



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

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

MINUTES

of meeting held on **22 OCTOBER 2010** at Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Bestwood Lodge, from 10.00 am to 11.05 am

Membership

Councillor Foster (Chair)
Councillor Carroll
Councillor Cooper (substitute for Councillor Wheeler)
Councillor Grocock
^ Councillor Spencer
^ Councillor Wheeler

Members absent are marked ^

12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Spencer and Wheeler.

13 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interests were made.

14 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 23 July 2010, copies of which had been circulated, be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

15 HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) STRATEGY 2010/13

Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Fire Officer, together with an updated Human Resources Strategy 2010-2013 which had been realigned to reflect the changing environment in which the Service now operated, copies of which had been circulated,.

During a lengthy discussion the following points were highlighted:

- (a) the environment within the public sector had clearly changed since the last Strategy was written in 2007 and the updated HR Strategy reflected this and was based more upon the challenging environment that was now faced within a context of budgetary constraint, service review and changes to legislation. The Service had more opportunity to set its own agenda in terms of its HR priorities;
- (b) the workforce planning process was embedded within the annual planning process and it was the aim to provide management information which would allow the Service to review its workforce requirements and plan for succession and recruitment into key roles;
- (c) it was the aim to foster positive relations with representative bodies and to engage directly with the employees on issues which affected them. In effecting any changes which may arise through the Fire Cover Review, budgetary impacts or through the development of the Service, it was important that the employees felt informed and were able to contribute their views;
- (d) it was hoped to replace the HR management information system within the next 2 years to further improve efficiency and the integration of the information systems to ensure that managers had the information they needed to manage workforce issues effectively. However, the difficulty of the current financial situation was understood;
- (e) a considerable amount of data was yet to be collected but the Service was still working towards setting the fitness level of 36 VO2 to the higher level of 42 VO2 and fitness tests would then become annual;
- (f) the Service offered access to a wide range of benefits and salary sacrifice schemes but these would have to be carefully managed in the future. It would be the intention to bring in benefits which were made available but would not be funded. With regard to the Westfield Health scheme most workers participated. The scheme fed back into the Occupational Health and Fitness Team and resulted in problems being dealt with quicker;
- (g) HR continued to provide responsive and informed support to line managers and employees at their workplace and to establish good working relationships. The role of peripatetic trainers would further enhance location based support. It was partly as a result of this approach that grievances and disciplinary procedures had fallen;
- (h) joint working and the sharing of resources with regional neighbours already operated across a number of HR areas such as regional fire-fighter recruitment, assessment and development centres and the Regional Control Project. It was anticipated that collaboration on HR related projects would continue as this shared approach would bring efficiencies and greater integration of approach.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the revised Human Resource Strategy 2010-13 be approved;**

- (2) **that the full peer assessments report be e-mailed to councillors on the Committee;**
- (3) **that a short milestone report be submitted to this Committee each year reporting progress on the HR Strategy;**
- (4) **that a further report be submitted in due course when the implications for the Service of the Government's announcement on the increased retirement age were known.**

16 HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated. The Chief Fire Officer pointed out that uniformed sickness continued to fall but non-uniformed sickness remained on the high side. With regard to retained staffing numbers, these remained disappointing but this was a perennial problem across the country.

RESOLVED that the report be endorsed and the progress regarding Human Resources issues be noted.

17 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 on the basis that, 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).

18 REGRADEING OF POSTS

Consideration was given to the 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 July to September 2010 (inclusive) be noted.