Ukraine by donating 6 old appliances
- APRIL 2025**
 - Launched the Leadership and Personal Development Academy
 - Taking Care of Behaviours Training for all staff launched
 - New Communications and Engagement strategy approved
 - ICT installed smart phones into 75 frontline appliances
 - Operation Reset launched to deliver improved operational visibility and activity recording across WDS stations.
 - Introduced the new Building Firefighting Tactics for SWFRS guide.
 - Completed delivery of over 35 Firefighting tactics awareness sessions to all operational staff
 - Held consultation workshops with colleagues on the new promotions process
 - Introduced mediation as part of the resolution process for internal grievances.
 - New interim decontamination facility launched at Cardiff Gate
 - National and international collaboration to advance Firefighting tactics
 - Community Safety Department Delivery Plan 2025 - 2028 published
 - Home Fire Safety Check (HFSC) targets increased from 15,534 to 21,732 per year
 - Go-live for NHS premises under the revised AFA model
- MAY 2025**
 - HMICFRS report published with three causes of concern
 - Launch of Contaminants Programme team
 - Middle Leaders workshop: Sharing the learning with the RAF Red Arrows team
 - Reviewed and updated the induction for WDS
 - Working together with RMT, L&D launched first ever weekend inductions for On Call staff.
 - Launched Carbon Reduction Roadmap
 - Agile Working Policy phase 1 launched
 - Introduction of a Job Evaluation Board
 - Set up a 'Shared Services' team and functionality for 24/7 queries in People Services
- JUNE 2025**
 - Teams took part in multi-agency training exercise at Cardiff International Airport to enhance emergency response
 - Undertook upskilling of neurodiversity partners, ensuring confidence in referrals
 - Leaders in the Service complete their Pioneer Programme, strategic leadership training
 - High Rise training for Firefighters to equip crews with knowledge, skills and equipment to be ready for incidents in high rise buildings in South Wales
 - Celebrated On-Call Firefighters during on call month, showing people that #YouCan
 - Process mapping project started in People Services to explore digitisation of processes and procedures
- JULY 2025**
 - SWFRS hosted the first National Fire Cadet Games in Wales
 - Receive MOD Gold award for outstanding Armed Forces Support
 - Introduced concept of the Independent Professional Standards Unit (IPSU), with an interim lead appointed in July 2025
 - Recruited additional Pensions support to ensure that relevant McCloud data deadline is met
 - Development of Post Incident Reporting to provide targeted wellbeing support
 - Started recruitment for a new Independent Advisory Group
 - Work started on a Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) to assess risks and response, informed by the upcoming Fire Cover Review (FCR)
 - Instructors at Cardiff Gate Operational Training, Leadership and Personal Development Academy signed the Instructor
 - New Personal Development prospectus launched by Learning and Development team
 - Middle Leaders training programme - Unconscious bias, Vicarious Liability and Social Media
 - Started working with Alacrity, to identify innovative digital solutions
 - New Family Liaison Officers trained
 - Middle Leaders Vision, Mission, Values feedback
 - Spirit of Fire Project begins to capture and highlight positive culture examples
- AUGUST 2025**
 - Major incident with a large-scale wildfire in Brynmawr
 - New Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Adam Openshaw appointed - start date in December
 - New Director of Support Services/Monitoring Officer, Amanda Brown joined the Service
 - New Assistant Chief Fire Officers, Matt Jones and Martin Ward-White appointed, with start dates in December.
 - CFO visited all teams and crews across the Service - 100% complete
 - Seven workplace mediators trained by ACAS
 - Teams from all over the Service delivered a series of 999 days in communities
 - Existing training packages have been updated for Incident Commanders and BA Training
 - Replacement started of older 19mm high-pressure hose reels with more efficient 22mm versions to enhance water delivery and firefighter protection
 - Start of work to fit all appliances with Delta Fire Attack 500 SBC Pro Smooth Bore Branches, aligning the Service with global best practice
 - Work started to upgrade SharePoint in People Services
 - Set up a Document Control Unit for People Services
 - A new hose stream training rig at Cardiff Gate Training Centre has been commissioned to simulate realistic fire scenarios
 - Started a pilot to look at allocation and approval of PHs for firefighters
 - Relocation of BA maintenance team.
 - Project team established to plan the 2026 30 years of SWFRS celebrations
 - New Staff Survey Launched
- SEPTEMBER 2025**
 - People Services supported DDaT team trialling new security training
 - Senior Leadership Team Executive Leadership Training Programme started with Academi Wales
 - Working group convened in People Services to evaluate the Disability Employment Gap
 - Hosted an event for both national and international partners to share key learning and best practices in responding to domestic dwelling fires.
 - ICT improved Wi-Fi resilience and coverage across the estate
 - Operational intelligence SSRI collaboration and quality assurance programme launched.
 - Coordinated training for 44 employees on 'Handling Suicidal Thoughts'
 - Progress made on phased approach to reviewing all people policies - Maternity, Paternity, Adoption, Mediation, Agile Working policies
 - People Services and OHU Business Continuity and Business Impact assessment with aim for completion in late 2026 with key focus on resilience, contingency planning and resourcefulness of the functions
 - Risk-Based Intervention Programme (RBIP) Strategy 2025-2028 rewritten and approved
- OCTOBER 2025**
 - Independent Advisory Group have their first meeting
 - Developed and introduced a Cancer Screening Questionnaire
 - Over 150 staff members received training on conducting Equality Impact Assessments
 - Relaunched the Inclusive Workforce Group
 - Piloting NFCC Active Bystander training
 - Learning from Grenfell submitted to Commissioners
 - Secured approval and implementation planning for the OH - Patient Management System
 - People Services working to create a video on PTSD awareness
 - Creation of a new training package centering around 'Perception awareness'
 - Developing third module of training for Middle Leaders on Handling Disciplinary, Grievance and Internal Workplace Investigations
 - Developing and implementing the new Operational Assurance Programme
 - New Operational Assurance Team established
 - Celebrated International Mens Day
 - Extrication team crowned world rescue champions, best extrication team in the world rescue challenge in Croatia
 - The Spirit of Fire project group set up
 - New Uniform Trials completed, and procurement started for the order
 - 3-month trial started for additional shifts, aiming to support 5 Firefighters per appliance
 - System updates to reflect rebanding of all WDS, Control and OCDS2015 pension scheme tiers
 - Started work with Resilium UK to transform the way we understand and manage risk, using a new barrier-based bow tie approach.
 - Middle Leaders learning session with Professor Stephen Carver on risk in our communities
 - Revised Disciplinary, Grievance and Anti-Harassment procedures drafted and issued for consultation
 - Launched the decontamination programme, including training, policy updates, infrastructure improvements, air quality monitoring and clear zoning in stations.
 - Started engagement programme with political and civic community stakeholders, showcasing the work we deliver that goes beyond dealing with fires.
- NOVEMBER 2025**
 - People Services, in collaboration with the Statistics team, to develop sickness absence dashboards for line managers
 - CFO reaffirmed his commitment to the new standards of behaviour and our strive for excellence in a Respect video to all colleagues
 - Business Fire Safety (BFS) Department Strategy and Improvement Delivery Plan 2024-2027 published
 - Attended the launch of the public consultation on the Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff Strategy
 - Delivered Drug and Alcohol Procedure training to Line Managers in conjunction with Randox in preparation for new procedure roll out
 - People Services training developing recorded content for line manager training
 - Level 2 Fire Safety qualification trial launched for Supervisory Managers to build competence in fire safety legislation and inspection.
 - Collaboration with Cardiff Business School to place 5 students on the Service for 20-week placements commencing in January
 - "Our Service, Our Values" online training for vision, mission and values launched through E-Hyb
 - Service hosts Women in the Fire Service event with over 100 people taking part in workshops and activities
 - People Services reviewed and drafted new Attendance Management Policy, Reasonable Adjustments Policy, Modified Duties Procedure and New Medical Redeployment Policy
 - Reaffirmed our dedication to building a workforce that reflects the vibrant diversity of the communities we serve in Black History Month
 - In pursuit of operational excellence, the service embraced global collaboration and learned from fire experts from Australia and the Netherlands about firefighting tactics and technologies
 - Start of new Honours and Awards process as part of Reward and Recognition project launched
 - Annual Improvement Plan launched for the Service
 - Started trial of 360 feedback with two providers
 - Risk-Based Intervention Programme (RBIP) Strategy 2025-2028 rewritten and approved
 - Updated the Management and Self-Referral Forms with OH Clinical team
 - Initiated and delivered wellbeing and accessibility improvements with the Property Team
- DECEMBER 2025**
 - Hosted first ever Women in the Fire Service event
 - Hosted first National Fire Cadet games
 - Hosted Women in the Fire Service
 - Celebrating 30 year anniversary Closing off all the recommendations and moving forward with Operational Excellence

**COURAGE TO ACT
COMPASSION TO CARE**

2026

Our story

This is our next series in our updates on the progress we have made in the recommendations from the Fenella Morris review.

Through our transformation programme, Step Forward, we are taking coordinated action to embed the findings of the Independent Culture Review and other key reports.

Our aim is to build a stronger, more positive culture across the Service — one that reflects our shared values and supports a safer, more resilient South Wales.

Our next update focuses on what we have done to enhance diversity and improve our facilities.

Matthew Collins, DICE Business Partner shares:

“Embedding DICE into our organisational culture is not a one-time initiative—it’s a continuous commitment to building a Service where every individual feels respected, empowered, and safe. Our progress reflects the values we lead with, and the future we’re shaping together.”

Diversity, inclusion, equity and cohesion

Data and transparency

We’ve improved data collection by encouraging staff to update diversity profiles, improving visibility and enabling data-driven decision-making. The Gender Pay Gap Review has also been completed and published.

Building networks

We have over 30 members of staff, corporate and operational, who are part of our DICE champions' network. Since January 2025, three DICE champions meetings have been held, designed to support inclusion and decision-making across the Service.

Corporate departments have been restructured with external input, and our Inclusive Workforce Group has been launched.

We launched our armed forces network and achieved the Ministry of Defence (MoD) Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) gold award and remain dedicated to supporting the Armed Forces community and will continue to develop innovative ways to honour and support those who serve.

We have run awareness campaigns and networking sessions around menopause, Welsh language inclusion, and other key areas, which help to foster understanding and support.

In 2024, we held the first Women in the Fire Service (WFS) Cymru at Cardiff Gate Operational Training, Leadership and Personal Development Academy. Over 100

delegates of corporate and operational staff participated in the event, championing inclusively and showing support to our women in the fire service. Nine representatives from SWFRS joined fire and rescue colleagues from across the UK at this year's (WFS) National Training and Development Event — a weekend of learning, empowerment, and connection.

We've also celebrated our people through the launch of SWFRS Long Service Awards, recognising the dedication and contributions of our workforces.

Leadership commitment

The ELT and SLT have publicly reaffirmed their commitment to our values. CFO and Commissioners set a clear stance on addressing domestic violence. Our leaders have actively participated in values-led sessions and leadership development. The Leadership Academy and Strategic Lead for Leadership and Development has also played a key role in embedding DICE into how we lead and shape the future of our Service.

We have taken steps to ensure managers are trained on completing Equality Impact assessments, so far over 140 managers have completed the training.

Promoting positive behaviours

As covered in our Speaking up progress, our behavioural standards have been reinforced through initiatives like the *Speak Up* campaign and *Taking Care of Behaviours*, encouraging safe reporting and respectful communication across the Service. All staff will receive the training, with 440 members of staff already having completed.

We have embedded DICE into our corporate induction sessions, setting service expectations and our stance on inappropriate behaviour to new staff members.

Community engagement

We have developed our engagement with communities and champion a variety of events, initiatives, and campaigns throughout the year that reflect our commitment to inclusion and allyship across diverse backgrounds and communities. Highlights include an Iftar celebration at Cardiff Castle, women in the fire service, Black History Month, and activities raising awareness around menopause.

In June 2024, in support of Pride month we published a video reinforcing our stance against inappropriate and offensive comments towards the LGBTQ+ community via on our social media channel.

Members across the service –corporate and operational, including members of the ELT and SLT – attended this year's Pride Cymru event in Cardiff, as well as local Pride events. We stood alongside the LGBTQ+ community, to celebrate inclusion and

participate in the parades showing our commitment to championing diversity and inclusion.

Staff training and inclusion tools

Staff have engaged in interactive DICE training, including lived-experience sessions and cultural intelligence workshops. We have introduced 'work with me' passports to help staff articulate their needs, particularly around neurodiversity, disability, health, and wellbeing. Our Neurodiversity Partnership Network has supported greater understanding and inclusion across the Service, with over 100 people being referred.

Enhancing our facilities

We have accessed all our estate, and taken steps to prioritise work to ensure our facilities are inclusive, accessible, and responsive to the needs of our workforce and communities.

We have launched a new trial uniform to improve comfort, professionalism, and practicality.

Creating safe spaces

We've made visible commitments to keeping our communities safe, all 47 of our stations now have Safe Haven buttons, offering immediate support to anyone needing emergency assistance.

Fire stations have been designated as Safe Spaces, reinforcing our role as a trusted and welcoming presence. We're modernising how we work with the introduction of a new uniform trial, to offer comfort, professionalism and practicality needed to support everyone in their role.

Protecting health and wellbeing

The new interim decontamination facility is now operational, enhancing safety in high-risk scenarios. We have recently taken a major step forward in protecting the health and wellbeing of our firefighters and staff through our new comprehensive decontamination programme. The programme is more than a set of new policies and procedures; it is a commitment to reducing exposure to harmful fire-related contaminants and embedding best practice in everything we do across the Service.

These aren't just initiatives, they're the building blocks of a culture where people feel safe, valued, and connected. We're proud of what we've achieved together, and we remain committed to continuing this journey with respect, integrity, and compassion.

Our Story

This is the second update in the series over the coming weeks on the progress we are making in delivering the recommendations from the Fenella Morris Independent Culture Review.

This forms part of our wider commitment to transparency, accountability, and delivering an inclusive and exceptional service.

Through our transformation programme, Step Forward, we are taking coordinated action to embed the findings of the Independent Culture Review and other key reports. Our aim is to build a stronger, more positive culture across the Service — one that reflects our shared values and supports a safer, more resilient South Wales.

This update focuses on the changes to our values and standards.

Ethics, values and standards

Aligning our values with our commitment to change

All the recommendations relating to ethics, values and behaviours from the Fenella Morris cultural review have now been completed and audited by the Commissioners.

As part of this work, in September 2024, the Board of Commissioners reaffirmed the Service's dedication to the NFCC Core Code of Ethics, followed by the development of a Culture Statement of Commitment signed by Commissioners and members of ELT/SLT, showcasing both individual and collective leadership responsibility.

In July 2025 we launched our new Vision, Mission and Values. Placing emphasis on being professional, respectful, caring, and accountable, which were core principles highlighted in the review.

These values were shaped by feedback gathered from colleagues across the Service and now serve as the foundation for our behavioural standards and cultural goals, marking a significant milestone in our transformation journey.

Setting clear behavioural standards and expectations

We've taken significant steps to clearly outline our behavioural standards, ensuring they reflect both our values and the national Core Code of Ethics. These standards define what is expected across the Service and make clear what will not be tolerated—whether in person or online.

This work was shaped by extensive staff engagement, including:

- 176 manager-led sessions
- 1,359 staff participating in team-based workshops
- 60 operational staff reached in follow-up sessions

- 135+ staff involved in additional workshops.

In Spring 2025, we launched the Taking Care of Behaviours campaign, a pivotal moment in our cultural transformation. The campaign promotes a safer, more respectful workplace and equips staff with the tools to thrive. It reinforces that:

- Sexual harassment and the sharing of sexualised content are unacceptable, must be reported, and will be subject to disciplinary action
- These are working to embed these standards in our expectations that we set and our disciplinary procedures.

We'll continue to reinforce these messages through regular communications, including the new Shout magazine, visible leadership with PO visits, and news updates.

Embedding ethics and values in practice

We've adopted and promoted the Core Code of Ethics and NFCC guidance, using real-world scenarios to support discussion and reflection. Our updated values will be supported by a refreshed standards and expectations procedure and a practical toolkit to help teams apply them consistently.

Values and standards are now a key part of:

- The recruitment process
- Staff inductions
- Staff annual reviews
- Promotion processes, reflecting evolving responsibilities and leadership expectations
- Assessing and supporting behavioural development

Our Personal Review (PR) process, launched in 2021, continues to assess behaviours and performance using the NFCC Leadership Framework, which includes clear examples of both positive and unacceptable behaviours.

We've also made strong progress in learning and development:

- Introduction to unconscious bias: **81% completed**
- Inclusive language and communications: **76% completed**
- Inclusive leadership: **79% completed**
- Safeguarding: **80% completed**

Set cultural change targets that reflect on our values

We've established clear culture goals that reflect our commitment to embedding our values into everyday practice. These goals are supported by strategic planning and ongoing engagement, ensuring they are reflected in how we lead, support each other, and serve our communities.

Culture goals were shaped through:

- 3 major middle leader sessions (July, August, December 2024) with 120 participants, covering topics focused on Culture Change, Self-Assessment, and Our Service, Our Values
- 11 targeted engagement sessions (Jan 2025) and 12 strategic sessions (Feb 2025)
- Transformation Roadshows, with senior leaders and Commissioners, delivered across hybrid locations and helped define and refine measurable culture targets aligned with staff feedback and strategic priorities.

Visible leadership commitment to values and inclusion

Leadership across the Service continues to demonstrate a strong and visible commitment to our values, equality, diversity, and cultural transformation. This commitment is reflected in public declarations, strategic planning, and direct engagement with staff.

June 2025, instructors from across Cardiff Gate Operational Training, Leadership, and Personal Development Academy came together for the official signing of the brand-new Instructor Charter. This marked another positive step forward in shaping the culture and future of our training environment, reinforcing our commitment to professional standards and inclusive leadership.

Further leadership involvement includes:

- Active participation by ELT and Commissioners in refining our Vision, Mission and Values (VMV)
- 10 staff engagement sessions in March 2025 (5 face-to-face and 5 online), ensuring direct dialogue with teams across the Service
- Publication of the Strategic Plan in March 2025, setting out our long-term cultural and operational goals.

Thank you to everyone for the part you are playing in embedding these changes in our day to day operations and all that we do.

Leadership

This is the third update in our series reporting on the progress being made against recommendations from the Independent Culture Review, as part of our wider commitment to transparency, accountability, and delivering an inclusive and exceptional Service.

This update focuses on our progress in leadership, specifically the development of our executive and senior leadership teams.

“Through our transformation programme, Step Forward, we are taking a coordinated action to embed the changes needed in response to the Independent Culture Review and other key reports. This is being led by our new Service Strategy with a vision, mission and values. We have adopted and used the NFCC Fire Standards for leading the service and leading and developing our people as our foundation”, said Dominic Mika, Director of Strategic change and Transformation.

“Our aim is to build a stronger, more positive culture across the Service — one that reflects our shared values and supports a safer, more resilient South Wales.” He added.

Strategy with vision, mission and values

Building on the Culture Statement signed by the Senior leadership team in early 2025, the new Service Strategy brings together all the areas of work that deliver the recommendations and set our vision for our ambitious future.

This work is encapsulated with a new vision and mission for the Service that sets out our approach and is supported by our agreed values that gives clarity on the way we will deliver for people in our communities.

Leadership frameworks and standards

Alison Reed, Director of People services, said, “Our leadership approach is guided by the NFCC Leadership Framework, which outlines the skills and behaviours expected of leaders across the fire and rescue service.

“It is supported by the approved Fire Standard for ‘Leading and Developing People’, which details expectations for leaders, and the Core Code of Ethics, which promotes accountability and ethical behaviour.”

These frameworks emphasise the need for:

- Fostering a positive and inclusive culture
- Developing and empowering people
- Leading change effectively
- Adapting leadership styles
- Encouraging collaboration across teams.

Georgina Gilbert, Leadership and Personal Development Academy Strategic Lead added, “Since establishing the Academy, we have been focusing on how we go beyond the recommendations for leadership in the Service and are looking at how we strengthen the way people learn, grow and lead, so that great leadership is experienced and shared at every level, not just spoken about at the top.

We have set up the Academy to create a collaborative, future-focused approach to leadership and personal development, one that supports people across the service to lead with confidence, clarity and care.”

Strengthening representation in ELT and SLT recruitment and selection processes

Four Commissioners were appointed following the publication of the Morris Report to help lead strategic and cultural transformation across the Service. They have a role to play in overseeing transparent, inclusive and fair recruitment of ELT and SLT roles.

Key actions include:

- Advertising all vacancies internally and externally, with skills-based job descriptions and person specifications which helped attract a diverse pool of candidates from various industries.
- Successfully recruiting external and non-operational candidates to a mix of new and existing roles, which means gender diversity at ELT has improved.

The roles are:

- Chief Fire Officer
- Director of Strategic Change and Transformation
- Head of Communications and Engagement
- Chief of Staff
- Treasurer
- Director of Service Support / Monitoring Officer (ACO)

We’ve also embedded broader engagement in recruitment by:

- Including internal staff stakeholder panels and external representatives in all permanent SLT and ELT recruitment processes
- Ensuring a member of People Services sits on every senior interview panel to enhance consistency and transparency.

There is still more we can do, and our recruitment and promotion processes are under continuous review to ensure fairness and effectiveness.

Conflict of interest declarations

To support a deeper level of transparency, Commissioners, ELT and SLT members sign conflict of interest declarations relating to recruitment. This includes disclosure of memberships in external organisations, family relationships, and relevant social connections. These declarations are held by the monitoring officer, with those from Commissioners and ELT published on the Service's public website. They are also published on the Service's internal intranet, along with SLT Conflict of Interest Declarations.

Declarations are reviewed annually and updated promptly to reflect any changes in personnel, or potential interests.

Additionally, conflict of interest procedures have been extended to cover recruitment, disciplinary, and grievance panels. This remains an ongoing process, requiring active management to ensure accuracy and accountability are maintained.

CFO participation in oversight committee meetings

The CFO has actively participated as a member of the oversight and ethics committee for the past year.

His continued engagement ensures that when issues arise, they are handled with transparency, fairness, and integrity, reinforcing our commitment to ethical leadership. This involvement also upholds the Service's core value of respect, by promoting a culture where all individuals are treated with dignity, concerns are taken seriously, and processes are managed impartially.

Wider changes and progress to develop leadership

There has been a significant amount of other work delivered to go a step beyond the recommendations in the report and to support the development of excellent, empowered and selfless leaders. This includes:

- The establishment of a leadership academy that sets the standards for leadership across the Service, and harnesses the leadership potential of our people
- The introduction of a Future Fire Think Tank to embed a new philosophy of innovation for our future
- ELT structure has been reviewed to make sure the team are organised to support delivery of organisational excellence.
- The SLT have completed a series of training courses to support their ongoing professional development, including unconscious bias, misconduct, taking care of behaviours and having difficult conversations.
- We are working with the Academi team on a leadership development programme for the SLT to support ongoing learning and development.
- We have developed clear learning and development pathways for our people to become tomorrow's leaders.

We are committed to changing the way we develop and support our people, and we know that operational excellence comes from great leaders. There is a significant amount of work taking place over the coming months and years to deliver this change and to nurture our talent for our future success.

Additional milestones include:

- From January to June 2025, nine delegates participated in the Pioneer Programme, a development initiative designed to prepare future strategic leaders
- Since January 2025, there has been 88 PO visits to stations, corporate teams, occupational health, and Control, reinforcing leadership visibility and operational engagement. In addition to this, the CFO has visited every team in the Service since he joined.
- In June 2025, the team at Cardiff Gate Operational Training, Leadership and Personal Development Academy signed the Instructor Charter which champions a professional culture across our training centre. Inspired by the success of the Learner Charter, which every new recruit signs on arrival, the Instructor Charter was created to mirror that commitment from those delivering training to learners - with commitment to respect and excellence.
- For the recruitment of recent senior leadership roles, we have received 119 applicants for leadership roles, with 56 stakeholders actively involved across all roles, demonstrating strong engagement and commitment to leadership development.



Our vision

Working together as one team to be an outstanding Fire and Rescue Service, protecting South Wales today, ambitiously innovating for tomorrow.

Our mission

To serve our communities, by reducing risk and responding to emergencies.

Our values

Developed in extensive consultation with our people, give us the agreed framework for US to serve and protect OUR communities effectively in South Wales. They are **Compassion, Courage, Respect, Integrity** and **Excellence**.

- We act with **compassion**
- We approach situations with moral and physical **courage**.
- We **respect** each other, our partners and the public we serve
- We act with **integrity**
- We aim for **excellence** in all that we do

This can all be summed up in our motto:

**COURAGE TO ACT,
COMPASSION TO CARE**

Ends: To achieve the vision and deliver on our mission we will achieve each of the following strategic goals, which are supported by detailed plans with timescales and resources required.

- Develop clear governance, policies and procedures
- Harness the advancements in digital technology to deliver a modern, digitally excellent, affordable and future proofed Service
- Achieve operational excellence through safe, effective and assertive prevention, protection and response capabilities.
- Work together as one team - 'One Team One Mission'
- Have a people centred approach in all we do
- Develop excellent, empowered and selfless leaders
- Become a learning service, constantly evolving and ambitious
- Pursue a just culture, underpinned by our values, to allow our people to build high performing teams
- Develop excellent communication and engagement approaches with our staff, partners and communities
- Drive sustainability and reduce our environmental impact.

Develop clear governance, policies and procedures

Clear governance is our foundation for success. It demonstrates accountability and transparency, gives confidence that we have truly learned the lessons of the past.

- Step Forward Programmes for Governance and Policy and Procedures
- Establish an efficiency programme.

Harness the advancements in digital technology to deliver a modern, digitally excellent, affordable and future proofed Service

Embark on digital change to provide a modern, effective, better affordable and more responsive service to our communities.

- Build a digital backbone that harnesses advancements in technology
- Establish a Future Fire Think Tank.

Achieve operational excellence through safe, effective and assertive prevention, protection and response capabilities

We want to be outstanding in all that we do, working as one to be safe, protecting our communities, looking ahead and innovating for the future.

- Move to a 'Just Culture' to enhance our operational effectiveness
- Develop a strategic level safety system
- Review and update policies and procedures to reduce bureaucracy and ensure legal and regulatory compliance in operational activities

Work together as one - 'One Team One Mission'

Working together we will give the best experience for our people by putting respect and compassion at the centre of all decisions.

- Launch, embed and sustain our new mission, vision and values
- Embed strategic communication so colleagues feel informed and engaged

Have a People Centred approach in all we do

Our people must feel supported and we must build a service about which they are rightly proud.

- Set high standards, and expectations for positive behaviour to build trust and loyalty
- Recognise our people's contributions, dedication, service and successes
- Establish a new approach to disciplines and grievances

Develop excellent, empowered and selfless leaders

Our commitment to change and operational excellence comes from the passion within our leaders to lead the way and be the best they can.

- Establish a leadership, training and personal development academy.
- Provide education and training to our leaders, at every stage of their careers

Become a learning service, constantly evolving and ambitious

With learning and excellence driving our ambition, we will keep focused on looking ahead. We will share progress and learn best practice and rekindle belief and confidence in our fine Service.

- Improve our internal service inspection and assurance systems to include behaviours and culture

Pursue a just culture, underpinned by our values, to allow our people to build high performing teams

Build a culture that seeks to understand how things went wrong to improve them for the future.

- Move from a blame culture to a 'Just Culture'
- Recognise and celebrate success of our people.

Develop excellent communication and engagement approaches with our staff, partners and communities

Sharing the passion and include everyone on the journey of change and give clarity to the part we each play.

- Build a data led communication and engagement strategy to engage with the public and other partners and stakeholders to reduce risk for the public

Drive sustainability and reduce our environmental impact

We have a bold ambition to do our best to live in harmony with nature.

- Harness emerging green technologies to reduce our impact on the environment.
- Minimise and offset our carbon footprint and achieving **net zero by 2030**.

The nine step forward projects:



Communication and Engagement

Develop excellent communication and engagement, with our staff, partners and communities.



Digital Transformation

Ambitiously transform our use of data and our digital and technology capability in all areas, to deliver a modern, digitally excellent, affordable and future-proofed fire and rescue service.



Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion and Equity

To embed a fair, inclusive, and equitable culture by enhancing diversity, fostering staff engagement, and driving measurable progress in workforce representation and equity.



Ethics, Values and Behaviours

Develop a just culture underpinned by our values and ethics to become an elite team with new ways of working.



Governance and Strategy

Develop clear governance to run our service with transparency to serve our communities.



Leadership

Develop excellent, empowered and selfless leaders.



Policy and Procedure

Develop coherent policies and procedures that reduce bureaucracy, balance our risks, empower our people and provide value for money for the taxpayer.



Safe and Positive Environment

To embed a culture of professional excellence by fostering psychological safety, modernising facilities, strengthening recognition, and ensuring robust support systems.



Talent Management

Work together as one team providing excellent talent management, career progression and development through a people centred approach.

Training, development and leadership

Our next update in the journey to deliver the recommendations from the Fenella Morris Independent Culture Review highlights the meaningful progress we've made in transforming our approach to training, development, and leadership - setting the standards and expectations for a more inclusive, empowered, and future-ready Service.

Neil Davies, Head of Training and Development, commented:

“Creating a culture where everyone feels respected, supported, and empowered isn't just a goal - it's a responsibility. The steps we're taking now, from inclusive training to leadership development, are shaping a Service that reflects the values we stand for. As we look to the future, we're building a Service that's not only fit for today, but ready for tomorrow.”

Setting a new standard for behaviour

Respect, inclusion, and integrity are at the heart of everything we do - and now, they're embedded in every step of our training journey.

All recruits and staff across the Service must now complete the *Taking Care of Behaviours* (TCoB) programme. The training sets clear expectations for behaviour across the Service, using real-life scenarios and practical guidance. Our values are reinforced through posters, workshops, and resources at every stage.

More than 85% of staff have also undertaken DICE training, either face-to-face or online.

Our DICE Champions network is now active across the Service. Our champions are based on stations and across departments, and are leading the way in promoting diversity, inclusion, cohesion, and equity.

Training and development

Through our partnership with Cardiff and Vale College (CAVC), the one-day *Living the Values* course delivered by CAVC has been launched and will be delivered to all new instructors, corporate staff working with apprentices, cadet instructors, and the learning and development team. This training reinforces our core values and supports consistent standards, ensuring all staff and instructors are equipped to model and uphold them in their roles.

A new Level 3 Award in Education and Training (L3 AET) programme has been introduced to support instructors who do not currently hold a teaching qualification. Delivered by Cardiff and Vale College (CAVC), this is a closed course and includes

training for business fire safety (BFS) staff to facilitate delivery of new qualification Level 2 Award in Carrying Out Fire Safety Checks, to benefit operational staff.

Leadership for the future

We have launched a comprehensive leadership and development programme, delivered in partnership with Academi Wales, for our executive and senior leadership teams. The programme includes facilitated sessions, diagnostics, and coaching on inclusive leadership, self-reflection, and building trust.

In April 2025, we launched our new *Leadership and Personal Development Academy*. Open to all staff, the Academy offers workshops, group coaching, and development pathways for everyone—from new firefighters to senior leaders. The launch of the Academy brought together staff and external experts for hands-on learning and open discussion. In July 2025, we launched the New Personal Development Prospectus, a dynamic and comprehensive guide to the wide range of opportunities available through our Learning and Development team.

We have held multiple learning and development sessions including:

- The Leading Others Programme, which welcomed 50 attendees
- 36 members of staff participated in the Leading the Function Programme
- 9 delegates joined the Pioneer Programme
- An 18-month Senior Leadership Team (SLT) development programme has also been designed to support strategic growth
- We have held middle manager sessions led by Professor Steven Carver and the Red Arrows.

Looking ahead, the theme for 2026 is *Learning to Living — Making Leadership Real*, focusing on embedding leadership into everyday practice.

We have held sessions with external speakers and staff across the Service. 70 middle leaders and members of the Senior Leadership Team attended the Red Arrows Debrief and Just Culture Session. Nine attendees from SWFRS participated in the WFS National Training and Development weekend. Over 100 middle leaders and staff from across the Service attended a session on learning lessons on risk and innovation from the Space Industry with Professor Steven Carver.

Updated training and equipment

Since January 2024, we have trained 142 new recruits at our Operational Training, Leadership and Personal Development Academy. Our wholetime recruits' courses have now been extended with an additional week of values and standards training.

We now have lived-experience sessions as part of our regular training. These sessions, featuring both internal and external voices, help staff connect with the real impact of actions and decisions.

Embedding the change in everyday practice

- More open conversations about values, standards, and inclusion—at every level of the Service.
- Visible DICE Champions and new internal resources to help you connect, learn, and get involved.
- Leadership that listens, reflects, and acts—supported by new development pathways and coaching.
- Training that’s practical, relevant, and accessible, with real-life stories and interactive learning.
- A culture where everyone is encouraged to speak up, challenge poor behaviour, and support each other.

Measuring the change

Cultural feedback from learners has been positive, with 97% reporting that they enjoy the apprenticeship experience—an increase from 91% in 2023. Additionally, 97% rated SWFRS as very good or good in providing safety support. We have also received strong ratings for wellbeing, with 94% of learners recognising our encouragement of wellbeing, and 93% rating its overall wellbeing support as very good or good.

Every conversation, every training session, and every act of leadership helps shape the future of our Service. Whether you're a new recruit or a senior leader, everyone has a role in building a respectful, inclusive culture. Together, we're creating a workplace where everyone feels safe, respected, and valued.

CONNECTING

100% CFO visited every team in the Service

88 PO visits across stations, corporate teams, and Control

33+ Workshops held to support cultural engagement

176 Teams involved in manager-led values discussions with...

1,059 Colleagues participating in those sessions



3 INCLUSIVE WORKING GROUPS

- DICE Champions
- Inclusive Working Group
- Neurodiversity Partnership Network

SPEAKING UP

- More flexible exit interviews
- Phase one of the Agile Working Policy rolled out
- Culture statement from Commissioners, CFO, ELT and SLT
- Stance against violence reaffirmed by CFO
- Town-hall sessions hosted by the CFO in June 2025, with another planned for Autumn 2025
- Crimestoppers FRS Speak Up line continues to provide a safe, anonymous way for staff to raise concerns



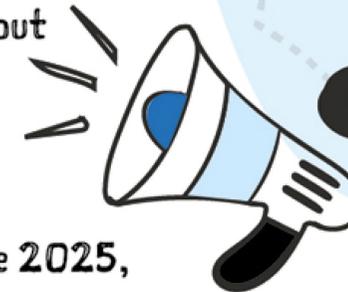
LEARNING

9 Delegates completed the Pioneer Programme

50 Colleagues completed Leading Others in 2024-2025

31 Colleagues completed Leading the Function in 2024-2025

5 Enrolled in Leading the Function for 2025-2026



CONNECTING PEOPLE
SPEAKING UP





INVESTING IN FACILITIES AND INNOVATION

- ✓ Safe Havens in all stations
- ✓ A new interim Decontamination Facility is now operational
- ✓ New decontamination programme launched
- ✓ Fire stations have been designated as Safe Spaces
- ✓ Introduction of a new uniform trial.



Inputs of demographic information held has improved by almost 500 submissions since January 2025.

over 100

People have been referred for support through the Neurodiversity Partnership Network

400

Staff completed the new Taking Care of Behaviours (TCoB) training.

over 140

Managers trained on completing Equality Impact Assessments



8

DICE sessions delivered at corporate inductions

over 30

Members of staff are part of the DICE Champions Network



Achieved the Ministry of Defence (MoD) Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) Gold award.

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DICE Champions Network sessions since January 2025

Relaunch of the Inclusive Workforce Group to shape inclusivity in the Service

SUPPORTING EVENTS AND INITIATIVES

400

Staff participated in the first WFS Cymru 2024

- Black history month awareness

9

Staff from SWFRS joined delegates for the National WFS event in June 2025

- Iftar celebration at Cardiff Castle

- Pride Cymru and local events

**DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, COHESION
EQUITY AND FACILITIES**





Set clear behavioural standards and expectations

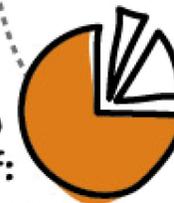
- 176** Manager-led sessions
- 1,359** Staff participating in team-based workshops
- 60** Operational staff reached in follow-up sessions
- 135+** Staff involved in additional workshops

EMBEDDING ETHICS AND VALUES IN PRACTICE

Values and standards are now a key part of:



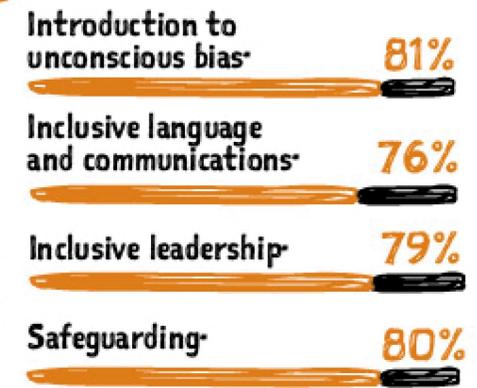
- The recruitment process
- Staff inductions
- Staff annual reviews
- Promotion processes
- Supporting behavioural development



Made strong progress in learning and development



*COMPLETED



Set cultural change targets that reflect our values

- 6** Major middle leader sessions
- 11** Targeted engagement sessions
- 12** Strategic sessions

ETHICS, VALUES AND BEHAVIOURS

Visible leadership commitment to values and inclusion

- 10** Staff engagement sessions in March 2025
- Publication of the Strategic Plan in March 2025

TRANSFORMATION

ROADSHOW



We have:

- Adopted the NFCC Fire Standards
 - Leading the Service
 - Leading and Developing People

NEW

Produced a new Service Strategy with **60** workstreams

1 New Mission

NEW

1 New Vision

NEW
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NEW

5 New Values

1 New Operational Training, Leadership and, Personal Development Academy

1 Leadership Charter signed

Embedded broader engagement in recruitment by:



- Including internal stakeholder panels and external representatives in all permanent ELT and SLT recruitment processes
- Ensuring a member of People Services sits on every senior interview panel to enhance consistency and transparency

All Commissioners, ELT and SLT members have must sign conflict of interest declarations relating to recruitment.



OTHER STATISTICS

4 Commissioners appointed following the culture review

9 Delegates participated in Pioneer Programme for future strategic leaders

88 Principal Officer visits to stations, corporate teams, occupational health, and Control since January 2025

100% of teams visited by the Chief Fire Officer

ROLES

119

Total number of applicants for leadership roles

5 NON-OPERATIONAL ROLES FILLED IN ELT/SLT

- Director of Strategic Change and Transformation
- Head of Communications and Engagement
- Chief of Staff
- Treasurer
- Director of Service Support/ Monitoring Officer (ACO)

LEADERSHIP

RECENT COURSES/WORKSHOPS UNDERTAKEN BY ELT/SLT:

- Unconscious Bias (Online)
- Difficult Conversation Handling
- Behavioural Standards and Bias
- Taking Care of Behaviours
- Misconduct Training
- Discipline and Grievance Training



1 **NEW** Head of Communications and Engagement

NEW **DEVELOPED** **1** Communications and Engagement Strategy with **7** workstreams

COMMS AUDIT

8 Workshops with colleagues in HQ, Dyffryn, Maindee, Merthyr Tydfil, Cardiff Central and Bridgend.

1 **NEW** Internal Communications Plan with **5** Objectives

- Hearts and minds
- Support and advice
- Campaigns
- Channels
- Measurement

4 Meetings with

- BBC WALES
- ITV WALES
- WALES ONLINE
- SW ARGUS

88% **AGREE** that they understand the changes we collectively make to be a healthy, efficient and effective Service

144 RESPONSES

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MEDIA ENGAGEMENT JAN-JULY 2025

344 Media calls received
15 Interviews given

CULTURE WE PUBLISHED..

10 SWFRS webpages
30 INTRANET pages

95% **UNDERSTAND** the part they play

78% **ARE PROUD** to work for the Service

KEY THINGS PEOPLE TOLD US:

- There is too much information on too many channels
- Colleagues want more positive news stories about the great work they are doing
- Managers wanted more support to cascade the key messages and updates to their teams.

90% **READ** the executive team weekly message

MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS

1 **TEAMS CALL TO ALL** HMICFRS UPDATE WITH EXEC LEADERS

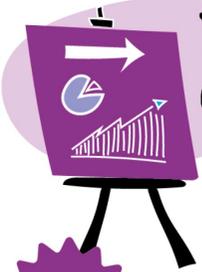
CALL TO ALL (INCOMING)

BREAKING NEWS: 17 CULTURE MEDIA RELEASES...8 MIDDLE LEADERS SESSIONS..



TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Training and development sessions:



70+ Staff attended Red Arrows Debrief and Just Culture Session

NEW

9 Attendees at WFS National Training and Development Weekend

Personal Development Prospectus launched

NEW Leadership Academy launched

ALL

Instructors and key staff signed the Instructor Charter at Cardiff Gate

DICE and Wellbeing



DICE CHAMPIONS appointed at all stations/depts

75% UPTAKE of 'Work With Me' passports

ALL NEW STAFF & CONTRACTORS will receive DICE training

MENTAL HEALTH & suicide prevention programme

STAFF TRAINING

85% Staff completed DICE module

100% New recruits completed values and standards training

ALL Instructors registered and completed Skills for Justice Assessor Award

3 New operational courses introduced

142 New recruits trained at Cardiff Gate in last 18 months

Cultural feedback:

97% of learners enjoy the apprenticeship

97% rated SWFRS very good/good for safety support

94% rated SWFRS very good/good for wellbeing encouragement

93% rated SWFRS very good/good for wellbeing support

Development programmes

36 Attendees - Leading the Function programme

9 Attendees joined Pioneer Programme

100+ Attendees - Professor Steven Carver Managing Change Session

18 months SLT Development Programme

50 Attendees - Leading Others programme

Collaboration & knowledge sharing

35+ Firefighting tactics awareness

16 Delegates visited Netherlands Institute for Safety, including 3 from SWFRS

Collaborations with Welsh fire services, NFCC seminars & UK-wide sessions

COURSES AND PROGRAMMES INTRODUCED

NEW **2** Courses Created - Crew Manager ICL 1 Leadership Course

NEW **1** 2-Week Instructor Induction and Development Programme - In development

1 Level 3 Award in Education and Training programme planned



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