

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
(Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority)

11 April 2011

Present:-

Councillor Cann (Chairman), Boyd, Healey (vice Bown), Leaves (vice Mrs Nicholson) and Manning

Apologies:-

Councillors Bown, Burridge-Clayton, Mrs. Nicholson and Mrs Turner.

***HRMDC/27. Minutes**

RESOLVED

- (a) that the Minutes of the public part of the meeting held on 21 January 2011 be signed as a correct record, and;
- (b) that the Minutes of the meeting held in Part 2 (in the absence of the press and public) on 21 January 2011 be signed as a correct record.

***HRMDC/28. Declarations of Interest**

Members of the Committee were asked to consider whether they had any personal/personal and prejudicial interests in items as set out on the agenda for this meeting and to declare any such interests at this time.

No interests were declared.

***HRMDC/29. Absence Management**

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of People and Organisational Development (HRMDC/11/3) that provided an update in respect of the Service performance for absence levels in 2010/11.

The Human Resources Manager reported that the actual level of absence to February 2011 was 7.38 days/shifts lost per person as compared with the same period in 2009/10 which was 7.22 days per person. Although the Service was on track to meet the target level set, performance was 2.3% down on last year.

The Committee noted that action was being taken to address issues that had been identified, including:

- A presentation had been prepared in respect of dealing with absence and all staff were to receive a 15 minute interactive training session, whilst Line Managers would be receiving a 45 minute session;
- Consideration was being given to stress management training for Line Managers.

Councillor Cann expressed the view that, whilst this action was commendable and the reduction in sickness absence was very positive, he felt that the target set for sickness absence of 9 days/shifts lost per person was not sufficiently challenging. Reference was also made to the position in respect of long term sickness and whether there was any information available in respect of the age profile for this area.

The Human Resources Manager reported that this information had not been sought out previously but that it could be provided. The Committee sought an assurance that the return to work monitoring was being undertaken robustly. It was noted that Line Managers were required to complete form L3 and this was followed up. The reporting process for sickness absence had been changed recently and action was being taken to ensure that meetings were being held with staff who had reached the trigger point on absence and that Line Managers were provided with appropriate guidance for dealing with this.

***HRMDC/30. Streamlining of Assessment & Development Centres (ADCs)**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of People and Organisational Development (HRMDC/11/4) that set out recommendations for streamlining ADCs to a 3 exercise model in future, including 2 role plays plus written exercises. The benefits of adopting this approach were to achieve long term savings as a result of increasing the number of candidates who could be assessed at each ADC event, reducing pressure on the assessors in the process.

RESOLVED that the recommendations as set out within Section 5 of the report be endorsed.

***HRMDC/31. Public Duties and Equality Impact Assessment**

This item was deferred for consideration at a future meeting.

***HRMDC/32. Retained Duty System: Outcome from Part-Time Workers Regulations Employment Tribunal**

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of People and Organisational Development (HRMDC/11/5) that set out the findings of the test cases which had been taken in two authorities (Kent and Royal Berkshire) which had originally been raised under the Part Time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations in 2001. These test cases had subsequently been subject to the Employment Tribunals process and a determination had now been made. This will result in a compensation payment for the staff affected as set out within paragraph 2.3 of the report and, in order to comply with the Regulations following the compensation, amendments to the Grey Book were required.

The Human Resources Manager reported that the costs associated with the compensation payments had to be met by the fire and rescue service. There had been a sum of £1million set aside in a reserve to cover these costs but it was difficult to quantify the exact implications for the Service at this time due to issues such as pension. He added that the Treasurer was collating information in respect of the financial implications which would be reported to the Resources Committee at its meeting on 18 May 2011.

***HRMDC/33. Regional Control Centre (RCC) Update**

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of People and Organisational Development (HRMDC/11/6) outlining the position for staff affected by the cancellation of the Regional Control Centre project.

***DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The meeting started at 10.00hours and finished at 11.00hours