



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE & CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY -
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Services HQ, Bestwood
Lodge, Arnold Nottingham NG5 8PD on 10 October 2014 from 13.32 pm - 14.07
pm**

Membership

Present

Councillor Michael Payne (Chair)
Councillor Liz Yates
Councillor John Allin (as substitute for
Councillor Sybil Fielding)

Absent

Councillor Eunice Campbell
Councillor Stephen Garner
Councillor Sybil Fielding

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Tracy Crump - Head of HR Services
Nick Linthwaite - HR Manager
Craig Parkin - Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Carol Jackson - Governance Officer, Nottingham City Council

11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Sybil Fielding
Councillor Stephen Garner

12 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None

13 MINUTES

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2014 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

14 HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

Craig Parkin, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, introduced the Chief Fire Officer's quarterly report updating members on human resources issues within the Service. The

following statistics relating to Quarter 1 (Q1), 1 April - 30 June 2014 were drawn to Members' attention:

- absence rates have increased by 12% (150.5 days) across the workforce as a whole during Q1, compared to the previous quarter and by 29% compared to the same quarter of 2013;
- the increase is accounted for primarily by non-uniformed sickness absence. 70% of this is long term in nature i.e. for a period of more than 28 days and relates to significant medical issues e.g. surgery, stress/anxiety and musco-skeletal conditions;
- staff with stress related illnesses are offered support from Occupational Health with a view to getting them back to work as quickly as possible;
- targeted absence for 2014/15 remains as for 2013/14;
 - whole time and control 6 days;
 - non-uniformed 7 days;
 - whole workforce 6.25 days;
- there have been 19 leavers and 7 starters since the last report. Fire-fighter roles are over-strength by 6 posts with 14 vacancies at supervisory level. A Crew Manager selection process will be run in early November to address the gap in Supervisory Manager roles. This will reduce the over-establishment of fire-fighters;
- there were two whole-time retirements on the grounds of permanent ill-health during Q1 of 2014-15. These are the first for a number of years;

Members felt that the Nottingham Post's coverage of absence figures following the publication of this report had not reflected the true picture of absence across the organisation. The Chair agreed to respond to the article published by the Post by way of a letter for publication, setting out the full facts for the benefit of the public.

RESOLVED to endorse the report.

15 ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER POST

Craig Parkin, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, introduced the Chief Fire Officer's report seeking approval for the establishment of a Communications Officer post within the Corporate Communications and Administration team. The proposed new role will be one dealing with day-to-day activity and help deal with the growing demand for information and provide the ability to respond quickly to this demand.

The Chair asked the Assistant Chief Fire Officer to pass on the Committee's thanks to the Corporate Communications team for the excellent job it is doing in maintaining effective and pro-active media services, keeping the media, staff and the public fully informed in difficult times.

RESOLVED to support the establishment of a new post of Communications Officer and to recommend this to the Combined Fire Authority.

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16 DISCRETIONS UNDER THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSIONS SCHEME

Craig Parkin, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, introduced the Chief Fire Officer's report seeking member approval on the Service policy statement in relation to the discretions that exist under the Local Government Pension Scheme.

RESOLVED to approve the Service policy statement regarding application of employer discretions under the Local Government Pension Scheme

17 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

The Committee decided to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the remaining agenda item in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on that basis that, having regard to all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

18 REGRADING OF POSTS

Craig Parkin, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, introduced the Chief Fire Officer's report notifying members of the applications considered by the Job Evaluation Panel in respect of changes to the permanent non-uniformed establishment, during the period April to September 2014 (inclusive).

RESOLVED to note the report.