

## report

meeting	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE AUTHORITY	
date	23 JULY 2004	agenda item number

### REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

#### AD-HOC MEMBERS GROUP ON EQUALITIES

##### 1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

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

##### 2 BACKGROUND

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 16 March 2004.

##### 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 invariably lead to changes in Service policy and procedures.

##### 6 RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

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

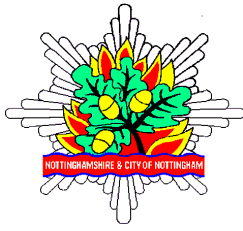
##### 7 RECOMMENDATIONS

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 15 June, 2004**  
**At 10.00 A.M.**  
**Service Headquarters**  
**In the Conference Room**

**Present:**

Councillor Graham Jackson	CFA Member
Councillor Parry Tsimbirdis	CFA Member
Paul Woods	Chief Fire Officer
Julie Dennis	Equality and Fairness Advisor
Naseem Begum	BME Development Worker
Margaret Spooner	Administrator (Minutes)

**Absent :**

Councillor Ken O'Toole	CFA Member
Councillor Joyce Bosnjak	CFA Member
Gina Turner	Human Resources Manager
Neil Colton	Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Paul Smith	FBU Representative
Alan McClean	FBU Representative
Jim McKenna	Unison Representative
Pete Allen	Sub Office Retained

**APOLOGIES**

1. Apologies for absence were received from:  
 Councillor Joyce Bosnjak, ACFO Neil Colton, Gina Turner and Jim McKenna.

**02/04****PREVIOUS MEETING**

2. **Minutes for the meeting held on Tuesday 16 March 2004 were approved as an accurate record.**

3. **MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising from the meeting held on Tuesday 16 March 2004.

4. **AGENDA ITEMS**

5. **TWO TICKS FOR DISABILITY**

	<b>Action By</b>
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**Action By**

**05/01/04** It was confirmed that NF&RS had been awarded the symbol for disability from May 2004. NF&RS are waiting the certificate. There was a presentation. The question was raised whether the press had been invited to the presentation. Julie Dennis told Members that the press had been invited to the presentation but they had declined the offer. The symbol will appear on NF&RS letterheads and also on the internet. Julie Dennis to chase this up and report back in September 2004.

**JD**

**6. CFOA: REGIONAL EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS MEETING**

**06/1/04** Members were informed that the minutes for the CFOA Regional Equality and Fairness Meeting, held on 18 May 2004 at Cheshire, were not available yet for members to read, but Julie Dennis outlined one of the main issues covered at the meeting.

**06/02/04 • Emergency Contact Cards**

**06/03/04** This card has a similar format to that of a credit card. On the front of the original card it states "I am deaf / hard of hearing". "Please dial 999". On the back of the card there are symbols depicting Police, Fire and Ambulance Services.

**06/04/04** The card was originally sponsored by the Midlands Bank, but since becoming part of HSBC, they will no longer continue with sponsorship. The copyright of the card belongs to the Leeds Deaf Club.

**06/05/04** It was decided that the card would be adapted for use by the Fire Service as a pilot scheme, using £5000 that the Regional Fire Services had set aside over previous years. The aim is to target not only the deaf and hard-of-hearing, but also non-English speaking people. The card will read, "I am deaf / hard of hearing", or "I do not speak English." "Please dial 999 and connect me with the Fire Service". Julie Dennis is to pass this on to Community Safety. It was suggested that this item is presented to the National Equality Meeting. Julie Dennis will report back at the next Ad Hoc meeting, in September 2004.

**Action**

**JD**

**7. CFOA: NATIONAL EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY PRACTITIONERS GROUP MEETING**

**07/01/04** Prior to the Ad Hoc meeting, members received minutes from the CFOA National Equality & Diversity Practitioners Group meetings held on Wednesday 11 February and Tuesday 18 May 2004

Julie Dennis highlighted some of the main issues:

**07/02/04** Establish terms of reference to ensure what type of work should be produced and how this work will link in with the Project Board.

**Action By**

- 07/03/04** A meeting is to be arranged between National Equalities and Diversity Practitioners Group and Project Board to discuss how the relationship will work.
- 07/04/04** Presentation on the Esat self-assessment tool for the ESLG. This is a web-based system and is relatively simple to adapt and would cost approximately £650. Maria Tonks to find out the cost of customising this system to meet the needs of the Fire Service. This issue to be raised with ODPM as it has the possibility to be used nationally as a means of achieving a common audit trail across all Services.
- 07/06/04** Equalities Standard for Local Government - Concentrate on the six areas regarding the key strategic issues to be addressed.
- 07/07/04** ESLG, DDA, Equal Pay, Harassment & Bullying, Targets, Core Values - How to be more affective on Positive Action and Training, in accordance with national standards
- 07/09/04** National Black Professional Firefighters Conference – this conference is to be held in Los Angeles during August. It was suggested that each Fire Service should send at least one black firefighter to the conference. It was agreed that this may not be possible for NF&RS this year but it could be considered in the future.
- 07/10/04** Disability Discrimination Act – working with Disability Rights Commission to produce guidance for the Fire Service first draft in September even though legislation comes out in October 2004.

**8. CFOA NATIONAL EQUALITIES & FAIRNESS UPDATE**

Because of the absence of Gina Turner, this agenda item is to be deferred to the next Ad Hoc Meeting on Tuesday 14 September 2004

**B/F**

**9. CORE VALUES**

Because of the absence of Gina Turner, this agenda item is to be deferred to the next Ad Hoc Meeting on Tuesday 14 September 2004

**B/F**

**17. BME DEVELOPMENT OFFICER UPDATE**

**17/04**

Naseem Begum informed Members on the following issues:

**17/1/04 Home Risk Assessment** - visited 60 homes to do home risk assessment, accompanied by the relevant station personnel and Garth.

**17/2/04 Asian Sheltered Accommodation** - Visited Asian Sheltered Accommodation, accompanied by Crossley Powell, to talk about false

**Action By**

- alarms and the prevention of fires. Residents were also shown a video.
- 17/3/04 Presentation** – completed several presentations, with translation.
- 17/4/04 Radio Fiza** – Naseem has given several talks on Home Risk Assessment and Fire Safety.
- 17/5/04 Links with Indian Communities** – links have been formed with the elderly luncheon clubs, namely Pakistani Centre and Pakistan Forum.
- 17/6/04 Community Safety Event on 5 July with Julie Dennis** – this event will focus on fire safety issues for BME voluntary and community organisations, and also on recruitment into the Fire Service. This event will take place at both the YMCA and Central Fire Station. An invitation is to be sent to all BME Community Groups, CFA members, Notts Chief Constable, Chief Executive of Notts County Council, Local Equalities Officers and Jagtar Singh from ODPM.
- 17/7/04** The event will be split into two sections as follows:
- Section One:**
- 17/8/04**
- Talks on “Race Equality Scheme” by CFO Paul Woods
  - “Partnership Working” by Milton Crosdale,
  - Julie Dennis will present the “Race Equality Scheme Year One Review”
  - Naseem Begum to present “Community Safety – Making our Community Safer”.
- Consultation workshop to gain feedback from BME community groups.
- Section Two**
- Station Tour
  - Chip Pan Demonstration,
  - Community Safety Video.
  - Recruitment Video.
- 17/9/04** It was reported that this event was still short of a speakers. It was suggested by CFO Woods that Councillor Brent Charlesworth of the City Council is contacted to find out if he is available. CFO Woods agreed to

		<u>Action By</u>
	<b>Action</b> contact Councillor Charlesworth.	<b>PW</b>
<b>17/10/04</b>	Members were also asked if they would like to volunteer to help at this event. It was suggested that if this event is successful, next year could include members from the disabled community. Julie Dennis and Naseem Begum to report back at the next Ad Hoc meeting in September 2004	<b>JD/NB</b>
<b>17/12/04</b>	Members were informed that Action plans have been drawn up for the next twelve months. Naseem will be focusing some of her time on Asylum seekers, Young People, and liaising with Kashmeera Gorecha of Nottingham University, who is a regional recruitment officer for black and ethnic minority communities.	
<b>17/13/04</b>	Councillor Graham Jackson thanked Naseem for the update and congratulated her on all the time, work and effort she has put in during the few weeks she has worked for NF&RS. Concern was raised that too much of Naseem's time could be taken up being a translator. It was suggested that this issue be addressed through Community Safety.	<b>NB</b>
<b>16.</b>	<b>16/04 WORK LIFE BALANCE</b>	
<b>16/1/04</b>	Owing to the absence of Gina Turner, this agenda item was not discussed in great detail. Julie Dennis updated Members with the information available to her. All the questionnaires have been returned. Some of the issues need to go the SMT due to the financial implications.  Tracy Crump is to write a handbook.  The main topics from the questionnaires highlighted were: Child Vouchers, Firefighter' Shift patterns, and compressed hours. Members will be given a more in-depth view at the next meeting September.	
<b>12.</b>	<b>ACTION PLAN PROGRESS</b>	
<b>12/1/04</b>	<b>Training</b> – half way through the programme for station based staff. One Managing Fairness course outstanding. All trainers, and facilitators agreed that the training had been both challenging and enjoyable. Two of the courses proved to be more difficult than other training courses. This was due to some attendees having difficulties in accepting changes to both UK and European legislation.  It was agreed that, in some cases, extra training may be needed to make employees aware of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in the workplace. There is a clear message across the Service of expectations in regard to Equality and Diversity. The Service will no longer accept ignorance as an excuse for inappropriate behaviour.	

**12/2/04** With the return of nearly all the evaluations forms it was agreed that the majority of employees taking part in the training course found it both enjoyable and beneficial.

**Action** Julie Dennis informed members that NF&RS have been successful in obtaining the contract for the Equality training in Northamptonshire at a cost of £30,000. A meeting is to be arranged between Gina Turner and Julie Dennis to discuss how to implement a plan with dates and times.

**12/2/04** **Positive Action** – this has been put on hold because NF&RS are not recruiting any Wholetime Firefighters at the present, but Naseem Begum will be attending a recruitment event on 3 July in Hyson Green to speak to communities about Wholetime and Retained recruitment. Margaret Spooner to send out the postcard on training which has been used on a previous recruitment campaign.

**12/3/04** **Integrated Risk Management** – still ongoing.

**12/04/04** **Cultural Change** - is on going with the help of Naseem Begum

**12/05/04** **Targets** – is on going, but there is a need to look at setting more realistic target dates.

**12/06/04** **Equality Standards Local Government** – Ensuring that NF&Rs main stream equality across the organisation by giving Human Resources, Safety Services and Information Services a record book to record their progress. Each department will need to achieve the same level at the same time.

**12/07/04** **Legislation** - still on going. Julie Dennis to focus on European Legislation and the possibility of European funding to assist with projects.

**12/08/07** **Local Performance Indicators** – this will be shown through the targets.

**12/09/04** Members raised concerns that with so many different projects taking place there is a danger that NF&RS could finish up spreading their resources to the limit. CFO Woods suggested that there should be a review of external issues to see what the impact is on internal projects with regards to deadlines and targets. Julie Dennis is to update the Action Plan, and schedule as an agenda item for the September Ad Hoc Meeting.

**16/10/04** CFO Woods requested that, once the Action Plan as been updated, it should be presented to CFA in September to let them know what the financial commitment will be.

**Action By**

**JD/GT**

**MS**

**JD**

**B/F**

**JD**

**Action By**

**20. HARASSMENT AND BULLYING POLICY**  
**20/01/04** A copy of the Harassment & Bullying Policy Review was distributed to Members at the meeting. Julie Dennis pointed out that there are still some amendments to be completed.

**20/02/04** Following a discussion, it was agreed that Julie Dennis should arrange a meeting with CFO Woods to look at the wider view and its implications. Julie Dennis is to update the policy by mid July to enable SMT to discuss this at their meeting set for the middle of July 2004.  
**Action**

**JD/PW**

**21. B&EMM**

**21/01/04** Julie Dennis informed Members that she had just returned from the "Networking Women in the Fire Service" Conference at Morton College.

**21/02/04** One of the items discussed at the meeting was establishing a support group for women in the Service in Nottinghamshire. The aim of this group would be to move forward issues which affect women, to be consulted on new policies and to give them an opportunity to meet other women in the Service whom they may not necessary work alongside.

**21/03/04** The first meeting is planned to be a steering group meeting which will give members the opportunity to establish the format and expectations. It is hoped that NF&RS will be able to form their own women's support group.

**21/04/04** The first meeting is scheduled for 22 September 2004 at Nottinghamshire Service Headquarters. Julie Dennis to report back to Ad Hoc at a future date.  
**Action**

**JD**

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**22/04 NOTTINGHAM MELA**

This event will take place on Sunday 25 July 2004 on the Forest Recreation Ground. NF&RS will be having a Stall, with members of staff available to speak to the public.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**The next Meeting Tuesday 14 September 2004 at 10.00 am in the Conference Room**

**ALL**