



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

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

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Services HQ, Bestwood
Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PD on 5 April 2019 from 10:05am to 11:18am**

Membership

Present

Councillor John Clarke (Chair)
Councillor John Longdon
Councillor Brian Grocock
Councillor Mohammed Saghir (items 32-
34)

Absent

Councillor Vaughan Hopewell
Councillor Jackie Morris

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Tracy Crump - Head of People and Organisational Development
Adrian Mann - Governance Officer
Craig Parkin - Deputy Chief Fire Officer

28 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Jackie Morris - Caring responsibility

29 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

30 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2019 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

31 HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

Tracy Crump, Head of People and Organisational Development, presented a Human Resources Update for Quarter 4 of the 2018/19 municipal year. The following points were discussed:

- (a) due to the timing of the meeting in relation to the review period, it was not possible to include an analysis of the absence figures in the report for Quarter 4, so the data will be presented to the next meeting. The Service recorded below the national average for sickness days for both whole-time/control staff and the full workforce, placing it 11th of 30 services for the former category and 15th of 29 for the latter. Compassionate support processes are in place for staff who need to take time off sick and initiatives continue to reduce the level of sickness in the workforce. Although staff have been through a continued period of change, morale generally remains good, on the whole;
- (b) there is one grievance process and one pension scheme appeal underway. An Employment Tribunal case will be heard during June. The costs are being met from the designated budget, but the ongoing expenditure will be monitored carefully;
- (c) most recent leavers departed the Service due to retirement. To ensure continuity across the projected upcoming retirements, whole-time staff numbers are slightly above establishment level, while approximately 25 new firefighters are now at stations following two recent trainee courses. Achieving and retaining the needed level of on-call staff is a challenge and there is a continual recruitment process to maintain the numbers. A dedicated team supports on-call staff and a high degree of active management is required to ensure that overall staffing remains stable through regular turnover. Focused engagement is being carried out with communities around some stations with low numbers of on-call staff in the local area, to improve recruitment.

RESOLVED to note the Human Resources update.

32 EQUALITIES MONITORING REPORT

Tracy Crump, Head of People and Organisational Development, presented an Equalities Monitoring Report for the six-month period from 1 July to 31 December 2018. The following points were discussed:

- (a) women now represent 16.5% of the total workforce and 6.55% of all firefighters (31 of 473). The number of female staff is increasing slightly and the latest round of firefighter recruitment resulted in 13 women being appointed out of 44 applicants. However, the percentage of women decreases in the higher-level management roles. A great deal of work is being done to create a culture of equality and female staff are being sought to act as workplace advocates, to both receive development support from their managers for growing into more senior roles, and to help and encourage their colleagues working to follow the same career path. Currently, most people in senior operational roles have served as firefighters and it is not current practice to enter directly into these positions without this experience, so ways of diversifying the career backgrounds of staff will be explored;
- (b) 3.99% of the total workforce is of a black, Asian or minority ethnic (BAME) background, which falls short of being representative of the overall BAME community in Nottinghamshire (11.2% of the total population in 2011). It is challenging to attract people with a BAME background (particularly into

operational roles) into the Service, but a high level of positive action and engagement work is underway to promote the careers available;

- (c) the Strategic Inclusion Board continues to work towards broader diversification within the workforce, drawing information from steering groups and both internal and external forums. Managers must aim for full inclusion of all staff and internal management structures are in place to facilitate culture change and engage and empower everyone within the organisation. Following previous initiatives, additional work will be carried out to ensure that external forums for engaging with local BAME communities are as effective as possible;
- (d) there is a strong commitment to promote lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) equality across the Service, which has been recognised in the top 100 of the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index for its commitment to promoting equality issues. Nevertheless, the declaration rate for staff identifying as LGBT remains relatively low, so further work is needed to ensure that people feel comfortable being themselves at work.

RESOLVED to note the Equalities Monitoring Report and support the Fire Service's continued commitment to attracting, recruiting and retaining a more diverse workforce.

33 UPDATE ON THE PEOPLE STRATEGY

Craig Parkin, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, presented a six-monthly Update on the People Strategy. The following points were discussed:

- (a) the local policy mirrors the National Fire Chiefs' Council's strategy closely. A number of workshops are being run with a focus on the People Strategy and staff are being encouraged to engage as much as possible. Progress will be reviewed during 2019 and the equality framework will be considered for a peer assessment. Four one-day conferences for all employees will be held in May and June to focus on the Strategic Plan and to receive feedback from staff, and councillors are welcome to attend these conferences;
- (b) the recent recruitment processes have been positive and the new trainees will have placements at multiple stations, to further their development. A third trainee course is scheduled for the end of the year. A number of retirements are anticipated over the next 18 months and there has been recent turnover in middle management roles, so a significant recruitment process has been carried out to ensure continuity and enable the new staff to develop their skills and knowledge;
- (c) a new mixed-crewing model went live on 1 April at the Ashfield and Retford fire stations and the process has been relatively positive, to date. A review and closure report will be produced after three months of operating under the new system;
- (d) the planning for the joint control room with Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service is developing further and an update report will be available for review by senior management, shortly. There will be a reduced number of roles in the joint control room, so transition support is in place for those staff who want to move to the new

unit, while some staff will retire or receive redundancy and others have been offered alternative positions within the Service;

- (e) unfortunately, the Fire Authority's association with the Prince's Trust Programme will end in July 2019, due to budget constraints. Alternatives for youth engagement are now under consideration, such as the creation of a joint cadet programme with the Police;
- (f) the detail of the proposals to implement a joint headquarters with the Nottinghamshire Police from October 2021 is under development by the Strategic Collaboration Board and conversations are underway with staff to address any concerns, particularly for those in non-uniform support roles;
- (g) the Service is taking a positive role on implementing the significant project to ensure that an integrated approach is taken to review, develop and deliver operational training in line with the National Operational Guidance, while also delivering the annual training plan.

RESOLVED to note the update on the People Strategy.

34 RELOCATION TO A JOINT HEADQUARTERS: WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

Craig Parkin, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, presented a report on the implementation of a joint headquarters with the Nottinghamshire Police at Sherwood Lodge, Arnold from October 2021. The following points were discussed:

- (a) the projected creation of a joint headquarters with the Police is over two years away, but a great deal of hard work will need to be done with staff, Fire Authority members, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Police colleagues to ensure that everybody is fully informed and is able to contribute to the process;
- (b) it is important to Fire and Rescue staff that the move is not seen as the Fire Service being merged into the Police Force. The joint headquarters will need to retain its level of accessibility and it will be vital to lose as few people in the move as possible, so that the Service's collected knowledge and experience is not lost unduly. The Strategic Collaboration Board is working to a collaborative framework and a number of working groups have been established with the Police. The Fire Authority still retains its full decision-making powers.

RESOLVED to note the report on the workforce implications of the proposals to relocate the Fire Service to joint headquarters with Nottinghamshire Police.