



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM  
FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE & CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY -  
HUMAN RESOURCES**

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Services HQ, Bestwood  
Lodge, Arnold Nottingham NG5 8PD on 22 January 2016 from 10.00 - 10.56**

**Membership**

Present

Councillor Darrell Pulk (Chair)  
Councillor Brian Grocock  
Councillor Neghat Nawaz Khan  
Councillor Mike Pringle  
Councillor Liz Yates  
Councillor Jason Zadrozny

Absent

Councillor Eunice Campbell  
(substituted by Councillor Brian  
Grocock)  
Councillor Michael Payne  
(substituted by Councillor Darrell  
Pulk)

**Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:**

Tracy Crump - Head of HR, Notts F&RS  
Gavin Harris - Head of ICT, Notts F&RS  
Sue Maycock - Head of Finance, Notts F&RS  
Craig Parkin - Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Notts F&RS  
James Welbourn - Governance Officer  
Councillor Gordon Wheeler - County Councillor (observing)

**33 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR FOR THE MEETING**

In the absence of the Chair, Councillor Darrell Pulk was appointed Chair for the meeting.

**34 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr Eunice Campbell (personal reasons) (substituted by Cllr Brian Grocock)  
Cllr Michael Payne (substituted by Cllr Darrell Pulk)

### **35 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

None.

### **36 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2015 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the presiding Chair.

### **37 INFORMATION GOVERNANCE MANAGER**

Craig Parkin, Assistant Chief Fire Officer at Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service introduced a report proposing the creation of an Information Governance post, along with the deletion of both the Performance Officer and Evaluation Officer posts.

The following points were highlighted:

- (a) vacancies have been managed to provide internal support and governance;
- (b) the new post will provide services to the organisation;

Following questions from members, further information was provided:

- (c) the Performance Officer post was vacant for one year, and the Evaluation Officer post has been vacant since the middle of 2015;
- (d) there have been occasions where solicitors have been brought in to assist with Freedom of Information (FOI) requests. One of these requests had cost close to £2,500 to process.

All managers at Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service have gone through FOI and data awareness training; however, the Information Governance manager post would coordinate these requests. This would negate the need to have external help with the majority of FOIs;

- (e) in 2015 the authority processed 120 FOIs. A Joint Interoperability Board with the Police also looked at this area of work;

Councillors agreed a further report could come back through this Committee if requested. This would likely be an annual update.

### **RESOLVED to recommend that the Fire Authority:**

- (1) amend the permanent establishment and create the new post of Information Governance Manager;**
- (2) delete the posts of Performance Officer and Evaluation Officer.**

### **38 ESTABLISHMENT OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER ROLE**

Craig Parkin, Assistant Chief Fire Officer at Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service introduced a report seeking creation of an ICT Development Officer role.

The report, and questions from members, highlighted the following information:

- (a) there has previously been a great demand on external consultants coming into the Fire Authority when required to do so. This will continue, as consultants will always be required for certain pieces of work, although the reliance on them should be lessened. It is anticipated that consultancy costs will decrease;
- (b) there are two budgets for the creation of this post; money will be taken from both of those budgets to pay for the new role. All of the money comes from revenue;
- (c) the ICT business plan provides guidance for future projects; for example, the change in phone system is documented;
- (d) the new post can carry out development and retain knowledge within the organisation, to other members of staff;

**RESOLVED to support and recommend to the Fire Authority the creation of an additional ICT Development Officer post with effect from 1 April 2016 to be funded by a virement from non-pay budgets.**

### **39 HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE**

Tracy Crump, Head of HR at Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service updated members on key Human Resources metrics for the period 1 October – 31 December 2015.

The following points were highlighted:

- (a) there will be an increase in absence rates near Christmas which impacts on figures, but this was expected;
- (b) two-thirds of absence was attributed to long-term absentees;
- (c) there was a slight reduction in the absence of wholetime employees;
- (d) musculo-skeletal and mental health problems are important issues that require constant monitoring. The Fire Service is linked into a scheme called Rehab-Works' that provides physiotherapy; a helpline is also part of this service. Musculo-skeletal injuries are of particular concern for the organisation as it gets older as a whole workforce; fitness programmes could be tailored to mitigate this impact.

The amount of recovery time required for mental health issues is generally longer, but this affects a small proportion of the workforce. A peer support programme is being put into place, and should be fully resourced and operable within the next year. This peer support will include help over the phone for affected colleagues;

- (e) an external training provider will be hosting 'resilience workshops' to help deal with pressure and stress at work;
- (f) the wholetime pay budget was significantly overspending; this is no longer the case, and there is ongoing work to reduce this further;
- (g) the service has a policy to avoid making people redundant where possible, which saves redundancy costs;
- (h) IDRPs stands for Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure. This tends to relate to issues around the firefighter pension scheme;
- (i) Fire and Rescue have carried out two sessions with Mind (mental health charity). Government have given money to Mind to speak to services. Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service are currently doing more for employees than Mind recommend;
- (j) members of the Committee would be welcome to attend the peer support training.

**RESOLVED to:**

- (1) applaud the work done by officers;**
- (2) ask that the Committee are notified of any tangible results going forward;**
- (3) endorse the report.**

**40 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the remaining items in accordance with section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the basis that, having regard to all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, as defined in paragraphs 1 & 3 of Schedule 12A to the Act.**

**41 REGRADEING OF POSTS**

Craig Parkin, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented the report on the regrading of posts.

**RESOLVED to note the recommendations within the report.**