

report

meeting	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY	
date	16 December 2005	agenda item number

REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

CONVERSION OF POSTS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek Authority approval for the conversion of uniformed posts within Safety Services (Fire Safety Officers) and Human Resources (Driving School posts), and to establish the principle of delegating authority to the Chief Fire Officer for the conversion of non-operational posts as required in the future.

2. BACKGROUND

The Authority has approved a number of conversions of uniformed posts to non-uniformed ones in recent years. Members have recognised the need to embrace diversity in the workforce and the need to introduce specialists into the Service. Such conversions have historically been in Headquarters and Service Development Centre posts, but also include those associated with community safety delivery.

3. REPORT

- 3.1 As has been stated it is recognised that, as a result of the change agenda set by the Authority, the National Framework document, and the Service's need to broaden the scope of skills and expertise, there are a number of justifiable reasons to convert posts. Government and local expectations require an upskilling of our workforce, which in turn delivers a diversified programme of proactive and reactive resources. This will continue however, further to the above purpose of the report. Approval is sought from the Authority to delegate any future conversions to the Chief Fire Officer. This will increase capacity to discuss directional issues commensurate with the Authority business and provide expedient conversions dependant on business need and service delivery requirements. It is worth reminding Members the post conversions are limited to posts without a nationally agreed role map and will not effect operational posts.
- 3.2 This report covers two areas : the first relates to the approval to convert a number of existing, uniformed posts to non-uniformed ones. The second area covers the process to deal with future need.
- 3.3 As a direct consequence of the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) process, the Service is constantly appraising both its service delivery/support options, and the role requirements to deliver them. The Authority also has a duty to consider value for money. As a direct consequence, the Strategic Management Team (SMT) has recently accepted reports proposing the conversion of posts in fire safety and driving school (2).

- 3.4 In terms of the fire safety posts, there is scope to convert a number of posts. Non-uniformed fire safety officers are not new to the Service as there are a number of them across the country. The same is true of driving school posts.
- 3.5 Within the uniformed officer structure, officers who advance or move for career development take their skills with them. This generally results in the need for selection and training of replacements which is expensive. It is shown that the turnover rate for non-uniformed staff is far lower. It is also evident that many of the roles being undertaken at this level do not require operational competence.
- 3.6 Appendices A and B provide further rationale and detail relating to the posts referred to above.
- 3.7 The development of service delivery and support options in the future will require SMT to consider a range of approaches and solutions. Further examination of post conversions will take place in line with Service strategies and IRMP expectations. The Authority is asked to consider and approve delegation to the Chief Fire Officer of the responsibility to consider and approve future post conversions.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial implications arising from this report are contained in Appendices A and B, and relate to salary savings nett of implementation costs.

6. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

There are personnel implications arising from this report. All appointments will be made in accordance with existing policies and procedures. The recommendations are in line with stated expectations that the Fire Service will provide better access to all levels of the organisation and will also increase the selection pool to promote the Service's aspirations around diversity.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

An initial impact assessment has revealed that there are no direct equality issues arising from this report.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) That Members approve the conversion of the posts detailed in this report.
- (ii) That Members give delegated authority to the Chief Fire Officer to approve the conversion of uniformed posts to non uniformed posts and that any such conversions be reported annually to the Personnel Committee.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION

None.

Paul Woods
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

Report

Meeting: Fire & Rescue Authority

Date: December 2005

Appointment of Non Operational Fire Safety Audit Officers**1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1 To explain the reasons for recommending the appointment of non operational Officers into the newly restructured Technical Fire Safety Department, to define the role within the Job Description/Person Specification and to detail further work required.

2. Background

- 2.1 As part of the Technical Fire Safety Implementation Plan (October 2003), it was recommended that the Fire Authority begin to appoint non-operational officers to the Fire Safety Inspectorate.
- 2.2 Members will be aware of the high profile now attributed to Fire Safety issues which have come to the fore particularly in the light of the Fire Service modernisation agenda, Integrated Risk Management Planning and the forthcoming Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order.
- 2.3 Critical to the Authority's success in this field will be to have a stable, competent and efficient workforce of professional Fire Safety Inspecting Officers. Additionally, within Nottinghamshire we have seized the opportunity of a significant restructure within the Technical Fire Safety Department, thereby allowing us to accommodate the new risk based approach to commercial premises within the County.
- 2.4 The proposal to introduce non-operational personnel, with well defined career development opportunities, into this workforce will make a significant contribution to the achievement of that goal.
- 2.5 In addition to creating a more diverse workforce, the available hours for inspecting are increased as their duty system will be based upon a traditional 5 day week.
- 2.6 Their role will be similar to the operational officers and will contribute to the re-inspection programme, consultation processes and themed inspections. They will report to the Station Manager based within the individual areas. The significant difference between the non operational officer and that of an operational counterpart relates to the Prohibition of premises. The non operational officer will assist in the prohibition processes and will be responsible to the lead prohibition officer. This lead officer will issue the notice and offer guidance on the legal procedures to be adopted.
- 2.7 Given the current number of ranks within the Fire Safety Inspecting Officer workforce, it is clearly necessary to provide a measure of demarcation between

them by differentiating between the tasks and responsibilities assigned to each of them. In the case of the non operational Inspecting Officers, this will be a linked career development grade which will attract different and increasing levels of responsibility at each of the pay scale stages. Further investigations should be carried out with a view to further strengthening the career progression options for those Inspecting Officers in Fire Safety.

- 2.8 Ongoing consideration needs to be given to the optimum balance between uniformed Watch Manager posts and non uniformed Inspecting Officers. To maintain the specialisms within Fire Safety, that encompass operational knowledge as it relates to premises, application of prohibition and enforcement processes, vacancies are to be advertised to operational and non operational potential candidates. This allows flexibility in appointments to maintain this spectrum of skills.
- 2.9 There will of course be some differences in the terms and conditions (including salaries) between the operational and non operational officers, which are attributable in part to the prohibition processes as detailed above and to the potential operational elements of the uniformed officer's job specification. This includes the organisational option of transferring those uniformed officers to operational posts within the service over a period of time and they will be required to maintain their operational competence.
- 2.10 The duties of the Inspecting Officers are likely to change in the light of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order due in April 2006 and will accordingly be subject to review, although the clear escalation of complexity and responsibility associated with each grade will be retained. This is further complicated by the introduction of the National Occupational Standards for Fire Safety – which have not yet been finalised. Further investigations are to be carried out with a view to further strengthening the career progression options for Inspecting Officers in Fire Safety.
- 2.11 Training and development is an essential consideration in these proposals and will focus on the new Fire Safety Order.
- 2.12 The training/development needs will be assessed in line with the National Occupational Standards and the requirements under the Fire Safety Order. A training/induction package will be available as soon as staff are in post and will be prepared by the Technical Fire Safety Department (HQ).
- 2.13 New officers will be placed in teams alongside experienced Inspecting Officers and given an overview of the work and the procedures. This arrangement will provide support and lighten the training/development requirements on individual teams. New officers would also be assigned a Station Manager as a mentor and they would initially shadow an experienced Inspecting Officer.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 The new non-uniformed posts will potentially replace existing Fire Officer roles on the retirement of the present 'Watch Manager' post-holders. As appropriate these posts will be deleted from the uniformed establishment to fund the creation of Fire Safety Audit Officers on the non-uniformed establishment. Based on a grading of Sc 5/6, this will result in a saving of £10380 per annum in the first year and an on-going saving in subsequent years.

4. Personnel Implications

- 4.1 The post of Fire Safety Audit Officer has been provisionally evaluated under the NJC Job Evaluation Scheme and it is envisaged that the post could be a Career Graded post with the grade 3/4 (subject to career progression and achieving certain competencies). On this basis, the salary range would be £14664-21654. This will be subject to a review based on the recently promulgated Fire Safety role maps and NVQ's.

5. Equal Opportunity Implications

- 5.1 In considering the roles of the existing Fire Safety Inspecting Officers and the Fire Safety Audit Officers, the issue of equal pay for work of equal value has been carefully considered. The difference in salary paid to employees undertaking these roles relates primarily to the different responsibilities linked to the Prohibition of premises. It is considered that this constitutes a "material difference" in terms of comparative pay.

6. Risk Management Implications

- 6.1 The recommendations contained within the report are in line with the Local Risk Management Plan. In particular a greater number of inspecting hours provided by the non operational Officers improves ability to react at the at the point of delivery.

7. Recommendation

- 7.1 To support this report, thereby approving the appointment of 'non operational' Inspecting Officers, within the Technical Fire Safety Department as and when suitable vacancies arise. Further to this, for members to approve additional works in terms of further consideration to the possibility of enhancing the career development prospects for non operational officers and to making further changes to the uniformed/non operational officer structure within the Fire Safety function as appropriate.

Mark Huckerby
Group Manager
Technical Fire Safety

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

JOB DESCRIPTION

DEPARTMENT Safety Services

SECTION Technical Fire Safety

<u>JOB REF.</u>	<u>JOB TITLE</u>	<u>GRADE</u>	<u>DATE</u>
Various	Fire Safety Inspecting Officer	Sc5/6 (Pending evaluation)	July 2004
		Watch Manager A	

RESPONSIBLE TO. Geographical Area Station Manager

RESPONSIBLE FOR. No Line Management Responsibility

JOB PURPOSE

To undertake inspections in line with Brigade Policy to discharge the Authority's statutory duty under fire safety legislation and to provide fire safety advice and guidance to local authorities, business, commerce, the public and to professional and other regulatory bodies.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- (a) Undertake inspection of premises in accordance with Brigade policy to enforce relevant fire safety legislation, provide fire safety advice and guidance and determine solutions to hazards and risks identified through inspection and investigation.
- (b) Provide advice on self determined fire risk assessments and evaluate fire safety design submission to achieve compliance with relevant fire safety legislation.
- (c) Provide advice and guidance on request and through inspection on:
 - Fire safety in premises
 - Issues relating to fire protection systems
 - Issues relating to building construction, refurbishment, materials and demolition.
- (d) Provide and process risk information gained from inspections in support of the Brigade's Integrated Risk Management Plan.
- (e) Undertake liaison and consultation with Building Control Bodies, local authorities and other regulatory agencies in accordance with Brigade policy and procedures.
- (f) In conjunction with Line manager, monitor the progress of new or refurbished premises for compliance with requirements/recommendations made under relevant fire safety legislation.
- (g) Responsible for management and control of own workloads, organizing inspections and maintenance of records and files.
- (h) Responsible for updating, retrieval and actioning electronic information from the Fire Safety Management Information System and Risk Based Inspection Programme.

- (i) Responsible for the preparation of fire safety reports, letters, enforcement notices and plans in accordance with Brigade fire safety policy and procedures.
- (j) To take enforcement action in line with Brigade policy and procedures in support of the principles detailed in the Enforcement Concordat. Where necessary, provide support to the investigation of an offence through the preparation of case files, interviewing and cautioning of witnesses, taking and preparing statements and the collecting of evidence, this may include giving evidence at a tribunal/court.
- (k) Liaise and consult with other enforcing authorities (where appropriate) in respect of Fire Safety provisions within premises. This is to include communication of failure of legislative compliance.
- (l) Maintain knowledge and understanding of Fire Authority policies and procedures, and ensure work is carried out inline with department standards and targets.
- (m) Maintain confidentiality of information in accordance with agreed procedures, disclosing Information to authorised persons only.
- (n) Prepare and deliver Fire Safety Training to Operational Personnel when required to do so.
- (o) Attend departmental meetings, training sessions, and courses identified as appropriate to role.
- (p) To uphold and actively promote the equality and diversity policies of the Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service.
- (q) To work within the health and safety policies of the Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service.

NOTE In addition to the above you may from time to time be required to undertake such other duties necessary to meet the needs of the Fire Authority, such duties to be Commensurate with the responsibilities and grading of the post.

QUALIFICATIONS/EXPERIENCE

The post-holder must have an understanding of fire safety legislation and how it is enforced. They must have experience of undertaking inspections of premises, evaluating and assessing fire risks and hazards. The post-holder must hold a current driving licence.

SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITY

Nil.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED

Station Manager (Section Head) and Group Manager (Department Head – Fire Safety)

This job description is a guide to the work you will initially be required to undertake. It may be changed from time to time to meet changing circumstances. In addition, members of staff are liable to serve at any of the Fire Service's places of employment as may be required.

NOTTIGHAMSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

PERSON SPECIFICATION

DEPARTMENT	Safety Services	SECTION	Technical Fire Safety
JOB REF.	JOB TITLE	GRADE	DATE
Various	Fire Safety Audit Officer	Sc 5/6	July2004
	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	METHOD OF ASSESSMENT
1. QUALIFICATIONS	Risk assessment training.	Successfully completed the A to C fire safety modules at the Fire Service College or similar or equivalent courses.	Application form.
2. EXPERIENCE	<p>Experience of undertaking inspections of premises and evaluating and assessing fire risk assessments for compliance with fire safety legislation.</p> <p>Experience of determining solutions to hazards and risks identified through inspection and investigation.</p> <p>Experience of report writing to support inspection of premises.</p>	<p>Experience of taking enforcement action in accordance with the principles outlined in the Enforcement Concordat.</p> <p>Experience of evaluating fire safety design submissions.</p> <p>Experience of Fire-fighting Operations and the effects of fire upon building performance.</p>	<p>Application form.</p> <p>Interview.</p>
3. TRAINING	Must be willing to undertake fire safety training internal and external.		<p>Application form.</p> <p>Interview.</p>
4. SPECIAL KNOWLEDGE	<p>Working knowledge of Fire Safety Legislation and its application to the workplace.</p> <p>Knowledge of the principles of risk assessment and its application in the workplace.</p> <p>Understanding and use of IT programmes including Microsoft Word, Excel and Outlook.</p>	<p>Successfully completed Modula Courses at Fire Service College or similar</p> <p>Qualification in Fire Safety Studies e.g. H.N.C./H.N.D.</p> <p>IOSH./NEBOSH or similar</p> <p>Relevant IT qualification e.g.ECDL/NVQ</p>	<p>Interview.</p> <p>Assessment Centre.</p>

	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	METHOD OF ASSESSMENT
5. CIRCUMSTANCES (PERSONAL)	Flexible approach to working hours. Hold a current driving licence.		Interview. Application form.
6. DISPOSITION	Must be conscientious, and have the ability to work unsupervised. Good communication skills, both written and verbal. Work as part of a team when required.		Application form. Assessment Centre. Interview.
7. PRACTICAL AND INTELLECTUAL SKILLS	Ability to disseminate information. Interpret and implement legislative information. Demonstrate awareness of Brigade Fairness and Equality policy.		Application form. Assessment.
8. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS	Knowledge of Fire Precautions Act, Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order Other Legislation as required		
9. PHYSICAL SKILLS (if any)			

meeting	STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT TEAM	
date	16 December 2005	agenda item number

Non-Uniformed Driver Trainers

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To appraise Senior Managers of the proposal to move the establishment within the Driver Training Section to Non-Uniformed posts and to ensure that the appropriate measures for achieving this change are considered.

2. BACKGROUND

Following the retirement of the Sub Officer in Driving School the opportunity was taken to replace this post with a Non-Uniformed manager. The current post holder has now been in post for several months and has established himself in the role. The long term aim for driver training has always been to move to a fully non-uniformed section.

3. REPORT

It is felt that now would be an appropriate time to consider the next change to the establishment in Driving School by replacing the 2 crew manager posts with 2 non-uniformed driver trainers. This would allow for these posts to be re-deployed into the operational establishment or other suitable specialist roles within the Service.

One of the key drivers for this change is the expected improvement in availability of driver trainers due to the change in duty system and reduced leave allowances which would be brought about by appointing non-uniformed personnel. If the 3 present driver trainers were replaced with non-uniformed staff this would provide an increase in available training time of 36 weeks in a year and provide both increased capacity and flexibility across the range of driver training delivery.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial implications associated with this report relate mainly to cost savings which are likely to be realised from the different salary payments if this change goes ahead. At present the actual salary to be paid to the non-uniformed driver trainers is expected to be in the region of grade 5 (£20,295 to £24,708), the same as other non-uniformed trainers, compared to salary levels paid to uniformed driving instructors of more than £32,000 each, anticipated costs savings are in excess of £15,000.

Further costs may be incurred in re-training the staff released in this change to prepare them for the new role they will be moving into.

5. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

This report involves a change in establishment of the Service by changing two uniformed post for 2 non-uniformed posts. As already stated it would be expected that the uniformed posts would be re-deployed within the Service. Consultation with the RB's may be required due to the nature of this change.

6. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no equal opportunity implications arising from this report.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

This change is not expected to impact on Risk Management within the Service as we will continue to deliver driver training in line with national guidance, with trainers qualified to required standards.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

That approval be given to the change in establishment in the Service's Driver Training section by replacing two non-uniformed crew manager posts with two non-uniformed driver trainers with effect from 1 January 2006 at the salary grade identified through the Job Evaluation process.