

AT A MEETING of the HAMPSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE held at Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Eastleigh on 10 November, 2011.

PRESENT:

Councillors: Mrs. M.J. Tucker (Vice-Chairman in the Chair); A.S. Carew; K. Chapman; S. Darragh; R.J. Kimber; K. Morrell; E. Neal.

95 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A. Evans; L. Fairhurst and J. West.

96 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were mindful that, where they believed they had a personal or personal prejudicial interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting, they should normally, at the time of the debate, declare their interest and having regard to the circumstances described in paragraphs 9, 10, 11 and 12 of the Fire Authority's Code of Conduct consider whether to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 12 of the Code.

There were no declarations of interest made by Members under this item.

97 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 12 July, 2011 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Vice-Chairman.

98 DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations on this occasion.

99 ESTABLISHMENT

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Officer (Item 5 in the Minute Book) on the authorised and actual establishment as of 1 October, 2011.

The Chief Officer highlighted some of the key figures mentioned in the report in relation to the authorised establishment, the Retained Duty System establishment and the Grey Book and Green Book establishments. This confirmed that the intended efficiency savings were being achieved by way of natural turnover thus lowering the risk of any redundancies.

RESOLVED:

That the HR Committee accepts the changes to the establishment made under

the Chief Officer's delegated powers contained within the report.

100 **STAFF REVIEW UPDATE**

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Officer (Item 6 in the Minute Book) on the Staff Review involving an examination of all those who worked outside of operational 'Watches' on stations. The report updated Members on the progress made so far and set out the future governance arrangements for the staff review over the remaining years of the Comprehensive Spending Review period. The intention was for the project to be closed down in December, 2011 after which the lessons learnt during the process would be evaluated.

In recognising the value of the project and what had been achieved, the Committee were interested to learn more about any opportunities for apprenticeships within the Service, particularly in the light of Government grants which may be available in respect of this. The Chief Officer was asked to investigate this further with a report back to the next meeting.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee continue to support the work carried out as part of the Staff Review.
- (b) That further updates be provided on the Staff Review by way of the Establishment Report made to each meeting of the Committee.

101 **REVIEW OF THE POLICY COVERING THE RE-EMPLOYMENT OF GREY BOOK EMPLOYEES IN THE FIREFIGHTERS PENSIONS SCHEME AND GREEN BOOK EMPLOYEES IN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME FOLLOWING RETIREMENT**

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Officer (Item 7 in the Minute Book) on the review of the policy covering the re-employment of grey book employees in the firefighters pension scheme and green book employees in the Local Government Pension Scheme following retirement.

Since 1 December, 2006, eligible Grey Book employees had the opportunity to request to commute their pension lump sum and, following a break in service, be re-employed in their existing role. This policy had been extended on 20 April, 2007, to include Green Book employees as well. However, in response to the Comprehensive Spending Review and the budget constraints facing the HFRS, the Committee had agreed at its last meeting that the validity and form of any re-employment policy for HFRS should be reviewed. Also, a temporary freeze on further re-employment had been put in place pending any outcomes from this review.

Members noted the detailed information provided in the submitted Policy Review Report, together with the data analyses obtained in respect of this matter. They supported the Senior Management Team view that to retain the existing policy in

the current financial climate presented an avoidable additional risk and therefore should be removed. However, it was agreed that the option for a reconsideration of the policy at a more favourable time was important.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee endorse the Senior Management Team (SMT) recommendations to action Option 2 of the submitted Policy Review Report, as follows:

“The policy is removed at this time with the option to reconsider the position when the full effects of the current Comprehensive spending Review has been absorbed by HFRS and when the staffing and financial issues are once again relatively stable and balanced. This would provide future Group Leaders the scope and freedom to make the best decision as to the validity and form of any new re-employment policy should they feel it appropriate to introduce one at some point in the future”.

- (b) That the Committee endorse the SMT recommendation that a date in late Summer/Autumn 2013 be noted as a potential first point from which the requirement for any new policy could be revisited and any changes in the situation, as described in the attached Policy Review Report, be considered.
- (c) That the above recommendations come into immediate effect.