



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: 26 July 2013

Purpose of Report:

To update Members on human resources issues within the Service

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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 4: 1 January to 31 March 2013.

Absence	Quarter 4 1 Jan to 31 st Mar 2013	Compared with previous quarter	Compared with same quarter of 2013	Cumulative total days lost for 12/13	Cumulative average over last 12 months
Total workforce (179 employees have been absent during Q4)	1260.5 lost 1.75 days per employee	1303.5 days lost 1.83 days per employee 3.3% decrease (-43 days)	898.5 days lost 1.27 days per employee 40% increase (+362 days)	4560 days lost 6.39 days per employee	6.39 days per employee (above target)
Uniformed (128 employees have been absent during Q4) <i>excluding retained</i>	789.5 days lost 1.39 days per employee	798 days lost 1.42 per employee 1 % decrease (-8.5 days)	512.5 days lost 0.93 days per employee 54% increase (+277 days)	3105 days lost 5.55 days per employee	5.55 days per employee (below target)
Non uniformed (51 employees have been absent during Q4)	471 days lost 3.1 days per employee	505.5 days lost 3.3 days per employee 7% decrease (-34.5 days)	386 days lost 2.5 days per employee 22% increase (+85 days)	1455 days lost 9.5 days per employee	9.5 days per employee (above target)
Long term sickness (defined as 28 days or more)	Total Workforce		26		
	Uniformed (excluding retained)		18		
	Non Uniformed		8		

- 2.2 Absence rates have decreased by 3.3% across the workforce as a whole during Quarter 4, however absence for non-uniformed employees reduced by 7% (-34.5 days) which is a distinct improvement on the previous quarter results. This means that average absence for the quarter (1.75 days) was above the target of 1.56 days per person. However 59% of this absence was long-term in nature i.e. for a continuous period of more than 28 days, which indicates a serious medical condition.
- 2.3 As set out in the previous report for quarter 3, absence traditionally peaks during this reporting period due to seasonal factors and therefore is it not unusual to see a spike in absence levels. However it does represent a 40% increase on the same period of 2011-12.
- 2.4 There were 84 separate periods of medically certified absence in quarter 4. Of these 70 employees have subsequently returned to work during the review period. 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.
- 2.5 The total cumulative average taken over the last 12 months is 6.39 days per employee) and compares favourably to the average public sector average of 6.5 days but is higher than the private sector average of 5.8 days (*Source: Absence management 2012- annual survey report of the CIPD and SimplyHealth*).
- 2.6 It is worth noting that 567 employees had no sickness absence at all during 2012-12, representing 79.4% of whole-time, control and non-uniformed employees. All employees who had full attendance have been written to by the Chief Fire Officer to commend them for their exemplary record.
- 2.7 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).
- 2.8 Target absence figures for 2013/14 have remained the same as for 2012-13:

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

- 2.9 Over the period 1 April 2013 – 30 June 2013:
- Disciplinary: 3
 - Grievances: 1
 - Harassment and Bullying: 0
 - Formal Management Sickness Absence Policy: 0
 - Dismissals including ill health retirements: 0

- Redundancy: 1
- Redeployment: 0
- ET cases:

STAFFING NUMBERS

2.10 During the period 1 April to 30 June 2013, 11 employees commenced employment. Establishment levels at 30 June 2013 are highlighted below.

	Approved	Actual	Variance
Wholetime	541	534 (532.5 full time equivalents)	-7 (-8.5 FTE)
Retained	216 units	285 persons (153 units) (includes 62 dual contracts)	- 63 units
Non-Uniformed	175	162 <i>Established Post – 153</i> <i>Fixed Term Non-Established Post – 0</i> <i>Fixed Term in Established Post -2</i> <i>Agency staff – 7</i>	-13
Fire Control	27	27 (FTE)	0

2.11 There have been 22 leavers and 11 starters since the last report which has resulted in an actual workforce figure of 1008 employees. Leavers are broken down as follows: 11 whole-time, 5 retained, 1 control and 5 non-uniformed employees.

2.12 As at 30 June 2013 whole-time establishment stood at -8.5 FTE (532.5 FTE) employees against an establishment of 541 posts. Fire-fighter roles are over-strength by 1.5, with 9 vacancies at Supervisory level and 1 at Station Manager level. The Trainee Fire-fighter programme due to commence in September 2013 will result in an over-establishment of 13.5 Fire-fighters, however this is compensated for by under-establishment in other areas, resulting in an overall over-establishment of 5 roles. This “front-loading” of trainee Fire-fighter roles is part of succession planning for projected retirements during 2013-15, and the promotion of competent Fire-fighters into vacant supervisory roles.

2.13 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 in areas where cover is historically

low. 27 interviews will take place in July which will enhance the current levels of availability in these areas.

- 2.14 Whilst there are still a number of vacancies within the non uniformed establishment, primarily due to the creation of new posts arising from the re-structure process, there are currently 7 selection processes at various stages of progress and some offers of appointment have been made.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Employee numbers are below establishment across the board (except for Control) and this is causing pay budgets to underspend. However, the Wholetime pay underspend is being offset by overtime costs resulting from crewing arrangements at West Bridgford.
- 3.2 It is anticipated that the Fire-fighter trainee programme in September and the on-going recruitment of non-uniformed roles will bring the expenditure on pay back in line with the budget, although the underspends accumulated in this early part of the year will remain.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The human resources implications are set out in this report.
- 4.2 There are no learning and development implications.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

An equality impact has not been undertaken because this review does not impact upon policy or service function.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

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

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

8. 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

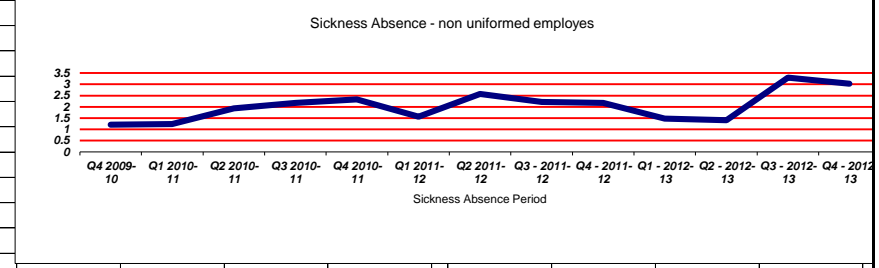
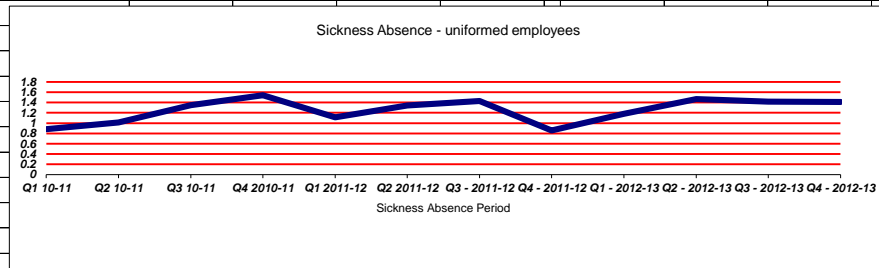
It is recommended that Members endorse the report.

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

None.

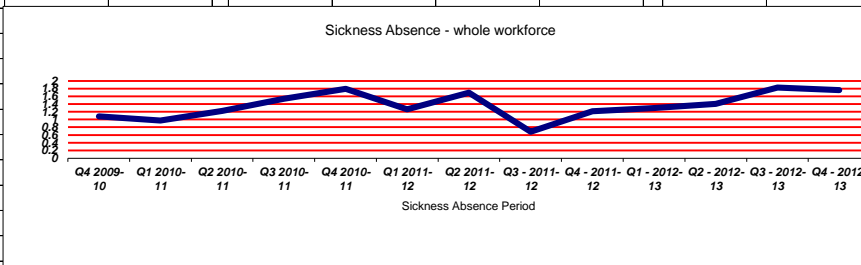
Frank Swann
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

BREAKDOWN OF ABSENCE Q4 (Jan - Mar 13)																	
WORK GROUP	Jan				Feb				Mar				SUMMARY OF QUARTER 4				
	Average (days per person)	Total work days lost	Jan 2012 days lost	% difference	Average (days per person)	Total work days lost	Feb 2012 days lost	% difference	Average (days per person)	Total work days lost	Mar 2012 days lost	% difference	Average (days per person)	Total work days lost	Q4 2012 days lost	% difference	
UNIFORMED (inc Control)	0.49	272.5	176	-54.83	0.48	264	160.5	-64.49	0.44	253	176	-43.75	1.41	789.5	512.5	-54.05	
NON UNIFORMED	1.16	184	158.5	-16.09	1.01	156	129	-20.93	0.85	131	99.5	-31.66	3.02	471	387	-21.71	
TOTAL WORKFORCE	0.64	456.5	334.5	-36.47	0.59	420	289.5	-45.08	0.53	384	275.5	-39.38	1.76	1260.5	899.5	-40.13	



UNIFORMED ABSENCE

NON UNIFORMED ABSENCE



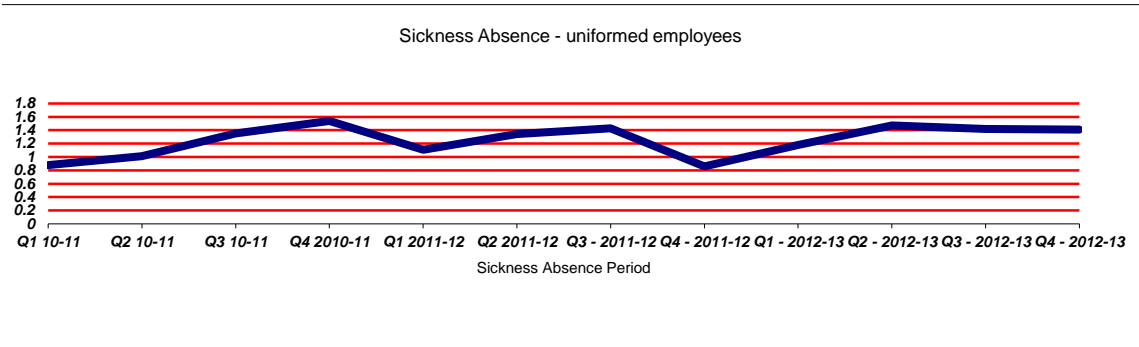
TOTAL ABSENCE

ABSENCE BY QUARTER

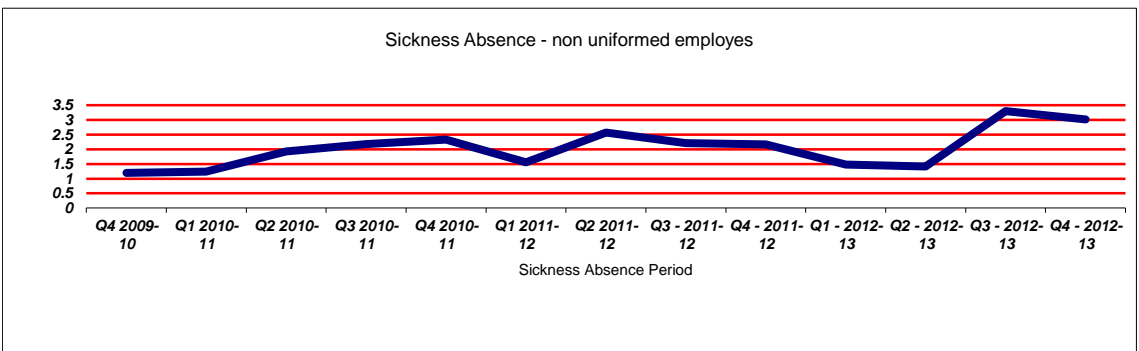
WORK GROUP	Q1				
	Average (days per person)	Total work days lost	Q1 2007 days lost	Difference in shifts lost	% difference
UNIFORMED (inc Control)	2.07	1240	1513	273	18.04
NON UNIFORMED	2.04	351.5	457.5	106	23.17
TOTAL WORKFORCE	2.06	1591.5	1970.5	379	19.23

**BREAKDOWN OF ABSENCE - AVERAGE WORK DAYS LOST PER EMPLOYEE
PERIOD: APRIL 2007 - DEC 2012**

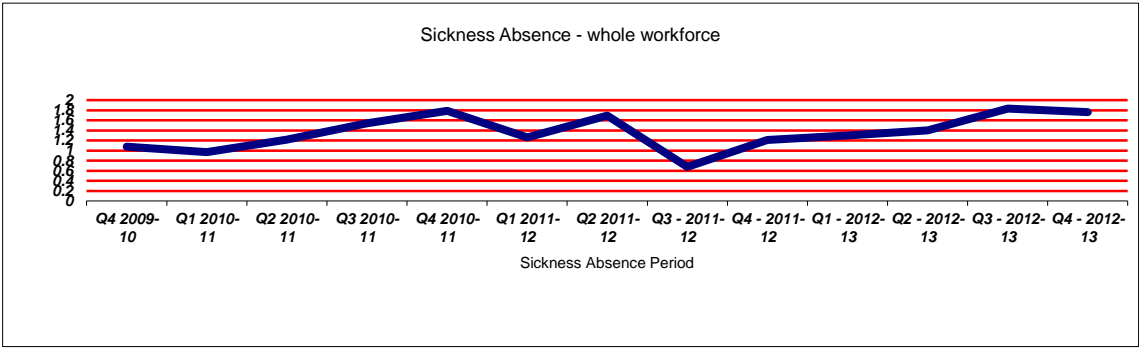
ILLUSTRATIVE CHART



UNIFORMED ABSENCE



NON UNIFORMED ABSENCE



WORKFORCE ABSENCE

WORK GROUP	Q1 2007				Q2 2007				Q3 2007				Q4 2007				Q1 2008			
	Average (days per person)	Total work days lost	Quarter 4 2006-07 days lost	% difference	Average (days per person)	Total work days lost	Quarter 1 2007 days lost	% difference	Average (days per person)	Total work days lost	Quarter 2 2007 days lost	% difference	Average (days per person)	Total work days lost	Quarter 3 2007 days lost	% difference	Average (days per person)	Total work days lost	Quarter 4 2007-08 days lost	% difference
UNIFORMED (inc Control)	2.33	1400	1335	4.87	2.34	1332	1400	-4.9	2.68	1622	1332	21	1.97	1195	1622	26.3				
NON UNIFORMED	2.93	450.5	547	-17.64	2.9	452.5	450.5	0.44	2.8	465	452.5	2.76	3.4	585	465	25.8				
TOTAL WORKFORCE	2.45	1850.5	1882	-1.67	2.34	1784.5	1850.5	-3.6	2.67	2087	1784.5	17	2.29	1780	2087	-14.7				