



Minutes

Human Resources Committee

Date: 06 October 2023

Time: 10:30

Venue: FSHQ

Present: Cllr F Shaheen (in the chair), Cllrs C Anderson, J Garvani, Z Hussain, C Keith, D Kirton, N Mohammed, M Pollard, R Wood and H Zaman.

In Attendance: Ishaq Mahmood

Apologies: U Sutcliffe

12 Minutes of meeting held on 4 August 2023

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 4 August 2023 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

13 Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

14 Urgent items

There were no urgent items.

15 Admission of the public

There were no items requiring the exclusion of the press or public.

16 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

17 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 June 2023, including establishment strength, sickness absence data and high-level discipline and grievance figures.

Members were also provided with an up to date print out of National HR Statistics with comparisons to WYFRS statistics.

The information relating to the acting up opportunities for ethnic minorities would be circulated after the meeting. Members requested information relating to the number of whole time Firefighter staff in leadership roles who were non white British, and at Station Manager and above levels to compare with national benchmarking and were informed that this accounted for 2 or 3 people and it would not be possible to carry out national benchmarking.

Members also noted that the sickness absence relating to respiratory illness had doubled whilst that for Covid had halved. It was observed that people now had to pay for Covid tests. The Chair commented that more work needed to be done but it was good to see the Authority's efforts in achieving improvements.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

18 Fire Protection Posts

The Director of Service Support submitted a report seeking approval for the creation of 2 new posts within the Fire Protection Team, a Fire Protection Supervisor, and a Fire Protection Manager. Members were advised that the additional workload since the tragic events of Grenfell, the new ways of working to support the Risk Based Inspection Programme via OSARIS and the work being done with the Building Safety Regulator has led to the necessity to consider the teams resources to support the delivery of this work.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted and that the creation of two new posts within the Fire Protection Team is approved.

19 Apprenticeships – Achievements and Progress

Members considered a report of the Chief Employment Services Officer which gave details of the support provided for apprenticeships, the numbers and range of successful apprenticeships delivered between April 2017 and March 2023 and an update on the Apprentice Levy Funds.

Members welcomed the report and requested further information on whether there were any initiatives to spend the remaining 49% of the Levy fund. It was noted that there was a balance between leaving some funds unspent instead of spending it on things that were not adding value to the organisation. The training also required off the job learning which resulted in a large indirect cost, therefore apprenticeships were being focussed on the areas thought to add value. The levy was a proportion of the payroll costs so was a fixed amount. Members also sought confirmation whether training involved new technologies

such as battery energy storage sites and were informed that this would be explored regarding fire protection employees.

Members requested and received confirmation that the apprentices quoted in the report had been happy to waive their anonymity. They also noted that the part relating to any challenges encountered would be included in a revised version and circulated after the meeting. Members additionally requested the ethnic background details regarding staff offered apprenticeships and were informed this would also be circulated after the meeting. Members further asked if there were plans for any apprenticeship BAME communications if low applicant numbers were involved. They were informed that two people were undertaking qualifications as part of the Positive Action strategy at a level above that which would normally be open, and there would be an option for future opportunities in that area.

The Chair noted the good mix of apprenticeships and that it was important to obtain the information requested so that the Authority could provide an accurate reflection of the work.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

20 Accident Analysis Annual Report

The Chief Employment Services Officer submitted a report which informed members of the accident trends for the period April 2022 to March 2023. Members were disappointed to note that the total number of accidents was the highest it had been for the last 5 years, however the report author stressed the importance of analysing the figures and noted the increase was due to the unprecedented heatwave experienced in quarter 2.

Members sought reassurance regarding any increase due to the ongoing building projects and were informed that the contractors had responsibility for reporting all accidents and to date none had been reported. In addition, the Authority received regular H&S reports from contractors. Members also sought information regarding accidents due to dismantling appliances and were informed there had been a reduction due to health and safety campaigns, good housekeeping and reiterating best practice. Powered gear gantry ladders were also helping with MSK issues.

It was noted that it was useful to highlight the problem areas and that H&S is taken seriously at the Authority.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

21 Local Pension Board Annual Report

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report which invited Members to review and ratify the Local Pension Board Annual Report 2022 – 23.

The Members were informed that dealing with the Matthews judgement had been a challenge but was being handled. All staff who had retired after the new legal implementation date would be assessed. The chair noted it was an honour to be on the Board.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted, and it be confirmed the Local Pension Board had acted within its Terms of Reference and in accordance with good governance principles during the 2022 – 23 municipal year.

22 Safe to Command Firefighter Role

Members considered a report of the Director of Service Support which updated members on the proposal to develop the Safe to Command Firefighter Role, including the findings of the formal consultation and the implementation plan.

Members were advised that the consultation found that the proposals were welcomed amongst operational staff and that there have already been several firefighters actively seeking to apply for the role. It is planned to circulate an Expressions of Interest, which will be live for 4 weeks and conclude any required selection processes by the end of November 2023.

Members sought clarification regarding the number of applicants and were informed that a standardised selection process would take place if the number of applicants exceeded the roles available. It was noted that Bradford was not currently included on the stakeholder engagement list, but the document would be updated to reflect this as engagement had taken place.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

23 Minutes of the Yorkshire and Humberside Employers' Association meetings held on 6 July 2023

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the YHEA meeting held on 6 July 2023 be noted.