



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority

SHIFT CHANGE TASK AND FINISH REVIEW GROUP

Report of the Chief Fire Officer and
Chair of the Shift Change Task and Finish Review Group

Agenda No:

Date: 17 September 2010

Purpose of Report:

To update Members on the progress of shift change implementation.

CONTACT OFFICER

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Chief Fire Officer

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1. BACKGROUND

Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service implemented revised shift patterns with effect from 1 January 2007 following the signing of a collective agreement before the Fire and Rescue Authority on 28 April 2006. To ensure that these revised patterns remained effective and continued to meet the expectations of the public, the Service and its employees, a Shift Change Task and Finish Review Group was established by Policy and Strategy Committee on 22 May 2006. At that time it was agreed that the Task and Finish Review Group would be chaired by the lead opposition spokesperson. This was subsequently revised at the Policy and Strategy Committee of 31 July 2009 and the role of chair was allocated to the then Vice Chair of the Authority.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 Regular meetings of the Task and Finish Review Group have taken place, through which issues around the finer detail of implementation have been raised by both Management and the Fire Brigades Union. These issues have been positively resolved as part of the ongoing process.
- 2.2 As the new working arrangements have become embedded within the Service, fewer issues are formally raised at the meetings as most concerns are dealt with swiftly by Management and the Trade Unions through the normal industrial relations processes within the organisation.
- 2.3 At the meeting of the Group on 15 June 2010, a report, which had previously been considered by the Corporate Management Board on the first year of self rostering, was presented to be considered and discussed (attached with minutes as Appendix A). All parties agreed that the implementation of the new working practices had been successful and the Service and employees had benefited positively.
- 2.4 In view of the positive industrial relations, and successful implementation of self rostering, the Group agreed that they no longer need to meet, with the proviso that if there were any problems, the Fire Brigades Union could, through the Industrial Relations Officer, approach Assistant Chief Fire Officer John Buckley or Councillor Griggs, and if required the Group could be reformed on an ad hoc basis.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The successful implementation of self rostering has generated savings which will be factored into future base budgets.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The successful implementation of self rostering has increased flexibility for employees and assisted in driving down sickness.
- 4.2 With regard to learning and development it is evident that the flexibility developed within the Service has increased access to training and improved attendance on courses.

5. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Service's Equality and Diversity Officer, Management and Trade Union have undertaken an equality impact assessment on the shift change process. This has influenced the form and function of the operating principles, ensuring that the Service's working patterns improve accessibility to all.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

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

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The successful management and deployment of operational resources is key to underpinning the Authority's community safety ambitions. The formation of the Group has ensured that implementation of revised working arrangements has been successful in improving and safeguarding this critical function. Furthermore, ongoing processes are in place to ensure that emerging issues can be addressed and any potential risks removed at early stage.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 9.1 Accept the contents of this report.
- 9.2 Agree to formally dissolve the Shift Change Task and Finish Review Group with the proviso that, should the need arise, the group can be reconvened by the Fire Authority.


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

- Fire and Rescue Authority Report of 28 April 2006 – Future Service Delivery Arrangements.
- Policy and Strategy Committee Report of 22 May 2006 – Task and Finish Group for Shift Change Implementation.
- Policy and Strategy Committee Report of 31 July 2009 – Shift Change Task and Finish Review Group.

Frank Swann
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

Councillor Penny Griggs
CHAIR OF THE SHIFT CHANGE TASK AND FINISH REVIEW GROUP

APPENDIX A

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|---|---|
|  <p>NOTTINGHAMSHIRE Fire & Rescue Service <i>Creating Safer Communities</i></p> | <p>SHIFT CHANGE TASK & FINISH REVIEW GROUP Tuesday 15 June 2010 Fire & Rescue Service HQ (SMT Conference Room)</p> |
|---|---|

Present :

| | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Councillor Penny Griggs (Chair) | Fire & Rescue Authority |
| Councillor Alex Foster | Fire & Rescue Authority |
| Councillor Barrie Cooper | Fire & Rescue Authority |
| John Buckley | Assistant Chief Fire Officer |
| Phil Coates | Fire Brigades Union |
| Alan Coates | Fire Brigades Union |
| Bob Mould | Fire Brigades Union |
| Mark Healy | Industrial Relations Officer |
| Lorraine Butler | Notes |

Apologies : Frank Swann Chief Fire Officer

| | | | Action |
|---|--|---|--------|
| 1 | | <p>APOLOGIES Apologies were received from CFO Frank Swann.</p> | |
| 2 | | <p>PREVIOUS MINUTES – 25 March 2010 Agreed as an accurate record.</p> | |
| 3 | | <p>MATTERS ARISING There were no matters arising.</p> | |
| 4 | | <p>FIRST YEAR REVIEW OF SELF ROSTERING</p> <p>JB went through the findings of the report with the members of the Shift Change Task and Finish Group.</p> <p>The report had previously been through CMB.</p> <p>Sickness Absence - Sickness absences for shift based personnel had significantly reduced since the introduction of self rostering by 500 days per year. This is an average of 5.6 days per person, which is lower than the public sector average of 6.5 days per person. Moral is believed to be a major factor.</p> <p>Confidence Levels – Incidents where standards were met were 90.5% compared to 85.5% for the previous year. However if retained personnel were not included in these figures it would probably be even higher.</p> | |

| | | |
|-----------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| | <p>Wholetime Appliance Unavailability – This again showed an immediate and sustained improvement. The success of this is driven by local managers.</p> <p>Detached Duties – Reduced by 30%, a saving of £25-30,000. It was felt by the FBU that the reduction should be much more than this. JB to look into this.</p> <p>Compassionate / Special Leave – This had reduced from 231 days to 147 days.</p> <p>Overtime – As a result of new appointments there was a continued reduction in overtime shifts. For self rostering to work, there has to be sufficient personnel and these are now in place.</p> <p>Impact on Training – Attendance has improved on training courses, due to increased lead in times and ‘time and a half’ accrued for working evenings and weekends.</p> <p>PC pointed out that this was for day duty staff only. Shift staff do not receive any extra.</p> <p>A discussion took place regarding the fairness of the ten hours given for attending a course. For the staff on the stations this meant two hours still to work, whereas the day duty staff received more than their daily hours.</p> <p>JB explained that the ten hours accrued for attendance on a course reflects the actual activity undertaken on the day.</p> <p>Summary - Overall the changes have been extremely positive.</p> <p>Financial Implication - There had been significant savings but the priority now was to protect what we’ve got. There is an emergency budget on 22 June. However it should be recognised that Trade Unions have worked well with management to get to where we are currently.</p> <p>PG to communicate to all staff both the financial and practical savings achieved, in the form of a Staff Briefing Paper.</p> | <p>JB</p> <p>PGJB</p> |
| <p>5</p> | <p>DEPLOYMENT OF SUPERNUMERARY PERSONNEL</p> <p>There are eleven extra personnel on stations (supernumerary). There is some confusion as to whether this was for trainees or transferees. There is an element of uncertainty.</p> <p>A meeting to be arranged between JB and the unions regarding ‘Supernumerary’ and the ‘Pool’.</p> | <p>JB/FBU</p> |
| <p>6</p> | <p>PROTOCOLS FOR PERSONNEL WHO CANNOT FULFIL THE SELF-ROSTER SHIFT REQUIREMENTS</p> | |

| | | |
|-----------|---|---------------|
| | <p>The FBU were aware of personnel who have had their contracts changed, so they are not called in at short notice because of primary care. This was causing a burden on the rest of the station and causing some bad feeling, as there are many others in similar positions.</p> <p>JB explained that by law (Flexible Working Policy) the Service is obligated to look into and to try to accommodate requests for flexible working.</p> <p>The protocols to be discussed in the meeting between JB and the unions.</p> | JB/FBU |
| 7 | <p>POOL</p> <p>To be added to the meeting between JB and the unions.</p> | JB/FBU |
| 8 | <p>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF WORK DONE BY PERSONNEL ON SELF ROSTER DATABASE</p> <p>The FBU wanted to put forward FF Haslam from West Bridgford for an acknowledgement for his help and hard work putting together a pilot system to help with the self rostering. This was agreed by all.</p> <p>JB on Cllr Penny Griggs' behalf to approach the Chief with regard to an honorarium in appreciation of all his hard work.</p> | JB |
| 9 | <p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>There was no other business.</p> | |
| 10 | <p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>CMB had suggested that this group should be brought to a close. This was agreed by all members with the proviso that if there were any problems the FBU could meet with JB of Cllr Griggs at any time or the group could be reformed.</p> | |



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Corporate Management Board

FIRST YEAR REVIEW OF SELF ROSTERING

Report of Assistant Chief Fire Officer Risk Response

Date: 01 June 2010

Purpose of Report:

To update CMB Members on the outcomes of the first year of the implementation of self rostering principles across shift based and day-duty uniformed employees.

Recommendations:

That CMB note the contents of this report, and forward to the Shift Change Task and Finish Group for consideration.

CMB LEAD OFFICER

Name : ACFO John Buckley

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 During 2008 extensive trials of self rostering arrangements took place at West Bridgford, Newark, Mansfield and Stockhill fire stations, together with the Specialist Rescue Team operating over three separate locations.
- 1.2 The trials were extremely positive with benefits for the Service and staff being identified. The trials ceased on 31 December 2008 as all relative learning had been gained, and management and employee representatives were in a position to move forward and negotiate a formal collective agreement.
- 1.3 At the meeting of the Fire Authority on 20 February 2009 a collective agreement was signed by management and the Fire Brigades Union, agreeing to implement self rostering for all day-duty and shift based staff on 01 April 2009.
- 1.4 As part of the implementation process reviews have taken place at the three and six months stages to ensure that the collective agreement is meeting the expectations of both the Authority and the representative bodies. This report provides an overview of the first full year of operation.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 It has been a long term objective of the Authority to have in place rostering arrangements that provide optimum opportunity for productivity and afford flexibility for employees. The changes to the pre-existing shift system in 2006 removed the 15-hour night shifts and the requisite stand-down period, furthermore crewing principles known as 'Amber Call' and 'Pool' were introduced to assist the Service in dealing with the impact of sickness absence and fluctuations in the establishment.
- 2.2 The latest collective agreement regarding self-rostering, implemented in April 2009, maintained all of these original concepts and enhanced the flexibility of employees further by placing the management of rosters at the local level, therefore empowering local managers to deploy the resources they supervise to best meet the local needs of the organisation and staff alike.
- 2.3 This report reviews the first full year of the self rostering arrangements since total roll-out across the Service, and presents quantitative and qualitative data to provide an overview of how well the new arrangements are working from both management and employee perspectives.

Sickness Absence

2.4 The tables below represent sickness absence of uniformed staff and compare short and long term figures for the period 2008/09 and 2009/10. The tables show:- 1) Shift Based Personnel Absence, 2) None Shift Based Personnel Absence, and 3) All Uniformed Personnel Absence

| Table 1: Shift Based Personnel Absence | | | | | |
|---|------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Time Period | | Short Term Shifts Lost | Long Term Shifts Lost | Total Shifts Lost | |
| Year 01/04/08 to 31/03/09 | Actual | 1461 | 1988 | 3449 | |
| | Per person | 3.3 | 4.4 | 7.7 | |
| Year 01/04/09 to 31/03/010 | Actual | 951 | 1563 | 2514 | |
| | Per Person | 2.1 | 3.5 | 5.6 | |
| Variance over total year | | -35% | -21% | -27% | |

| Table 2: None Shift Based Personnel Absence | | | | | |
|--|------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Time Period | | Short Term Shifts Lost | Long Term Shifts Lost | Total Shifts Lost | |
| Year 01/04/08 to 31/03/09 | Actual | 254 | 365 | 619 | |
| | Per person | 2.1 | 3.1 | 5.2 | |
| Year 01/04/09 to 31/03/010 | Actual | 179 | 393 | 572 | |
| | Per Person | 1.5 | 3.3 | 4.8 | |
| Variance over total year | | -30% | +8% | -7% | |

| Table 3: All Uniformed Personnel Absence | | | | | |
|---|------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Time Period | | Short Term Shifts Lost | Long Term Shifts Lost | Total Shifts Lost | |
| Year 01/04/08 to 31/03/09 | Actual | 1715 | 2353 | 4068 | |
| | Per person | 3 | 4.1 | 7.1 | |
| Year 01/04/09 to 31/03/010 | Actual | 1130 | 1956 | 3086 | |
| | Per Person | 2 | 3.4 | 5.4 | |
| Variance over total year | | -34% | -17% | -24% | |

- 2.5 Table 1 shows an impressive reduction of 35% regarding short term absence, and a reduction of 21% in long term sickness absence. This has resulted in an overall reduction of 27% and identifies that shift based absence is approximately 5.6 shifts per person per year. Total number of employees within this group is 448
- 2.6 Table 2 shows a reduction in short term absence of 30%, but disappointingly a slight increase of 8% in long term absence, however the overall trend is a reduction of 7% within none shift based roles and equates to approximately 4.8 shifts lost per person per year. Total number of employees within this group is 120.
- 2.7 Table 3 collates the overall absence for all uniformed staff and shows a **34% reduction in short term sickness** and a **17% reduction in long term sickness**. This corresponds to **an overall reduction of 24%** and equates to just **5.4 shifts lost per person per year**. This is equivalent to almost 1000 days less absence during 2010 than in the previous year.
- 2.8 Not all of the reductions can be attributed to the changes in working arrangements as other interventions are also involved, however the reduction in absence within the work groups affected by the new arrangements is far greater than in other areas.

Confidence Levels

- 2.9 Utilising the existing capability of MIS to report on BVPI 145a (Confidence Levels) a comparison can be made regarding the effectiveness of crewing arrangements. However what must be borne in mind is that this also covers Retained mobilisations, and the data is relative to discontinued Standards of Fire Cover attendance times, and weight of attack.
- 2.10 The table below presents the data as recorded within the MIS, and as can be seen under the new agreement this has improved compared with previous performance.

| <u>BVPI 145a – Confidence Levels</u> | | |
|---|--|------------------------------|
| Date Range | % of incidents where standards were met | |
| Apr – Jun 08 | 86.8% | 2008/09 average 85.5% |
| Jul – Sep 08 | 85% | |
| Oct – Dec 08 | 82.8% | |
| Jan – Mar 09 | 87.5% | |
| Apr – Jun 09 | 89% | 2009/10 average 90.5% |
| Jul – Sep 09 | 88.7% | |
| Oct – Dec 09 | 90.9% | |
| Jan – Mar 10 | 93.2% | |

- 2.11 A more robust mechanism of measuring the effectiveness of crewing arrangements can be drawn from comparing the amount of time wholetime appliances have been unavailable. This generally occurs at the changeover of shift and is caused when detachments arrive late/leave early, or where sickness is reported with little warning, and covers cannot be immediately secured.
- 2.12 The table below demonstrates an immediate and sustained improvement since the implementation of self rostering.

| <u>Wholetime Appliance</u> <u>Unavailability</u> | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Date Range | Total Unavailability |
| Jan – Mar 09 | 73hrs, 48mins |
| Apr – Jun 09 | 4hrs, 3mins |
| Jul – Sept 09 | 3hs, 35mins |
| Oct – Dec 09 | 1hr, 3mins |
| Jan - Mar 10 | 43mins |

Detached Duties

- 2.13 The move to self rostering at the local level has substantially reduced the number of detachments required to maintain operational cover. This has reduced travelling costs by around 30% and reduced the burden on employees in terms of travelling time.

Compassionate / Special Leave

- 2.14 Compassionate and Special leave is granted for a number of reasons, including personal emergencies, sports leave, military service etc. This type of leave is usually requested where other options have been exhausted and are an indicator of the flexibility inherent in any rostering arrangements.
- 2.15 When comparing 2008/09 with 2009/10 it is encouraging to see a reduction in both shift based and none shift based groups resulting in a total reduction of 36%, which is equivalent to a reduction of 84 days.

| <u>Compassionate and Special Leave</u> | | | |
|---|------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| <u>Extractions</u> | | | |
| | Shift Based Days | None Shift Based Days | Total |
| 2008/09 | 156 | 75 | 231 |
| 2009/10 | 114 | 33 | 147 |
| Variance | -27% | -55% | -36% |

Overtime

- 2.16 Due to deficiencies in the ridership establishment overtime has been deployed to cover shortfalls. This has significantly reduced with recruitment of trainees but still exists in small numbers due to the requirements of specialist roles and functions.
- 2.17 Although the use of overtime is not ideal, it has ensured that appliance availability has not been compromised and has been self funding due to vacancies within the established.
- 2.18 The table below shows the total number of shifts covered over the year and demonstrates continued reductions as a result of new appointments. Selection and progression processes are ongoing to remove all vacancies which will remove the need for overtime to be used in the future.

| <u>Overtime Shift Covers</u> | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|
| Apr – Jun 09 | 618 |
| Jul – Aug 09 | 597 |
| Sep – Dec 09 | 558 |
| Jan – Mar 10 | 168 |

Impact on Training

- 2.19 The move to self rostering changed the way training is planned, allocated and provided to personnel. This has resulted in the alignment of training provision with the financial year which enhances the planning process.
- 2.20 As a consequence of the leave year now being from April to March, Retained Duty System personnel have increased notification and this assists them in planning their attendance on courses.
- 2.21 Increased lead in times, and the enhancement of evening and weekend working accruing 'time and a half' has recognised the importance of, and assisted the delivery of training outside of normal office hours. This has had a slight negative impact on capacity but has been contained within the training function, and staff have greater flexibility in planning their attendance through the use of self rostering.

Workforce Perspective

- 2.22 As part of the research for this report Watch and Crew Managers across the Service were asked to provide any comments that they wished to be considered as part of the review, and discussions have taken place through numerous station / departmental visits.
- 2.23 Anecdotal themes have emerged which have generally been positive about the new arrangements:
- Increased understanding of self rostering is now apparent, particularly when we started to book leave for 2009/10, however it is clear that some Middle Managers are unsure of issues and not always conversant with the collective agreement. This has caused some unnecessary friction at times;
 - Riding 5/9 is generally the norm with only a few occasions where short term notice of sickness or the transfer of staff have caused situations which couldn't be covered;
 - Staff can generally get the time off and leave that they require and there is a sense of everyone working together to help each other out with shift swaps/covers being part of normal life;
 - Flexibility within the system has been used to enable staff to accommodate child/dependant care needs without resorting to Special Leave requests;
 - Management of sickness cover can be difficult at times but we are generally successful in covering the deficiencies;
 - Most staff seem to be happier under the new arrangements compared to the previous centralised crewing system;
 - The management of the rostering can be quite time consuming, although once the majority of the work has been done at the beginning of the year it gets easier;
 - The allocation of training courses has been easier, however changes at short notice can be disruptive to plans and leads to extra work for the Supervisory Managers;
 - The management of overtime was time consuming, and in the end the novelty wore off and it got increasingly difficult to get people in. As vacancies have been filled this has become less of an issue;
 - The reduction in detachments to other stations is beneficial, however this has had the knock on effect of people becoming stale, and the opportunity to gather different perspectives has reduced;
 - The IT software we are using works well and the Service should look to formally adopting it.

Summary

- 2.24 In general terms the overall changes have been positive and have resulted in a decline of absence, increased appliance availability and a reduction in costs.

- 2.25 From the comments received from staff operating on the new system the general view is that it is working well and they are content with the arrangements.
- 2.26 Comments made by a few staff suggest that some Middle Managers may need more support in terms of their understanding of the Self Rostering agreement and this will be addressed by the Response Department.
- 2.27 This report confirms that the new rostering arrangements are working well and having a positive impact on employees and the Service's ability to effectively respond to the needs of the community.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Base budgets will be affected by the sustained savings and these need to be amended going forward.
- 3.2 There is potential that some of the direct savings from the implementation of the new arrangements can be claimed as efficiencies and this will need to be explored in full by the Finance Department.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no Human Resources or Learning and Development implications arising from this report.

5. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

An initial equality impact assessment has identified no specific aspects relating to a disproportionate effect in respect of the key equality strands.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

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

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no Legal Implications arising from this report.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no Risk Management implications arising from this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

That CMB note the contents of this report, and forward to the Shift Change Task and Finish Group for consideration.

John Buckley
Assistant Chief Fire Officer