

**At a meeting of the HAMPSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY HUMAN
RESOURCES COMMITTEE held at Hampshire Fire
and Rescue Service Headquarters, Eastleigh
on 8 July 2016**

The Chairman announced that the press and members of the public were permitted to film and broadcast the meeting. Those remaining at the meeting were consenting to being filmed and recorded, and to the possible use of those images and recording for broadcasting purposes.

PRESENT:

Councillors:

p	Ann Briggs	p	Jonathan Glen
a	Roz Chadd	a	Chris Lagdon
p	Hannah Coombs	p	John Wall
p	Mark Cooper	p	Matthew Winnington
p	Liz Fairhurst		

131 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Chadd and Councillor Lagdon.

132 DISCLOSURES 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 personal interests in any such matter that they might have wished to disclose.

There were no declarations of interest received for the meeting.

133 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

It was agreed that in recommendation a) in paragraph 128, "...membership of the Group can reduce to any two or three of those Members" to "membership of the Group can reduce to a minimum of two Members"
The Minutes from the meeting on the 13 April 2016 were then agreed to be correct and signed by the Chairman.

134 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman had no announcements for this meeting.

135 DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations received for the meeting.

136 ESTABLISHMENT

The Committee received a report from the Human Resources Director which provided an update on the authorised and actual establishment as of 30- April 2016 (Item 6 in the Minute Book).

The report was introduced and it was confirmed that the Service currently had 40 full-time posts, with an increase in Retained Duty System (RDS) staff since the last quarter. Despite this, establishment for RDS remained 127.79 under the RDS authorised establishment, which included some intentional vacancies. There had also been 12 full time employee (FTE) reductions since the previous report.

It was proposed that future reports to Committee move to reporting against the new establishment. This was not anticipated to be in place fully until 2019, but it was felt useful to be able to monitor progress. Some vacant positions would continue to be held going forward to allow for future flexibility.

It was agreed that many acronyms were used in the report and that these would be summarised more succinctly in future reports, to make it clearer for new Members and also members of the public.

RESOLVED:

The HR Committee approved that:

- a) The changes to the establishment contained within this report made under the Chief Officer's delegated powers.
- b) Future establishment reports to HR Committee are based on the establishment determined through Risk Review and agreed by the Fire Authority in February 2016.
- c) Future establishment reports to HR Committee provide an update on the progress, activity and recommendations of the Resource Management Group
- d) January 2017's establishment report to HR Committee provides an update on the review of RDS establishment at each station and any key actions.

137 ANALYSIS OF SICKNESS DATA

The Committee considered a report from the Human Resources Director, which provided Committee with an in depth analysis of absence data and trends (Item 7 in the Minute Book).

The report was introduced and it was confirmed that had been a 5% overall reduction in sickness, which included a 28% reduction in Green Book staff sickness. Page two of the report showed a 13% increase in sickness in the Control group, but it was confirmed that this was primarily down to it being a small team and there being a higher impact with individual sickness.

Reasons for sickness were discussed and it was acknowledged that “general symptoms” was a very generic term that made it difficult to specify a lot of cases. It was also noted that there were a high number of “back and knee” symptoms, particularly amongst older members of staff.

In a recent Benchmarking process it was revealed that HFRS sat around the middle of the group listings at around average, but this was something that officers and Members wanted to improve on in the future as sickness analysis was assessed in more detail.

During discussions about reducing sickness, it was suggested that friendly competitions be introduced across various team, but it was agreed that this was a difficult balance to maintain with having people at work who were not fully fit and may put themselves in danger. It was acknowledged that the majority of the risk review process had ended and the stability would help reduce sickness for some people, but there were others who were still at a time of change and uncertainty who may still feel varying degrees of stress in the workplace. It was also discussed whether it be made compulsory to have return to work interviews after people had been off sick for any period of time, but noted that this would work better as a process used at the manager’s discretion rather than something to be made compulsory.

Expanding on mental health issues, it was confirmed by officers that those suffering with mental health were referred onto Occupational Health, although this was not always something that was done immediately. Traumatic Incident Monitoring (TRIM) was a model that had been used and found to be effective.

ACTION: It was requested that in future reports, the data on shifts lost (as seen in the chart on page 4 of the report) include the number of FTE’s at the stations to give further context to the percentages.

RESOLVED:

The Human Resources Committee:

- a) Received and noted the report; and
- b) Confirmed that the report provided the in depth data analysis it required on a six monthly basis, which would be standardised for future Committee meetings.
- c) Agreed that the next report to come to Committee should include more specific data on spikes in sickness absence and potential trends, so that the patterns can be analysed for possible inclusion in the action plan.

138 RECRUITMENT

The Committee received verbal update on recruitment (Item 8 in the Minute Book).

Members were updated on recruitment within the Service. It was highlighted that

some vacancies were being held, but this was being balanced with maintaining a high standard of performance within the service.

Since the last reporting, it was confirmed that the following were now in place:

2 x Area Managers

2 x Watch Managers

6 x Crew Managers

There were interviews taking place in July 2016 for 2 x Group Managers.

There were currently 20 posts available for Firefighter roles, which would consist of 16 new recruits and four transfers. Advertisements would go out in September ahead of the training, which would begin in April.

RESOLVED

- a) The Human Resources Committee received the verbal update on recruitment

139 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To resolve that the public be excluded from the meeting during the following item of business, 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 this item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraph 1 of Part I 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 report.

140 PRINCIPAL OFFICER PAY REVIEW

The Committee received an exempt report from the Human Resources Director (Item 10 in the Minute Book) regarding the principal officer pay review, which was specific to Gold Book staff.

The methodology undertaken was explained, which included benchmarking against other Authorities. Members discussed how the reward strategy in the Service as a whole was something that should be looked at by officers going forward.

RESOLVED

The Human Resources Committee approved the proposed local pay adjustment of 1%, backdated to January 2016.