



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority

PROPOSAL TO FORMALLY RECOGNISE THE ASSOCIATION OF PRINCIPAL FIRE OFFICERS

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Agenda No:

Date: 28 May 2010

Purpose of Report:

To seek Fire Authority recognition for the Association of Principal Fire Officers.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Up until 23 July 2004, Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority only formally recognised the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) and Unison for negotiation, formal consultation and where appropriate, collective bargaining.
- 1.2 Following the meeting in July 2004, recognition was also given to the Retained Firefighters Union (RFU) and the Fire Officers Association (FOA). This ensures that the representatives of those staff organisations could be afforded appropriate facilities in time-off for trade union duties.
- 1.3 At present the body which represents the majority of the Strategic Officers within Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service does not have formal recognition and this paper proposes that this matter is addressed.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 The Association of Principal Fire Officers (APFO) represents the senior Strategic Managers of the Fire and Rescue Services. It is the formally recognised national negotiating body for Officers conditioned to “Gold Book” conditions of service.
- 2.2 Although APFO is recognised at a regional level or the Joint Partnership Forum, no approach for formal recognition has even been made in Nottinghamshire. This is considered important as there are APFO members working for the Fire Authority. These members also on occasion carry out activities on behalf of APFO, and in order for these duties to be endorsed the union requires formal recognition. This would also provide the relevant statutory protection against victimisation for being a trade union official.
- 2.3 The relationship between employers and trade unions is governed by the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992, with ACAS codes of practice available to assist in that process. By recognising APFO, the Authority will be agreeing to recognise that body in the same manner as the other representative bodies within Nottinghamshire.
- 2.4 The Service does have relevant standing orders and procedures which deal with trade union activities and these are suitable enough to accommodate APFO as a body.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report, however indirect consequences such as the provision of reasonable time-off to undertake trade union activities, will need to be accommodated.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific issues arising from this report. Training and development for APFO members is provided by APFO themselves.

5. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

An initial equality impact assessment reveals no negative impact on any of the six equality strands. By recognising other representative bodies it ensures that a broad range of views are obtained on Service directives.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Under the provisions of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992, recognising APFO will provide statutory protection for officials undertaking union duties and ensure any members are consulted on collective bargaining issues.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Failure to recognise APFO in an official sense could leave Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority unable to formally engage with its Principal Officers over various aspects of their contractual arrangements. These risks are minor, but require addressing formally.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members approve the formal recognition of the Association of Principal Fire Officers.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)

None.

Frank Swann
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER