



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM  
FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

of meeting held on **23 APRIL 2010** at Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Bestwood Lodge, from 10.00 am to 10.55 am

**Membership**

Councillor Foster (Chair)  
^ Councillor Cross  
Councillor Grocock  
Councillor vacancy  
Councillor Wheeler

Members absent are marked ^

Councillor Cooper attended the meeting as an observer.

**22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Cross.

**23 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 22 January 2010, copies of which had been circulated, be confirmed and signed by the Chair.**

**24 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

No declarations of interests were made.

**25 HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) UPDATE**

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated. With regard to the low number of grievances (9) a mediation process was currently being agreed with the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service which it was hoped to introduce next year and should help to reduce the figure further. The process would involve the Service training its own internal mediators.

Even though the overall sickness absence figures for the Service were down, the figures for non-uniformed staff had continued to rise in quarter 3. The Human Resources and Occupational Health Teams had investigated the short-term absence but there was no evidence of a common reason for absence or that sickness was concentrated in particular job roles. During quarter 3 nine non-uniformed staff had been absent on a long term basis (more than 28 days) but 8 of these had now returned to work and one had left the Service's employment. Consequently, the quarter 4 figures showed a significant reduction in non-uniformed absence, reducing from 268 days in quarter 3 to 35 in quarter 4. If the end of year figures showed an annual average absence of around 6 days per employee, which they were on course to do, the sickness absence would have been halved in 2 years and would be one of the lowest in the country. It was possible that the introduction of 'fit notes' by GPs in addition to 'sick notes' could help to reduce absence further as one of the options could be employees returning to work earlier on reduced hours for a temporary period.

## **RESOLVED**

- (1) that the report be endorsed and the progress regarding Human Resources issues be noted;**
- (2) that a benchmarking exercise be undertaken with other 'family group' Fire Services and with the City and County Councils to compare sickness absence figures and a simple matrix be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee.**

## **26 URGENT ITEM – INTRANET/INTERNET OFFICER**

**The Chair of the meeting was of the opinion that this item, although not included on the agenda, should be considered as a matter of urgency in accordance with Section 100(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, in view of the special circumstances that the decision to appoint an Intranet/Internet Officer could not wait until the next meeting of the Committee as it was an area identified by the Audit Commission for urgent attention.**

**Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated.**

**RESOLVED that the appointment of an Intranet/Internet Officer on the terms detailed in the report be approved, it being noted the cost would be met from the efficiency savings contingency.**

## **27 CONVERSION OF POSTS**

**Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated.**

**RESOLVED that the changes to the establishment arising from post conversions during the period April 2009 to March 2010 with the additional cost of £85,407 being met from the budget provision for operational support be noted.**

## **28 EMPLOYEE DISCOUNT SCHEME**

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated, together with the leaflet 'My Advantage' detailing the benefits and discounts available for Service staff and their families, copies of which were passed around the table.

**RESOLVED that the success of the 'My Advantage' scheme offering Service employees access to on-line discounts for a number of shops and services in year 1 be noted and a further report be submitted in due course on the effectiveness of the scheme as an employee benefit prior to renewal of the license in 2011.**

## **29 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED that, pursuant to section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the remaining item as it contained information relating to individuals and was likely to reveal the identity of those individuals and having regard to all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information, as defined in paragraphs 1 and 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).**

## **30 REGRAIDING OF POSTS**

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated.

**RESOLVED that the applications considered by, and outcomes of, the Job Evaluation Panel in respect of changes to the permanent non-uniformed establishment during the period January to March 2010 (inclusive) be noted.**