

report

meeting	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE AUTHORITY	
date	1 AUGUST 2003	agenda item number

REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

AD-HOC MEMBERS GROUP ON EQUALITIES

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPROT

- 1.1 To update Members on the ongoing work being carried out in the Service with regards to Fairness and Equality.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Ad-Hoc Members Group on Equalities has now been formed for some time and it was agreed that all minutes from the meetings of the Group would be submitted to Fire Authority members for their information. Please find attached as Appendix A the minutes of the meeting held on 13 May 2003.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

4 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no personnel implications arising from this report.

5 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This report contains issues that will invariable lead to changes in Service policy and procedures.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 That Members note the contents of the report and attached minutes.

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION

None

P. Woods
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE
Minutes of THE AD HOC MEMBERS GROUP ON EQUALITIES
 held on
Tuesday 13 May 2003
 at 10.00 a.m.
 in the Conference Room

Present:

Councillor Graham Jackson	Chairperson
Councillor Joyce Bosnjak	CFA Member
Councillor Ken O'Toole	CFA Member
Paul Woods	Chief Fire Officer
Gina Turner	Human Resources Manager
Julie Dennis	Equality and Fairness Advisor
Andy Bettison	Temporary Assistant Divisional Officer
Pete Allen	Sub Officer Newark Retained
Margaret Spooner	Administrator (Minutes)

Apologies:

01/03 Apologies for absence were received from

Councillor Parry Tsimbiridis	CFA Member
David Johnson	Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Paul Smith	FBU Representative
Prad Verma	FBU Representative
George Ware	Union Representative

2 02/03 PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes for the meeting held on Tuesday 1 April 2003 were approved.

Action By

3 03/03 MATTERS ARISING

03/03/5 RACE EQUALITY BOOKLETS

Julie Dennis reported that the printers had a slight technical hitch with the Brigade badge. This issue has now been resolved and the printing is scheduled to go ahead.

13/03 FEEDBACK FROM MEETINGS AND SEMINARS

It was reported that Julie Dennis and Jeremy Lodge have had a meeting with Milton Crossdale to look at the possibility of forming a partnership to raise funding. A further meeting is scheduled for Thursday 15 May 2003. Julie Dennis to report back at the next Ad Hoc meeting.

JD

19 19/03 ODPM CONFERENCE 8 & 9 MAY 2003

Julie Dennis distributed two documents to members. The first document was called 'Bringing Structure to Building Links with Community Groups' by Kabinder Dhemi, the Community Safety Officer at Shropshire Fire & Rescue Service and the second document was titled 'Tower Hamlet, changing relationships' by London Fire & Emergency Planning Authority. Members were requested to read the information and give any comments or suggestions at the next meeting.

ALL

Julie Dennis went on to outline the meeting she attended at Cheshire on 8 & 9 May as follows:

19/03/01 Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service – Sexuality Awareness Training. Training to be provided by the Health Service, in order to tackle issues relating to sexuality.

19/03/02 Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Service – Recruitment initiative to reach school children. Derbyshire have made links with a number of inner city schools in Derby. They talk to young people about a career in the Fire Service and this has now become part of the Citizenship classes of the National Curriculum.

19/03/03 Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service – Bilingual Project. Merseyside have employed three female community Home Fire Safety Officers to assist with Community Fire Safety initiatives. These initiatives have not only resulted in reaching more homes, but applications have increased from ethnic minority candidates, one being a woman from the Asian Community.

19/03/04 Suffolk Fire & Rescue Service - Working with Carers. This is similar to the Nottinghamshire Caring for Carers training package. This project has been so successful that they have more referrals than the Service can handle.

19/03/05 Strathclyde Fire & Rescue Service – Flexible working scheme – This is a pilot project due to be launched in Strathclyde, offering flexible working to all personnel across the Brigade. One individual who is going to be part of the pilot is a male firefighter who wishes to change his shift pattern temporarily to fit in with caring arrangements at home.

19/03/06 The Disability Discrimination Act – Employment Issues for the Fire Service – An overview of the DDA was given, outlining the main aspects of the Act including:

- Part 1 Definition of Disability
- Part 2 What it covers and what are relevant changes? What is discrimination? Reasonable adjustments.

19/03/07 DRC Project

DRC PD team will be writing a good practice guidance document on employment issues for the Fire Service. They are requesting comments, views, ideas and concerns from Brigades.

19/03/08 Development of a Fire Service Recruitment Tool Kit

The Fire Service Recruitment Tool Kit will be available via an internet website. Sharone Kirby to come and speak to Officers for their comments.

SK

Following the briefing a discussion took place and it was suggested that in future it would be beneficial to members if they could have any handout prior to the meeting. This would enable members to read through the information and make notes of any questions or comments they would like to voice.

Councillor Graham Jackson asked how do we ensure that action points obtained from attending conferences and seminars were fed back across the Brigade. Members were told that any relevant information is passed on to Community Safety, Information Services and any other department or organisation it may affect. Also the Human Resources Strategy plan is aimed at linking with departments and supporting teams throughout the City and County.

20 20/03 FACILITIES

Members were informed that preparatory design and consultation work on Ashfield, Beeston and Bingham was largely completed in 2002/03, but not in time to start any of the work that year. Therefore, £50,000 was carried forward to add to the £50,000 capital already allocated for Equalities Schemes in 2003/04.

It is anticipated that we shall only be able to complete Beeston and Ashfield this financial year, though it may be possible to make a start on Bingham.

The March meeting of the Female Facilities Group also agreed target minimum standards of female accommodation for future projects, namely:

- 2 Toilets
- 2 Shower cubicles
- Washbasins
- Adequate locker storage for bedding, duty rig, spare fire kit and toiletries
- Dormitories should be a single, mixed occupancy room with beds segregated by screens.

ACFO David Johnson investigated the facilities at West Bridgford and reported that they were fine, consisting of:

- 8 dedicated beds
- 8 dedicated washing & toilet facilities
- 2 unisex washing facilities

It was noted that the aim should be to give dignity for all, and to have some private space. Julie Dennis to visit West Bridgford and report to Ad Hoc at the next meeting

JD

Action By

14 14/03 WHOLETIME RECRUITMENT

ADO Bettison reported that the Women's Awareness Day and Black and Asian & Ethnic Minorities Days held at Djanogly College Nottingham were a great success.

The two general careers events held at Victoria Leisure Centre Nottingham and Brigade Training Centre were also a great success with over 400 people attending. The Brigade received five negative responses regarding the Career Days arranged by the Brigade. Julie Dennis reported that she has written a response. ADO Bettison to report back on the feedback from the survey conducted at a later date.

AB

14/03/01 RECRUITMENT 2003

The new recruitment campaign commenced on Friday 9 May 2003 and up to Tuesday 13 May 2003 - 553 application forms had been sent out. Feedback on the final figures to be given at a later date. A meeting is to be arranged regarding a standard tests process for Wholetime and Retained.

AB

14/03/02 TRANSFERRED CANDIDATES

Interviews for 9 candidates requesting a transfer to Nottingham took place at BTC on Thursday 8 May 2003. The candidates were of a very high standard and 8 candidates were successful.

09/03 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

22/03 WOMEN CHIEF FIRE OFFICERS

Chief Fire Officer Paul Woods informed members that there is to be a Fire Service Leadership Conference on Thursday, 6 November 2003 at the Hilton Hotel – Sunrise, Florida. If any members are interested they can find out more information from WCFO'S Conference Facilitator by e-mail or looking on the internet under www.womenfireofficers.org.

ALL

The next meeting to be held on **Tuesday, 15 July 2003** in the Conference Room.

ALL