



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

**HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

of meeting held on **19 APRIL 2013** at Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Bestwood Lodge, from 10.00 am to 10.39 am.

**Membership**

Councillor Smith (Chair)  
^ Councillor Collins  
^ Councillor Cooper  
^ Councillor Cross  
Councillor Yates  
Councillor Grocock (as substitute for Councillor Collins)  
Councillor Wheeler (as substitute for Councillor Cooper)

Members absent are marked ^

**Officers in Attendance**

Dave Horton Assistant Chief Fire Officer  
John Mann Area Manager  
Tracy Crump Human Resources Manager  
Rav Kalsi Constitutional Service Officer, Nottingham City Council

**23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors Collins, Cooper and Cross.

**24 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

No declarations of interests were made.

**25 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the last meeting held on 25 January 2013, copies of which had been circulated, be confirmed, and signed by the Chair.

## **26 HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE**

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Fire Officer, which updated the Committee on human resources issues within the Service such as sickness absence and staffing numbers.

It was reported that sickness absence rates had increased by 26% overall in quarter 3 (October to December), with an increase of 135% for non-uniformed employees since the previous quarter. The majority of absence for non-uniformed employees was accounted for by long-term absentees and had been certified by a doctor. The majority of long-term sick absentees had now returned to work. The Service had expected an increase in absence due in part to the number of absences related to seasonal health issues such as the norovirus and a flu virus. Overall, the Service was still on target for the third period of the year.

Enquiries were made as to whether flu vaccinations had been considered for the Service workforce. It was reported that the administering of the vaccination would have to be voluntary, however colleagues in Occupational Health would be instructed to look into the possibility of administering the vaccination next winter.

It was reported that stress related absence was becoming a major reason for sickness amongst non-uniformed staff. The Occupational Health team were however geared towards early intervention and could offer support in terms of counselling.

**RESOLVED that the contents of the report be endorsed.**

## **27 OUTCOMES OF EMPLOYEE SURVEY**

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Fire Officer, which updated the Committee on the outcomes of the employee survey which had been issued to all employees in September 2012. Mrs Crump, Human Resources Manager, reported that the Service was encouraged by the outcomes overall, however reported that there had been a slight drop in response rate to 40%. There had been 12 areas where improvement had been identified and only a couple of areas where responses were worse than were given in 2010. This was expected given the impact of issues dealt with in the last couple of years including the fire cover review, budget reductions and re-structuring.

It was reported that the survey was sent out electronically to remain both confidential and anonymous and reminders were sent out weekly to encourage completion. It was reported that the next employee survey was scheduled for 2014 and would be undertaken by the corporate level of the Service.

**RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.**

## **28 LIVING WAGE**

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Fire Officer, which updated the Committee on the application of a Living Wage which, if adopted would raise the minimum hourly rate currently payable by 82 pence per hour. It was reported that this would currently only apply to employees on the lowest non-uniform grade.

Mrs Crump confirmed that it was not proposed that the Living Wage rate be applied to non-established posts such as short term schemes which provided workplace support for young people on work experience and apprenticeships. Should the Living Wage rate be adopted, it was proposed that the rate be paid as a salary enhancement rather than being incorporated into the current grading structure.

Councillor Wheeler stressed that the decision would require the approval of all members on the Fire Authority and in light of this, proposed that the recommendation in the report be amended to have members note the report and have the report go to a meeting of the full Fire Authority for consideration.

**RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted and that the matter be submitted to the full Fire Authority for further consideration.**

### **29 CONVERSION OF POSTS**

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Fire Officer, which updated the Committee on the posts which had been re-designated during the period April 2012 – March 2013. During this period it was reported that a Station Manager role in the Fire Protection team had been converted to a non-uniform Fire Protection Support Team Partnership Manager Post at grade 6 and three Watch Managers within the Fire Protection team had also been converted to 3 non-uniform Fire Protection Inspecting Officer roles at grade 6. Members felt that the proposals noted in the report allowed for some flexibility within the Service.

**RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.**

### **30 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED that the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the remaining items in accordance with section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 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 Act.**

### **31 REGRAIDING OF POSTS**

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Fire Officer, which updated the Committee on 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 2013 (inclusive).

**RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.**