



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

Agenda Item No:

Date: 19 April 2013

Purpose of Report:

To update Members on Human Resources issues within the Service

CONTACT OFFICER

Name : David Horton
Assistant Chief Fire Officer

Tel : 0115 967 0880

Email : david.horton@notts-fire.gov.uk

Media Enquiries Contact : Matt Sismey
Tel: 0115 967 0880 matt.sismey@notts-fire.gov.uk

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 3: 1 October 2012 to 31 December 2012.

Absence	Quarter 3 1 Oct to 31 st Dec 2012	Compared with previous quarter	Compared with same quarter of 2012	Cumulative total days lost for 12/13	Cumulative average over last 12 months
Total workforce (employees have been absent during Q3)	1303.5 days lost 1.83 days per employee	1035 days lost 1.47 days per employee 26% increase (+268.5 days)	1244.5 days lost 1.7 days per employee 4.7% increase (+59 days)	3299.5 days lost 4.63 days per employee	5.95 days per employee
Uniformed (employees have been absent during Q3) <i>excluding retained</i>	798 days lost 1.42 days per employee	820 days lost 1.46 per employee 2.7 % decrease (-22 days)	850.5 days lost 1.5 days per employee 6.2% decrease (-52.5 days)	2315.5 days lost 4.15 days per employee	5.10 days per employee
Non uniformed (employees have been absent during Q3)	505.5 days lost 3.3 days per employee	215 days lost 1.41 days per employee 135% increase (+290.5 days)	394 days lost 2.4 days per employee 28.3% increase (+111.5 days)	984 days lost 6.4 days per employee	8.91 days per employee
Long term sickness (defined as 28 days or more)	Total Workforce		29		
	Uniformed (excluding retained)		21		
	Non Uniformed		8		

- 2.2 Absence rates have increased by 26% across the workforce as a whole during Quarter 3, with absence for non-uniformed employees significantly increasing by 135% (+290.5 days), since the previous quarter. 61% (309 days) of total absence for non-uniformed employees was long-term in nature i.e. was for more than 28 days and covered by a medical certificate. This means that average absence for the quarter was above the target of 1.56 days per person for the first time in many years.
- 2.3 The Service was expecting an increase in absence due to the number of absence notifications received by the absence team for conditions which were prevalent during November/December, such as the norovirus and a flu virus. Absence traditionally peaks during this reporting period due to seasonal factors, but was slightly higher than the same period of 2011 by 59 days (+4.7%).
- 2.4 However total absence for 2012/13 of 4.63 days per employee is still within the target range of 4.68 days for the third period of the year.
- 2.5 There were 52 separate periods of medically certified absence in the review period. However 47 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.
- 2.6 The total cumulative average taken over the last 12 months (5.95 days per employee) compares favourably to the national absence average of 6.5 days and to the average public sector rate of 8 days.
- 2.4 In terms of reasons for absence, the majority of sickness absence was certified as due to lower limb conditions (uniformed) and anxiety and depression (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

- 2.7 Over the period 1 January 2013 – 31 March 2013:
- Disciplinary: 3
 - Grievances: 0
 - Harassment and Bullying: 0
 - Formal Management Sickness Absence Policy: 0
 - Dismissals including ill health retirements: 0
 - Redundancy: 0
 - Redeployment: 0
 - ET cases: 0

STAFFING NUMBERS

2.9 During the period 1st January to 31 March 2013, 20 employees commenced employment. Establishment levels at 31 March 2013 are highlighted below.

	Approved	Actual	Variance
Wholetime	541	542 (540.5 full time equivalents)	+1 (-0.5 FTE)
Retained	216 units	290 persons (155 units)	- 61 units
Non-Uniformed	175	163 <i>Established Post – 152</i> <i>Fixed Term Non-Established Post – 2</i> <i>Fixed Term in Established Post - 1</i> <i>Agency staff – 8</i>	-12
Fire Control	27	28 (FTE)	+1.0 FTE

2.10 There have been 21 leavers and 20 starters since the last report which has resulted in an actual workforce figure of 1013 employees. Leavers are broken down as follows: 6 whole-time, 8 retained and 7 non-uniformed employees.

2.11 As at 31st March 2013 whole-time establishment stood at -0.5 FTE (540.5 FTE) employees against an establishment of 541 posts. These figures include the recent intake of Trainee Fire-fighters who commenced training on 18th March. Fire-fighter roles are over-strength by 3.5, with 4 vacancies at Supervisory level.

2.12 A retained recruitment campaign commenced this month with a view to providing more units of cover from September. Promotional campaigns have already been undertaken at Southwell and Bingham fire stations over recent weeks to increase interest in RDS roles and enhance the present levels of cover.

2.13 There are still a number of outstanding vacancies within the non uniformed workforce, a significant number of which are currently in the process of recruitment.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 During this financial year, significant underspends against the pay budget have been reported to the Finance and Resources Committee. These have arisen due to the high number of vacancies on the establishment for most of the year. The staffing numbers shown in paragraph 2.9 mean that the significant underspends against the Wholetime pay budget will come to an end and the new financial year

will start almost at full establishment. For the Non-Uniformed establishment there are still a relatively high number of vacancies following the restructuring, so underspends will continue into the new financial year.

- 3.2 The Retained pay budget is also underspending significantly, and if the recruitment campaign referred to in paragraph 2.12 is successful then the underspend will reduce.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

The human resources implications are set out in the report and 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.

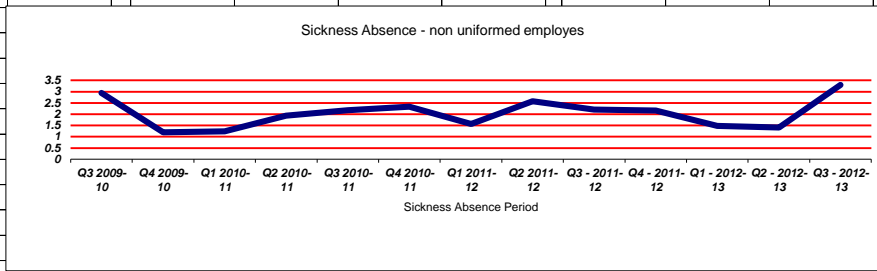
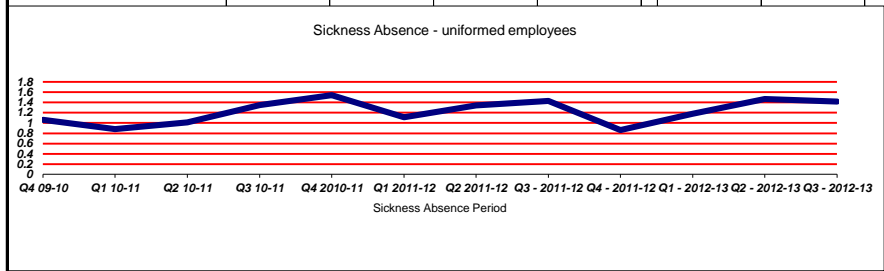
9. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)

None.

Frank Swann
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

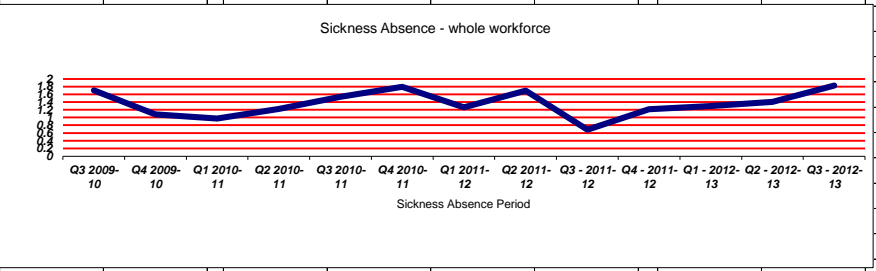
BREAKDOWN OF ABSENCE Q3 (Oct - Dec 12)

WORK GROUP	Oct				Nov				Dec				SUMMARY OF QUARTER 3			
	Average (days per person)	Total work days lost	Oct 2011 days lost	% difference	Average (days per person)	Total work days lost	Nov 2011 days lost	% difference	Average (days per person)	Total work days lost	Dec 2011 days lost	% difference	Average (days per person)	Total work days lost	Q3 2011 days lost	% difference
UNIFORMED (inc Control)	0.56	317	271.5	-16.76	0.45	251	275	8.73	0.41	230	304	24.34	1.42	798	850.5	6.17
NON UNIFORMED	1.12	170.5	142.5	-19.65	1.04	160.5	134	-19.78	1.14	174.5	117.5	-48.51	3.30	505.5	394	-28.30
TOTAL WORKFORCE	0.68	487.5	414	-17.75	0.57	411.5	409	-0.61	0.57	404.5	421.5	4.03	1.82	1303.5	1244.5	-4.74



UNIFORMED ABSENCE

NON UNIFORMED ABSENCE



TOTAL ABSENCE