

**M. Pearson
CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY**

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

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

Wednesday 5 September 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

A G E N D A

1. Apologies

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2012 attached (Page 1).

3. Items Requiring Urgent Attention

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

4. Declarations of Interest

Members are asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests they may have in relation to any items on the agenda for this meeting.

PART 1 – OPEN COMMITTEE

5. Firefighters' Pension Scheme Internal Disputes Resolution Panel

The Committee is required to appoint 3 of its Members to serve on the Firefighters' Pension Scheme Internal Disputes Resolution Panel. (Membership of this Committee in 2011/12 was Councillors Bown, Boyd and Wright).

The Committee is **RECOMMENDED** to appoint (from amongst its membership) 3 members to serve on the Panel until the first meeting of the Committee following the Annual Meeting of the Authority in 2013.

6. Human Resources (HR) Improvement Programme

Presentation to be given 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 Bown (Chair), Brooksbank (Vice Chair), Burrige-Clayton, Chugg, Knight, 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)

25 June 2012

Present:-

Councillors Bown, Brooksbank, Cann, Chugg, Dyke (vice Horsfall), J Smith and Woodman (vice BurrIDGE-Clayton).

Apologies:-

Councillors BurrIDGE-Clayton and Horsfall

***HRMDC/1. Election of Chair**

RESOLVED that Councillor Bown be elected Chair of the Committee until the first meeting after the Annual General Meeting of the Authority in May 2013.

***HRMDC/2. Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2012 be signed as a correct record.

***HRMDC/3. Election of Vice Chair**

RESOLVED that Councillor Brooksbank be elected Vice Chair of the Committee until the first meeting after the Annual General Meeting of the Authority in May 2013.

***HRMDC/4. 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/5. Absence Management & Health of the Organisation**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of People and Organisational Development (HRMDC/12/8) attached (page 4) 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, amongst others:

- Sickness absence performance in 2011/12;
- A detailed breakdown of long term sickness;
- The main reasons behind sickness absence;
- Levels of wellbeing and referrals to counselling;
- Staff turnover figures.

The Human Resources Manager stated that the level of sickness absence in 2011/12 was 8.02 days/shifts lost per person as compared with 2010/11 when it was 8.25 days per person. Reference was made to the point that, although the figures showed a downward trend which was very positive, the March sickness absence level was higher than other months in each of the last 3 years. The sickness absence figures compared well with other public sector organisations which were at an average of 9 days and the private sector which was 7 days. The Committee also requested information on the comparisons with regional colleagues. The Human Resources Manager reported that he had been advised that this was not available for public release currently but that he would request the information again.

There had been an improvement in long term sickness during 2011/12 with only 4 staff currently absent for a period greater than 6 months. The number of uniformed staff on long terms sickness had increased, however, but this was mainly attributable to non-work related physical injuries or operations.

It was noted that the level of referrals to counselling in Somerset remained at a much higher level than in Devon. There was no direct explanation of this and it was suggested that perhaps the Service should look into why the level of referrals in Devon was not as high.

In the light of the point that there had been a continuous reduction in sickness absence for the Service since combination in 2007, there was a discussion in respect of the frequency for the submission of reports on this matter to the Committee. The view was expressed that this information could be considered annually in conjunction with the health of the organisation trends unless there was an adverse trend appearing during the course of the year. Following a discussion, Councillor Woodman proposed (and was seconded by Councillor Chugg):

“that the monitoring information in respect of sickness absence should be considered by the Committee on a 6 monthly basis”.

Councillor Dyke proposed an amendment (and was seconded by Councillor Brooksbank):

“that the monitoring information in respect of sickness absence should be considered annually by the Committee”. Upon a vote (2 for 4 against), the amendment was lost.

The Committee then voted on the motion put by Councillor Woodman. Upon a vote (4 for, 2 against), the motion was carried.

RESOLVED

- (a) that future reporting on Absence Management be consolidated within the Service Performance Management reports that will include Absence Management as an external facing measure and be considered on a six monthly basis by the Committee,
- (b) that Health of the Organisation trends be considered annually by the Committee.
- (c) That, subject to (a) and (b) above, the sickness absence management data contained within this report be noted.

***HRMDC/6. Training Facilities**

The Committee received for information a presentation given by the Director of People and Organisational Development at the meeting covering the work of the Training Academy and the facilities that the Service had at its disposal to deliver the training function.

***HRMDC/7. Pensions Auto Enrolment**

The Director of People and Organisational Development reported upon the position in respect of pension's auto enrolment following the Government's recent workplace reforms. She advised that all staff were encouraged to join a pension scheme, namely:

- The Firefighters' Pension Scheme (for both wholetime and retained staff);
- Local Government Pension Scheme (for non-uniformed staff); or,

It was noted that staff were required to auto enrol within a pension scheme as a result of these reforms but could decide to opt out up to 3 years following this. There was a cost associated with this for the Service which was in the region of an additional £531,000 if all staff decided to remain within a scheme once auto enrolled in August 2013. As a result, the position had been carefully reviewed and a decision had been made to include half of this amount within the budget for 2012/13.

Reference was made to the funds within the pension scheme and if individuals had a choice as to how these were invested. The Director of People and Organisational Development stated that she would ask the Treasurer to the Authority to respond separately on this matter.

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

The meeting started at 10.00hours and finished at 11.40hours