

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

18 March 2019

Present:-

Councillors Bown (Chair), Clayton, Peart, Thomas, Vijeh (Vice-Chair) and Randall Johnson (vice Hannaford)

Apologies:-

Councillors Best and Hannaford

* **HRMDC/17** **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2018 be signed as a correct record, subject to amendment under the apologies given to include Councillor Bown.

* **HRMDC/18** **Gender Pay Gap**

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of Service Improvement (HRMDC/19/1) that set out the latest iteration of the Service's Gender Pay Gap Report for 2018 which had to be published in accordance with the provisions in the Equalities Act 2010 by 31 March 2019.

It was noted that the Service data for 2018 indicated a mean gender pay gap in favour of male staff of 13% against a gap across the UK of male workers earning 17.9% more than female workers. The Director of Service Improvement elaborated upon the reasons behind the pay gap and also referred to the short, medium and long term actions that were being taken to achieve a more diverse workforce and to improve the position in the 2019 report.

* **HRMDC/19** **Workforce Culture, Diversity & Inclusion - Quarterly Update**

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of Service Improvement (HRMDC/19/2) that set out the progress made in the last quarter of 2018-19 towards achieving a more diverse workforce and a more inclusive working environment.

The Committee noted the following points in particular:-

- The new appraisal process had reached the stage where staff had been informed of the format of the meeting and general principles. The accompanying IT system was still in development but the first stage to support appraisal conversations was expected to be commenced with trials before the end of April 2019;
- The cultural audit had been completed in line with Public Service Internal Audit Standards. Additionally, a survey from the National Centre for Diversity was undertaken by senior leaders and Authority Members which would assist with understanding on FREDIE (Fairness, Respect, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Engagement), which was to be an area of interest for forthcoming HMICFRS inspections;

- The People Strategy had been produced and consulted upon with publication of the final draft due in April 2019;
- The People Impact Assessment trial was ongoing and consideration was to be given to an implementation plan and guidance;
- The national report on recruitment and diversity in the workplace had been published and the key findings were set out at paragraph 3.8 of the report circulated.

* **HRMDC/20** **Absence Management Performance Report**

The Committee received for information a report (HRMD/19/3) that set out the Service performance on absence management for the period April 2018 to January 2019.

It was noted that the Service had continued to see an overall reduction in sickness absence during this period. Average employee sickness absence was 6.44 days compared with 7.20 days (a 10% reduction) on the same period in 2017/18. Sickness absence for On Call staff had also reduced by 6.1% to 9.58 days as compared with 10.21 days in 2017/18. The main causes of sickness absence across all staff categories remained as musculoskeletal and mental health issues, which reflected the national position.

Reference was made to the management actions that had been taken to reduce sickness absence across the Service. These included, amongst others, the issuing of 272 vouchers for flu jabs and a task to finish group looking in depth at mental health issues, the recommendations for which were set out within the report circulated.

The Committee enquired as to whether benchmarking information was available. The Director of Service Improvement advised that he would be reporting to the next meeting of the Committee with the up to date benchmarking statistics on sickness absence.

* **HRMDC/21** **Request for Retirement & Re-employment**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Service Improvement (HRMDC/19/4) that set out a request for retirement and/or re-employment in accordance with the approved Pay Policy Statement for 2018/19.

RESOLVED that the application set out at paragraph 2.4 of the report be approved.

* **HRMDC/22** **Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services Tranche One Reviews: People**

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of Service Improvement (HRMDC/19/5) that gave an overview of the preparations for the forthcoming inspection of the Service by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services in 2019. The report also set out learning from the findings from inspections of other fire services undertaken in tranche one.

It was noted that the inspection would focus on three key themes, namely:

- Effectiveness – how well the community was served in terms of prevention, protection, resilience and response;
- Efficiency – how well each service provided value for money, allocated resources to match risk and collaborated with other emergency services;
- People – how well each service promoted its values and culture, trained its staff and ensured they had the necessary skills, ensured fairness and diversity within its workforce and developed leadership and service capability.

The Service was in the third tranche of inspections and thus, had been able to review the reports published so far from the first tranche. The report examined the key themes emerging from the People theme in tranche one and indicated an assessment of the current Service position in relation to the identified issues.

The Committee made reference to the need to highlight the differences between Wholetime and On Call duty systems and the impact this had on day to day operations.

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

The Meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 3.30 pm

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