

**Minutes of the Meeting of
Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority
Human Resources Committee
held at Headquarters, Shrewsbury
on Thursday, 27 May 2010 at 2.00 pm**

Present

Members

Councillors Adams (Chair), Mrs Barrow, Groom, Hartin (Vice-Chair), Kiernan, and Picken

Officers

Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Temporary Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Human Resources), Human Resources Manager, Equality and Diversity Officer and Management Support Officer

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Price.

2 Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Members that they should declare any personal and/or prejudicial interests at this point and that they should leave the meeting room before any item, in which they had a prejudicial interest was discussed.

The Chair declared a personal interest in report 9, as he is a member of the voluntary organisation A4U.

3 Non-Exempt Minutes

Members received the minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting, held on 14 January 2010.

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs Barrow, seconded by Councillor Kiernan and

Resolved that the minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting, held on 14 January 2010, be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record

4 Public Questions

No questions, statements or petitions had been received, from members of the public.

5 Committee Terms of Reference

The report provided details of the Terms of Reference of the Human Resources Committee, as they appear in the Fire Authority's Members' Handbook, for review by the Committee.

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs Barrow, seconded by Councillor Kiernan and

Resolved that the Committee agree to the amendment detailed in the report for recommendation to the Fire Authority

6 Committee Role Descriptions

The report sought to establish Role Descriptions for the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Human Resources Committee.

It was proposed by Councillor Hartin, seconded by Councillor Mrs Barrow and

Resolved that Members agree the Role Descriptions for the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Human Resources Committee for recommendation to the Fire Authority

7 Telford Race, Equality and Diversity Partnership

The purpose of this report was to inform the Committee of the progress of Telford Race, Equality and Diversity Partnership (TREDP). The Committee was also asked to endorse the request from the group for funding for 2010/11 with a concomitant Service Level Agreement.

The Equality and Diversity (E&D) Officer brought Members' attention to the background and achievements of the partnership in his report. He explained the involvement of Telford & Wrekin Council, Citizens Advice Bureau, the Primary Care Trust, West Mercia Police and other agencies. TREDP provides feedback and information on many areas, including the local community's perception of the Service.

Councillor Mrs Barrow asked how much funding is received from other agencies. The E&D Officer responded that TREDP receives £27,000 from the Equality and Human Rights Commission, £22,000 from Shropshire Council, £5,000 from the Primary Care Trust, £5,000 from West Mercia Police and £2,500 from The Wrekin Housing Trust.

Councillor Groom agreed with the recommendations in the report but felt that the name of the partnership should be changed to 'Telford, Equality and Diversity Partnership' as a priority, as the partnership had a multi-strand approach. It was felt by the Committee that the current name gave the impression that the partnership excluded other strands of diversity. The Committee, therefore, asked the E&D Officer to contact the partnership to discuss the change of name.

Councillor Hartin asked why the Service was proposing to give £5,000 and not the requested £5,305. The E&D Officer responded that this was the sum, which had been granted to the partnership previously.

Subject to discussion regarding the above name change, it was proposed by Councillor Hartin, seconded by Councillor Picken and

Resolved that the Committee note the contents of the report, and recommend to the Fire Authority:

- Preparation of a Service Level Agreement, setting out the measurable outcomes to be secured in exchange for a financial contribution to Telford Race, Equality and Diversity Partnership; and
- On satisfactory conclusion and signature of this Service Level Agreement, a payment to Telford Race, Equality and Diversity Partnership not exceeding £5,000.00

8 Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework 2009 Analysis of Gaps in Meeting Standards

The report informed the Committee of the gaps in Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service equality and diversity policies and practice, when compared with the standards required under the different levels of the Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework 2009.

The E&D Officer advised the Committee that the Service was 'moving towards excellence' and in order to achieve 'excellent' needed to produce evidence, which was focused on different departments. He was confident that the Service would achieve 'excellent' in the given timescale.

Councillor Groom asked about the cost and resource implications involved for the Service to achieve 'excellent'. The E&D Officer responded that this was being investigated, and much of the work required was already being done. A report detailing all of the gaps would be taken to the next Equality and Diversity Steering Group, where they would be evaluated for their value for money and improvements to service delivery.

Councillor Kiernan requested that the Equality Action Plan, taken to the Audit and Performance Management Committee, be brought to the next meeting for information.

Resolved that the Committee note the contents of the report

9 Shropshire Partnership Equalities Forum – Progress during 2009/10

The report informed the Human Resources Committee of the progress on the Shropshire Equality and Diversity Forum, as requested by the Fire Authority.

The E&D Officer explained that the Service did not provide the partnership with funding, but members of the Service attended meetings and supported the work done by the group. He explained that progress had been made, despite the lack of recent membership engagement. He added that the Forum is unique in that it supported the whole of Shropshire and not just certain areas.

Councillor Groom asked if Cruse Bereavement Counselling could be approached and asked to join the Partnership. The E&D Officer agreed to feed back this request to officers involved in the Forum.

Resolved that the Committee note the contents of the report

10 Area Manager Appointments

The report provided an update to Members on the outcomes of the recent Area Manager Promotion round.

Members were pleased with the appointments and a discussion took place regarding the development process for officers.

Resolved that the Committee note the Area Manager appointments

11 National Joint Council Circular NJC/2/10

Members were asked to note the NJC Circular 'Part-time workers (prevention of less favourable treatment) regulations'.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer explained that officers were awaiting the final outcome of the points raised in the Circular. The Chief Fire Officer added that the Service might incur costs of up to £700,000 and work would now need to be done to safeguard taxpayers' money, to prevent a similar situation occurring in the future.

Resolved that the Committee note the contents of the NJC Circular

12 Local Government Act 1972

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs Barrow, seconded by Councillor Hartin and

Resolved that, under the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded for the following items on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined by the provisions of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act, by virtue of paragraphs 1, 2 and 3

13 Appeals Committee Exempt Minutes (Paragraphs 1 and 2)

Members were asked to receive and note the summarised minutes of the Appeals Committee meetings, held on 11 February 2010 and 19 March 2010.

Resolved that the Committee note the exempt summarised minutes of the Appeals Committee meetings, held on 11 February and 19 March 2010

14a Applications to Undertake Outside Employment (Made Direct to the Committee)

The report informed Members of two applications to undertake outside employment.

The Chair highlighted an error in the report in that recommendation b) should not have been included and should, therefore, be removed.

The Committee considered the applications on their merits, having regard to all the circumstances and the health and safety of employees and the public.

It was then proposed by Councillor Hartin, seconded by Mrs Barrow and

Resolved that the Committee agree the applications for outside employment

14b Application to Undertake Outside Employment (Approved Provisionally by the Chair and Vice-Chair)

The report informed Members of an application from a Fire Authority employee to undertake outside employment, approved provisionally by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee.

The Committee considered the application on its merits, having regard to all the circumstances and the health and safety of employees and the public.

It was then proposed by Councillor Hartin, seconded by Mrs Barrow and

Resolved that the Committee confirm the provisional approval given by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Human Resources Committee

The meeting closed at 2.45 pm.

Chair.....

Date.....