

report

meeting	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY	
date	9 June 2006	agenda item number

REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

AMENDMENT TO GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to amend the terms of reference of the Policy and Strategy Committee to incorporate responsibility for the Ad-hoc Equalities Group.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 As part of its response to the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) outcomes, and as part of its desire to improve Member engagement, Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service introduced its revised Governance structure in April 2006.

2.2 Within the revised Governance structure the Ad-hoc Equalities Group, a long standing working group chaired by the Chair of the Fire & Rescue Authority, was allocated to the Human Resources Committee.

3 REPORT

3.1 Equality and Fairness is a key element within the effective operation of an organisation. Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service is no different, with key targets and measures being established within the Fire & Rescue Services' National Framework.

3.2 The Service also has a legal duty under a variety of legislation including such areas as age, disability, sex and ethnic origin with which it has to legally comply.

3.3 Key to the achievement of the Service's activities is a workforce that is as diverse as its community as well as having a fair and equitable place to work, that encourages individual development.

3.4 Equality and diversity is a corporate issue that cuts across all aspects of service delivery and management. By amending the Governance arrangements to establish the Ad-hoc Equalities Group as a key responsibility of the Policy and Strategy Committee. It places appropriate emphasis on this important element of organisational values.

3.5 There would be no need or requirement to amend the structure or membership of the Ad-hoc Equalities Group. The only noticeable difference would be that it would be tasked strategically with work from the Policy and Strategy Committee as opposed to the Human Resources Committee.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

5 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

There are no personnel implications arising from this report.

6 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Although this report itself presents no equalities issues, the subject of the report clearly focuses on the importance that the Fire & Rescue Authority could be seen to place on Equality.

7 RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

By allowing the Ad-hoc Equalities Group to report directly to Policy and Strategy Committee the Fire & Rescue Authority will be seen as sending a clear message that Equalities forms a key part of its strategic thinking. Failure to do this could potentially lead to external criticism.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

That members approve the following amendment to the terms of reference of Human Resources Committee and Policy and Strategy Committee:-

- 8.1 the deletion of the reference to 'Ad-Hoc Equalities' in the term of reference number 12 of the Human Resources Committee;
- 8.2 the addition of the following provision in the terms of reference for Policy and Strategy Committee to take the strategic lead in the development of equality across the Authority and to act upon outcomes referred to it from the Ad-Hoc Equalities Group.

9 BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION

None.

Paul Woods
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER