

| | | |
|---------|---|--------------------|
| meeting | NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY | |
| | HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE | |
| date | 4 April 2007 | agenda item number |

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

HUMAN RESOURCES ACTION PLAN

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To brief Members on the activities of the appointed Interim Head of Human Resources and the Action Plan implementation.

2. BACKGROUND

The Interim Head of Human Resources for Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service (NFRS) was appointed with the remit of actioning recommendations contained within a PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) report on the NFRS Human Resources function, delivered to Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire & Rescue Authority in November 2006. The recommendations were expressed as a series of objectives contained in a terms of reference letter agreed with NFRS at Appendix A.

3. REPORT

Action Plan

3.1 Primary activity during the initial period was aimed at formulating and implementing an action plan aimed at achieving the objectives referred to in Appendix B. This activity constituted a number of elements :

- Formulating and agreeing a format ;
- Identifying and getting on board “owners” for various elements of the business plan ;
- Holding of series of meetings with owners/key contributors/stakeholders to formulate/develop/populate HR action plan ;
- Regular individual and group update meetings with owners to evaluate progress ;
- Communicating appropriate elements of the plan to key stakeholders and others.

Other Activity

3.2 This activity constituted a number of elements :

- Initial one to one meetings with all members of the HR team, in addition to ongoing regular one to one and group meetings.
- Meetings with key individuals within the management and organisational structure.
- Initial and ongoing meetings with Trade Union local representatives, and in some instances regional and national representatives from the Fire Brigades Union, Fire Officers Association, Retained Firefighters Union and Unison.
- Visits to Fire Stations at Mansfield, Stockhill, Central, Harworth and Ashfield, as well as Service Development Centre in Ollerton. Also each Watch in HQ Control Centre.
- Formulation of process for periodic HR function meetings, including the setting up of a small “senior HR” team.
- Weekly attendance at SMT meetings.
- Attendance at CFOA Equality and Regional HR meetings.
- Periodic updates of CFA Chair, CFA HR Committee Chair and other Members.
- Participation in general Head of HR activity, covering issues such as:
 - § Discipline ;
 - § Grievance ;
 - § Employment Tribunal claims (including meetings and discussions with BrowneJacobson, solicitors) ;
 - § Incapacity Retirement ;
 - § Policy Development ;
 - § Liaison with external agencies such as DCLG and legal advisers ;
 - § HR Business planning ;
 - § Pensions ;
 - § Recruitment ;
 - § Occupational Health issues ;
 - § Training/Development.
- Dealing with numerous legacy issues, including grievance, and ill-health retirement cases.
- Contribution to the development of HR Business Plan for 2007/2008.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Each objective plan output will be subject to financial evaluation.

5. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

Each objective plan output will be subject to specific personnel implications to be identified individually.

6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Each objective plan output will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The risks associated with the HR function have been previously stated. This plan sets about mitigating those risks.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members endorse the report and the progress made to date, and agree to receive ongoing updates on progress through the Human Resources Committee structure.

9. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS (OTHER THAN THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION)

None.

Frank Swann
DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

| CONTACT OFFICER | |
|------------------------|---|
| Name : | Peter Short Interim Head of Human Resources & Training |
| Tel. No : | 0115 967 0880 |
| E-mail : | peter.short@notts-fire.gov.uk |

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Service

List of Objectives for the Interim Head of HR

Introduction

This list has been designed with the intention of providing a set of objectives for the Interim Head of HR post.

Objectives

1. Formulate, gain approval for, and implement an action plan to deliver the following objectives – to include:
 - Milestones
 - Timescales
 - Accountabilities
 - Communication
 - Periodic review (possibly repeat HR effectiveness review)
 - Identification of effective use of resources to achieve objectives

2. Implement new HR structure – to include:
 - Definition of roles and responsibilities (to include Station Managers with HR responsibilities and HR Business Partner roles)
 - Appropriate consultation
 - Skills audit of existing HR team
 - Formulation of process to enable transactional activity to be dealt with in HR service centre
 - Appointment to roles
 - Clear accountability
 - Clear personal objective setting for HR team
 - Clear understanding and expectation from other Departments within the Service of what is expected of the HR function
 - Formulation of process for ongoing review

- Development of PDP's for HR team
- Formulation of plan to fill skills gap

3. Review the use of external HR support and expertise – to include:

- Current use
- Costs
- Skills gap
- Ongoing need

4. Review and update all HR Policies and procedures – to include:

- Legal compliance assured
- Harmonisation/Standardisation, where appropriate
- All Policies and procedures consolidated into one staff handbook
- Formulation of process for user awareness
- Formulation of process for ongoing, periodic review to include Trade Union involvement

5. Formulate process for dealing with Discipline and Grievance cases – to include:

- Optimum use of informal resolution channels
- Clear roles and responsibilities
- Identification of numbers of outstanding cases
- Reduction in current outstanding cases
- Targets and measurements for reduction in the number of future formal cases to include time taken to deal with cases

6. Implement process for Personal Development Reviews – to ensure:

- All staff to undergo annual review
- All staff to have PDP's
- Process to monitor compliance
- Effectiveness review

7. Formulate guidance for dealing with OHS Sickness Absence/Ill Health Retirement guidance – to include:
 - Identification of current levels of sickness absence and ill health retirements
 - Process for user awareness
 - Process for monitoring effectiveness
 - Process for more effective involvement of Occupational Health

8. Evaluation of use of “Firstcare” – to include:
 - Options for continued use, or alternative solutions

9. Implement process for Equality Impact assessments – to ensure:
 - Identification of numbers of Equality Impact assessments undertaken
 - Assessments completed at all stations
 - Process is in place for future re-assessments as and when appropriate

10. Improved relationships with Trade Unions:
 - Analyse basis of current relationships or lack of
 - Agree process for improving relationships including formal and informal channels

| Overall | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------|--|-------------|--|---|---|--|---|--------------------|---|----------------|
| | Objective | Owner | Key contributors | Completion date | Resource issues | Communication issues | Risks | Review date (s) | Period Activity | Status |
| Objective | Formulate and have commenced implementation of an action plan to deliver agreed objectives | P.Short | TC, CP, Owners | 09/02/07 | | Update SMT members and other key stakeholders on process being adopted | | Weekly at SMT | Plan drafted, discussed, formulated and discussed with key stakeholders. Sub plan owners identified and meetings held, sub plans populated. Plan approved at SMT and actions commenced, regular individual and group meetings held with Sub plan owners. Initia | Completed |
| Objective | Implement new HR structure | P.Short | HR team, SMT, Group/Area Managers | 30/04/2007 | | Keep all key contributors, Stakeholders and TU updated | Final structure does not meet requirements, aspirations of all concerned - this to be minimised and mitigated via full involvement and consultation | Weekly | Initial discussion with all staff, informal discussions with TU, presentation from PwC, feedback sought from key stakeholders. Draft structure produced and further discussions held with relevant individuals and groups. Process matrix to completion drafted | |
| Objective | Formulate and implement process and review for optimum contribution from HR team | P.Short | HR team, Dick Dawson, L&D team | 30/052007 | | Keep TU updated of process and progress | Dependance on availability of overall PDR programme | Weekly from 1/4/07 | | N/A at present |
| Objective | Review the use of external HR support and expertise | N.Timms | | 30/04/2007 | | | | | Past expenditure has been analysed in order determine the reasons behind it. Expenses have been categorised into projects and/or themes (e.g. job evaluation, shift change etc) in order to identify whether the expenditure is likely to be ongoing or whether | |
| Objective | Review and update all HR Policies and procedures | T.Crump | RB's, Vic McMillen, HRO's | April 2007 (uncontested documents) Sept 2007 (whilst unreviewed policies will be accessible from the end of April, a total overhaul and reformatting will take some time to complete) | Time / conflicting priorities | Post completed policies & procedures on intranet and R.drive | Failure to agree single policy with all RB's | 01-Mar-06 | *15/03/07 - Status Report: (1). Preliminary work undertaken to sort existing policies/procedures into files for the master intranet HR Policy folder (2) draft Re-engagement policy, Secondary employment policy, draft Appointment policy submitted to S | |
| Objective | Formulate process for effective and efficient dealing with Discipline and Grievance cases | C.Parkinson | F Swann, P Short, Personnel Officers, J Buckley, M Smart, V McMillen, Uniformed HR Managers, Rep bodies, L Reeson, Training providers, D Dawson. | Aug-07 | Funding resources for training line managers. | Extensive communication required throughout the organisation. | Unless current practices are addressed risks are: ET cases, Waste of Management and the time, staff demotivation, worsened Industrial relations. | | Chris Parkinson held discussions with Mark Healy to ascertain regional stance. Draft NFRS disciplinary procedure issued to Uniformed Rep Bodies for comment. Chris Parkinson and Karen Jennings to discuss operation of discipline and grievance proc | |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------|---|-------------|---|---|--|---|---|---------------|--|----------------|
| Objective | Formulate and implement process for Personal Development Reviews | D.Dawson | Vic McMillan Chris Parkinson | May-07 | Availability of key contributors to allocate sufficient time to the process. | All departments, sections and watches will need to be included | The project requires the support and buy-in from all managers and for appropriate time to be allocated to the task. | 25th May 2007 | summary of activity - * a new style of PDR form has been produced which is suitable for all personnel (uniformed and non-uniformed) and includes appraisal and the platform for CPD. * a new policy and procedures have been | On track |
| Objective | Formulate guidance for dealing with OHS Sickness Absence/ Ill Health Retirement guidance | C.Parkinson | J Buckley, F Swann, V McMillan, M Smart, R Johnston, S Cornish, Personnel Officers, Uniformed HR Managers, Rep bodies, Occ Health, L Reeson, SMT, Training providers, D Dawson. | Jul-07 | | Funding/resources for training line managers | Unless current practices are addressed, risks are: Inconsistent treatment; ET cases; Loss of productivity; lowering of morale; increased operating costs. | | Sickness absence group established, comprising of Chris Parkinson, Paul Hair, Vic McMillan, Richard Johnston, Sue Cornish, Helen Seedhouse and Donna Kelly. Meeting held in mid Mar | |
| Objective | Evaluate use of "Firstcare" | C.Parkinson | SMT, Occ Health, Personnel Dept, IT, Crewing, J Buckley | Jul-07 | | None | | | Firstcare review group established, comprising Chris Parkinson, Paul Hair, Helen Seedhouse, Vic McMillan and Peter Mann. Initial report assessing the current situation produced by Chris Parkinson resulting from this group meeting to discuss. | |
| Objective | Formulate and implement process to manage Equality Impact assessments | J.Dennis | R.Johnston PACT | 30/04/2007 | Admin Support | Process to be communicated across the service | Failure to meet requirements under BVPI 2, RRA, DES, GES | 01/03/2007 | Procedure and guidance notes fully documented, need to be formatted in house style. Flow chart steps identified, flow chart to be drafted. Process and flow charts to be communicated to relevant staff, for action, as appropriate. | |
| Objective | Optimise relationships with all Trade Unions (FBU, FOA, RFU, UNISON) | M.Healey | CP, TC, PS - TU representatives, SMT, Group/Area managers | May-07 | MH not full time NFRS resource | All concerned need to be aware of potential ER impact of most NFRS decisions and actions being considered, or taken | | Monthly | Existing relationships evaluated and draft paper produced, which identifies actual structures and processes and perceived state of relationships. Outline action plan for improvement drafted. | |
| Objective | Produce HR Business Plan for 2007/2008 | T.Crump | HRO's, Area Managers (SS, IS), Dept service users (PACT) | 01/04/2007 - 1/5/07 for project plans | Conflict of priorities. Information from other depts | Published as part of corporate plan. | Plan not completed due to time constraints | 01/03/2006 | 15/03/07- Status report : HR Business Plan completed in draft. Some detailed Project Plans completed. Interdependencies agreed via PACT. On target to complete by 1st April 2007. | |
| Objective | Ensure that key characteristics in relation to HR function identified by PwC report are addressed | P.Short | Plan owners | Dependant on progress of overall and sub objectives | | Keep SMT and Key stakeholders updated with significant issues | | | | N/A at present |