



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

Date: 10 October 2014

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 receives 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 Human Resources 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 1: 1 April to 30 June 2014.

Absence	Quarter 1 1 Apr – 30 Jun 2014	Compared with previous quarter	Compared with same quarter of 2013	Cumulative total days lost for 14/15	Cumulative average over last 12 months
Total workforce (156 employees have been absent during Q1)	1404.5 days lost 1.94 days per employee	1254 days lost 1.71 days per employee 12% increase (+150.5 days)	1090days lost 1.5 days per employee 29% increase (+314.5 days)	1404.5days lost 1.94 days per employee	6.23 days per employee
Uniformed (102 employees have been absent during Q1) <i>excluding retained</i>	879 days lost 1.57 days per employee	904.5 days lost 1.59 days per employee 2.8% decrease (-25.5 days)	667.5 days lost 1.18 days per employee 31.7% increase (+ 211.5days)	879 days lost 1.57 days per employee	5.44 days per employee
Non uniformed (54 employees have been absent during Q1)	525.5 days lost 3.19 days per employee	349.5 days lost 2.1 days per employee 50.45% increase (+176 days)	422.5 days lost 2.7 days per employee 24.4% increase (+103 days)	525.5 days lost 3.19 days per employee	8.92 days per employee
Long term sickness (defined as 28 days or more)	Total Workforce		35		
	Uniformed (excluding retained)		25		
	Non Uniformed		10		

- 2.2 Absence rates have increased by 12% (150.5 days) across the workforce as a whole during Quarter 1, compared to the previous quarter and by 29% compared to the same quarter of 2013. The average absence for the period was 1.94 days per employee, which is above the target of 1.56 days. This is primarily accounted for by an increase in non-uniformed sickness absence.
- 2.3 In reviewing the reason for this increase for non uniformed employees, 70% of absence was long-term in nature i.e. for a period of longer than 28 days, and related to significant medical issues. As an indication of the types of conditions recorded, 136 days were lost due to surgery, 119 to stress/anxiety and 51 to musculo-skeletal conditions.
- 2.4 There were 56 separate periods of medically certified absence in Quarter 1. Of these, 31 employees have subsequently returned to work or left the service. The graphs attached as Appendix 1 give a clearer idea of how absence has been affected over a longer period of time and sets out a more representative view of absence over the year.
- 2.5 In terms of reasons for absence, the majority of sickness absence during Q1 (in terms of working time lost) was certified as due to lower limb or back conditions (uniformed), anxiety/depression or Upper Limb conditions (Control) and anxiety/depression or reproductive conditions (non- uniformed).
- 2.6 The 2013 Chief Fire Officers Association absence survey showed that mental illness is the main cause of sickness absence for all staff categories in the 31 Fire and Rescue Services surveyed. This is reflected in absence at Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service for non-uniformed and Control employees, but not for Wholetime absence where lower limb and back injuries are the main causes of absence from work.
- 2.10 Target absence figures for 2014/15 will remain the same as for 2013-14:

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

- 2.11 Over the period 1 April 2014 – 30 June 2014:
- Disciplinary: 2
 - Grievances: 1
 - Harassment and Bullying: 0
 - Formal Management Sickness Absence Policy: 0
 - Dismissals including ill health retirements: 1
 - Redundancy: 2
 - Redeployment: 0
 - Employment Tribunal cases: 0
 - IDRPs appeals: 0

STAFFING NUMBERS

2.12 During the period 1 April 2014 to 30 June 2014, 7 employees commenced employment. Establishment levels at 30 June 2014 are highlighted below:

	Approved	Actual	Variance
Wholetime	531	531 (530.5 full time equivalents)	0 (-0.5 FTE)
Retained	204 units	256 persons (137.5 units) (includes 60 dual contracts)	- 66.5 units
Non-Uniformed	183 (166.49 fte)	176 <i>Established Post – 165 (157.18 fte)</i> <i>Fixed Term Non-Established Post – 2</i> <i>Fixed Term in Established Post - 5</i> <i>Agency staff – 3</i>	-7
Fire Control	26	26 (25 FTE)	-1

2.13 There have been 19 leavers and 7 starters since the last report which has resulted in an actual workforce figure of 989 employees. Leavers are broken down as follows: 5 whole-time, 8 retained, 1 control and 5 non-uniformed employees.

Additionally, the Service employs 2 Apprentices on one year fixed-term contracts (2 have obtained permanent employment since the last review), and 36 Contingency Crew Operatives on zero hour contracts.

2.14 As at 30 June 2014 whole-time establishment stood at -0.5 FTE (530.5 FTE) employees against an establishment of 531 posts.

2.15 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.

2.16 It should be noted that the outcome of the operational cover proposals will lead to a reduction in whole-time established posts and the anticipated redeployment of some “at risk” Retained Duty System (RDS) employees to the whole-time duty system. At this point it is anticipated that the number of whole-time employees will exceed the establishment for a short period, however this will provide some resilience against anticipated retirements during the remainder of 2014/15.

2.16 During the last quarter, the Service ran a Group Manager selection process which filled two vacancies at this level (both were internal appointments).

- 2.17 The Service has completed a RDS recruitment process and 11 trainees commenced training at Service Development Centre (SDC) in September. A further recruitment process will commence in October which will target the stations who are currently under establishment.
- 2.18 The Service has also recruited a further 19 contingency operatives who have now received initial training.
- 2.19 During the period the Service has appointed to two whole-time positions, 3 retained positions (dual employment) and 2 support roles (non uniformed posts).

ILL HEALTH RETIREMENTS

- 2.20 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, and mean the Authority has exceeded its target of 1 ill-health retirement per year.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Pay budgets are projected to underspend this year, mainly as a result of the management of vacancies in the establishment from the start of the year until now (see paragraph 2.12). An updated position on this pay budget is reported quarterly to the Finance and Resources Committee.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

The human resources implications are set out in the report, and there are no learning and development implications.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

As this review does not impact upon policy or service function, no equality impact has been undertaken.

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 workforce issues.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members endorse the report.

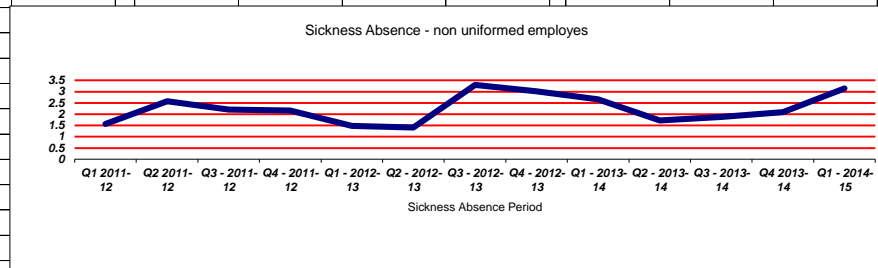
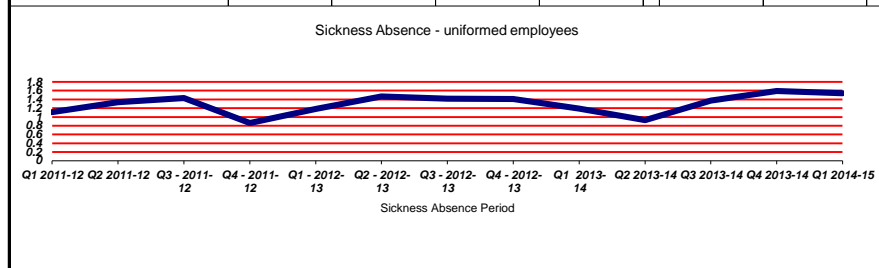
9. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)

None.

John Buckley
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

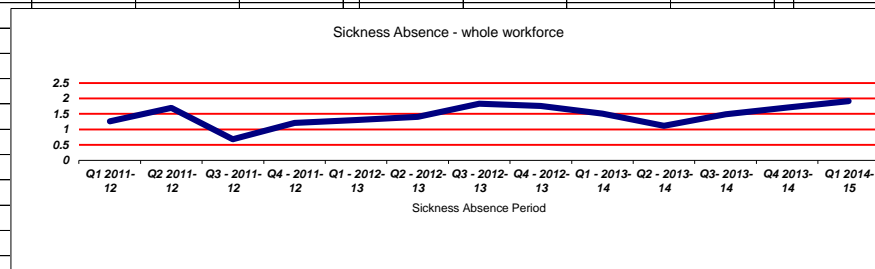
BREAKDOWN OF ABSENCE Q1 (Apr - Jun 14)

WORK GROUP	Apr				May				Jun				SUMMARY OF QUARTER 1			
	Average (days per person)	Total work days lost	April 2013 days lost	% difference	Average (days per person)	Total work days lost	May 2013 days lost	% difference	Average (days per person)	Total work days lost	June 2013 days lost	% difference	Average (days per person)	Total work days lost	Q1 2014-15 days lost	% difference
UNIFORMED (inc Control)	0.42	235	231	-1.73	0.54	303	258	-17.44	0.61	340	178.5	-90.48	1.54	878	667.5	-31.54
NON UNIFORMED	1.29	213	159	-33.96	0.88	144	140.5	-2.49	1.02	168.5	116	-45.26	3.15	525.5	415.5	-26.47
TOTAL WORKFORCE	0.61	448	390	-14.87	0.61	447	398.5	-12.17	0.69	508.5	294.5	-72.67	1.91	1403.5	1083	-29.59



UNIFORMED ABSENCE

NON UNIFORMED ABSENCE



TOTAL ABSENCE