

Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority

HR Committee

Item 7

5 November 2015

Independent review of conditions of service for all fire and rescue staff

Report by Head HR & Workforce Development

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1 Summary

- 1.1 In Sir Ken Knight's review, *Facing the Future**, published last year on the 17th May 2013 the issue that conditions of service for firefighters could be an actual or perceived barrier to changes that could provide a more efficient service to the public was identified.
- 1.2 In a written ministerial statement on the 15 July 2014 Government announced its intention to commission an independent review of conditions of service for all fire and rescue staff. The review will consider the effectiveness of the existing national arrangements for agreeing all conditions of service; it will not however look at pay or pensions. This paper brings this review to attention of HFRS HR Committee and seeks to understand any specific points the committee would wish to feed into the review.

2 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 To note the approach being taken by government to review conditions of service for all fire and rescue staff.

3 Introduction and background

- 3.1 Adrian Thomas has been appointed as the independent reviewer; it is expected that the review will take around five months with a final report to Government by February 2015. Evidence gathering is already underway providing chairs, chiefs and firefighters the opportunity to feed in views via a questionnaire.
- 3.2 Adrian Thomas has spent his career in the field of personnel management, with experience across the Pharmaceutical, Banking and Transportation industries. This has included a number of senior HR positions in GlaxoSmithKline, Network Rail and the Royal Bank of Scotland. He is currently Vice President of the Association of Graduate Recruiters and Chairman of the Recruitment Society.
- 3.3 The aim of the review is to unearth where there may be constraints or barriers with the current terms and conditions of employment (Grey and Gold books) to which the Knight review referred and what can be done to solve them.

*https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/200092/FINAL_Facing_the_Future_3_md.pdf

- 3.4 The Chief Fire Officer HFRS has written to Adrian Thomas inviting him to visit Hampshire in order that the initiatives we are progressing and our requirements of changes to the national conditions of service framework can be most effectively fed into and influence the outcome of the review.

4 Supporting our corporate aims and objectives

- 4.1 Sir Ken Knight's review highlights a number of workforce configuration initiatives already taking place within the existing conditions of service framework. These initiatives provide the potential learning and approaches to build into the HR work streams within HFRS projects; ensuring that we have the most efficient models of working which reflect a very different context of prevention, reduced demand, consideration of risk and a wider community role. The Risk Review is clearly one critical project to focus on however our workforce remodelling should not be limited exclusively to this project. We will utilise new approaches already available to us under existing conditions of service whilst working in parallel to ensure our requirements of changes to the national conditions are taken forward through Adrian Thomas' review. This work is critical to ensuring the achievement of the strategic objectives of the organisation.

5 Risk analysis

- 5.1 Changes to working conditions for staff will inevitably be unsettling for staff. Effective leadership requiring a diagnostic to establish the key priorities, the right approaches and implementation which focusses on maintaining staff dignity and motivation is critical. The Head HR & WfD will therefore ensure that this area of work is effectively prioritised and resources allocated to it.

6 People Impact Assessment

- 6.1 Any future proposal made around new approached to workforce models will be compatible with the provisions of the equality and human rights legislation.
- 8.2 There is potential for significant impact on the workforce which will be better understood once the approaches are more clearly defined; both at a local and national level.

7 Resource implications

- 7.1 HR & WfD resources will be prioritised to focus on this area of work. It is intended to achieve this from within the currently funded establishment.
- 7.2 This work is integral to achieving the strategic objectives of the organisation and must be embedded within the operational projects already underway. The support of finance colleagues to assist with assessment of any case for change will be critical.

8 Consultation

- 8.1 Staff have already been invited by Adrian Thomas to contribute to his review. Local changes will involve staff involvement and consultation.

9 Conclusion

- 9.1 HR Committee is asked to note that the national review of conditions is underway whilst locally we will work to establish the critical people priorities for the HR & WfD function that will deliver optimum performance improvement that can be progressed within existing conditions.

10 Background papers

- 10.1 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:

FACING THE FUTURE: Findings from the review of efficiencies and operations in fire and rescue authorities in England. Sir Ken Knight CBE QFSM FIFireE