

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

(Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority)

19 September 2014

Present:-

Councillors Bown (Chair), Brooksbank, Chugg, Healey (vice Smith), Knight, Prior Sankey (vice Horsfall) and Woodman (vice BurrIDGE-Clayton).

Apologies:-

Councillors BurrIDGE-Clayton, Horsfall and Smith.

NB. Councillor Dyke was also in attendance in his capacity as Chairman of the Resources Committee (and in accordance with Standing Order 36(1)).

1. Minutes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2014 be signed as a correct record.

2. Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED that, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the following paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to the Act, namely:

- Paragraph 1 - Information relating to any individual;
- Paragraph 2 - Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual;
- Paragraph 4 - Information relating to any consultations or negotiations or contemplated consultations or negotiations in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the Authority and its employees.

3. Retirement/Re-Employment

(An item considered in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 during which the press and public were excluded from the meeting).

The Committee considered a report of the Director of People and Commercial Services (HRMDC/14/9) that set out information in respect of the Authority's position in relation to retirement and re-employment in accordance with the Pay Policy Statement (PPS) for the 2014-15 financial year and as approved by the Authority at its meeting on 24 February 2014 (Minute DSFRA/48 refers). The report also set out details of the expressions of interest that had been submitted by operational staff for retirement/re-employment for consideration by the Committee.

RESOLVED that the requests for uniformed retirements and re-employment as identified within report HRMDC/14/9 be approved.

4.

Working with Trade Unions - Supplementary Report

(An item considered in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 during which the press and public were excluded from the meeting).

The Committee considered a report of the Director of People and Commercial Services (HRMDC/14/10) that set out additional information that had been requested by the Committee at its previous meeting on 23 July 2014 (Minute HRMDC/9 refers). This was to enable the Committee to determine the appropriate employment relations machinery that should be operated within Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service in the future. The report also detailed the additional costs associated with the operation of the existing employment relations machinery for Representative Bodies, including the Fire Brigades' Union (FBU), Fire Officers' Association (FOA) and the Retained Firefighters' Union (RFU) together with 3 potential options for the way forward.

Following a lengthy debate, Councillor Knight **MOVED** with Councillor Chugg seconding that:

- (a) the current arrangement allowing for paid release for two, full-time Fire Brigades Union (FBU) officials be terminated, and;
- (b) employment relations arrangements going forward be on the basis of facilities to allow for the reasonable release of officials of unions recognised by the Service for trade union duties only and not trade union activities, with delegated authority for the Chief Fire Officer to agree this on a case-by-case basis;
- (c) operation of these revised arrangements be reported to future meetings of this Committee to facilitate ongoing review of their efficiency and effectiveness;
- (d) the previously agreed principle of any regional release being subject to cost neutrality for the Service be re-affirmed, with any release so agreed being subject to review as appropriate by the Service, and;
- (e) the existing arrangements for "check-off" be maintained.

This was put to the vote (and carried unanimously), whereupon it was:

RESOLVED

- (a) That the current arrangement allowing for paid release for two, full-time Fire Brigades Union (FBU) officials be terminated, and;
- (b) that employment relations arrangements going forward be on the basis of facilities to allow for the reasonable release of officials of unions recognised by the Service for trade union duties only and not trade union activities, with delegated authority for the Chief Fire Officer to agree this on a case-by-case basis;
- (c) That operation of these revised arrangements be reported to future meetings of this Committee to facilitate ongoing review of their efficiency and effectiveness;
- (d) That the previously-agreed principle of any regional release being subject to cost neutrality for the Service be re-affirmed, with any release so agreed being subject to review as appropriate by the Service, and;

(e) That the existing arrangements for “check-off” be maintained.

5. **Draft Response to the Government Review on Terms and Conditions of Service for Operational Staff**

(An item considered in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 during which the press and public were excluded from the meeting).

The Committee considered a report of the Director of People and Commercial Services (HRMDC/14/11) that set out the background to the independent review of the terms and conditions of service for operational fire and rescue service staff that had been launched recently together with a proposed response to the consultation exercise.

The Human Resources Manager advised the Committee that the deadline date for responses to the consultation had been extended now to 17 October 2014. As a result, he suggested that the Committee may wish to approve a response in principle subject to the Executive Board giving further consideration to the responses to the questionnaires with the Chief Fire Officer authorised, following consultation with the Chair of the Committee, to approve the final response for submission on behalf of the Authority.

RESOLVED

- (a) that, subject to incorporation of the views of the Committee on the responses to questions 28 and 29 of the Conditions of Service questionnaire, the draft responses to the independent review of the terms and conditions of service for operational staff be approved in principle;
- (b) that, in light of the extension of the deadline for submitting responses to 17 October 2014, the Executive Board be asked to review the response, with the Chief Fire Officer authorised, following consultation with the Chair of the Committee, to approve a final response for submission on behalf of the Authority.

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

The meeting started at 10.00hours and finished at 12.05hours.