



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

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Date: FRIDAY 26 JULY 2013

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Bestwood Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham

Members are requested to attend the above meeting to be held at the time, place and date mentioned for the purpose of transacting the following business.

Clerk to the Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority

AGENDA

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillors, colleagues or other participants in meetings are requested to declare any personal or personal and prejudicial interest in any matter(s) on the agenda

3 MINUTES

Last meeting held on 19 April 2013 (for confirmation)

Attached

4 HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

Report of Chief Fire Officer

Attached

5 TO CONSIDER EXCLUDING THE PUBLIC FROM THE MEETING DURING CONSIDERATION OF THE REMAINING ITEM(S) 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 OUTWEIGHS THE PUBLIC INTEREST IN DISCLOSING THE INFORMATION

6 REGRADING OF POSTS
Report of Chief Fire Officer

Attached

7 WORKFORCE PLAN 2013 - 15
Report of Chief Fire Officer

Attached

ANY COUNCILLOR WHO IS UNABLE TO ATTEND THE MEETING AND WISHES TO SUBMIT APOLOGIES SHOULD DO SO VIA THE PERSONAL ASSISTANT TO THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AT FIRE SERVICES HEADQUARTERS ON 0115 967 0880

IF YOU ARE UNSURE WHETHER OR NOT YOU SHOULD DECLARE AN INTEREST IN A PARTICULAR MATTER, PLEASE CONTACT THE CONSTITUTIONAL SERVICES OFFICER SHOWN ON THIS AGENDA, IF POSSIBLE BEFORE THE DAY OF THE MEETING, WHO WILL PROVIDE ADVICE IN THE FIRST INSTANCE.

Constitutional Services Officer: - Carol M Jackson
0115 8764297
carol.jackson@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

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<http://open.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/comm/default.asp>



**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 REGRADEING 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.



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

CONTACT OFFICER

Name : ACFO David Horton
Strategic Director (Corporate Support)

Tel : 0115 967 0880

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

Media Enquiries Contact : Matt Sismey
0115 967 5889

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) excluding retained	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.

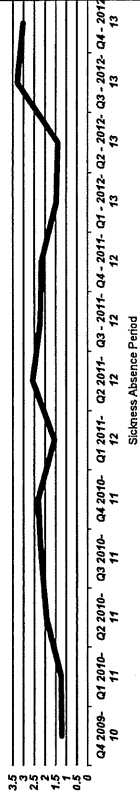
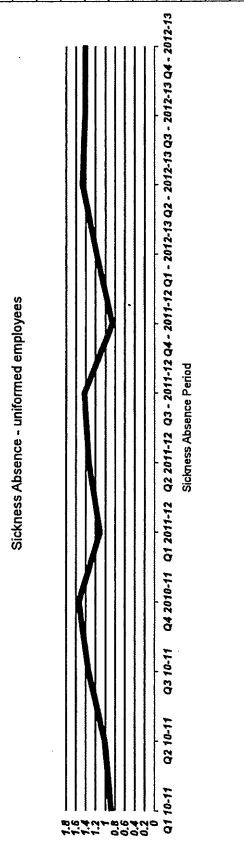
9. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)

None.

Frank Swann
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

BREAKDOWN OF ABSENCE Q4 Jan - Mar 13

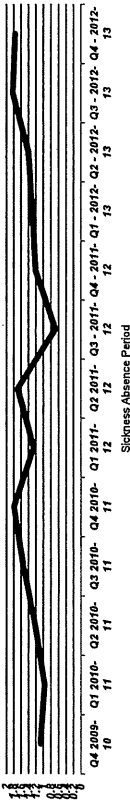
WORK GROUP	Jan			Feb			Mar			SUMMARY OF QUARTER 4		
	Average (days per person)	Total work days lost	% difference	Average (days per person)	Total work days lost	% difference	Average (days per person)	Total work days lost	% difference	Average (days per person)	Total work days lost	% difference
UNIFORMED (Inc Control)	0.49	272.5	-54.83	0.48	264	-64.49	0.44	253	-43.75	1.41	789.5	-54.05
NON UNIFORMED	1.16	184	-16.09	1.01	156	-20.93	0.85	131	-31.66	3.02	471	-21.71
TOTAL WORKFORCE	0.64	456.5	-36.47	0.59	420	-45.08	0.53	384	-39.38	1.76	1260.5	-40.13



UNIFORMED ABSENCE

NON UNIFORMED ABSENCE

Sickness Absence - whole workforce



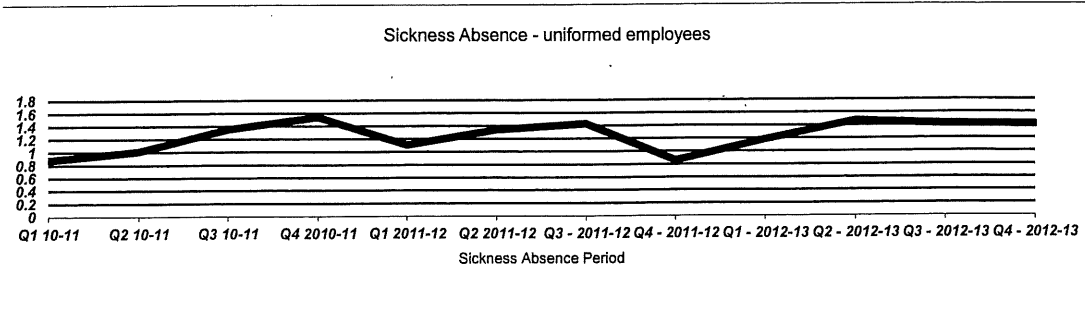
TOTAL ABSENCE

ABSENCE BY QUARTER

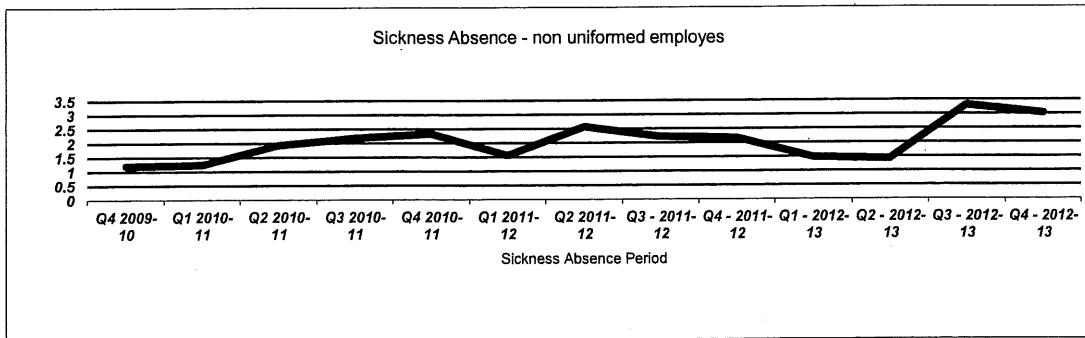
WORK GROUP	Q1			
	Average (days per person)	Total work days lost	Q1 2007 days lost	Difference % in shifts difference lost
UNIFORMED (Inc Control)	2.07	1240	1513	273 18.04
NON UNIFORMED	2.04	351.5	457.5	106 23.17
TOTAL WORKFORCE	2.06	1591.5	1970.5	379 19.23

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

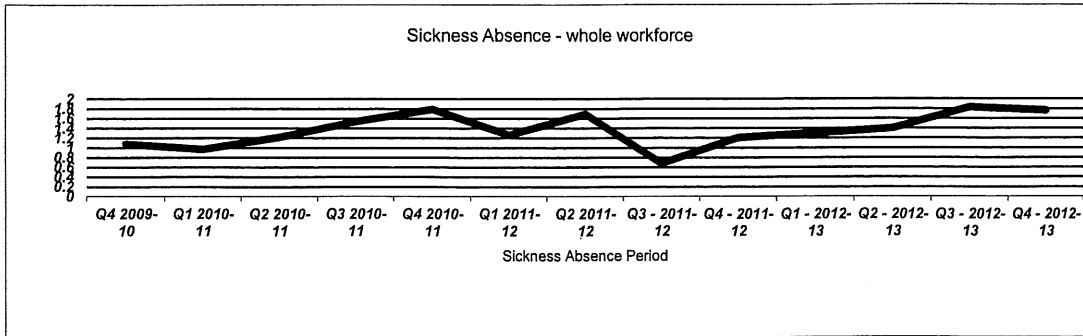
ILLUSTRATIVE CHART



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 difference days lost %	Average (days per person)	Total work days lost	Quarter 1 2007 difference days lost %	Average (days per person)	Total work days lost	Quarter 2 2007 difference days lost %	Average (days per person)	Total work days lost	Quarter 3 2007 difference days lost %	Average (days per person)	Total work days lost	Quarter 4 2007 difference days lost %	
UNIFORMED (inc Central)	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

