

SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
MINUTES OF THE HR & EQUALITIES MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY, 17 JULY, 2017 AT
SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS

1. PRESENT:

Councillor	Left	Authority
S Pickering (Chair)		Rhondda Cynon Taff
D Ali (Deputy Chair)		Cardiff
S Bradwick		Rhondda Cynon Taff
R Crowley		Vale of Glamorgan
C Elsbury	11:50 hrs	Caerphilly
S Evans		Torfaen
K Gibbs		Merthyr Tydfil
A Hussey		Caerphilly
K McCaffer		Vale of Glamorgan
D Naughton		Cardiff
G Thomas		Blaenau Gwent
H Thomas		Newport
P Wong		Cardiff

APOLOGIES:

D Thomas	Torfaen
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ABSENT:

C Smith	Bridgend
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OFFICERS PRESENT:- ACO P Haynes – Director of People Services, Mr C Powell – Deputy Monitoring Officer, Mr M Malson – Head of HR, AM I Greenman – Head of Training & Development, Mr A Jones – Employee Relations Manager, Ms J Nancarrow – Absence Management Manager, Ms K Jeal – Budget & Data Control Manager, Ms G Goss – Recruitment & Assessment Manager, Ms C Baldwin – Welsh Language Officer, Ms C Wood-Duffy – Equality & Diversity Officer

2. WELCOME ADDRESS

The new Chair warmly welcomed Members and Officers to the first HR & Equalities meeting for the Municipal Year 2017/2018.

Following a request by the Chair, each Member provided a formal introduction.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

4. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

NATIONAL JOINT COUNCIL CIRCULAR NJC/8/17 – INCLUSIVE FIRE SERVICE GROUP – IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

Each Member was provided with a copy of the National Joint Council Circular NJC/8/17 Improvement Strategy. The Chair advised that Members and Officers would need to provide a formal response to the document by 28 July 2017, and that arrangements to compose a response were being progressed.

ATTENDANCE AT AN INTERNAL DISPUTES RESOLUTION PANEL (IDRP) PROCEDURE

The Chair informed the HR & Equalities Committee that 4 Members were required to sit on an IDRP. Members were advised that they would shortly receive an e-mail requesting expressions of interest, and were assured that the Members selected would receive full training and guidance throughout the procedure, with the Panel being supported by a nominated Barrister.

5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous HR & Equalities meeting held on 27 March, 2017, were received and accepted as a true record of proceedings.

6. GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLIC SERVICE PENSION SCHEMES

The ACO People Services informed Members that the purpose of the presented report was to inform them of the factors affecting the governance of Firefighter Pension Schemes, and their roles and responsibilities as scheme managers.

RESOLVED THAT

Members agreed to accept the information contained within the report, and to receive additional monitoring reports on a regular basis.

7. FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION SCHEMES – WALES GOVERNMENT CIRCULARS 2017/2018

The ACO People Services informed Members that under the terms of the Public Services Pension Act 2013, the Fire & Rescue Authority was the recognised Scheme Manager for Firefighters Pension Schemes, and as such would need to identify through which mechanism it intended to fulfil its role and obligations.

Members were advised that the Welsh Government issued regular communications to all Chief Fire Officers, Chairs, and Clerks of Fire & Rescue Authorities, electronically in a standard circular template. The e-mails and circulars would cover a variety of areas, including all aspects of Firefighters Pension Schemes, and would have to be noted or actioned as appropriate. The presented report set out the current requirement for Firefighters Pension Schemes managerial and administrative actions.

RESOLVED THAT

7.1 Members agreed to accept the Welsh Government Firefighters' Pension Scheme Circulars and e-mails received throughout 2017/2018.

7.2 Following a question and answer session on the Firefighters Pension Scheme Fund current deficit, Members agreed to note the actions that had been implemented for each of the circulars.

8. REPORT ON HUMAN RESOURCES & OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION

The Head of HR delivered an electronic presentation to Members and provided a detailed report on the current structure and functions established within the Human Resources & Occupational Health Department.

Each HR Manager provided Members with a brief overview of their individual section composition and roles within the HR department:-

- Employee Relations
- Attendance Management
- Recruitment & Assessment
- Budget & Data Control
- Equality & Diversity
- Welsh Language
- Occupational Health Services

RESOLVED THAT

8.1 Members agreed to note the contents of the report and presentation.

8.2 Following a question and answer session on the Occupational Health Budget, individual sections within the HR department, and the high Firefighters retirement profile, Members acknowledged the streams that were being progressed.

8.3 Following a request by Members, Officers agreed to provide further information on how the Service would interact with individuals online who had hearing difficulties.

The Chair and Members thanked Officers for their excellent presentation and report.

The HR Managers withdrew from the meeting at 11:40 hrs.

9. SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE – OVERVIEW OF TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

The Head of Training & Development provided Members with an overview of the Training & Development department, and identified the organisational structure and functions established within, in order to facilitate the range of training.

Councillor Elsbury left the meeting at 11:50 hrs.

RESOLVED THAT

Following Members consideration of the content of the report, and lengthy discussion on attacks on Firefighters, they agreed to endorse the content of the report.

10. PROPOSED NEW COMPARTMENT FIRE BEHAVIOUR TRAINING (CFBT) PROJECT AT CARDIFF GATE TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

The Head of Training & Development delivered an electronic presentation to Members on the proposed new Compartment Fire Behaviour Training (CFBT) project at Cardiff Gate Training & Development Centre, and introduced the individual training managers.

RESOLVED THAT

Following a question and answer session which included the topics of noise levels and the possibility of external funding, Members agreed to note the content of the electronic presentation on the proposed new Compartment Fire Behaviour Training (CFBT) project at Cardiff Gate Training & Development Centre.

At the conclusion of the presentation Members were given a tour of the facility and access to a range of demonstrations and practical activities.

11. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The ACO People Services presented the Forward Work Programme for 2017/2018.

RESOLVED THAT

Members accepted the Forward Work Programme for the HR & Equalities Committee 2017/2018.

12. TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT (PART 1 or 2)

There were no items of urgent business.