



DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

M. Pearson
CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY

To: The Chair and Members of the Human
Resources Management & Development
Committee

(see below)

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

Your ref :
Our ref : DSFRA/MP/SS
Website : www.dsfire.gov.uk

Date : 6 December 2016
Please ask for : Sam Sharman
Email : ssharman@dsfire.gov.uk

Telephone : 01392 872200
Fax : 01392 872300
Direct Telephone : 01392 872329

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 14 December, 2016

A meeting of the Human Resources Management & Development Committee is to be held on the above date, **commencing at 10.00 am in the Conference Room B, Somerset House, Service Headquarters** to consider the following matters.

M. Pearson
Clerk to the Authority

AGENDA

PLEASE REFER TO THE NOTES AT THE END OF THE AGENDA LISTING SHEETS

1 Apologies

2 Minutes (Pages 1 - 4)

of the previous meeting held on 16 September 2016 attached.

3 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

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

PART 1 - OPEN COMMITTEE

4 Absence Management and the Health of the Organisation (Pages 5 - 14)

Report of Director of Service Improvement (HRMDC/16/14) attached.

5 Retirement & Re-employment (Pages 15 - 18)

Report of Director of Service Improvement (HRMDC/16/15) attached.

MEMBERS ARE REQUESTED TO SIGN THE ATTENDANCE REGISTER

Membership:-

Councillors Bown (Chair), Burrige-Clayton, Chugg (Vice-Chair), Hill, Julian, Knight and Thomas

NOTES

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|----|---|
| 1. | <p><u>Access to Information</u>
Any person wishing to inspect any minutes, reports or lists of background papers relating to any item on this agenda should contact the person listed in the “Please ask for” section at the top of this agenda.</p> |
| 2. | <p><u>Reporting of Meetings</u>
Any person attending a meeting may report (film, photograph or make an audio recording) on any part of the meeting which is open to the public – unless there is good reason not to do so, as directed by the Chairman - and use any communication method, including the internet and social media (Facebook, Twitter etc.), to publish, post or otherwise share the report. The Authority accepts no liability for the content or accuracy of any such report, which should not be construed as representing the official, Authority record of the meeting. Similarly, any views expressed in such reports should not be interpreted as representing the views of the Authority.
Flash photography is not permitted and any filming must be done as unobtrusively as possible from a single fixed position without the use of any additional lighting; focusing only on those actively participating in the meeting and having regard also to the wishes of any member of the public present who may not wish to be filmed. As a matter of courtesy, anyone wishing to film proceedings is asked to advise the Chairman or the Democratic Services Officer in attendance so that all those present may be made aware that is happening.</p> |
| 3. | <p><u>Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (Authority Members only)</u>
If you have any disclosable pecuniary interests (as defined by Regulations) in any item(s) to be considered at this meeting then, unless you have previously obtained a dispensation from the Authority’s Monitoring Officer, you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) disclose any such interest at the time of commencement of consideration of the item in which you have the interest or, if later, as soon as it becomes apparent to you that you have such an interest;(b) leave the meeting room during consideration of the item in which you have such an interest, taking no part in any discussion or decision thereon; and(c) not seek to influence improperly any decision on the matter in which you have such an interest. <p>If the interest is sensitive (as agreed with the Monitoring Officer), you need not disclose the nature of the interest but merely that you have a disclosable pecuniary interest of a sensitive nature. You must still follow (b) and (c) above.</p> |
| 4. | <p><u>Part 2 Reports</u>
Members are reminded that any Part 2 reports as circulated with the agenda for this meeting contain exempt information and should therefore be treated accordingly. They should not be disclosed or passed on to any other person(s). Members are also reminded of the need to dispose of such reports carefully and are therefore invited to return them to the Committee Secretary at the conclusion of the meeting for disposal.</p> |
| 5. | <p><u>Substitute Members (Committee Meetings only)</u>
Members are reminded that, in accordance with Standing Order 35, the Clerk (or his representative) must be advised of any substitution prior to the start of the meeting. Members are also reminded that substitutions are not permitted for full Authority meetings.</p> |

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

16 September 2016

Present:-

Councillors Bown (Chair), Burridge-Clayton, Chugg (Vice-Chair), Knight, Thomas and Wheeler

Apologies:-

Councillors Julian

* **HRMDC/10 Minutes**

RESOLVED that, subject to correcting the spelling error in Minute *HRMDC/4 (Absence Management) to read "...station...", the Minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2016 be signed as a correct record.

* **HRMDC/11 Absence Management**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of People and Commercial Services (HRMDC/16/10) on absence management within the organisation. There had been an increase in sickness absence during the 2014-15 financial year which had continued into 2015-16 financial year. The report highlighted the action plan developed to respond to this and aimed at addressing both long-term sickness and developing a fitness, health and well-being culture.

The report also highlighted (and the Committee received a presentation on) the development of a new Absence Reporting Tool (part of a wider, Service Management Information system – "Workbench") that, amongst other things, would show – in real-time – the number of staff absent from work due to sickness at both organisational and departmental levels. The new system would be available on multiple platforms (e.g. personal computer; smartphone etc) and would be linked to other aspects of service delivery (e.g. vehicle availability).

RESOLVED that the Service continue with the action plan directed towards reducing down sickness absence.

(SEE ALSO MINUTE *HRMDC/12 BELOW)

* **HRMDC/12 Equalities Strategy - "Safer Lives, Brighter Futures" Monitoring Report**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of People and Commercial Services (HRMDC/16/10) on progress against those objectives and actions contained in the current iteration of the Service Equality Strategy, "Safer Lives, Brighter Futures" designed to address the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

The report identified the key findings from the most recent employee survey and those cross-cutting themes identified as priorities for further development and action. The report also identified organisational gender and ethnicity figures as at August

2016 and ongoing work being undertaken by the Organisational Development Team to produce a project plan aimed at delivering a more diverse workforce.

A new Equality Strategy covering 2017 – 2020 was currently being developed and would factor in the outcomes of a review against the action plan identified in the current strategy, equality aspects of corporate priorities, guidance from the national Equality Framework for Fire & Rescue Service and internal and external consultation.

In debating the report, the Committee indicated that it would be helpful in future to have details on the number of equality issues, grievances etc. raised – along similar lines to the standing item on sickness absence monitoring.

RESOLVED

- (a). that, for future meetings, a “health of the organisation” report be submitted setting out a range of information including absence management monitoring, grievance cases, bullying and harassment cases, equality issues etc.;
- (b). that, subject to (a) above, the report be noted.

* **HRMDC/13 Redundancy Compensation Rates**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of People and Commercial Services (HRMDC/16/12) on the outcome of the annual review of redundancy compensation rates.

RESOLVED

- (a). that the Authority be recommended to retain the current compensation rate (a multiplier of 1, using the an actual week’s pay) for all uniformed and support staff;
- (b). that the Committee reviews the compensation rates at least annually, with any proposed changes being recommended to the Authority following consultation with the trades unions.

* **HRMDC/14 Retirement and Re-employment**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of People and Commercial Services (HRMDC/16/13) setting out details of four requests for retirement and re-employment submitted for approval in accordance with the Authority’s approved Pay Policy Statement for the current financial year.

The report also set out the position in relation to use of former employees for casual work in support areas. There was no associated mutuality of obligation between the Service and the individuals concerned who were not classified as having been re-employed. As such, these engagements fell outside the requirements of the Pay Policy Statement to seek Committee approval.

RESOLVED

- (a). that the requests for retirement and re-employment as set out in paragraph 2.4 of report HRMDC/16/13 be approved; and
- (b). that the distinction between casual workers and employees as set out at paragraph 3.1 of the report be noted.

* **HRMDC/15 A New Approach to Competence, Training and Assurance.**

The Committee received, for information, a presentation from the Head of the Service Training Academy on proposed overhaul of the Service approach to the governance, design, development and delivery of training. The presentation outlined the drivers for the initiative (including the Networked Fire Control Services Project; the move towards securing greater collaboration wherever practicable; technological advances). The initiative would be evidence-led and would link operational assurance to training delivery, with a focus on local training delivery wherever possible. It would also feature a “blended learning” approach, with standardised training materials being available to access on multiple devices (e.g. computers; tablets; smartphones).

(SEE ALSO MINUTE HRMDC/16 BELOW)

HRMDC/16 Blended Learning and its Links in Supporting Staff Training

The Committee received a presentation from the Head of the Service Training Academy on the “blended learning” approach now being adopted by the Service in relation to training provision. The approach would feature a standardised, centralised training resource repository capable of being accessed via multiple devices (e.g. computers; tablets; laptops). Training delivery would utilise the “flipped classroom” approach whereby relevant training materials could be accessed on-line prior to undertaking more traditional types of training.

The innovative, e-learning centred approach, utilising videos, interactive walk-throughs etc., afforded flexibility to embrace new and emerging technologies (e.g. Microsoft HoloLens) and was more easily accessible for those for whom more traditional training methods could present problems (e.g. people with dyslexia). The project had been short-listed for an international e-learning award, the winners of which would be announced at an event to be held in London on 30 November 2016.

RESOLVED

- (a). that the Authority be asked to receive a presentation on the “blended learning” approach at its meeting scheduled for 19 December 2016; and
- (b). that, subject to (a) above, the presentation be noted.

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

The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 12.29 pm

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Agenda Item 4

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	HRMDC/16/14
MEETING	HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	14 DECEMBER 2016
SUBJECT OF REPORT	ABSENCE MANAGEMENT AND THE HEALTH OF THE ORGANISATION
LEAD OFFICER	Director of Service Improvement
RECOMMENDATIONS	<p><i>(a) that the Service completes the development work for a new sickness absence dashboard within the Workbench, and;</i></p> <p><i>(b) subject to (a) above, that the report be noted.</i></p>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service takes the health, safety and wellbeing of employees seriously and as such it provides a wide range of initiatives, interventions and policies to ensure that employees enjoy a safe and supportive working environment.</p> <p>The Service performance for Absence Management has been included as a standing item on the Human Resources Management and Development Committee (the Committee) agenda since the formation of the Service. Absence levels are a key measure as they affect the efficiency and the effectiveness of the Service. During discussions at recent committee meetings, there has been a desire to broaden the considerations to the 'Health of the Organisation'.</p> <p>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 in this report are the sickness levels, ill-health retirements, the number of discipline and grievances cases, any trends in bullying and harassment, the turnover of staff, the levels of stress and referrals to counselling, the number of mediation cases, and the number and type of cases being dealt with by the Welfare Officer.</p> <p>As part of the Committee meeting, the ICT team will demonstrate a new absence dashboard that is in development. The dashboard will use real-time data and once completed the app will provide daily performance levels and be available for Members and managers to use whenever they choose.</p>
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	Staffing time associated with the development of a new app but in the longer term this will improve the Service's ability to provide data with reduced manual intervention.
EQUALITY RISK AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS (ERBA)	The current Absence Management policy has had an equality impact assessment and a further ERBA will be required for a new Sickness Absence Management policy that is in development.
APPENDICES	None

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS	None
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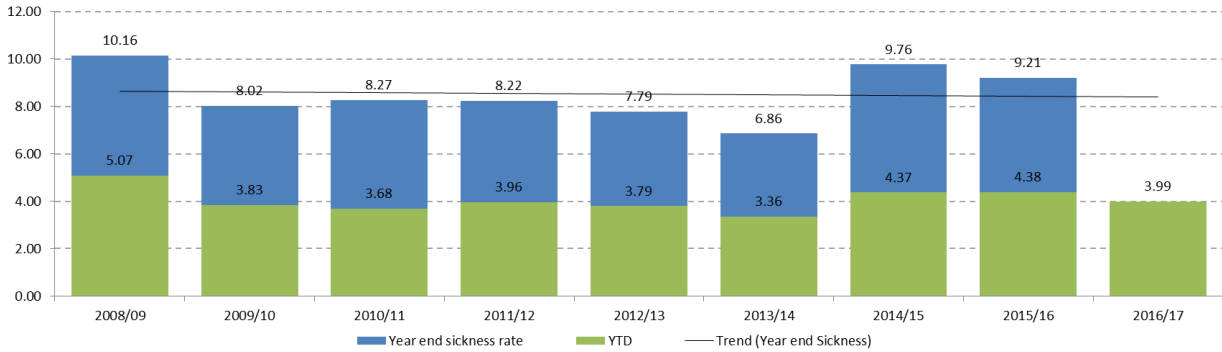
1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service takes seriously the health, safety and wellbeing of employees and provides a wide range of initiatives, interventions and policies to ensure that employees enjoy a safe and supportive working environment. However, the Service recognises that employee absence has a significant cost to the organisation and is therefore something that needs to be measured, understood and addressed. A reasonable balance needs to be struck between the genuine needs of employees to take occasional periods of time off work because of ill-health and the Service's ability to fulfil its role in serving local communities.
- 1.2 The Service performance for Absence Management has been included as a standing item on the Committee agenda since the formation of the combined Service in 2007. Absence levels are a key measure as they affect the efficiency and the effectiveness of the Service. During discussions at recent Committee meetings there has been a desire to broaden the considerations to the 'Health of the Organisation'.
- 1.3 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 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.
- The key aspects of consideration in this report are the sickness levels, ill-health retirements, the number of discipline and grievances cases, any trends in bullying and harassment, the turnover of staff, the levels of stress and referrals to counselling, the number of mediation cases, and the number and type of cases being dealt with by the Welfare Officer.
- 1.4 It is also important that sickness data is presented in a form which meets the requirements of the audience and the Committee has previously requested that the Service reports absence data in a format that identifies how many staff are off at any one time rather than just the lost working days. The Committee has also requested that the Service distinguishes any lost time as a result of workplace injuries. To achieve this, the Service is developing a sickness absence dashboard app which will use data from our new Absence Reporting tool, which is an ICT application within our newly created 'Workbench'. At the Committee meeting, we will demonstrate the concept being developed and this will provide an opportunity for Member feedback before finalising the dashboard app. The data available will be in real-time, allowing managers, for the first time, to access up-to-date sickness data. The dashboard data will be at a top level and therefore include the figures but not personal sensitive data associated with sickness. Therefore, once complete the app will be available for Members to check on performance at any time they choose rather than relying on the next Committee report. This will be a real step forward in the provision of data and one that will enhance the Service management data as well.

2. 2016/17 ABSENCE PERFORMANCE

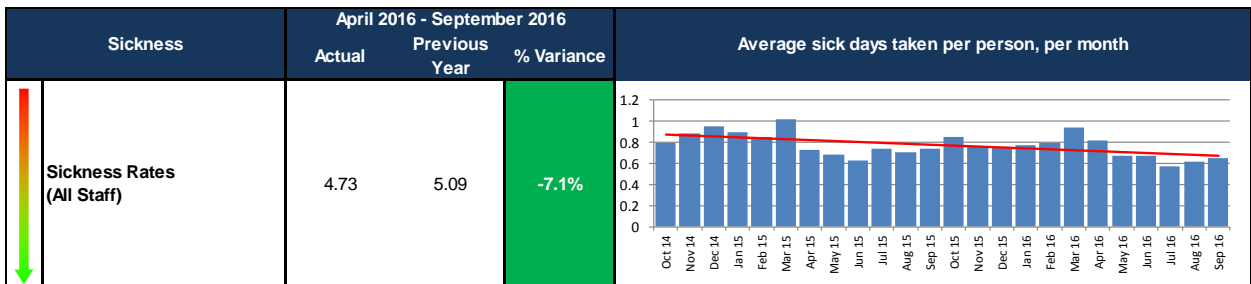
2.1. Absence levels since the formation of the Service are shown below in terms of average lost days per person per year. This shows the improvement during the last financial year and that for Q2 we are slightly lower than the rate for 2015/16.

Sickness Levels since the formation of DSFRS



2.2. The graph below shows the monthly sickness rates for the last 2 years. On average, employees have taken 4.73 days of sick leave from April to September 2016/17 compared with 5.09 for the previous year.

Sickness Direction of Travel



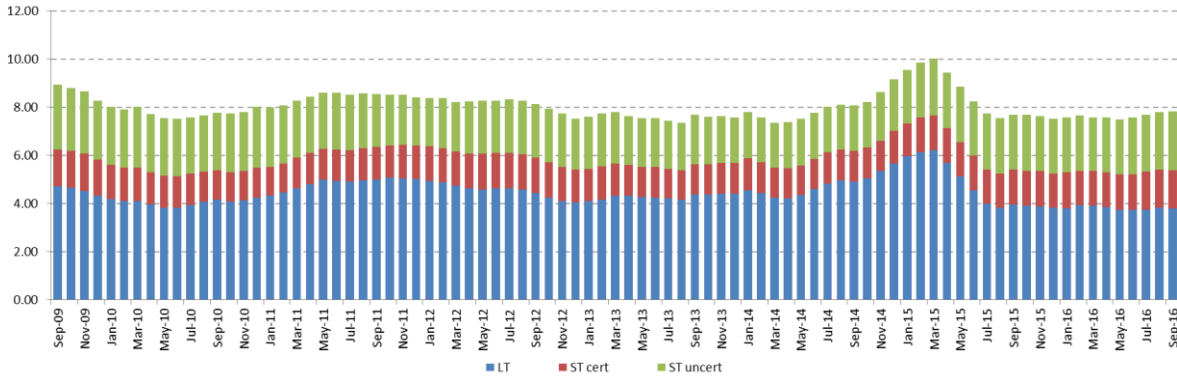
2.3. With monthly peaks and troughs in sickness, it is difficult to see the on-going longer term change in the rates over this time. The bar chart below shows the 12-month rolling sickness rate as measured at the end of each month. As this is a rolling rate it removes any monthly peaks and troughs and enables us to see performance trends more clearly.

2.4. There are 3 categories of sickness shown in the chart:

- Uncertified sickness – periods of sickness up to 7 days which do not require a GP medical certificate
- Short-term sickness – periods of sickness between 8 and 28 days for which a GP certificate is required
- Long-term sickness – periods of over 28 days

2.5. The Committee has received previous reports regarding the peak (as illustrated in the chart overleaf) that occurred in long-term sickness from May 2014 until August 2015.

Average sick days taken per person, per year on a rolling 12 month basis



2.6. We can then consider the breakdown of sickness rates between the different contract types as well as the length of sickness. There are 4 contract types that we consider:

- Wholetime Station based staff
- Wholetime non-Station based staff
- Control Staff
- Support Staff

Sickness Rates by Post Type

Sickness Rates by post type April 2016 - September 2016	Wholetime Station based staff			Wholetime Non Station staff (inc SHQ, STC, group support teams etc)		
	Actual	Previous Year	% Variance	Actual	Previous Year	% Variance
Overall Sickness Rate	3.70	4.12	-10.2%	5.28	4.66	13.2%
Total # Days/shifts lost	1397.00	1657.00	-15.7%	985.5	913.00	7.9%
Sickness Rates - Long Term (over 28 calendar days)	1.91	2.68	-28.5%	4.23	3.81	11.2%
# Days/shifts lost LT	727	1078.00	-32.6%	791	746.00	6.0%
Sickness Rates - ST Cert (8 - 28 calendar days)	0.64	0.47	37.3%	0.62	0.46	34.5%
# Days/shifts lost STcert	238	187.00	27.3%	115.5	90.00	28.3%
Sickness Rates - ST Uncert (up to 7 calendar days)	1.14	0.97	17.3%	0.43	0.39	8.3%
# Days/shifts lost STuncert	432	392.00	10.2%	79	77.00	2.6%

Sickness Rates by post type April 2016 - September 2016	Control			Support staff		
	Actual	Previous Year	% Variance	Actual	Previous Year	% Variance
Overall Sickness Rate	6.07	4.83	25.6%	3.21	4.00	-19.6%
Total # Days/shifts lost	212	199.00	6.5%	747.6	999.00	-25.2%
Sickness Rates - Long Term (over 28 calendar days)	3.32	2.08	59.9%	1.28	2.42	-47.2%
# Days/shifts lost LT	116	86.00	34.9%	296.8	605.00	-50.9%
Sickness Rates - ST Cert (8 - 28 calendar days)	0.43	0.71	-39.2%	0.79	0.73	8.2%
# Days/shifts lost STcert	15	29.00	-48.3%	184.61	183.00	0.9%
Sickness Rates - ST Uncert (up to 7 calendar days)	2.32	2.05	13.2%	1.14	0.84	35.8%
# Days/shifts lost STuncert	81	84.00	-3.6%	266.19	211.00	26.2%

2.7. Within Wholetime, long-term sickness has improved compared with the previous year but both short-term sickness and uncertified sickness have increased.

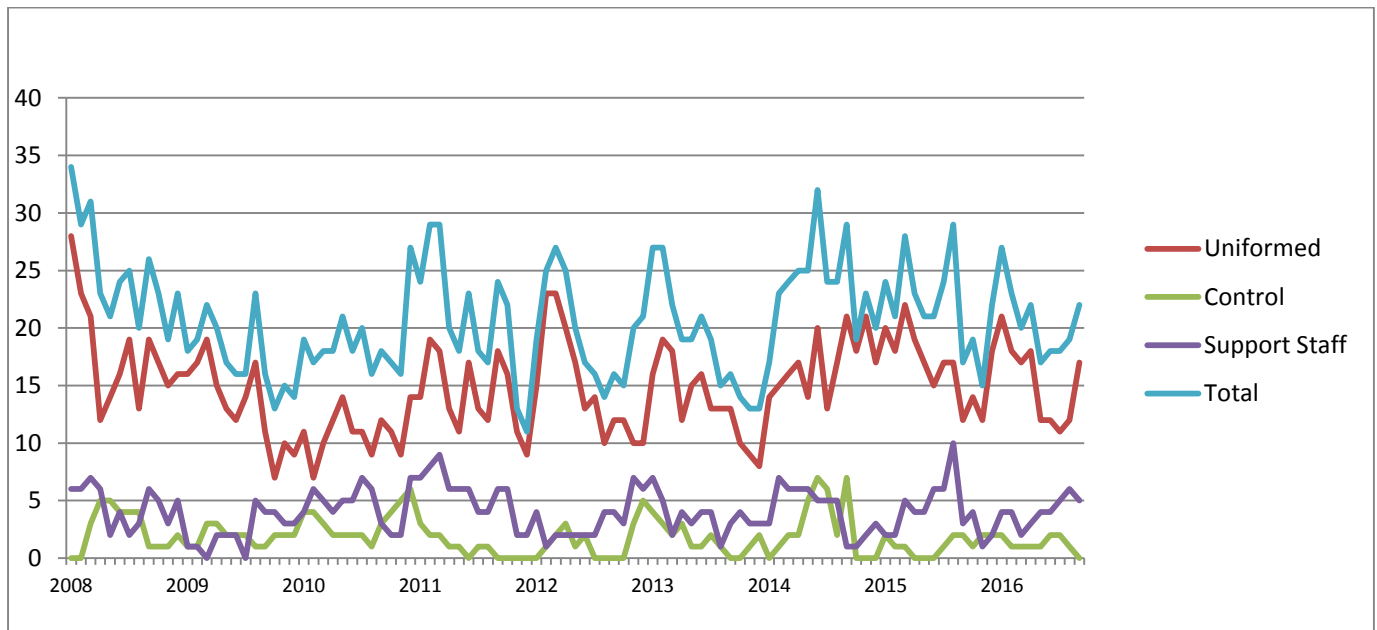
2.8. Within Control uncertified sickness has improved but long-term sickness in particular is showing an increase. Control are the staff category with the highest levels of sickness.

2.9. Support staff have seen an overall improvement in sickness although again short-term sickness has increased.

2.10. Wholetime Non-station based staff has seen an increase in both long-term and short-term sickness.

2.11. In order to understand how a small number of staff on long-term sickness can have a big impact on absence levels, we can consider the number of staff that are on long-term sickness at any one time and this is shown below. When staff come off long-term sickness this can be as a result of a number of reasons including the person returning back to work with full fitness, returning on restricted duties, ill-health retirement or through leaving the Service on capability grounds. It can be seen below that the overall total long-term sickness tracks that of the wholetime uniformed which is the largest of these three categories of full-time staff. Over the last three months since the last Committee meeting, we have seen an upturn in long-term sickness.

Numbers of staff on Long Term Sickness



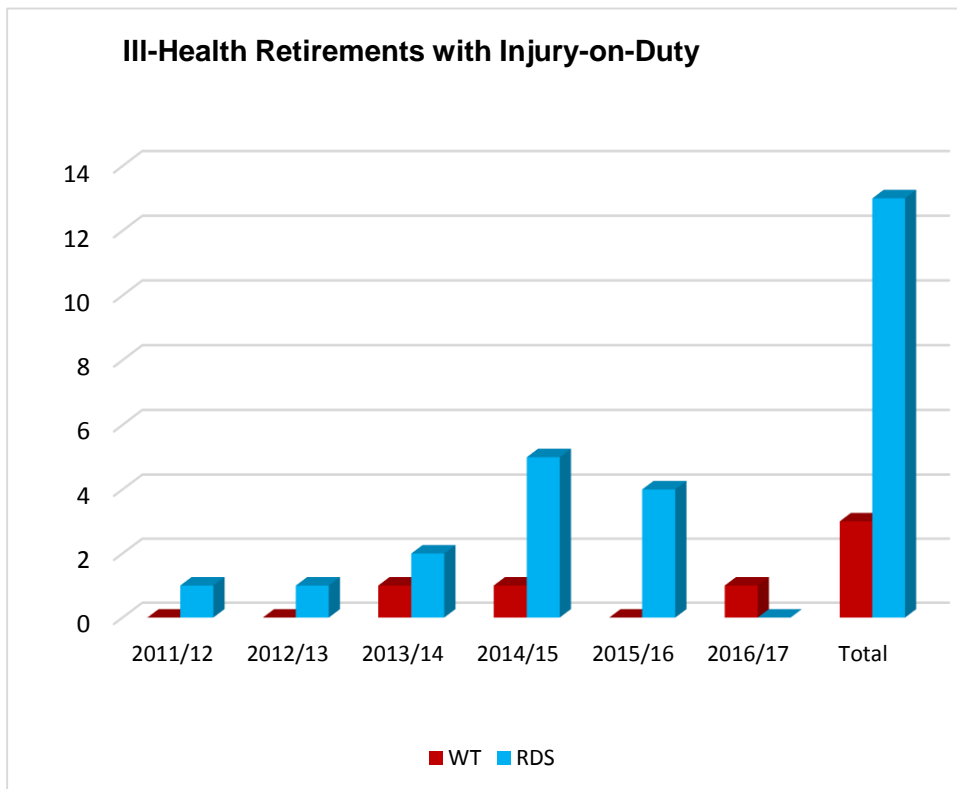
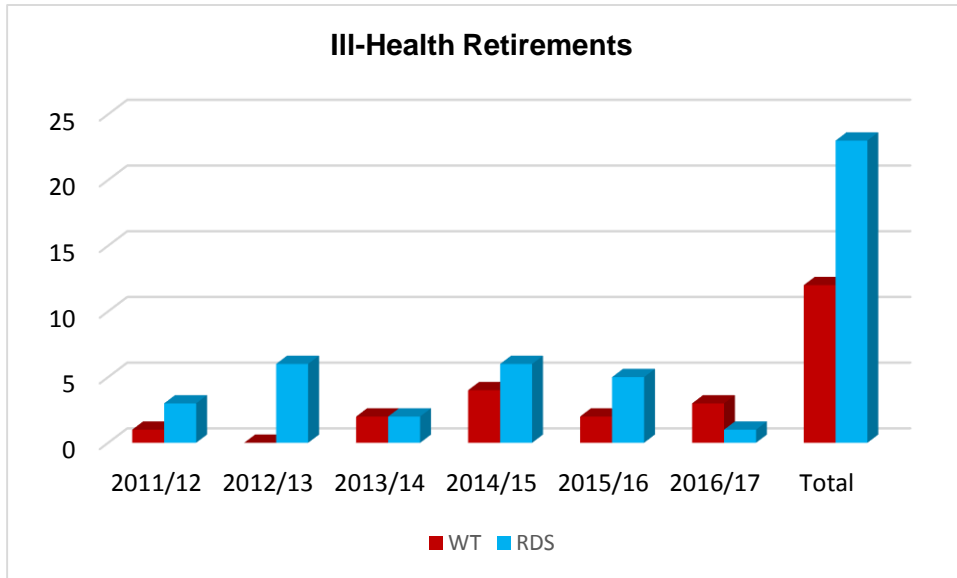
2.12. The data within this report does not however, include the On-call staff which is the biggest proportion of our staff. As a Service we do record On-call sickness but need to extend this into our dashboard reporting. There is also the aspect of staff on restricted duties and who are therefore unable to carry out their normal duties which reduces our capacity as an organisation.

2.13. Another aspect is the number of employees who have not had any sickness absence in a financial year. For 2015/16, 54% of staff did not have any absence due to sickness.

3. INJURY-ON-DUTY RETIREMENTS

3.1. The Committee has requested further information on the level of ill-health retirements which are as a result of an injury-on-duty and this has been presented at a Members' Forum but is included here for completeness. Injury-on-duty will primarily be amongst uniformed staff as they undertake their operational role. This can represent a cost to the Service since where there is an injury-on-duty the pension cost of any associated injury pension is borne by the Service. The Service has an ill-health procedure which will apply to staff with permanent or long term ill-health. In such cases the Equality Act 2010 will normally apply since the nature of the injury or disability is long term. If the illness is related to a work related accident or illness then a Health & Safety investigation is carried out. On-duty injuries will also involve Risk & Insurance as there may also be a personal injury claim.

3.2. The uniformed ill-health retirements are shown below and are split by Wholetime and On-call staff. The first chart is the overall levels of ill-health retirement whereas the second is for those which were as a result of an injury-on-duty.



4. **MENTAL HEALTH**

- 4.1 During 2015/16 there was a significant increase in the number of sick days and number of cases for mental health. In looking at the cases there were eight cases totalling 2,024 days which have/will lead to either Ill Health Retirement or Capability dismissal. There are also two cases totalling 570 days, which relate to discipline investigations where the individuals were suspended.

	Number of sick days	Number of cases
2011/12	1315	70
2012/13	1917	75
2013/14	1851	74
2014/15	3408	76
2015/16	7156	113

- 4.2 The Service had two counselling contracts in place - one with Hammet Street Consultants in Somerset and the other with Devon Therapeutic and Counselling Services. Hammet Street Consultants saw 57 employees for counselling during the last financial year and Devon Counselling Service 53 employees during the same period. The Service's Welfare Officer has dealt with 85 welfare cases in 2015/16, there were 45 Personal Stress Risk Assessments, the Staff Supporters dealt with 18 cases and there were two mediation cases.

5. **STAFF TURNOVER**

- 5.1 The characteristic pattern of employee turnover is high for new starters, then decreasing. This pattern will vary in any single organisation and is known as the 'survival curve'. The levels of turnover within the Service up until the end of the last financial year are shown below.
- 5.2 These figures include 2013/14 when the Service initiated steps to reduce the workforce through voluntary redundancies as a result of the Corporate Plan. In the current financial year we are experiencing an increasing turnover amongst support staff particularly those at middle management level.

	2013/14			2014/15			2015/16			Average Leavers per year
	Employed on April 1st	Leavers during year	%	Employed on April 1st	Leavers during year	%	Employed on April 1st	Leavers during year	%	
Support	306	49	16.0	267	27	10.1	271	30	11.1	35
Control	47	4	8.5	45	3	6.7	46	5	10.9	4
Retained	1,029	117	11.4	1,055	134	12.7	1,201	132	11.0	127
Wholetime	720	90	12.5	642	32	5.0	624	41	6.6	54
Total	2,102	260	12.4	2,009	196	9.8	2,142	208	9.7	220

6. DISCIPLINE & GRIEVANCE CASES

- 6.1 There was a decrease in the number of grievance cases in 2015/16 but an increase in discipline cases. NB The numbers in both tables below, represent where there were disciplinary cases investigated or grievances heard and do not represent the outcomes which with disciplinary cases could range from no further action through to dismissal. With grievances they may result in no further action required or a decision and follow-up actions.

	Grievance	Discipline
2011/12	9	32
2012/13	10	36
2013/14	17	42
2014/15	14	19
2015/16	12	22

- 6.2 Of the discipline and grievance cases the number relating to bullying and harassment are as follows:

	Grievance	Discipline
2011/12	1	3
2012/13	4	6
2013/14	3	6
2014/15	0	1
2015/16	3	3

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1. This report provides a wider perspective of the Health of the Organisation as well as the Absence performance management and further progress has been made with new performance measures as requested by members.
- 7.2. Overall, we have seen an improvement in the sickness absence levels for 2016/17 compared with the Q2 results for the previous two years.

ACFO GLENN ASKEW
Director of Service Improvement

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Agenda Item 5

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	HRMDC/16/15
MEETING	HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	14 DECEMBER 2016
SUBJECT OF REPORT	RETIREMENT & RE-EMPLOYMENT
LEAD OFFICER	Director of Service Improvement
RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>That the requests for retirement & re-employment as identified in paragraph 2.5 of this report be approved.</i>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>The full Authority has approved a Pay Policy Statement in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011.</p> <p>The Pay Policy Statement requires, amongst other things, approval of this Committee to all requests for re-employment following retirement of employees up to Executive Board posts.</p> <p>This report provides more information on the Authority's position in relation to retirement and re-employment and sets out specific requests for approval.</p>
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	The Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service ("the Service") has now achieved the planned reduction in uniformed wholetime staff as a result of the Corporate Plan decisions in 2013-14. The Service is currently below the existing establishment level and retirement and re-employment provides us with certainty for the leave date for these employees whilst at the same time providing a healthy rate of staff turnover.
EQUALITY RISK & BENEFITS ASSESSMENT	The Retirement & Re-Employment Policy has had an equalities assessment.
APPENDICES	Nil.
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS	Nil.

1. **INTRODUCTION**

1.1. The Authority's approved 2016-17 Pay Policy Statement includes the following stated position on the retirement and re-employment of employees:

"8. RE-EMPLOYMENT OF EMPLOYEES

8.3 *The Authority will, in principle, allow the re-employment of employees who have retired, subject to a break in service of at least one month, because it is recognised that this often represents an effective way of retaining specialist knowledge and skills without any increase in cost to the Authority (and noting that costs to the Pension Scheme are no more than would be the case for normal retirement). The re-employment of any employee who has retired will, however, be subject to:*

- the approval of the Human Resources Management and Development Committee for all employees up to Executive Board posts; or*
- the approval of the full Authority for any Executive Board post-holder.*

8.4 *Where retired uniformed staff are re-employed, then the Fire-Fighters' Pension shall be abated such that the income from the gross annual rate of pay whilst re-employed together with the gross annual pension (after commutation) will not exceed the gross annual rate of pay immediately prior to retirement. For staff within the Local Government Pension Scheme, where an individual is re-employed on the same terms and conditions [salary] as previously, the same abatement rules as apply to those within the Fire Fighters Pension Scheme will be applied. However, the Authority's policy on Pension Discretions refers to flexible retirement and states that this "may be subject to abatement during such time as the individual remains employed by the Service". This allows the Authority to use flexible retirement opportunities where key employees may wish to continue working as they get older but step down in grade or reduce their working hours. This can be beneficial to the Authority in retaining key skills, knowledge and experience whilst also reducing costs. The authorisation of any such flexible retirement arrangements will be subject to the approval mechanism detailed above.*

8.5 *The appointment, or re-employment, of any members of the Executive Board (the Chief Fire Officer, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Director of Corporate Services and Director of People and Commercial Services) will always be subject to approval of the full Authority and any re-employment following redundancy or retirement will be subject to consideration of a robust business case and fully scrutinised against the above criteria."*

1.2. This paper includes details of applications for retirement/re-employment in accordance with the approved policy.

2. **RETIREMENT AND RE-EMPLOYMENT**

2.1. The Service policy on retirement & re-employment is linked to workforce planning arrangements. The Authority's 2013-14 to 2014-15 Corporate Plan, as approved at its meeting on 10 July 2013 (Minute DSFRA/20 refers), required a reduction of 149 whole-time posts. The Service has progressed well with reducing the staffing levels against this establishment target and this has now been achieved.

2.2. The Service has prepared forecasts of potential wholetime turnover in the next few years and is considering the options for fulfilling its staffing requirements, including the potential recruitment of new Firefighters. There will also be further work undertaken into the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). This work may identify longer term options which may modify the Service approach to staff resourcing over the longer term.

2.3. The Firefighters Pension Schemes provide for employees to receive their maximum pension benefits after 30 years' service. As there is no longer a fixed age for retirement, however, it is difficult to predict precisely when individuals are likely to leave the Service. The use of retirement and re-employment opportunities encourages individuals to commit to an end retirement date, giving the Service more control over actual retirement and natural turnover. Through this process, employees have a one month break in service before returning on a fixed-term contract - either on a full-time basis or as a job share. In either case, the maximum contract term has previously been set at 12 months because of the need to reduce wholetime Firefighter numbers. Now that the required reduction in numbers has been achieved, consideration could be given to longer periods for fixed-term contracts (for operational roles) or, in exceptional cases, permanent contracts – most likely only for Green Book jobs. Where employees return on a job share basis, we see an immediate reduction in the workforce staffing levels.

2.4. The Service has received an expression of interest from the following uniformed employees:

Role	Station /Dept	Interested in Job Share	Notes	Duration
Area Manager	Strategy & Business Change	Yes	Jobshare in G10 Assurance, Planning & Training Support Manager role (Academy)	Perm
Area Manager	Response	Yes	Jobshare in G10 Assurance, Planning & Training Support Manager role (Academy)	Perm
Watch Manager	Yeovil	Reduced hours	Looking to return in 21 hr post	12 months
Firefighter	Crownhill	Yes	Jobshare Firefighter role	12 months
Firefighter	Crownhill	Yes	Extension of existing jobshare firefighter role	12 months extension
WM	Middlemoor	Yes	Jobshare WM role	12 months

2.5. There are no additional financial costs for the organisation since these employees have reached the point at which they can retire and are therefore entitled to receive their pension lump sum on retirement. The pension payments would normally be abated if re-employed. In addition to giving certainty as to a leaving date, the retirement and re-employments represent a saving to both the Service and employee as pension contributions are either:

- removed as the employee opts out of future pension contributions, or;
- reduced since retired staff in the roles of Firefighter to Watch Manager who, on re-employment, decide to join a pension scheme would be enrolled in the 2015 Firefighters' Pension Scheme for which the employer contributions are lower than the previous 1992 Firefighters' Pension Scheme.

- 2.6. For positions at Station Manager or above, the employee would be eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme which again has lower employer contribution levels. Where uniformed staff move from uniformed positions to support staff positions, they will again be eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme.

ACFO GLENN ASKEW
Director of Service Improvement