Women in the Fire Service

National Executive Committee

27 November 2025 via Teams

Attending:

Directors: Jules King (Chair), Vicky Wallens-Hancock (Vice-Chair), Kathryn Billing (Liaison and Partnerships), Amy Beams (Corporate Members Services Liaison)

Executive:

Co-opted: Ceri Sumner, Jan Morris

Regional Reps: Daisy Byron (East), Emma Edwards (Joint Wales), Lisa Howsden (North East), Olivia Crook (South West), Anna Snelson (London)

WFS: Karen Smith (Services Manager), Kerry Cassidy (Administrative Assistant)

1.Apologies were received from:	
Dany Cotton, Ellie Hayes, Hannah Lodder-Rodda, Jenny Nangle, Karen Pointer, Nicky Thurston	
Welcome	
WFS Chair, Jules King welcomed members to the last National Executive Committee (NEC) meeting of 2025.	
2.Notes from the last meeting:	
The notes from the last meeting held on 2 October 2025 were received as a true record.	
3.Matters arising:	
Maternity Policy:	Action:
• Work continues with the NFCC on a range of model maternity policies, some of which are due for review. • No further update available at this time. • The Chair continues to attend the quarterly NFCC Lived Experience Forum. • A meeting with Amy Curl is scheduled for January 2026, at which an update will be requested	JK
Document Sharing re attending events	Action:
Update on sharing AFSA document giving a general outline and the benefits in attending events. Hannah Sherwood to forward to Daisy on her return.	HS/DB

Business Plan:	Action:
Directors agreed that a fully updated business plan is not currently required. A short position statement (approximately two pages) is being developed by the Chair, covering: • Review of completed work • Reflection on 2025 • Future plans It was noted that 2026 will include formal reviews, including development of a full business plan.	JK
4.Gifts and Hospitality:	
Declarations for Gifts and Hospitality were received from: Jules King – Chair received a PTSD 999 hoodie at the EES (approx. value £25); the equivalent amount was donated back to the charity. WFS received 4 places to attend the Emergency Services Show as part of the sponsorship of the Youth Inspiration Awards: Places offered to Jo Henry, Anna Snelson, Daisy Byron and Ellie Hayes Anna Snelson (LFB RR) attended a Garden Party at Downing Street representing WFS.	
5.Chairs Report: Presented by Jules King	
It is hard to believe that this is the last NEC meeting for 2025, and yet again, it has been a busy time. The team and Directors have been working on a new website, which is really starting to take shape and will hopefully be ready by the end of the year. We will of course update you all once that is complete. As sponsors for the Youth Inspiration Award for the Excellence in Fire Awards, we have received an invitation for four members of WFS to attend the event, taking place on Friday 5th December, which I am sure will be a great occasion. Since our last meeting, a few of us attended a South East event hosted by Surrey FRS and organised by Ellie Hayes. Following this event, the following week there was a women's health day event hosted by LFB event. Both events were a great success and my thanks to all those involved in organising these events. Finally, I would like to thank you all for all you continue to do to keep WFS going and celebrating all the things we stand for. I appreciate we all have busy jobs and volunteering on top of day jobs is much appreciated. Appreciating it is still November, however as this is our last meeting of 2025, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and hope you all have some time to spend time with those who mean the most to you over the festive period. See you in 2026!	

6. Treasurer's Report: Full Financial summary on Appendix 1	
The Chair presented the financial update on behalf of the Treasurer, with the following to be noted: • Accounts have been finalised and will be presented at the 2026 AGM. • It was noted that no payments are currently being made to HMRC in relation to staff tax and National Insurance due to a small company application. Payments are expected to resume at a future date.	
7. Health & Safety	
No health and safety concerns were identified.	
8. Marketing and Communications update:	Action:
Ellie Mason left the Marketing & Communications role on 13 October to focus on her Firefighting role with Norfolk FRS, with the hope of returning as a Local Representative in the future. The position was advertised and offered, however, the successful candidate subsequently withdrew after accepting alternative employment. Jo Henry (HR) and Karen Smith to review re-advertising.	JH/KS
9.WFS Events Update	
9.1 Women's Development Programme	Action:
Bookings have opened for the first programme following the new collaboration with Women to Work. • Thirty places are available. • Fees agreed: £299.00 (Corporate Members)/£399.00 (Non-members) Programme structure includes: Three half-day sessions, a month apart (9.30-12.30) Session Dates: 22 January, 12 February and 11 March 2026	All to promote
9.2 Training and Development Event	Action:
Planning is progressing well, and Events Management Team will be meeting on 4 December 2025. The majority of workshops have now been finalised and workshop outlines should be available online in January 2026. All Corporate members have received ticket allocation letters. The fees to attend are: **Corporate Member:** • £679.00 (single room) per person • £625.00 (Twin room) per person • £300.00 (Saturday only including lunch)	

Non Members: • £879.00 (single room) per person • £825.00 (Twin room) per person • £400.00 (Saturday only including lunch) A discussion took place regarding varying levels of Fire and Rescue Service support for staff attendance. It was noted that support differs between services, with some allowing delegates to attend as work/training related, while others requiring annual leave to be taken. The potential to offer CPD certificates to support professional development was discussed. The Chair and Amy Beams agreed to discuss accreditation options further at the next Events Management Team meeting. AB reported on an opportunity for a bespoke Level 2 Fire Safety Check course for 2026 where discussions are ongoing with Greater Manchester FRS. This would include accreditation through Skills for Justice and some online accredited learning to take place prior to the event. Further details TBC.	Chair/AB AB
10.Policies: For approval	
There were no policies requiring approval at this meeting.	
11. Any Other Business:	
Fitness Standards for women: Ceri Sumner talked about fitness standards for women, particularly post-menopause. An academic review through ASA has been requested, focusing on: 1. Whether job tasks remain unchanged 2. Whether current fitness standards remain appropriate 3. Whether men and women can meet job tasks using different standards JK has also had a few contacts recently around similar areas. One in particular is interested in running a workshop at the Training and Development Event around women's fitness and health, and the implications around Perimenopause and Menopause, and fitness standards.	
10. Dates of next meeting for 2026:	Action:
National Executive Committee (NEC): • Tuesday, 27 January 2026 • Wednesday, 15 April 2026 • Thursday, 24 September 2026 • Tuesday, 24 November 2026	

Regional/Local Rep Forums: • Wednesday, 18 February 2026 • Thursday, 7 May 2026 • Tuesday, 20 October 2026 • Thursday, 3 December 2026 KS would send out Teams links for all above meetings	KS