



Minutes

Human Resources Committee

Date: 05 October 2018

Time: 10.30 am

Venue: Fire and Rescue Headquarters, Birkenshaw

Present: Councillor A Wenham (in the Chair), C Anderson, T Austin, R Grahame (as substitute for Councillor T Peart), P Harrand (as substitute for Councillor C Pillai), R Hunt, J Lennox, O Rowley and J Sunderland

In Attendance: None

Apologies: Councillors J Dodds, T Peart and C Pillai

12 Minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 6 July 2018 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

13 Urgent items

None.

14 Admission of the public

RESOLVED

That the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the item of business specified below as it was likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during this item, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information of the description specified.

AGENDA ITEM NO.	TITLE OF REPORT	MINUTE NUMBER	Description of exempt information by reference to the paragraph number in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972
E15	Minutes of the Yorkshire and Humberside Employers Association – 5 July 2018	26	Paragraphs 1 and 4 – relating to an individual; and labour relations, consultations or negotiations

15 Declarations of interest

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest were made in any matter under consideration at the meeting.

16 Pay assimilation

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Employment Services Officer which advised of arrangements for assimilation to the new nationally agreed pay spine.

It was reported that the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services' pay agreement for 2018 – 20 included the introduction of a new pay spine for support staff to take effect on 1 April 2019. The new pay spine reduced the number of spinal points from 49 to 43.

A mechanism had been established to amend the Authority's pay structure to accommodate the new pay spine arrangement. Members were advised that this would effectively reduce the number of pay grades from 14 to 12 and adjustments would be made to the number of increments within the structure.

Employees would be progressed onto the revised pay structure in April 2019, Incremental progression would be applied as detailed in the report now submitted and adjustments would also be made locally to the Job Evaluation Scheme to reflect the new pay spine.

Members were advised that the additional cost of £0.493m (6% increase in paybill) associated with the introduction of the new pay spine would be met from efficiency savings.

As a Living Wage Foundation Employer, the Authority would not have to continue to pay supplements as the new pay spine currently addressed the issue of low pay. It was likely, however, that the Living Wage rate would increase at a faster rate than local authority pay in future years at which time the Authority would have to consider whether any supplement, or alternative arrangements, should be put in place to maintain compliance as a Living Wage Foundation employer.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

17 Work experience programme – proposal

The Chief Employment Services Officer submitted a report which outlined proposals for the introduction of a structured work experience pilot programme from Spring 2019.

The 5-day programme, to take place twice each year, would be planned and managed to ensure the health and safety of both the young participants and staff and would be offered in two main business areas as follows;

- Operational firefighter work experience, and
- Business support work experience

Members were advised that the programme would benefit the young participants in offering real work experience to assist in their decisions about future career paths and would improve their employability. The Authority would benefit from early engagement with those interested in the fire service as a career and, amongst other things, would benefit from improved relations within the communities of West Yorkshire.

It was anticipated that the costs associated with the programme would be minimal and could be met from within existing budgetary provision.

RESOLVED

- a) That approval be given to the proposal to run a pilot work experience programme in Spring 2019; and
- b) That a report on the success of the scheme (to include consideration of proof of skills acquired, provision of references and the continuation of current ad hoc work experience arrangements) and proposals to continue with the programme on a permanent basis be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee.

18 Accident analysis 2017 – 18

Members considered a report of the Chief Employment Services Officer which advised of the number and type of accidents which had occurred during the period April 2017 to March 2018.

It was reported that the number of accidents had reduced by 14% (23 incidents) compared with 2016 – 17 figures which continued the downward trend and was likely to be as a result of improvements in workplace health and safety management. In financial terms this also equated to a reduction of over 100 working days lost due to accidents at work.

Members were advised that, in spite of the apparent successes reported in the reduction of accidents, work would be done on the following to endeavour to reduce them further in the future;

- increased focus on core strength exercises to help avoid injury
- revision of current manual handling training
- review of methods of entry equipment and associated training and workwear

Members sought further additional information on the following specific areas;

- age / gender breakdown
- ingestion of water at Tees barrage
- level of operational injuries

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

19 Firefighter recruitment 2018

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Employment Services Officer which advised of the results of the second phase of wholetime firefighter recruitment.

Approval had been given to the 2018 recruitment process at the October 2017 meeting of this Committee which incorporated some adjustments to both the selection process and the Community Engagement Plan.

It was reported that, in spite of fewer candidates applying in 2018, a similar or higher number were processed at most stages of the process and there had been some encouraging results from the positive action undertaken with an increase in the proportion of female applicants (14.4% compared to 11.7% in 2017). This had also been reflected in the conditional offers made during the year (8 females (10.52%) compared to 4 the previous year (3.88%)).

Members were further advised however that the proportion of applications from BME candidates had fallen from 10.7% to 9.3% with 4 receiving conditional offers (5.2%) in the current year compared to 9 (8.73%) in 2017. Further work would be undertaken to attract under-represented groups in future recruitment exercises.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

20 Human Resources activity

The Chief Employment Services Officer submitted a report which advised of the establishment and strength of West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service together with directorate / departmental sickness absence figures and personnel activity to the end of June 2018.

It was also reported that implementation of the Integrated Risk Management Plan 4 (IRMP) had removed 31 wholetime operational posts from the establishment. During the same period there had been an increase of three Green Book posts – these new posts, however, had not increased the FTE Green Book establishment.

RESOLVED

- a) That the report be noted; and
- b) That approval be given to an amendment to the establishment as detailed in the report now submitted.

21 Politically restricted posts policy

Members considered a report of the Chief Employment Services Officer which sought approval for revisions to the Politically Restricted Posts policy.

It was reported that the policy had been not been reviewed for a number of years and revisions were now required to reflect statutory changes to the criteria for a post to be politically restricted. The changes removed the previous requirements which were based on a salary threshold and now incorporated two categories: Specified Posts and Sensitive Posts as required by regulations under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. Detail of those officers affected by the new categories was included in the report now submitted.

RESOLVED

That the revised Politically Restricted Posts policy be approved.

22 Detection, Identification and Monitoring (DIM) capability review

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Service Delivery and Deputy Chief Fire Officer which sought approval for the removal of four DIM Watch Manager posts following a DIM capability review which made recommendations for changes to the establishment to realise efficiency savings whilst maintaining the required levels of cover as required by the National Resilience framework agreement.

Members were advised that it was proposed to reduce the current 16 DIM advisers to 12. A reduction of four posts would comply with National Resilience performance indicators and levels of cover would not be affected.

It was proposed to redeploy two of four posts – one to a new DIM Watch Manager training post and one into the National resilience department.

A reduction in the number of DIM posts would realise savings of £129,614 per annum.

RESOLVED

That approval be given to the removal of four DIM Watch Manager posts at Dewsbury and that two of the posts be redeployed to other roles – one to a new DIM training post and one into an additional post in the National Resilience department.

23 Review of middle manager duty systems

The Director of Service Support submitted a report which advised of the outcomes of the review of Station Manager and Group Manager duty systems and which sought approval for a reduction in establishment of 1 x Station Manager from 36 to 35 and of 3 x Group Managers from 12 to 9. It was reported that, as an interim measure, one of the Group Manager posts would be retained to ensure completion of ongoing projects.

Members were advised that the reduction in posts would accompany changes to the terms and conditions and rota / duty systems for new Station and Group managers which, whilst technically non-Grey book compliant, would incorporate local compensatory measures. Reductions would be achieved in line with the retirement profile of the Authority.

Once the revisions were fully implemented in 2022 an annual saving of £202,845 would be realised (with £125,281 savings per annum in the intervening period).

RESOLVED

- a) That the changes to the Station Managers duty system be noted;
- b) That the change in Terms and Conditions for Middle Managers be noted;
- c) That approval be given to a reduction in Station Manager establishment from 36 to 35;
- d) That approval be given to a reduction in Group Manager establishment from 12 to 9 with one additional post being retained as an interim measure (10 Group Managers);
- e) That approval be given to the implementation of a revised Group Manager duty system; and
- f) That the revised Group Manager duty system be reviewed in 12 months and reported to the October 2019 meeting of this Committee.

24 Alignment of the Green Book establishment to the financial budget

Members considered a report of the Chief Employment Services Officer which advised of the outcome of a recent exercise to align the Green Book establishment with the financial budget.

The reconciliation exercise examined those posts where established hours had been reduced and were no longer being worked on a full-time basis. This equated to a total of 5.55 posts and it was now proposed to reduce the Green Book establishment so that it reconciled with budgetary provision.

RESOLVED

That approval be given to a reduction in the Green Book establishment as detailed in the report now submitted.

25 Operational training strategy

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Service Support which sought approval for a new Operational Training Strategy 2019 – 22 which set out a three-year plan to train and prepare staff to perform their operational roles safely and effectively.

The plan had been developed in response to a reducing number of operational incidents which effectively reduced operational exposure to certain activities. It was recognised that operational training should ensure that staff have the knowledge, skills and understanding to undertake the wide range of roles required of them. Members were advised that the plan had a greater emphasis on training rather than assessment and introduced a framework for improved coordination of training across all Districts and the Training Centre. It was further reported that the plan would be supported by an annual action plan which would highlight training priorities.

RESOLVED

That approval be given to the implementation of a new Operational Training Strategy 2019 – 22.

26 Yorkshire and Humber Employers' Association Minutes – 5 July 2018

(This item was considered exempt information under Schedule 12A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 – labour relations and negotiations)

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Yorkshire and Humber Employers' Association at a meeting held on 5 July 2018 be received.

Chair