



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

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Services HQ, Bestwood Lodge,
Arnold Nottingham NG5 8PD on 13 July 2018 from 10.00 am - 10.31 am**

Membership

Present

Councillor John Clarke (Chair)
Councillor Vaughan Hopewell
Councillor John Longdon
Councillor Jackie Morris

Absent

Councillor Mohammed Saghir

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

John Buckley - Chief Fire Officer
Tracy Crump - Head of People and Organisational Development
Catherine Ziane-Pryor - Governance Officer

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mohammed Saghir - leave

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 May 2018 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

4 WORKFORCE PLAN 2018-20

Tracy Crump, Head of People and Organisational Development, introduced the report which reviews the workforce plan for 2017-19 and presents the refreshed workforce plan for 2018-20. John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, also contributed to the discussion.

The following points were highlighted and questions from the Committee responded to:

- (a) the workforce plan is reviewed yearly and looks ahead for a two-year period enabling the Service to plan for known and predicted changes to the establishment, including recruitment periods which can take up to a year;
- (b) the whole time establishment has reduced by 17 posts to 455, partly due to the deletion of 16 operational posts which have been via normal turnover;
- (c) maintaining the on-call establishment is an ongoing challenge and whilst 36 new trainees were appointed in 2017-18, 27 staff left the in that year, against a predicted total of 29;
- (d) as of the end of March 2018, 258 on-call employees were engaged compared to 251 the previous year, but retention remains a challenge and recruitment is on-going;
- (e) there are 59 firefighters with dual employment contracts of whole time and retained duty system posts;
- (f) there are 162 support posts, 15 of which are fixed term, some of which are working on ICT projects where specific expertise is required;
- (g) it was anticipated that during 2017-18, 16 operational employees would leave the Service as they reached the 30-year retirement point. Following previous patterns, a 7 further staff were predicted to leave the Service due to a variety of non-retirement reasons, and potentially further 20 could choose to take early retirement. By the end of the year a total of 19 operational members of staff had left the Service;
- (h) with regard to equality, during the recent recruitment process and following positive directed action, 17 women and 31 Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) candidates have been successful in reaching the final stages of the selection process for the whole-time posts;
- (i) a further 40 whole-time posts will need to be recruited to during the next 2 years;
- (j) the Service still needs to identify £800,000 of savings by 2020, which is likely to have workforce implications as currently 79% of the total budget is spent on workforce;
- (k) as the retirement age of firefighters rises (to 60 under the new Fire-fighter pension scheme), it is anticipated that recruitment will be required less frequently, but that operational staff may leave the Service for reasons other than retirement as those joining Service are not likely to anticipate a 40-year career as a firefighter;
- (l) collaborative recruitment with Lincolnshire and Derbyshire Fire Rescue Services had been considered but was not found appropriate this time, although there is future potential, including at a regional level. Some training requirements are common across the Services and so this may provide an initial collaborative opportunity;
- (m) it is assumed that staff reaching 30 years of service and over the age 50 years of age will retire, and that half of the staff reaching 25- of 30 years of service and over the age of 50 years will retire early;

- (n) there is potential for significant retirement of Crew and Watch Managers within the next few years but succession planning is in place including developing some staff in preparation for them to apply for the vacancies;
- (o) as the retirement age rises the Service is considering health and fitness and how this may impact how people will want to work as they age. With an ageing population and more caring responsibilities of ageing parents, further flexible working will need to be considered;
- (p) it is possible for whole time operational staff to retire, have a break of six months, and then re-join the Service as retained duty staff without negative tax implications and with valuable experience;
- (q) external factors which influence workforce planning include national pay negotiations, broadening of role maps, the national living wage, apprenticeship targets, the Fire Rescue Service National Framework, and potentially, the result of the firefighter pension scheme legal challenge.

The members of the Committee welcomed the comprehensive report.

RESOLVED to note the report.

5 HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

Tracy Crump, Head of People and Organisational Development, presented the human resources update including the key human resources metrics for the period 1 April 2018 to 30 June 2018.

The following points were highlighted:

- (a) detailed sickness absence levels will be reported to the next meeting as they could not be collated in time for this agenda deadline;
- (b) since the last report 14 new staff have started and 14 have left the Service;
- (c) in the National Fire Chiefs Council sickness absence survey, NFRS ranks 11 out of the 30 services for 6.74 days average sickness absence per Whole-time and Control employee (the lowest being 2.77 days and the highest 14.58 days), and 16th out of 30 for an average of 8 days sickness absence over the whole workforce (the lowest being 2.76 days and the highest 14.46 days);
- (d) there had been one incident reported under the Harassment and Bullying procedure.

RESOLVED to note the report.

6 CONVERSION OF POSTS

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which updates members on the posts which have been re-designated during the period April 2017 to March 2018. The authority to re-designate posts was given to the Chief Fire Officer by the Authority in 2005 and is reported annually.

RESOLVED to note that during the period April 2017 to March 2018 one Watch Manager Trainer post was converted to a Simulation Software Developer role.

7 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 by virtue of Paragraphs 1 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

8 CHANGE TO PERMANENT ESTABLISHMENT: PAYROLL SECTION

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which requests a change to the permanent establishment within the Payroll Section. If agreed by the Committee, the recommendation will be submitted to full Fire Authority.

RESOLVED to approve the recommendations within the report.