



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

**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE & CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY  
(NFRS) - HUMAN RESOURCES**

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Services HQ, Bestwood  
Lodge, Arnold Nottingham NG5 8PD on 21 April 2017 from 10.00 am - 11.06 am**

**Membership**

Present

Councillor Michael Payne (Chair)  
Councillor Liaqat Ali  
Councillor Eunice Campbell  
Councillor Roger Jackson (substitute for  
Councillor Liz Yates)  
Councillor Mike Pringle

Absent

Councillor Liz Yates  
Councillor Jason Zadrozny

**Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:**

Wayne Bowcock - Deputy Chief Fire Officer, NFRS  
Tracy Crump - Head of People and Organisational Development, NFRS  
Councillor Brian Grocock - Fire Authority Member, observing  
Sue Maycock - Head of Finance, NFRS  
James Welbourn - Governance Officer

**25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor Liz Yates

**26 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

None.

**27 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 January were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

## **28 CORPORATE GAMES 2017**

Wayne Bowcock, Deputy Chief Fire Officer provided Members with an overview of the Corporate Games 2017.

The following points were highlighted:

- (a) the Corporate Games will bring businesses across the public and private sector together. It fits with the NFRS health and wellbeing agenda;
- (b) in early 2018 NFRS will be going out to advert for wholetime firefighters, so the Corporate Games could be seen as a positive action campaign, and an opportunity to signpost NFRS as an employer of choice;
- (c) other Fire Services will be invited alongside other high profile organisations;
- (d) this is a big event where over 5,000 competitors are expected to take part;
- (e) with the links to cultural development it was felt that this fell within the budget for organisational development; the spend for organisational development works is monitored throughout the year.

There will be an administrative burden on NFRS internally, but this will be managed;

- (f) there will be sickness cover for any injuries sustained during the games.

### **RESOLVED to:**

- (1) support the Service's engagement with the Corporate Games 2017;**
- (2) support the attached cost of £5,000 that will be managed within the internal organisational development budget.**

## **29 PEOPLE STRATEGY**

Wayne Bowcock, Deputy Chief Fire Officer at NFRS updated Members on the development of a People Strategy.

The following points were highlighted:

- (a) one of the elements of the Strategy was 'positive workplace' – this is closely linked to mental wellbeing. There has been hard work on inclusion in particular with women, Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities and the LGBT community;
- (b) many of the topics in the Strategy have already been started on; therefore this is a work in progress;

- (c) NFRS are not reacting to national guidance from National Fire Chiefs Council; work already done has been cross-referenced with this draft national guidance;
- (d) there will be an inspection regime delivered through the new fire inspectorate; this starts this year. The national people strategy will heavily inform this inspection;

Following questions from Members, further information was provided:

- (e) the People Strategy is an attempt to bring different strands of work so that there is one point of reference. The document is brief, and easily digestible, which should enable staff to link together what NFRS are doing;
- (f) staff will have access to different ways of development through profiling;
- (g) there has been consultation on certain themes with the unions and some workstreams will need negotiations.

Members thanked Tracy Crump for her hard work on this strategy.

**RESOLVED to:**

- (1) endorse the People Strategy;**
- (2) receive half-yearly updates on how the People Strategy is developing.**

**30 HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE**

Tracy Crump, Head of People and Organisational Development updated Members on key Human Resources metrics for the period 1 January – 31 March 2017.

The following points were highlighted:

- (a) there was an overall reduction in sickness absence in Quarter 4. There was a reduction in whole year absence compared with 15/16;
- (b) the average of 7.63% absence across the workforce means that the target of 6.25% for 2016/17 has been missed. However 7.63% is lower than the public sector average;
- (c) any long-term absences refer to serious illness or injuries that are supported by a doctor's note. NFRS keep in touch with employees on long-term absence and give them the support they need;
- (d) musculoskeletal problems are being tackled in new ways, such as the changing of fitness regimes.

Some other long-term absences can be attributed to mental health issues. There is a joint working group active that tries to help deal with these issues.

Specialists within the workforce form part of this group and work together with senior officers to see how mental health issues can be addressed;

Following questions from members, further information was provided.

- (e) there are a range of other services available to employees with mental health issues, and these options depend on the issues the employee is suffering with. There is a peer support team if someone wants to talk something through. For longer term support, there is a Westfield Health scheme, which operates for 24 hours a day, and can be accessed through the telephone;

There is also Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), or counselling. There is a trauma clinic in Nottingham and employees can be referred for support. More informal networks exist; for example the Employee Engagement Network. These people are not trained, but they can signpost to the relevant programmes. Finally, there are the options of using the unions, the MIND Blue Light charity, and the Firefighters' charity. The Firefighters' charity extends to family members;

- (f) there is a careers protocol when recruiting for retained firefighters, but it is ad hoc for wholetime firefighters as recruitment for those positions happens less often;

- (g) the figure at 2.13 in the report refers to two ill health retirements, and one dismissal.

**RESOLVED to endorse the report.**

### **31 CONVERSION OF POSTS**

Wayne Bowcock, Deputy Chief Fire Officer updated Members on posts which have been re-designated during the period April 2016 – March 2017.

**RESOLVED to note the contents of the report.**

### **32 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the remaining item 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.**

### **33 RESTRUCTURE OF FINANCE DEPARTMENT**

Sue Maycock, Head of Finance at NFRS introduced the report on the restructure of the Finance department.

**RESOLVED to approve the recommendations in the report.**