

## Post Reductions 2013/14

### Report of the Chief Fire Officer

For further information about this report please contact John Redmond, Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260201 or Louise McKenzie, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Corporate Services), on 01743 260205.

### 1 Purpose of Report

This report provides an update on the progress made on the reduction of the substantive establishment as a result of the Authority's Public Value consultation work. This work resulted from a recognised need to save approximately £3million over 4 years, commencing in April 2011. This report does not refer to issues arising from the need to create further budget reductions as a result of funding settlements since 2011, which work is ongoing.

### 2 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the content of this report

### 3 Background

The Public Value consultation carried out in 2010/11 identified several areas for cost savings. At the Fire Authority meeting in December 2010 Members agreed that in each of the four forthcoming financial years (2011/12 to 2014/15) a reduction of 2 non-uniformed posts (to an average value of £50,000 per year) and 5 Retained Duty System (RDS) posts would be achieved.

This report is the third in a series of annual progress reports against this activity and the content has already been presented to the Authority as a result of various mechanisms. This paper seeks to combine the progress so far into a single report.

## **4 Reductions for 2013-14**

### **Non-Uniformed Posts**

Although a reduction of two non-uniformed posts has been included in the savings for 2013/14, following a review of the Authority's support services it is unlikely that the majority of this saving will be achieved through natural wastage / staff movements. Whilst some of it will be achieved through ongoing vacancy management, it is not possible to fully quantify this until the end of the financial year.

However, further unanticipated efficiencies were identified in Performance Management, in that changes to the provision of ordnance survey mapping services generated a saving of £50,000 from 2013/14 onward. This was reported to Strategy and Resources Committee in November 2012.

### **Retained Duty Systems Firefighter Posts**

The agreement under Public Value was to delete 5 vacant RDS firefighter posts each year for four years, to achieve a total reduction of 20 posts.

The RDS establishment at 1 April 2010 provided for 343 'units'. Five units were deleted on 1 April 2011, 2012 and 2013, taking the establishment down to 328. This has not had any direct impact on staff as the Service is still running under establishment and turnover of staff is ongoing. As a result recruitment is continuing.

## **5 Post Reductions to date (2011 to 2013)**

Post reductions for non-uniformed posts in each of the last two years have been achieved through natural wastage and were notified to the Human Resources Committee in previous reports. In summary the following reductions have been made:

### **2011/12**

Reductions to the value of £44,500 were achieved through the deletion of two posts, following natural movement of staff, with the remainder of the target of £50,000 being achieved through other part-time posts being held as vacant.

### **2012/13**

Reductions to the value of £50,000 were generated through natural wastage, implementing alternative arrangements for photography services and a continuation of vacancy management.

## **6 Risks and Mitigation**

As explained in previous annual reports to the Committee, in reducing the non-uniformed establishment the Service is cutting an already small section of the workforce. The planned reduction of 8 posts over 4 years will undoubtedly affect the level of support available to the operational aspect of the organisation.

The risk to the organisation is being mitigated as far as possible by continuing to seek opportunities for reducing costs through efficiencies and by seeking to fill priority vacant posts internally leaving those 'donating' posts vacant and, therefore, potentially subject to deletion. This approach aims to protect those roles, which are critical to the day-to-day support of the broader Service.

## **7 Financial Implications**

The Head of Finance has been consulted in the preparation of this report and is in agreement with the figures stated.

## **8 Legal Comment**

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

## **9 Initial Impact Assessment**

The report provides purely historical information, which is brought before the Committee for information only. An initial Impact Assessment has not, therefore, been completed.

## **10 Appendices**

There are no appendices attached to this report.

## **11 Background Papers**

There are no background papers associated with this report.