



**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:** 17 July 2015

**Purpose of Report:**

To update Members on key human resources metrics for the period 1 April – 30 June 2015.

## CONTACT OFFICER

**Name :** Craig Parkin  
Assistant Chief Fire Officer

**Tel :** 0115 967 0880

**Email :** [craig.parkin@notts-fire.gov.uk](mailto:craig.parkin@notts-fire.gov.uk)

**Media Enquiries Contact :** Bridget Aherne  
0115 967 0880 [bridget.aherne@notts-fire.gov.uk](mailto:bridget.aherne@notts-fire.gov.uk)

## 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 keep informed of ongoing issues and offer their guidance and scrutiny.

## 2. REPORT

### HR METRICS - SICKNESS ABSENCE

- 2.1 The following represents absence figures for Quarter 1: 1 April to 30 June 2015 (detail available in appendices A and B)
- 2.2 Target absence figures for 2015/16 are:

Wholetime & Control: 6 days per person  
Non-Uniformed: 7 days per person  
Whole Workforce: 6.25 days per person  
(the average is affected by the numbers of employees in each work group and the average work shift)

### Total Workforce

Absence	Quarter 1 1 April – 30 June 2015	Compared with previous quarter	Cumulative total days lost for 15/16	Cumulative average over last 12 months
<b>Total workforce (142 employees have been absent during Q1, excluding retained*)</b>	1396.5 days lost  1.96 days per employee	1607.5 days lost  2.2 days per employee  13% Decrease (-211 days)	1396.5 days lost	1.96 days per employee

(\*Due to the on-call nature of the Retained Duty System days lost are recorded not shifts)

There has been a reduction in the level of absence across the whole workforce of 13% in Quarter 1 in comparison with Quarter 4

Long term absence equated 35% of the total absence during this period.

1 person has been on long term sickness over a period of 6 months. This is a reduction of 2 employees on the previous quarter.

## DISCIPLINE, GRIEVANCES ETC

2.3 Over the period 1 April – 30 June 2015:

- Disciplinary: 2
- Grievances: 0
- Harassment and Bullying: 1
- Formal Management Sickness Absence Policy: 0
- Dismissals including ill health retirements: 0
- Redundancy: 0
- Redeployment: 0
- Employment Tribunal cases: 0
- IDRP appeals: 0
- Performance and capability: 0

## STAFFING NUMBERS

2.4 During the period 1 April to 30 June 2015, 13 employees commenced employment. Establishment levels at 30 June 2015 are highlighted below:

	Approved	Actual	Variance
<b>Wholetime</b>	510 (510 FTE)	516 (515.58 full time equivalents)	+6 (+5.58 FTE)
<b>Retained</b>	192 units	247 persons (132.5 units) (includes 51 dual contracts)	- 59.5 units
<b>Non-Uniformed</b>	174 (161.31 FTE)	163 (149.66fte)	-11 (11.65 FTE)
<b>Fire Control</b>	24 (23.5 FTE)	28 (27.5 FTE)	+4 (4 FTE)

2.5 There have been 19 leavers and 13 starters during this quarter. Leavers are broken down as follows: 8 whole-time, 6 retained, 0 control and 5 non-uniformed employees. The total actual workforce is 954 personnel (includes 51 dual contractors)

2.6 Additionally, the Service currently employs 28 Contingency Crew Operatives on zero hour contracts.

2.7 As at 30 June 2015 whole-time establishment stood at +6 (5.58 fte) employees against an establishment of 510 posts. The over-establishment

of operational roles is accounted for by the removal of the two appliances and consequent transfer of employees from Mansfield and Highfields (no whole-time employees were made redundant), and the redeployment of 6 RDS employees into the whole-time establishment due to the closure of the Mansfield RDS section. It is anticipated that this over-establishment will reduce due to normal turnover during 2015-16.

- 2.8 During the period the Service has appointed to two support roles and 11 to the role of Retained Firefighter.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The over-establishment of Wholetime employees reported in paragraph 2.7 will have an impact on the pay budget. A budgetary “buffer” equivalent to 4 Firefighter posts will help to cover some of this additional cost but the Wholetime pay budget will need to be managed over the year, with the aim of keeping costs within the overall budget. The under-establishment of Non-Uniformed employees will help to offset the Wholetime pay overspend, and the overall position will be reported to the Finance and Resources Committee during the year.

### **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 note the contents of the report.

**10. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)**

None.

John Buckley  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**

# APPENDIX A

## Appendix - Reporting Period: 01/04/2013 to 30/06/2015

Quarter Breakdown by Month	April		May		June	
	Days Lost Per Person	Total Working Days Lost	Days Lost Per Person	Total Working Days Lost	Days Lost Per Person	Total Working Days Lost
Wholetime	0.56	290.5	0.54	277.5	0.46	239.5
Non Uniformed	1.40	237.0	1.12	189.0	1.03	174.0
Control	0	0	0.18	5.0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.74</b>	<b>527.5</b>	<b>0.66</b>	<b>471.5</b>	<b>0.58</b>	<b>413.5</b>

Current Q vs Previous Q	2,014 - Q4		2,015 - Q1	
	Days Lost Per Person	Total Working Days Lost	Days Lost Per Person	Total Working Days Lost
Wholetime	2.08	1,078	1.56	807.5
Non Uniformed	3.03	524.5	3.47	600
Control	0.25	7	0.18	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.96</b>	<b>1,412.5</b>	<b>2.24</b>	<b>1,609.5</b>

Whole Period Summary - Non Uniformed



Whole Period Summary Wholetime & Control



Whole Period Summary - All



## APPENDIX B

### WHOLETIME EMPLOYEES

Absence	Quarter 4 1 April – 30 June 2015	Compared with previous quarter	Cumulative total days lost for 15/16	Cumulative average over last 12 months
<b>Wholetime (94 employees have been absent during Q1)</b>	791.5 days lost  1.53 days per employee	1076 days lost  2.05 days per employee  26.4% decrease (-284.5 days)	791.5 days lost	1.53 days per employee

During Q1, there was a decrease in absence for wholetime employees. 32.9% of this absence was due to long-term medical conditions (of more than 28 days in duration).

The figure of 1.53 day lost is in line with the target.

The main reasons for absence are recorded as musculo-skeletal in nature (lower limb) and mental health issues (stress).

The Occupational Health team continues to work with operational employees with long term conditions to provide support and access to treatment.

A particular emphasis will be placed on working with employees in relation to musculo skeletal conditions and mental health issues across the service over the coming year with an aim of reducing the incidence and impact on employees of these conditions.

### Reasons for Absence

#### Wholetime

Absence Reason	Unique Absence	Days Lost
Musculo Skeletal - Lower Limb	25	215
Mental Health - Stress	6	144
Musculo Skeletal - Shoulder	3	80
Musculo Skeletal - Back	8	72
Gastro-Intestinal	20	57
Unknown causes, not specified	8	53
Cancer and Tumours	1	36
Musculo Skeletal - Neck	2	23
Musculo Skeletal - Other	4	17
Respiratory - Other	4	17

#### Short Term Absences

Absence Reason	Unique Absence	Days Lost
Mental Health - Stress	5	121
Musculo Skeletal - Lower Limb	18	91
Musculo Skeletal - Shoulder	3	80
Gastro-Intestinal	20	57
Musculo Skeletal - Back	6	53
Unknown causes, not specified	7	20
Musculo Skeletal - Other	4	17
Respiratory - Other	4	17
	3	9
Respiratory - Chest Infection	4	8

#### Long Term Absences

Absence Reason	Unique Absence Count	Days Lost
Musculo Skeletal - Lower Limb	7	124
Cancer and Tumours	1	36
Unknown causes, not specified	1	33
Mental Health - Stress	1	23
Musculo Skeletal - Neck	2	23
Musculo Skeletal - Back	2	19
Musculo Skeletal - Upper Limb	1	16
Hospital/Post Operative	1	5
Mental Health - Anxiety	1	5

## RETAINED EMPLOYEES

Absence	Quarter 1 1 April – 30 June 2015	Compared with previous quarter	Cumulative non availability (days) during 15/16	Cumulative average over last 12 months
<b>Retained (36 employees have been absent during Q1)</b>	917.5 calendar days lost  3.7 calendar days lost per employee	644.5 calendar days lost  2.65 calendar days per employee  42% increase (+273 days)	917.5 calendar days lost	3.7 days per employee

Due to the on-call nature of the retained duty system, absence levels reflect number of days of non availability rather than total working/shift days lost. Absences are calculated as consecutive calendar days not working time lost.

During Q1, absence levels have increased (+273 days) compared to Q4 and reflect an average of 3.7 calendar days per person. Short-term absence accounted for the majority of all absence (67.5%).

The main reasons for absence are recorded as musculo-skeletal in nature (Shoulder) and mental health issues (stress).

### Retained

Absence Reason	Unique Absen ce	Day s Los
Mental Health - Stress	7	449
Musculo Skeletal - Shoulder	3	219
Musculo Skeletal - Lower Limb	4	55
Hospital/Post Operative	1	36
Mental Health - Anxiety	2	36
	2	26
Gastro-Intestinal	8	23
Musculo Skeletal - Other	1	21
Musculo Skeletal - Neck	1	10
Respiratory - Chest Infection	2	10

### Short Term Absences

Absence Reason	Unique Absen ce	Days Lost
Musculo Skeletal - Shoulder	3	219
Mental Health - Stress	3	204
Musculo Skeletal - Lower Limb	3	49
Hospital/Post Operative	1	35.5
	2	26
Mental Health - Anxiety	1	23.5
Gastro-Intestinal	8	22.5
Musculo Skeletal - Other	1	20.5
Musculo Skeletal - Neck	1	10
Respiratory - Chest Infection	2	10

### Long Term Absences

Absence Reason	Unique Absence Count	Days Lost
Mental Health - Stress	4	244.5
Mental Health - Anxiety	1	12
Musculo Skeletal - Lowe	1	6





## CONTROL EMPLOYEES

Absence	Quarter 1 1 April – 30 June 2015	Compared with previous quarter	Cumulative total days lost for 15/16	Cumulative average over last 12 months
<b>Control (3 employees have been absent during Q1)</b>	5 shifts lost  0.18 shifts per employee	7 shifts lost  0.24 shifts per employee  28.5% decrease (- 2 days)	5 shifts lost	0.18 shifts per employee

There was a decrease of 2 days in absence during the review period, and no instances of long-term absence. Details about reasons for absence are shown below:

### Control

Absence Reason	Unique Absence Count	Days Lost
Eye Problems	1	2
Respiratory - Cold/Cough/Influenza	1	2
Unknown causes, not specified	1	1

### Short Term Absences

Absence Reason	Unique Absence Count	Days Lost
Eye Problems	1	2
Respiratory - Cold/Cough/Influenza	1	2
Unknown causes, not specified	1	1

### Long Term Absences

Absence Reason	Unique Absence Count	Days Lost

## SUPPORT EMPLOYEES

Absence	Quarter 1 1 April – 30 June 2015	Compared with previous quarter	Cumulative total days lost for 14/15	Cumulative average over last 12 months
<b>Non uniformed (45 employees have been absent during Q1)</b>	600 days lost  3.55 days per employee	524.5 days lost  2.98 days per employee  14% increase (+75.5 days)	600 days lost	3.55 days per employee

There was a slight increase in support employee absence levels during quarter 1. Long term absence accounted for 31.8% of total absence in the quarter.

The main reasons for absence are recorded as musculo-skeletal in nature (lower limb) and mental health issues (depression, stress).

The Occupational Health team are reviewing the reasons for absence within this work group to identify and address any work related issues which may be contributing to mental health issues (such as stress), or other health conditions . The Service has, and will continue, to focus support to employees experiencing mental health issues and to build awareness and resilience in individuals to deal with such issues when they arise. In many cases these issues are not directly related to work, however they may manifest themselves in performance or behavioural problems at work and in the development of stress related symptoms. This can be a complex set of circumstances which can often only be resolved by professional counselling, which is available to employees through a number of channels.

#### Non Uniformed

Absence Reason	Unique Absence Count	Days Lost
Mental Health - Depression	2	130
Musculo Skeletal - Lower Limb	4	108
Mental Health - Stress	2	85
Musculo Skeletal - Back	3	59
Respiratory - Cold/Cough/Influenza	12	41
Eye Problems	1	38
Mental Health - Anxiety	2	27
Unknown causes, not specified	7	27
Virus/Infectious Diseases	4	26
Other known causes (not specified in list)	2	24

#### Short Term Absences

Absence Reason	Unique Absence Count	Days Lost
Mental Health - Depression	2	130
Mental Health - Stress	2	85
Respiratory - Cold/Cough/Influenza	12	41
Musculo Skeletal - Back	2	34
Musculo Skeletal - Lower Limb	2	28
Unknown causes, not specified	7	26.5
Virus/Infectious Diseases	4	26
Gastro-Intestinal	7	16
Respiratory - Chest Infection	1	6
Headache/Migraine/Neurological	4	5.5

#### Long Term Absences

Absence Reason	Unique Absence Count	Days Lost
Musculo Skeletal - Lower Limb	2	80
Eye Problems	1	38
Mental Health - Anxiety	2	27
Musculo Skeletal - Back	1	25
Other known causes (not specified in list)	1	21