

AT A MEETING of the HAMPSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE held at Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Eastleigh on 14 November, 2012.

PRESENT:

Councillors: Mrs M. J Tucker (Vice-Chairman), A.S Carew, Cllr K. Chapman, R. Kimber, C. McEwing, E. Neal P. Smith and J.K. West.

118 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: A. Evans, S. Darragh and J. Fazackerley.

119 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were mindful of their duty to disclose at the meeting any disclosable pecuniary interest they had in any matter on the agenda for the meeting, where that interest was not already entered in the Authority's register of interests, and their ability to disclose any other pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in any such matter that they might have wished to disclose.

In relation to the whole agenda, Councillor McEwing declared that she was a Unite Union activist.

120 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 26 April, 2012 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The Director of Human Resources confirmed the latest position on the Retained Duty System Strategy project, particularly regarding negotiations with the Trade Unions (minute 116 refers)

121 DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations on this occasion.

122 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, 2012.

The Director of Human Resources outlined key elements of the report, confirming in particular that post reduction targets were expected to be met ahead of schedule. Possible future recruitment of retained officers was discussed and it was noted that this would be to cover natural reductions in staff, to ensure that sufficient levels were maintained. It was confirmed that reductions had not affected any of the contingency plans held by the Authority and that there were no plans to reduce the minimum number of fire officers required to crew a pump.

Several further aspects of the reported data were discussed, including: non-operational staff levels, the recruitment of female and ethnic-minority staff, retirements from the Service and the impact of changes to retirement age, external secondments and the methods of funding the animal rescue resource.

Congratulations were extended to two officers who had recently completed the Great South run, whilst wearing fire fighting equipment.

RESOLVED:

That the HR Committee accepts the changes to the establishment made under the Chief Officer's delegated powers contained within the report.

123 **MAINTENANCE OF COMPETENCE (MOC) SCHEME**

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Officer (Item 6 in the Minute Book) regarding the development of the MOC scheme for all operational Grey Book staff in the roles of firefighter, crew manager and watch manager.

The new scheme was introduced and its importance as well as its linkages to other processes and procedures within the Service was explained. The key feature of the scheme was to replace workplace assessment with skill practice opportunities and ongoing assessment, backed up by "Moodle" training resources. Members agreed that this approach would assist with re-enforcing key skills and were supportive of the scheme.

The methods of logging training were detailed and it was confirmed how learning from serious incidents, such as Shirley Towers could be fed into and update training. The means by which individual stations could record details of hazardous sites in their area, including plans for how to deal with a potential incident was described to the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the HR Committee acknowledge the work completed by the Service to ensure its compliance with legislation through the use of the Maintenance of Competence scheme to maintain the competence of Grey Book employees.

124 **INCLUSIVE EMPLOYER AND OUR JOURNEY TO EXCELLENCE AND INVESTOR IN PEOPLE**

The Committee received a presentation from the Director of Human Resources regarding equality and diversity in the workplace.

It was explained to the Committee that the Service was moving beyond the legal requirements relating to protected characteristics to a policy of inclusive engagement and that work had been undertaken with an organisation called Inclusive Employers to facilitate this. In particular the presentation described an event involving staff that had been able to break down barriers whilst also providing a better understanding of equalities within the Service. A draft booklet was circulated and it was noted that the plan within it was to act as a tool for inclusive engagement.

Members discussed the opportunities for support for staff who had been discriminated against and a number of support mechanisms were described.

RESOLVED:

That the HR Committee note the progress of the Service in becoming an inclusive employer and congratulate the team on the production of the booklet.

125 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED:

That in relation to the following items the public be excluded from the meeting, as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during the items there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, and further that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons set out in the reports.

Given their interest in the content of the report, Fire Service officers also removed themselves from the meeting.

126 **PRINCIPAL OFFICER PAY REVIEW**

The Committee considered the exempt report of the Chairman of the Principal Officer Pay Review Group, regarding the recent review of pay for principal officers (Item 9 in the Minute Book).

Following consideration of the exempt report it was resolved that the recommendations regarding principal officer and a review of the methodology for future years be agreed.

Summary of an exempt Minute