



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STAFFING COMMITTEE held on Wednesday, 9 November 2022 at Leadership Team Conference Room - Fire Service, Clemonds Hey, Winsford, CW7 2UA at 12.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Bob Rudd (Chair), Stef Nelson, Michael Beanland, Karen Mundry, Denis Murphy and Stuart Parker

1 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

A Recording of Meeting

Members were reminded that this meeting would be audio recorded.

B Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Peter Wheeler.

C Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of Members' interests.

D Minutes of the Staffing Committee

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Staffing Committee held on 29th June 2022 be confirmed as a correct record.

2 ANNUAL WORKFORCE PLANNING UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report of the Head of Service Delivery which provided an update (as at 24th October 2022) of the current operational staffing levels and overview of the workforce planning process that was used to plan for and recruit the required number of firefighters.

It was noted that there had been an increase in staff leaving the Service to both external employers and other fire and rescue services who were facing similar issues with their retirement profiles. In the four-year period to 31st March 2026, it was anticipated that there would be approximately 141 leavers, which represented employee turnover of 37%. In the last 12 months 62 recruits to wholetime firefighter roles had been appointed. 12 of these were Community Safety Apprentices and would begin as wholetime firefighters upon completion of a 16-week recruits course at the conclusion of their programme in March 2023.

The latest round of promotion boards for Crew, Watch and Station Managers were completed in October 2022 which had resulted in 10 permanent Station Manager appointments; 16 permanent Watch Manager appointments; and 17 permanent Crew Manager appointments.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Workforce Planning update be noted.

3 DISCIPLINE AND GRIEVANCE UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Transformation which provided an update on discipline cases, grievances, dignity at work complaints and Performance/Capability procedures within the Service.

The Head of HR and Organisational Development reported that the discipline figures for 2021 showed a significant decrease in discipline cases when compared with the data for 2020. There had been an increase in Grievances in the past two years. Most of these grievances had been related to leave entitlements including reimbursement of leave during sickness absence.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Discipline and Grievance update be noted.

4 HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (HR&OD) DEPARTMENT UPDATE

The Director of Transformation provided an update on the completion of the project to re-establish an in-house HR&OD department. The Director introduced and explained the HR&OD structure which included four teams: Resourcing; Business Partner Unit; HR Business Support (Payroll/Pensions); Organisational Development team and advised that:-

- Mr Carmine Rabhani had been appointed as the Head of HR&OD and was now in post;
- transition of the HR team from Joint Corporate Services to the new in-house HR&OD department took place on 31st October 2022;
- the HR&OD department had attended a two-day away session on 7th – 8th November 2022;

RESOLVED: That

[1] the update be noted.

5 PRESENTATION ON THE PEOPLE STRATEGY 2022-25

The Director of Transformation gave a presentation which provided an update about developments associated with the People Strategy 2022-25 (the Strategy).

Members were informed that the Strategy was predicated on the 'Steps Framework' which now consisted of four main elements: Step In; Step Forward; Step Up; Step Away. An overview was provided in respect of each of the elements, confirming activities carried out to-date and future intended activity.

The Director's presentation provided further information on the following:-

- Recruitment and Training
- Engaging with Young People
- Automation of the Appraisal process
- Health and Wellbeing
- Service Improvement
- Progression and Leadership
- New 'Wider Horizons' programme for fire staff development
- Workforce Planning and Retirement
- 2023-24 People Priorities
- National Core Code of Ethics

RESOLVED: That

[1] the People Strategy Update be noted.