

M. Pearson
CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY

To: **The Chair and Members of the
Human Resources Management
and Development Committee
(see below)**

**SERVICE HEADQUARTERS
THE KNOWLE
CLYST ST GEORGE
EXETER
DEVON
EX3 0NW**

Your ref : SS/SY/HRMD/Jun 12
Our ref :
Website : www.dsfire.gov.uk

Date : 15 June 2012
Please ask for : Sam Sharman
Email : ssharman@dsfire.gov.uk

Telephone : 01392 872200
Fax : 01392 872300
Direct Telephone : 01392 872393

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

Monday 25 June 2012

A meeting of the Human Resources Management and Development Committee will be held on the above date, **commencing at 10:00 hours in Conference Room B in Somerset House, Service Headquarters** to consider the following matters.

M. Pearson
Clerk to the Authority

AGENDA

1. **Election of Chair**
2. **Apologies**
3. **Minutes** of the meeting held on 19 March 2012 attached (Page 1).
4. **Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

Items which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered at the meeting as matters of urgency.

5. **Election of Vice Chair**
6. **Declarations of Interest**

Members are asked to consider whether they have any **personal/personal and prejudicial interests** in items as set out on the agenda for this meeting and declare any such interests at this time. *Please refer to the Note 2 at the end of this agenda for guidance on interests.*

PART 1 – OPEN COMMITTEE

7. Absence Management & Health of the Organisation

Report of the Director of People and Organisational Development (HRMDC/12/8) attached (page 4)

8. Training Facilities

Presentation by the Director of People and Organisational Development at the meeting.

9. Pensions Auto Enrolment

Oral report by the Director of People and Organisational Development at the meeting.

PART 2 – ITEMS WHICH MAY BE TAKEN IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Nil

MEMBERS ARE REQUESTED TO SIGN THE ATTENDANCE REGISTER

Membership:-

Councillors Cann (Chair), Bown, Brooksbank, Burrige-Clayton, Chugg, Horsfall and J D Smith.

Substitute Members

Members are reminded that, in accordance with Standing Order 36, the Clerk (or his representative) MUST be advised of any substitution prior to the start of the meeting.

NOTES

1. ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Any person wishing to inspect any minutes, reports or lists of background papers relating to any item on this agenda should contact Sam Sharman on the telephone number shown at the top of this agenda.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS BY MEMBERS

What Interests do I need to declare in a meeting?

As a first step you need to declare any personal interests you have in a matter. You will then need to decide if you have a prejudicial interest in a matter.

What is a personal interest?

You have a personal interest in a matter if it relates to any interests which you must register, as defined in Paragraph 8(1) of the Code.

You also have a personal interest in any matter likely to affect the well-being or financial position of:-

- (a) you, members of your family, or people with whom you have a close association;
- (b) any person/body who employs/has employed the persons referred to in (a) above, or any firm in which they are a partner or company of which they are a director;
- (c) any person/body in whom the persons referred to in (a) above have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000; or
- (d) any body of which you are a Member or in a position of general control or management and which:-
 - you have been appointed or nominated to by the Authority; or
 - exercises functions of a public nature (e.g. a constituent authority; a Police Authority); or
 - is directed to charitable purposes; or
 - one of the principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)

more than it would affect **the majority** of other people in the Authority's area.

Anything that could affect the quality of your life (or that of those persons/bodies listed in (b) to (d) above) either positively or negatively, is likely to affect your/their "well being". If you (or any of those persons/bodies listed in (b) to (d) above) have the potential to gain or lose from a matter under consideration – to a **greater extent** than **the majority** of other people in the Authority's area - you should declare a personal interest.

What do I need to do if I have a personal interest in a matter?

Where you are aware of, **or ought reasonably to be aware of**, a personal interest in a matter you must declare it when you get to the item headed "Declarations of Interest" on the agenda, or otherwise as soon as the personal interest becomes apparent to you, **UNLESS** the matter relates to or is likely to affect:-

- (a) any other body to which you were appointed or nominated by the Authority; or
- (b) any other body exercising functions of a public nature (e.g. membership of a constituent authority; other Authority such as a Police Authority);

of which you are a Member or in a position of general control or management. In such cases, provided you do not have a prejudicial interest, you need only declare your personal interest if and when you speak on the matter.

Can I stay in a meeting if I have a personal interest?

You can still take part in the meeting and vote on the matter unless your personal interest is also a prejudicial interest.

What is a prejudicial interest?

Your personal interest will also be a **prejudicial** interest if **all** of the following conditions are met:-

- (a) the matter is not covered by one of the following exemptions to prejudicial interests in relation to the following functions of the Authority:-
 - statutory sick pay (if you are receiving or entitled to this);
 - an allowance, payment or indemnity for members;
 - any ceremonial honour given to members;

- setting council tax or a precept; **AND**
- (b) the matter affects your financial position (or that of any of the persons/bodies as described in Paragraph 8 of the Code) or concerns a regulatory/licensing matter relating to you or any of the persons/bodies as described in Paragraph 8 of the Code); **AND**
- (c) a member of the public who knows the relevant facts would reasonably think your personal interest is so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.

What do I need to do if I have a prejudicial interest?

If you have a prejudicial interest in a matter being discussed at a meeting, you must declare that you have a prejudicial interest (and the nature of that interest) as soon as it becomes apparent to you. You should then leave the room unless members of the public are allowed to make representations, give evidence or answer questions about the matter by statutory right or otherwise. If that is the case, you can also attend the meeting for that purpose.

You must, however, leave the room **immediately after you have finished speaking (or sooner if the meeting so decides)** and you cannot remain in the public gallery to observe the vote on the matter. Additionally, you must not seek to **improperly influence** a decision in which you have a prejudicial interest.

What do I do if I require further guidance or clarification on declarations of interest?

If you feel you may have an interest in a matter that will need to be declared but require further guidance on this, please contact the Clerk to the Authority – preferably before the date of the meeting at which you may need to declare the interest. Similarly, please contact the Clerk if you require guidance/advice on any other aspect of the Code of Conduct.

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

19 March 2012

Present:-

Councillors Cann (Chair), Bown, Brooksbank, Burrige-Clayton, Horsfall, Mills (vice Boyd) and Wright.

Apologies:-

Councillor Boyd.

***HRMDC/30. Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2012 be signed as a correct record.

***HRMDC/31. 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 declare any such interests at this time.

No interests were declared.

***HRMDC/32. Assessment & Development Centre (ADC) Technical Assessment - Update**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of People and Organisational Development (HRMDC/12/4) that set out the current position in respect of technical assessment within the Service which was being introduced to replace stage 1 of the existing Assessment and Development Centre process.

The Director of People and Organisational Development advised that the technical assessment involved a paper based exercise together with both short and longer multiple choice questions. A pass mark for the examinations had been set at 70% based on the need to ensure operational competence and that the assessment was a robust test of knowledge. It was noted that the first Supervisory Management level ADC had already been undertaken and that 35 of the 84 candidates (42%) sitting the examinations had achieved the pass mark. Of the candidates who did not pass, the majority achieved a mark of over 50% which was very promising. These candidates would be offered a further opportunity to re-sit the examination in due course with appropriate support to assist with their preparation in the future.

RESOLVED that the Committee notes the approach taken in line with the principles of Technical Assessment and endorses:

- (a) The pass mark, and;
- (b) The Institute of Fire Engineers (IFE) equivalent level for Supervisory level technical assessment – to be Level 3 Certificate.

***HRMDC/33. Absence Management and Health of the Organisation**

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of People and Organisational Development (HRMDC/12/5) that set out the progress made with absence management, including an update on aspects linked to the overall health of the organisation.

The areas set out within the report included:

- Sickness absence performance 2011/12;
- Detailed breakdown of long term sickness;
- The main reasons behind sickness absence;
- Levels of wellbeing and referrals to counselling;

The Human Resources Manager stated that the current actual level of sickness absence (to the end of January 2012) was 6.55 days/shifts lost per person as compared with the same period in 2010/11 when it was 6.60 days per person. This demonstrates a gradual improvement in performance throughout the course of the year to a point where the Service had achieved a 0.8% improvement on 2010/11.

It was noted that the level of referrals to counselling in Somerset remained at a much higher level than in Devon and it was anticipated that more information on this matter would be submitted to the Committee in due course.

***HRMDC/34. Draft Equality Plan 2012/16 And Consultation Report**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of People and Organisational Development (HRMDC/12/6) that set out the requirements of the new Equality Act 2010, together with details of the Public Sector Equality Duty that came into force from April 2011.

The Director of People and Organisational Development reported that the Equality Act 2010 set out nine legally protected characteristics, namely - Age, Disability, Gender reassignment, Marriage and civil partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion and Belief, Sex and Sexual orientation. The duty also stated that, in relation to the protected characteristics above (with the exception of marriage and civil partnership), public authorities must give due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between people by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

These duties required the Service to publish equality objectives and, with this in mind, a new Equality Plan entitled "Safer Lives, Brighter Futures" had been produced and had been subject to wide consultation both within the Service and with external stakeholders. As a result of the consultation, it was noted that the Equality Plan had been amended to take account of comments made and this was now commended to the Committee for approval and endorsement by the Fire and Rescue Authority.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

- (a) notes the contents of the Consultation Report, and;
- (b) approves the Equality Plan 2012-16, amended as appropriate in line with the outcome of the consultation, and commends it to the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority for endorsement and adoption.

***HRMDC/35. 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 item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to the Act, namely information relating to contemplated consultations in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the Authority and its employees.

HRMDC/36. Redundancy Compensation Rates

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

The Committee considered a report of the Director of People and Organisational Development (HRMDC/12/7) that set out the background to the current redundancy compensation rate and which set out information to assist with the review, including comparisons with other local authorities within the South West region.

The Chairman moved (and was seconded by Councillor Burrige-Clayton:

“that it be recommended to the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority that there should be no change to the current redundancy compensation rate (a multiplier of 2) and that this matter should continue to be reviewed at least annually”.

Upon a vote (7 for, 0 against), the motion was carried.

RESOLVED that it be recommended to the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority that there should be no change to the current redundancy compensation rate (a multiplier of 2) and that this matter should continue to be reviewed at least annually.

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

The meeting started at 10.00hours and finished at 10.43hours

DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY



REPORT REFERENCE NO.	HRMDC/12/8
MEETING	HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	25 JUNE 2012
SUBJECT OF REPORT	ABSENCE MANAGEMENT & HEALTH OF THE ORGANISATION
LEAD OFFICER	Director of People and Organisational Development
RECOMMENDATIONS	<p>(a) <i>That the sickness absence management data contained within this report be noted, and:</i></p> <p>(b) <i>that future reporting on Absence Management be consolidated within the Service Performance Management reports that will include Absence Management as an external facing measure,</i></p> <p>(c) <i>that Health of the Organisation trends be considered annually by the Committee.</i></p>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>The progress with Absence Management has been included as a standing item within the Human Resources Management and Development (HRMD) Committee agenda. This report includes an update of the Service performance for absence levels. In addition, the Committee have sought to consider wider aspects which are linked to the overall health of the organisation.</p> <p>This report also recommends a consolidation of the provision of data and less frequent reviews of the longer term Health of the Organisation statistics. This will enable greater efficiencies within the Service and enable the HRMD to have a longer term programme focusing on more strategic matters that are impacting the Service.</p>
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	None
EQUALITY RISK & BENEFITS ASSESSMENT	The Absence Management policy has had an equality impact assessment.
APPENDICES	None
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS	None

1. INTRODUCTION

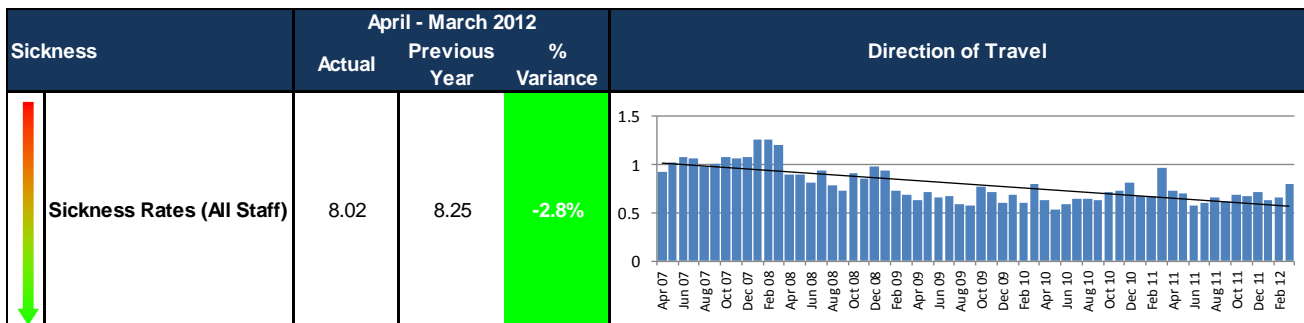
2.1 Absence levels have previously been identified as a key measure as they affect the efficiency and the effectiveness of the Service. During 2011/12, sickness absence rates were removed from our external facing measures but The Human Resources Management and Development (HRMD) Committee continued to monitor and review this measure as a standing item. In 2012/13 sickness absence will be returned as one of our external facing measures which will ensure that it has more rigorous monitoring.

2.2 The 'Health of the Organisation' relates to the wider health of the organisation as a means of monitoring people aspects which could be inextricably linked. The key aspects of consideration are the safety event rates, the levels of discipline and grievances cases, any trends in bullying and harassment, the turnover of staff, the levels of stress and referrals to counselling and the collective relationships with the unions. The health of the organisation encompasses the 'psychological' safety of the organisation. A psychologically safe workplace can be defined as one that does not permit the harm to employees' mental health in a careless, negligent, reckless or intentional way. There are critical reasons as to why employers should address the psychological safety of their workplace and work to minimise the risk factors. These are:

- Ensuring that we meet our legal and moral responsibility for our staff.
- The financial impact of enhancing psychological health in the workplace.
- The impact of workplace factors on employee mental health.

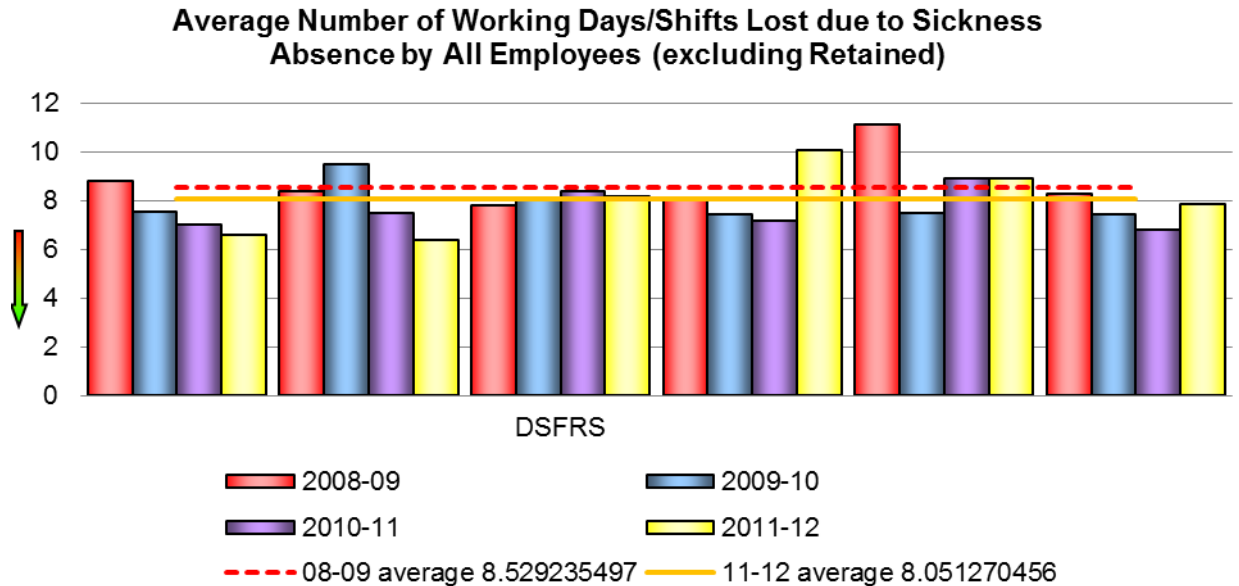
3 2011/12 APRIL TO MARCH ABSENCE PERFORMANCE

2.1 The absence performance for the full financial year in 2011/12 was on average 8.02 days/shifts lost per person compared with the previous year when it was as at an average of 8.25 days per person. When reviewing the direction of travel it is noticeable that although the trend is downwards, the March sickness levels have been higher than other months in each of the last 3 years. This is in part due to the way in which our absence records are closed out. During the financial year they are updated each month as staff return to work but at year end, records can still be showing staff as absent since the return to work forms may not have been completed and returned at that point in time. The overall records are not then refreshed on a retrospective basis. The process of recording absence will be improved when middleware is used to support this process. Sickness Absence is one of the 'break through' processes for middleware and Cambridgeshire FRS have been the lead on this with input from DSFRS.



2.2

The Service also undertakes benchmarking with other Fire & Rescue Services in the South West and the comparative data for 2011/12 are shown below. DSFRS are currently fourth in this table out of the 6 Fire & Rescue Services. This comparative data goes back to 2008/9 and it can be seen that the average regional levels have reduced during this period from 8.5 to 8.05 days/shifts lost per person.



3. LONG TERM SICKNESS

3.1

The monitoring of long term sickness i.e. those over 28 days, is reported on a monthly basis. These figures show that the number of Support Staff on long-term sickness has reduced during this period but the number of uniformed staff has shown an increase since April 2012. These are mainly attributable to physical injuries or operations and none of these relate to injuries-on-duty. The number of long term sick since 2008 are also shown graphically on the next page.

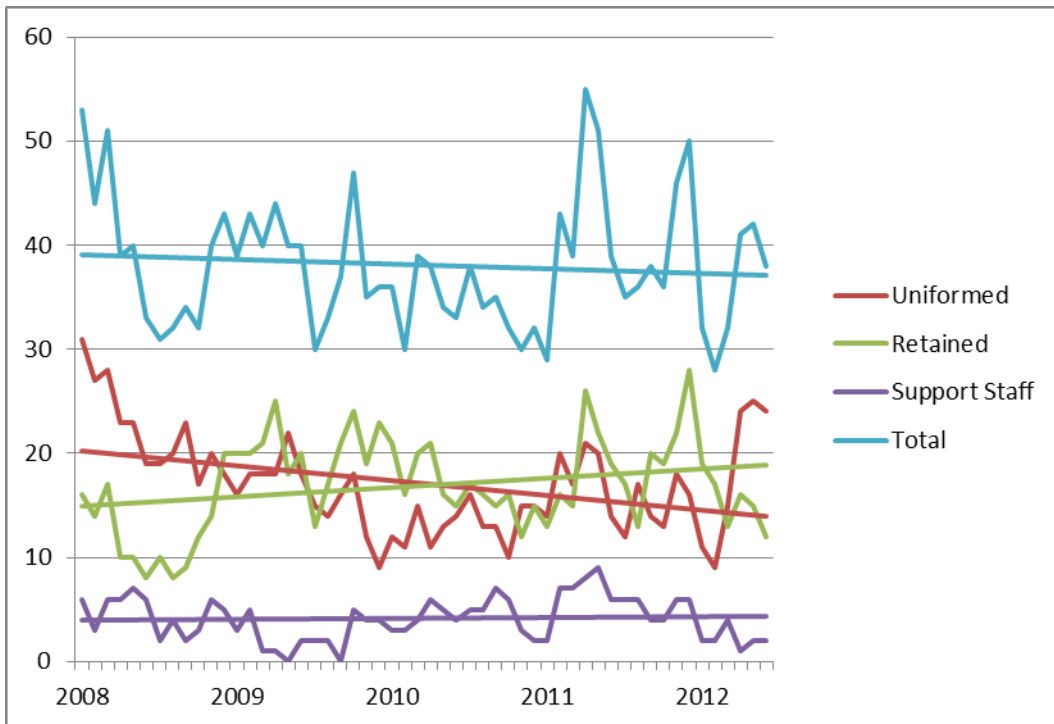
2011/12

Number of staff	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Uniformed	21	20	14	12	17	14	13	18	16	14	9	15
Retained	26	22	19	17	13	20	19	22	28	20	17	13
Non-uniformed	8	9	6	6	6	4	4	6	6	4	2	4
Total	55	51	33	38	34	38	36	46	50	38	28	32

2012/13

Number of staff	Apr	May	Jun
Uniformed	24	25	24
Retained	16	15	12
Non-uniformed	1	2	2
Total	41	42	38

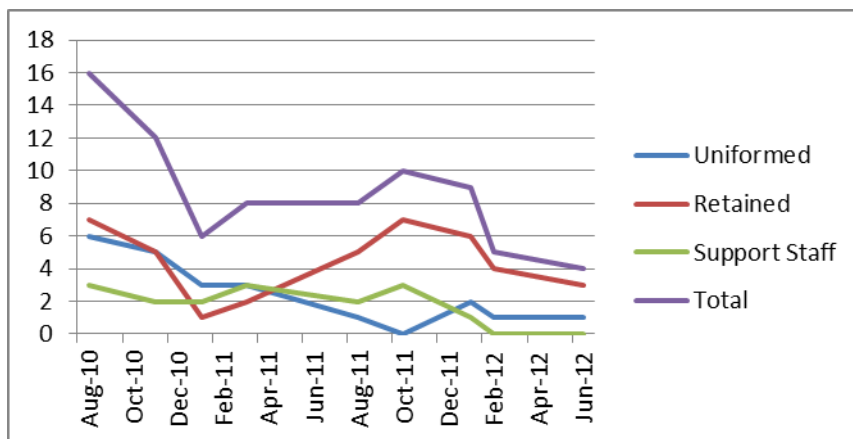
Long-term Sickness January 2008 to June 2012 – Number of Staff



3.2 The Long term sickness can then be further broken down for staff with absences that have been ongoing for a period longer than 6, 12, 18 and 24 months. This has been monitored at each HRMD committee since August 2010 and the total number of staff with long term sick beyond 6 months is shown in the graph below. This has reduced from 16 to the current level of 4.

Jun-12

Number of staff	>6 mths	>12 mths	>18 mths	>24 mths	Total
Uniformed	1	0	0	0	1
Retained	1	1	1	0	3
Support Staff	0	0	0	0	0
Total	2	1	1	0	4



4. **MENTAL HEALTH**

- 4.1 It is recognised that there is a close link between wellbeing and personal performance. People who feel well will generally perform better than people who do not feel well. The Service has counselling contracts in place and the number of sessions is shown below. An individual will have multiple sessions to assist them with their mental health issue.

Devon Counselling

	No of Sessions
2007/8	134
2008/9	180
2009/10	237
2010/11	261
2011/12	199

Somerset Counselling

	No of Sessions
2007/8	176
2008/9	143
2009/10	153
2010/11	304
2011/12	522

5. **TURNOVER OF STAFF**

- 5.1 Turnover rates provide a measure of the health of an organisation and whilst it is healthy to have some turnover, if the levels are excessive then it could suggest that there are underlying issues. Within Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service (DSFRS), there have been redundancies within both Control and Support Staff during the last year and these are reflected in these figures. The Retained has not changed from 7.7% and turnover in the Wholetime remains low as has traditionally been the case.

	2009/10			2010/11			2011/12			2012/13
	Employed on 1/4/09	Leavers during year	%	Employed on 1/4/10	Leavers during year	%	Employed on 1/4/11	Leavers during year	%	Employed on 1/4/12
Support	278	26	9.4	293	21	7.2	299	33	11.0	296
Control	57	6	10.5	59	5	8.5	58	14	24.1	45
Retained	1226	62	5.1	1280	98	7.7	1249	96	7.7	1211
Wholetime	711	23	3.2	733	14	1.9	734	26	3.5	712
Total	2272	117	5.1	2365	138	5.8	2340	169	7.2	2264

6. DISCIPLINE & GRIEVANCE CASES

- 6.1 The levels of Grievance and Discipline cases are shown below. There are typically about 30 discipline cases per year. The number of grievances has increased but remains low.

	Grievances	Discipline
2007/8	32	27
2008/9	30	20
2009/10	9	29
2010/11	4	33
2011/12	9	32

- 6.2 Of these, the number of cases found to be relating to bullying and harassment are as follows:

	Grievances	Discipline
2007/8	5	5
2008/9	3	0
2009/10	1	3
2010/11	1	2
2011/12	1	2

7. COLLECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS

- 7.1 Collective relationships remain generally good. There has been one matter that has required referral to the national employers and this relates to the contractual requirements for the uniformed Day Duty staff.

9. FUTURE REPORTS ON ABSENCE MANAGEMENT

- 9.1 As we commence a new financial year, it would be beneficial to review how the Service reports on these measures to the Committee and the frequency. Data is being produced for a range of requirements and inevitably there is duplication of work. It would be beneficial, where possible, to use the standard performance reports for the measurement of sickness absence and consider the Health of the Organisation statistics on an annual basis since any trends are longer term. This would allow more time to consider more strategic matters that are impacting the Service. It would then be possible to set out a longer term programme for the HRMD committee.

10. CONCLUSION

- 10.1 For 2011/12, the Service absence levels were slightly lower than the previous year. The Health of the Organisation continues to be an important aspect of the wider issues that should be considered by the Service and Authority on our journey to excellence but is one that can be incorporated on a planned basis over the year.

JANE SHERLOCK
Director of People and Organisational Development