

## Reasonable Adjustments

### Report of the Chief Fire Officer

For further information about this report please contact Paul Raymond, Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260201 or Natalie Parkinson, Equality and Diversity Officer, on 01743 260236

#### 1 Purpose of Report

This report is to provide Members with an overview of reasonable adjustments that have been made for our employees to support them in their employment.

#### 2 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the content of this report.

#### 3 Background

Under The Equality Act 2010, formerly The Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service is required to make reasonable adjustments for employees, who have a disability.

This paper is to provide Members with an overview of the types of adjustments that have been made to date and the costs involved with these.

The Service currently has 16 live reasonable adjustment cases. The duration of the cases depends on the employee and adjustment(s) involved but may last anywhere from a few months to over 12 months or for the duration of their employment.

Depending on the type of disability or potential disability, the employee has to be referred to an expert for advice on adjustments or equipment required in order for them to do their role. This may include referral to Occupational Health for advice.

The Service also uses 'Access to Work' for specialist advice on workplace adjustments and potential funding for these adjustments.

66% of our current cases are dyslexia cases and we have used a professional psychologist to undertake a report to ascertain whether the individuals are classified as dyslexic and what support and equipment they may require. The rest of the cases involve other physical adjustments which require workplace equipment.

When a report is received with advice and recommendations, the employee then has a meeting to discuss the contents of this. When the meeting has taken place adjustments and equipment will then be implemented. It is important to note that only what is required and necessary is put in place.

## **4 Type of Reasonable Adjustments**

For many of our employees with dyslexia, depending on the type of role they undertake, there are several types of adjustments that can be made. Here are some examples of these:

- Large monitor screens
- Changing the font size of text and colour of paper (from white)
- How information is given to them – in writing rather than verbal and broken down into smaller chunks by using bullet points.
- Software for the computer to help with spelling, grammar etc and to help write long documents such as 'Read.'
- Changing the colour of the computer screen (to make it easier to read)
- Tuition by a specialist dyslexia tutor to help with areas such as spelling, grammar, organisation skills, memory techniques (mind mapping)
- Electronic dictionaries
- Dictaphone to help with memory and organisation skills
- Highlighter pens to highlight important information for memory recall
- Note books to write down key words
- Headphones to listen to documents
- Coloured overlays to help with reading
- Providing documents in audio
- Providing documents such as power point presentations in advance
- Adapting learning styles to suit the employee

We are also investigating purchasing a networked system to support our employees.

For those with hearing impairments:

- Specialist headsets
- Individual neck loop
- Hearing equipment

For other types of disabilities, adjustments may include:

- Specialist mice
- Specific chairs / desks
- Change to rest times / working hours

All reasonable adjustments have to be assessed on an individual basis and as such each employee may be different to another even with the same disability.

## **5 Financial Implications**

With all of our reasonable adjustments we contact Access to Work to see if they can provide us with any funding for equipment or tuition. Given below is a breakdown of costs and funding from 1 March 2011 to 31 March 2012:

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service have contributed **£732.17**. Access to Work did not provide funding for 2011-12, however some of the previous unallocated funding has been used up to March 2012 towards tuition for people with dyslexia.

## **6 Legal Comment**

There are no direct legal implications to this report.

## **7 Equality Impact Assessment**

This is a historical report and as such does not require an Equality Impact Assessment. The processes are recorded in Brigade Orders ie Human Resources 5 Part 1 Section 8 – Dyslexia, Reasonable Adjustments and these include a completed assessment

## **8 Appendices**

There are no appendices attached to this report.

## **9 Background Papers**

There are no background papers associated with this report.