

WEST YORKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF THE PERSONNEL AND TRAINING COMMITTEE HELD ON 24 SEPTEMBER 2010 AT FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS, BIRKENSHAW,

Present: Councillors C Townsley (in the Chair); M Akhtar, V Binney, D Firth, D Gray, M Jamil (as substitute for Councillor P Booth), J Jarosz, A Manifold, D O'Neill (as substitute for Councillor R Pryke) and B Smith

Apologies : Councillors P Booth, T Hardwick and R Pryke

12 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Committee at a meeting held on 2 July 2010 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

13 URGENT ITEMS

None.

14 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC – SECTION 100A LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

There were no items which required the exclusion of the public and press.

15 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

No disclosures of interest in any matter under consideration were made.

16 EARLY TERMINATION POLICY

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Human Resources which sought approval for the new Early Termination Policy and proposed voluntary early termination severance terms.

Members were advised that, in order to be able to make the savings required over the next four-year period as a result of the Government's spending review, work was being done to re-structure the organisation and, as part of that re-structure, early termination would be offered to staff.

Attached at Appendix 1 to the report was an Early Termination Policy which set out the proposed approach to termination of contracts applicable at this stage to all green book staff and staff in the mobilising centre. Details of the proposed enhanced terms of voluntary severance were set out at Appendix B. Members were advised that those members of staff who were over 55 years of age, would be able to take their pension immediately should they be made redundant.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the Early Termination Policy attached at Appendix 1 to the report now submitted be approved;
- (ii) That voluntary early termination severance terms be approved as detailed at Appendix B to the report; and
- (iii) That a report be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee should it be necessary to make any compulsory redundancies.

17 OPERATIONAL ADMIN REVIEW – STATION CLERKS AND COOKS

The Director of Human Resources submitted a report which sought approval for a variation in station clerk contracts together with the disestablishment of the remaining station cook posts.

It was reported that a review of station clerk provision had been undertaken to assess whether it remained fit for purpose in the light of the impact of new technology and the re-alignment of some administration tasks to other staff. It was proposed to reduce the contracts for the station clerks to a maximum of 16 hours per week with the offer of a financial incentive based on the number of hours lost.

Similarly, due to changes in station turn-out patterns, a review of the work of the remaining eight station cooks had been undertaken and it was proposed that these posts be removed from the establishment.

Members expressed some concern about the impact of the proposals on the gender balance of the organisation and the specific impact on that particular sector of the community but were advised that all staff involved had been spoken to on an individual basis and it was anticipated that redeployment opportunities would be offered prior to severance or termination.

RESOLVED

- (i) That approval be given to the variation of station clerk contracts to a maximum of 16 hours per week with effect from 31 March 2011;

- (ii) That approval be given to the payment of a financial incentive to the clerks to accept the variation in their contract as detailed in the report now submitted; and
- (iii) That the eight station cook posts be removed from the establishment with effect from 31 March 2011.

18 COMMAND AND CAPACITY REVIEW

Members considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which advised Members of the completion of the managerial command and capacity review.

An increase to the establishment had been agreed at the 18 December 2009 meeting of the full Authority and the completion of the review had indicated that some of those posts remained unfilled. It was reported that the currently unfilled posts (Deputy Finance Manager, Data Processing Assistant and Partnership Officer) would be re-considered during the organisational restructure process.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

19 REVIEW – DIGNITY AND RESPECT POLICY AND EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Human Resources which sought approval for the revised Equality and Diversity policy and the new Dignity and Respect Policy and procedure.

It was reported that the policies reflected current legislation and set out the behaviour required from all members of staff both between colleagues and in their interaction with the local community.

Some concern was also expressed by members at the proportion of staff who it was reported, had been the subject of harassment and bullying. Members were advised that this figure may have been the result of the way the statistical information had been presented and investigations were ongoing into the issue.

RESOLVED

That the Dignity and Respect policy and the Equality and Diversity policy be approved.

20 REVITALISING HEALTH AND SAFETY

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Human Resources which advised Members of progress against the Revitalising Health and Safety Strategy targets.

It was reported that the following areas be targeted in an attempt to reduce accidents;

- Road traffic collisions
- Slips, trips, falls and fitness training
- Manual handling
- Striking by fixed / flying / falling object

RESOLVED

- (i) That the report be noted; and
- (ii) That the recommended actions be approved as detailed in the report now submitted.

21 PERSONNEL ACTIVITY REPORT

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Human Resources which advised of personnel activity to end June 2010.

It was reported that sickness figures continued to move in a downward trend and it was anticipated that they would be reduced by approximately one day per person by the end of the year.

Members were advised that comparison with other authorities was becoming difficult due to the removal of the requirement to publish the figures nationally.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

Chair