



Minutes

Human Resources Committee

Date: 20 January 2023

Time: 10:30

Venue: FSHQ

Present: Cllrs Midgley (in the chair), Anderson, Harrand, Hussain, Keith, Mohammed, Pervaiz, Pollard (as substitute for Cllr Kirton) and Wood

In Attendance:

Apologies: Cllrs Shaheen and Kirton

20 Minutes of meeting held on 7 October 2022

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 7 October 2022 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

21 Matters arising

There were no matters arising

22 Urgent items

There were no urgent items

23 Admission of the public

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

24 Declarations of interest

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

25 Minutes of the Yorkshire and Humberside Employers' Association

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Yorkshire and Humber Employers' Association meeting held on 29 September 2022 be noted.

26 Hybrid Working Survey Results

Members considered a report of the Chief Employment Services Officer which provided the results of the recent hybrid working survey.

Following the enforced move to home working during the pandemic, WYFRS have adopted a hybrid working policy. To gauge the opinions of the staff on these contracts WYFRS brought in an external training consultant to undertake workshops, one to one meetings, group interviews and an online survey.

The survey showed a range of responses, and it has become apparent that hybrid working does not suit everyone but that there are a range of positives and negatives which the service will attempt to address by establishing a hybrid working focus group involving a wide range of stakeholders from employees, managers, service users, and customers.

Members discussed and requested clarification of the following issues

- That a requirement of the hybrid working contract is having good connectivity
- That managers are given good support to manage any mental health concerns
- That managers are aware of staff workload and that staff are encouraged to log off at the end of their working day.
- That the chair of any meeting held via Microsoft Teams should make attendees aware of digital etiquette and the camera policy for that meeting.
- That staff conditions of service need to be top class to attract quality workforce as salaries are not always competitive
- That there is currently no allowance for the rising cost of fuel for homeworkers, but that national guidance will be followed when this is released.
- That there is team working plans within each individual department to ensure a balance of home and office working.
- That it is too early to tell is there is any correlation between sick leave absences and hybrid working.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

27 Implications for WYFRS of the Independent Culture Review of London Fire Brigade

The Chief Employment Services Officer presented a report detailing the results of a review of WYFRS's approach and performance in relation to the recommendations contained in the Independent Culture Review of London Fire Brigade.

It was noted that WYFRS already complies with the majority of the recommendations contained in the review but that any areas for improvement have been assigned to the appropriate officers to address. Members were informed that the HMICFRS is also looking

at the report across the Fire Service nationally and that WYFRS is going to introduce more systematic learning from past cases. Members were advised that at least one recommendation in the report was not agreed with which was the requirement to have an Independent HR representative on all selection interviews. It was felt this would remove the accountability from the Head of Human Resources to the Independent Person.

Members welcomed the report and were pleased that WYFRS had undertaken their own review of the recommendations as the original Independent Culture Review Report made for very harrowing reading.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

28 Positive Action and Evaluation 2020 - 2023

The Chief Employment Services Officer submitted a report which advised Members of the success achieved during the wholetime firefighter recruitment process in 2020/2023 to deliver against Positive Action Goals and contained recommendations moving forward for the next recruitment cycle.

Members challenged the report author regarding the following:

- More female than male recruits failing at the physical test and was support given to people who fail at this level to encourage them to improve their fitness.
- Could young people be given more support in the interview to help draw out their experiences to answer interview questions as they do not have the life and work experiences of older interviewees.
- Could any support be given to new recruits who drop out for financial reasons. It was noted that at present this could be because selection and training has been relocated to Halifax Station due to the on going rebuild at FSHQ.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

29 Human Resources Activity Report

The Chief Employment Services Officer submitted a report which advised Members of the key HR metrics for the reporting period ending 30 September 2022, including establishment strength, sickness absence data and high-level discipline and grievance figures.

Members were pleased to note that the Internal Audit of Sickness Absence had achieved a satisfactory result and requested that pre Covid figures be added to the report as a relevant comparator.

RESOLVED

- a) That the report be noted.
- b) That the conversion of a green book post (Fire Protection Inspector) to a grey book post (Crew Commander) be approved

30 Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Framework 2023 – 2028

Members considered a report of the Chief Employment Services Officer requesting approval of the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2023 – 2028 and were advised that once the strategy is approved action plans will be designed and monitored with 6 monthly updates to this Committee.

RESOLVED

That the Diversity and Inclusion strategy is approved

Chair