

WEST YORKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF THE PERSONNEL AND TRAINING COMMITTEE HELD ON 12 NOVEMBER 2010 AT FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS, BIRKENSRAW,

Present: Councillors C Townsley (in the Chair); M Akhtar (for agenda item nos. 7 – 9 only, Min nos. 28 – 30 refer), T Austin, V Binney, P Booth, D Firth, J Jarosz, A Manifold, R Pryke, D Ridgway (as substitute for Councillor D Gray) and B Smith

Apologies : Councillor D Gray and A Hussain

22 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Committee at a meeting held on 24 September 2010 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

23 URGENT ITEMS

None.

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

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

25 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

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

26 REDEPLOYMENT POLICY

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Human Resources which sought approval for the new Redeployment Policy for Green Book staff, including a reduction in the length of salary protection from three years to 12 months.

Members sought clarification from the Director of Human Resources with reference to paragraph 3.3 of the revised policy and specifically the terms of redeployment as they related to disability issues.

RESOLVED

That approval be given to the Redeployment Policy as detailed in an annex to the report now submitted.

27 OPERATIONAL RESOURCE POOL REVIEW

The Director of Human Resources submitted a report which informed Members of the outcome of a six-month review of the Operational Resource Pool (ORP) and which sought approval for the resulting recommendations.

Members were advised of the figures relating to the first six months' successful performance of the Pool during which time a number of additional advantages of its operation had been highlighted as follows;

- greater availability of Watch Managers and resultant reduction in mobilisation of station managers
- significant reduction in sickness levels
- small reduction in both detached duties and pre-arranged overtime

It was reported that further work was being undertaken to further reduce pre-arranged overtime costs which had not reduced as far as had originally been anticipated together with a more in-depth analysis of the fuel allowances payable to officers in the ORP.

RESOLVED

- (i) That a further evaluation be carried out after a full year's operation;
- (ii) That the fuel allowance be reviewed as part of the full year review; and
- (iii) That a change be made to the current practice of providing resilience for short notice absences by reducing the establishment of two pump stations and increasing the Operational Resource Pool as appropriate.

28 RETAINED DUTY SYSTEM REVIEW

Members considered a report of the Director of Operations which advised Members of the results of the nine-month evaluation of the Retained Duty System (RDS) which had been previously approved as part of the Integrated Risk Management Plan process in September 2009.

Members were advised that the implementation of the recommendations had resulted in a number of significant improvements to the Retained Duty System as follows;

- increased appliance availability
- increased training time
- greater levels of local and central support

- improved Community Safety work (Local Retained Support Officers)
- efficiency savings against original planned budget

The review also highlighted a number of risks and opportunities which could be addressed through the implementation of the following recommendations;

- increase in RDS weekly training from 3 to 4 hours
- establishment of Retained Support Manager post
- appointment of wholetime Local Retained Support Officers to each RDS station
- limit of two hours per week per station establishment figure to be spent on administrative tasks for non-operational work
- recommencement of RDS recruitment in specific station areas (due to difficulties with availability and unsustainable overtime costs following the recruitment freeze)

RESOLVED

- (i) That the progress made during the course of the Retained Duty System review be noted in terms of the improvement to firefighter safety and reduced community risk;
- (ii) That approval be given to the recommencement of recruitment of Retained Duty System firefighters in specific station areas; and
- (iii) That a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Personnel and Training Committee advising of the results of the RDS officer recruitment campaign.

29 RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON EQUALITY ACT

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Human Resources which advised Members of the response submitted on behalf of the Authority in respect of the “Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Duty – Promoting Equality through Transparency” consultation.

Members were advised that the new Act had replaced existing anti-discrimination laws and would cover race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion and belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

RESOLVED

That the consultation response, attached as an annex to the report now submitted, be noted.

30 PERSONNEL ACTIVITY REPORT

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

It was reported that it remained increasingly difficult to get comparative sickness figures from other local authorities. Some improvement in sickness figures was reported and specifically with regard to short term staff sickness.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

Chair