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## NATIONAL JOINT COUNCIL FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

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**To: Chief Fire Officers  
Chief Executives/Clerks to Fire Authorities  
Chairs of Fire Authorities  
Directors of HR (Fire Authorities)**

**Members of the National Joint Council**

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5 June 2015

### CIRCULAR NJC/09/15

Dear Sir/Madam,

#### **THE INCLUSIVE FIRE SERVICE**

##### Background

1. The NJC has a continuing commitment to equality, diversity and cultural issues in the fire service.
2. Section 2 of the Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book) covers issues such as equal opportunities of employment and a working environment free from discrimination, harassment or bullying.
3. The NJC last looked at those matters in detail in 2008, updating Section 2 of the Grey Book as a consequence. The expectation is that fire authorities will therefore already have *'set out and communicated the principles and strategies that are fundamental to developing an organisation which values all.'*
4. Since then, the NJC has reached various agreements that support family friendly working for example on matters such as maternity, paternity, adoption, ante-natal appointments, flexible working and time off for dependents.

##### Next steps

5. At the meeting of the National Joint Council on 3<sup>rd</sup> June members considered, given the employer/employee relationship, developing its commitment to equality, diversity and cultural issues, leading a piece of work to identify guidance in relation to any further strategies that could be used at local level to further encourage improvement.

6. Members made the following decisions:
  - (i) the Joint Secretaries were asked to set up an *Inclusive Fire Service Group* - led by the NJC, inviting other interested parties to be involved;
  - (ii) the purpose of such a group to be assessment of the current position and identification of guidance in relation to any further strategies that could be used at local level to lead to improvement; and
  - (iii) the work will be directed by joint lead members, reporting to the full NJC
7. As part of this work the NJC will consider whether it is necessary to gather new monitoring data or whether there is sufficient monitoring data already available that can be drawn together from the NJC survey and other sources. Other information may also be available such as the survey conducted by the FBU and employee satisfaction surveys at local level for example.

Yours faithfully

**SIMON PANNELL**

**MATT WRACK**

Joint Secretaries