

Affiliation to Skills for Justice

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

For further information about this report please contact Alan Taylor, Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260225 or Louise McKenzie, Assistant Chief Officer, on 01743 260205.

1 Purpose of Report

This report informs the Human Resources Committee of the national arrangements in place to align the Fire and Rescue Service to the Skills for Justice Sector Skills Council.

2 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the report.

3 Background

In a recent Fire Service Circular 22/2009 changes to the arrangements for the standards setting body for the Fire and Rescue Sector were announced. Until March 2008 the previous standards setting body was SkillsPlus UK. A change in Government policy meant that sectors needed to be transferred to Sector Skills Councils. Sector Skills Councils are sector-specific organisations set up to tackle the skills and productivity needs of their sector. Skills for Justice which is the Sector Skills Council covering all employers and volunteers working in the UK Justice sector was found to be the best match for the Fire and Rescue sector.

4 Skills for Justice

In April 2009 the Fire and Rescue sector joined the dedicated Sector Skills Council for the Justice Sector. Skills for Justice focuses on developing skills for safer communities. Other agencies within the Skills for Justice umbrella are the Police, Prison and Probation Services, Forensic Science and Courts and Tribunals Services.

Skills for Justice has developed a Service Level Agreement for the Fire and Rescue sector in conjunction with employers from each of the four nations and a new Fire and Rescue Occupational Standards Committee has also been established.

In addition Skills for Justice will provide support for the Integrated Personal Development System in terms of national occupational standards, qualifications and guidance from April 2009. The Service Level Agreement created will also provide some support for Assessment and Development Centres.

5 Funding

Skills for Justice is partly funded by subscription and partly by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills. The subscription is £3.50 per employee per annum. Communities and Local Government has agreed to pay the subscription for the English Fire and Rescue Service for the first two years and arrangements will then be reviewed for 2011/12.

6 Financial Implications

The Treasurer and the Principal Accountant have been informed of the funding arrangements and the national situation will be monitored for 2011/12 onwards.

7 Legal Comment

There are no legal implications arising from this report. People working for Fire and Rescue Services across the United Kingdom benefit from the range of workforce development solutions, products and services that Skills for Justice currently provide to other organisations in the Justice Sector.

8 Equality Impact Assessment

This report informs Members about a national change to the skills support arrangements and is for information only. There will be no impact upon people.

9 Appendices

There are no appendices attached to this report.

10 Background Papers

There are no background papers associated with this report.

Implications of all of the following have been considered and, where they are significant (i.e. marked with an asterisk), the implications are detailed within the report itself.

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| Balanced Score Card | | Integrated Risk Management Planning | |
| Business Continuity Planning | | Legal | * |
| Capacity | * | Member Involvement | |
| Civil Contingencies Act | | National Framework | |
| Comprehensive Performance Assessment | | Operational Assurance | |
| Efficiency Savings | | Retained | |
| Environmental | | Risk and Insurance | |
| Financial | * | Staff | * |
| Fire Control/Fire Link | | Strategic Planning | |
| Information Communications and Technology | | West Midlands Regional Management Board | |
| Freedom of Information / Data Protection / Environmental Information | | Equality Impact Assessment | |