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1 Summary

- 1.1 The Human Resources (HR) Committee requested an update from the service on Modern Apprenticeships at their meeting of 10th November 2011. This paper provides an overview of the Modern Apprenticeship Scheme and identifies how the service is currently engaged with, and working towards, using the scheme. It also identifies indicative costs to the service and Government funding available.
- 1.2 Modern apprenticeships are designed to address current and future workforce challenges, specifically to :
- improve transferability of knowledge, understanding & skills
 - maintain high levels of motivation of staff
 - retain talent and experience
 - developing a more effective workforce
- 1.3 The Government provide a level of funding (maximum £2862 per apprentice) to encourage organisations to support the scheme, but the organisation still has to pay the salary and on-costs for each person on the scheme.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The HR Committee recognise the opportunity and costs of the Modern Apprenticeship Scheme and agree that the service continue to pilot the scheme as outlined within this report.
- 2.2 The HR Committee receive a report on the evaluation of the pilot of apprenticeships when complete.

3 Introduction and background

- 3.1 Modern apprenticeships were introduced by Government to address current and future workforce challenges. The components of a Modern Apprenticeship are designed to allow employees to develop whilst in the workplace to ensure they gain the necessary knowledge, understanding and skills to perform their role to the best of their ability, They also ensure that the employer is able to achieve their organisational objectives.
- 3.2 HFRS has existing apprenticeship positions in Learning and Development, Fleet Maintenance and Stores. In addition to these, the service are currently looking at modern apprenticeships for Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced levels (working with qualifications up to Level 3 – the equivalent of 'A' levels), and are aimed at new employees, supervisory and middle managers. These apprenticeships can take between 1 and 3 years and involve designated time away from the workplace for development, but no more than that needed for current development requirements.
- 3.3 The service has approval to run and accredit the following modern apprenticeships internally:
- Business and Administration – Intermediate Apprenticeship
 - Business and Administration – Advanced Apprenticeship
 - Team Leading – Foundation Apprenticeship
 - Team Leading – Intermediate Apprenticeship
 - Management - Advanced Apprenticeship
- 3.4 HFRS have taken a leading role in supporting Skills for Justice (the national Sector Skills Council for the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) Sector) in the work to review all the nationally accredited qualifications currently offered by the Service. These qualifications were primarily from the Emergency Fire & Rescue areas. As a nationally accredited and approved centre for the delivery of these qualifications, HFRS were asked to form partnerships with Skills for Justice and Edexcel (the designated national awarding body for FRS qualifications) to assist with the development of a modern apprenticeship for Emergency Fire Services.

4 Current position

- 4.1 As a result of the work outlined above we have now successfully introduced a pilot for the Business & Administration BTEC & NVQ and Functional Skills within the service. We are also working both internally and with other FRS's, to introduce pilots for Team Leading & Management BTEC & NVQ.

- 4.2 To support the pilot, we have also been developing departmental managers (at all levels) to fulfil the assessment and quality assurance requirements of the scheme. This has been positively received as the managers involved are already reporting that their development into these roles has added value to many other aspects of their work, particularly in enhancing their role within the Personal Development Review System (PDRS) and when dealing with poor performance.

5 Supporting our corporate aims and objectives

- 5.1 The modern apprenticeship process fully supports all corporate aims as it is integral to how we develop our staff in order to support them to deliver their specific roles and responsibilities on a daily basis.

6 People Impact Assessment

- 6.1 Please refer to the PIA for HFRS Learning & Development
- 6.2 The proposals in this report are considered compatible with the provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights, the Human Rights Act 1998, and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

7 Resource implications

7.1 Human Resources

- 7.1.1 There are no additional human resource requirements.
- 7.1.2 Staff and managers involved within the apprenticeship processes will be required to carry out activities associated with the assessment and quality review requirements of their designated apprenticeship. This should be comparable with current development requirements for their particular role.

7.2 Physical Resources

- 7.2.1 The physical resource requirements will be met from within existing budgets.
- 7.2.2 Staff involved in the apprenticeship processes will need to be supplied with appropriate assessment and quality review resources (portfolios, paperwork...etc.). However we are currently investigating a more integrated electronic system for these types of processes to improve our efficiency.

7.3 Information and Communications Technology Resources

- 7.3.1 The ICT resource requirements will be met from within existing planned development of our ICT resources and existing budgets.

7.4 Financial Implications

7.4.1 Government funding is available for modern apprenticeships, based on a sliding scale based on age. This is detailed in 7.4.2 below based on the rates for 2011/12.

7.4.2 Learners aged 16-18 years at start of apprenticeship – up to £2,862 (fully funded)
Learners aged 19-24 years at start of apprenticeship – up to £2,615 (50% funding)
Learners aged 25+ at start of apprenticeship – up to £2,092 (50% funding)

7.4.3 Employers must be recognised and approved by the Skills Funding Agency to be eligible for funding. They must fulfil various requirements of audit and scrutiny determined by the Skills Funding Agency to clearly show where the employer has contributed 50% of the required funding for all learners over the age of 18 at the start of their apprenticeship.

7.4.4 The Modern Apprenticeship funding is only applicable to staff who are already employed by HFRS and are part of the organisation's establishment. Currently HFRS offers 5 apprenticeship opportunities within Fleet Maintenance, Stores and Learning and Development. The cost for each post would depend on its grade ranging from £12,787 - £19,126 (Grade A – D). Fleet Maintenance and Stores apprentices are employed for a fixed term period of 4 years, whilst the L&D apprentice has a fixed term contract for a 2 year period. Apprentices are assigned an assessor and receive a training plan with training activities provided by local colleges. Upon completion of the apprenticeships every attempt is made to ensure these skills remain with HFRS and qualified staff are recruited into suitable vacancies attracting permanent contracts.

7.4.5 Each apprentice will require registration costing between £175 - £220 per learner (dependent on which apprenticeship registered for). There will also be a need to provide the development input for all learners. This could be delivered internally if resources are available, or outside delivery could be provided creating a financial implication.

7.4.6 Full details of the Skills Funding Agency Apprenticeship Funding Requirements can be found in the following document :

[Skills Funding Agency Apprenticeships Funding Requirements 2011/12](#)

7.4.7 The full financial implications and opportunities of the apprenticeship processes outlined above are currently being investigated and will be reported on as part of the pilot evaluation.

8 Conclusion

- 8.1 The Modern Apprenticeship scheme can be used by the service to support development of staff in the early stages of their careers. There is funding available from Government to encourage organisations to use the scheme, but there are also salary and support costs associated with the scheme that the service would incur.
- 8.2 HFRS has taken a lead role in establishing a pilot of the scheme, and is working in close collaboration with other FRSs to develop a broader understanding of the opportunities the scheme provides.
- 8.3 The current pilot will provide a clear indication of the best approach to take with regard to how modern apprenticeships can best assist in addressing the current and future HFRS workforce challenges. It will identify how aspects of government funding and collaborative work can support this and identify the long term costs and benefits to HFRS should we commit to progressing with this scheme.

9 Background papers

- 9.1 The following documents disclose the facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and has been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of the report:

None

Note: The list excludes: (1) published works; and (2) documents that disclose exempt or confidential information defined in the Act.