

SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
MINUTES OF THE HR & EQUALITIES MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY 14 NOVEMBER 2011 AT
SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS

07. PRESENT:

Councillor	Left	Authority
R McKerlich (Chairman)		Cardiff
D T Davies		Caerphilly
D Hando		Newport
K Hyde		Cardiff
C James	Left 1145 hrs	Bridgend
S J Jones		Rhondda Cynon Taff
G Price		Merthyr Tydfil
V E Smith		Monmouthshire
G Stacey		Rhondda Cynon Taff
E T Williams		Vale of Glamorgan

APOLOGIES:

S Bradwick		Rhondda Cynon Taff
J Daniel		Rhondda Cynon Taff
R J W Greenland		Monmouthshire
J Singh		Cardiff
W Tomlinson		Torfaen

ABSENT:

OFFICERS PRESENT:- ACO P Haynes – Director of People Services, Mr M Malson – Head of Human Resources, Mr C Powell – Head of Business Support, GM G Davies – Head of Training & Development, Mr N Orninski – Grant Thornton Representative, Dr W Davies – Occupational Physician

The Chairman was sad to announce the death of the Chief Fire Officer's father and on behalf of Members agreed to write to the Chief Fire Officer offering their condolences.

A minutes silence was held.

08. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Each Member declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in each agenda item which affected their Authority.

09. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the HR & Equalities meeting held on 11 July 2011 were received and accepted as a true record of proceedings.

10. REPORT ON THE OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH UNIT ACTIVITY 1 APRIL 2010 TO 31 MARCH 2011

The Occupational Physician reminded Members that in January 2011 the Occupational Health Unit Activity Report for the first 2 quarters of 2010-2011 was presented to the HR & Equalities Committee.

The report presented to Members included the additional standard data for the 3 and 4 quarters together with an update on Occupational Health initiatives, completing reported information for 2010-2011 periods.

RESOLVED THAT

10.1 Members noted the content of the report.

10.2 Following a request from Members, the ACO People Service agreed to present a further report on the total cost of running the Occupational Health Unit.

11. TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT FUNCTION & VALUE FOR MONEY REVIEW

The Head of Training & Development and the representative from Grant Thornton presented Members with details on the Partnership Project Agreement principles with Babcock Limited and the framework of the Value for Money Private Finance Initiative review.

Members were informed the first draft of the review would be presented at the HR & Equalities Group Meeting.

RESOLVED THAT

11.1 Members agreed to note the content of the report.

11.2 Following a question and answer session, and Members concerns on not achieving threshold levels, the Head of Training & Development agreed to invite a Director from Babcock Limited to attend a future meeting, and answer Members questions.

12. ANNUAL REPORT TO THE WELSH LANGUAGE BOARD

The ACO People Services updated Members on the progress being made against the targets set out in the Authority's Welsh Language Scheme 2010-2013.

RESOLVED THAT

Members noted the content of the report.

13. STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN UPDATE

The ACO People Services informed Members that the Equality Act 2010 would impose a Single Public Duty on all Public Sector Organisations. The report outlined how South Wales Fire & Rescue Service had prepared for the duty.

RESOLVED THAT

13.1 Members requested departmental updates of progress against the Strategic Equality Plan.

13.2 Members agreed to have access to the Equality Risk Assessment Training and Development sessions during 2011 and 2012.

13.3 Members agreed to discuss their development requirements as part of the WLGA training needs analysis for equality and diversity.

13.4 Members agreed to note the content of the report and support the ongoing equality and diversity work.

Councillor C James left the meeting at 1145 hrs.

14. SICKNESS ABSENCE REPORT – 1 APRIL 2010-31 MARCH 2011

The Head of HR informed Members that for the period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011 the average number of shifts/working days lost for all staff (excluding Retained Staff) is 7.08 days per employee.

For the same period (excluding Retained Staff), short term absences were recorded at 61.5% (1269 occurrences equating to 5239 shifts/working days) (excluding Retained staff) and 38.5% (233 occurrences equating to 3280 shifts/working days) for long term absences.

Retained staff (RDS) figures are not included due to difficulties in reporting shifts/working days lost because of the working patterns associated with the retained duty system.

RESOLVED THAT

14.1 Members noted the content of the report.

14.2 Members requested further information on Self-Certification.

14.3 Following a request from Members, the Head of HR agreed to produce separate sickness absence figures due to accidents at work.

14.4 The ACO People Services agreed to provide Members with comparative performance data across the public sector.

15. REPORT ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

The Head of HR informed Members of the main reasons for the establishment of a Joint Consultative Committee (JCC), incorporating Members of the Fire & Rescue Authority, Officers of the Service and Employee Representatives of all the recognised Trade Unions.

The report also outlined the legal requirements for a JCC, methods of consultation, the setting up of a JCC and its constitution, and an outline of what could be discussed at such a Committee.

RESOLVED THAT

15.1 Members unanimously agreed to the establishment of a Joint Consultative Committee outside of the normal negotiating forums already established within the Service. This would provide ample opportunity for all sides to discuss organisational issues in a frank, open and honest forum before going into formal negotiation.

15.2 Members unanimously agreed that the Joint Consultative Committee should be chaired by an Authority representative for a 12 month period, followed by a trade union representative the following year.

15.3 Members agreed that a report recommending the establishment of a Joint Consultative Committee be made to the Fire & Rescue Authority.

16. GRIEVANCE AND DISCIPLINE ISSUES APRIL TO AUGUST 2011

The Head of HR provided Members with a summary of grievance and discipline matters investigated by the Resolution Unit during the period April 2011 to 31 August 2011.

RESOLVED THAT

16.1 Following Members concerns on the length of time of suspensions, Members agreed to note the content of the report.

16.2 Following a request by Members, the Head of HR agreed to present a further report on the number of dismissals issued within the last five years.

17. UNIFORMED OFFICERS MARKINGS

The ACO People Services reminded Members that at the previous meeting of the HR & Equalities Committee the Members asked for

a report which identified the markings associated with the complete range of roles in the Service.

RESOLVED THAT

Members noted the content of the report.

18. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The ACO People Services presented the Forward Work Programme.

RESOLVED THAT

Members accepted the Forward Work Programme for the HR & Equalities Committee 2011/12.