



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**  
**Fire & Rescue Service**  
*Creating Safer Communities*

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham  
Fire and Rescue Authority  
Human Resources Committee

# HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

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**Agenda Item No:**

**Date:** 25 January 2013

**Purpose of Report:**

To update Members on Human Resources issues within the Service

## CONTACT OFFICER

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## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 As part of its remit, the Human Resources Committee of Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority receive regular updates on human resources (HR) issues within the Service. This includes issues such as sickness absence, formal discipline, grievance, health and safety, employment tribunal cases and staffing numbers. These issues are known as HR metrics.
- 1.2 Reports are on a quarterly basis and allow the HR Committee to analyse ongoing issues and offer their guidance and scrutiny where applicable.

## 2. REPORT

### HR METRICS - SICKNESS ABSENCE

- 2.1 The following represents absence figures for Quarter 2: 1<sup>st</sup> July 2012 to 31<sup>st</sup> September 2012.

Absence	Quarter 2 1 July to 31 Sept 2012	Compared with previous quarter	Compared with same quarter of 2011	Cumulative total days lost for 12/13	Cumulative average over last 12 months
<b>Total workforce ( 131 employees have been absent during Q2)</b>	1035 days lost  1.47 days per employee	961 days lost  1.38 days per employee  7.7% increase (+74 days)	1253 days lost  1.7 days per employee  17.4% decrease (-218.5 days)	1996 days lost  2.8 days per employee	5.8 days per employee
<b>Uniformed (96 employees have been absent during Q2) <i>excluding retained</i></b>	820 days lost  1.46 days per employee	697.5 days lost  1.29 per employee  17.6% increase (+122.5 days)	793.5 days lost  1.4 days per employee  3.34 % increase ( + 26.5 days)	1517.5 days lost  2.7 days per employee	5.18 days per employee
<b>Non uniformed ( 35 employees have been absent during Q2)</b>	215 days lost  1.41 days per employee	263.5 days lost  1.7 days per employee  18.4% decrease ( - 48.5 days)	460 days lost  2.66 days per employee  53.3% decrease ( -245 days)	478.5 days lost  3.1 days per employee	8 days per employee
<b>Long term sickness (defined as 28 days or more)</b>	<b>Total Workforce</b>	23			
	<b>Uniformed (excluding retained)</b>	19			
	<b>Non Uniformed</b>	4			

- 2.2 Absence rates have increased by 7.7% across the workforce as a whole during Quarter 2, although absence for non-uniformed employees has seen a decrease of 18.4% (-48.5 days), since the previous quarter. However average absence is still within the target range of 1.56 days per person per quarter.
- 2.3 There were 48 separate periods of medically certified absence in the review period. However 41 of these employees have returned to work during this time. The graphs attached at Appendix 1 give a clearer idea of how absence has been affected over a longer period of time and give a more representative view.
- 2.4 The total cumulative average taken over the last 12 months compares favourably to the national absence average of 7.7 days and to the average public sector rate of 9.1 days.
- 2.4 In terms of reasons for absence, the majority of sickness absence was certified as due to operations/surgical procedures (uniformed) and gastro intestinal conditions (non- uniformed). Longer term absence was due to lower limb disorders not due to service (uniformed) and anxiety/depression not due to service (non- uniformed).
- 2.5 Target absence figures for 2012/13 have been established as:

Wholetime & Control: 6 days

Non-Uniformed: 7 days

Whole Workforce: 6.25 days\*

(\* the average is affected by the numbers of employees in each work group)

## **DISCIPLINE, GRIEVANCES ETC**

2.8 Over the period 1<sup>st</sup> October 2012 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012:

- Disciplinary: 2
- Grievances: 3
- Harassment and Bullying: 1
- Formal Management Sickness Absence Policy: 0
- Dismissals including ill health retirements:
  - Redundancy: 1 (voluntary)
  - Redeployment: 0
  - ET cases: 0

## **STAFFING NUMBERS**

2.9 During the period 1 October 2012 – 31 December 2012, 24 employees commenced employment (of which 2 were dual employment employees). Establishment levels at 31 December 2012 are highlighted below.

	Approved	Actual	Variance
<b>Wholetime</b>	541	535 (533.5 full time equivalents)	-6 (-7.5 FTE)
<b>Retained</b>	216 units	299 persons (159.5 units)	- 56.5 units
<b>Non-Uniformed</b>	172	163 <i>Established Post – 146</i> <i>Fixed Term Non-Established Post – 3</i> <i>Fixed Term in Established Post - 4</i> <i>Agency staff – 10</i>	-9
<b>Fire Control</b>	27	26 (FTE)	-1.0 FTE

- 2.10 There have been 18 leavers and 19 starters since the last report which has resulted in an actual workforce figure of 1013 employees. Leavers are broken down as follows: 5 whole-time, 9 retained, 1 control and 3 non-uniformed employees.
- 2.11 As of 30 December 2012 whole-time establishment stood at -6 (535 employees) against an establishment of 541 posts. Fire-fighter roles are over-strength by 5, with the majority of vacancies at Supervisory level (10). The Service has recently completed recruitment to Trainee Fire-fighter roles – with appointments planned during 2013 and 2014.
- 2.12 As previously reported to Committee, the Service has recently substantiated temporary operational appointments and undertaken Crew and Watch Manager selection. Appointments to these promotions will take effect during January and will release vacancies at Fire-fighter level, which will be filled by Trainee Fire-fighters appointed through the 2012 process. This will mean that the Service will be able to operate at or near full strength in terms of its operational capacity during 2013.
- 2.13 Appointments to support posts created by the re-structure and reported to this Committee in April are now largely filled.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The level of establishment vacancies has reduced since the last report to this committee and should continue to reduce once trainee fire-fighters are appointed. Nevertheless, this financial year has seen significant underspends against the pay budget because of vacancies, which have been reported to the Finance and Resources Committee.

3.2 The programme of voluntary redundancies has cost £380k so far, and this has been funded from an earmarked reserve set aside for this purpose.

#### **4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The human resources implications are set out in the report,

4.2 There are no learning and development implications.

#### **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

As this review does not impact upon policy or service function, no equality impact has been undertaken.

#### **6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

#### **7. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

A regular reporting system on the management of HR ensures that the Service and the Authority are aware of any developing issues and are agile enough to react appropriately to mitigate risks of employment tribunals and other claims against the organisation.

#### **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Members endorse the report.

#### **9. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)**

None.

Frank Swann  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**