

**Minutes of the Meeting of
Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority
Human Resources Committee
held at Brigade Headquarters, Shrewsbury
at 10.30 am on Tuesday 21 November 2006**

Present: Councillors Davies, Dr Drummond, Hartin, Mrs Holyoak and Picken

1 Election of Chair

It was proposed by Councillor Davies and seconded by Councillor Drummond:

That Councillor Mrs Holyoak be elected Chair of the Human Resources Committee.

It was proposed by Councillor Hartin and seconded by Councillor Picken:

That Councillor Hussey be elected Chair of the Human Resources Committee.

There being no other nominations, on a vote with three Members voting for Councillor Mrs Holyoak and two Members voting for Councillor Hussey, Councillor Mrs Holyoak was duly elected Chair to hold office until the meeting of the Committee immediately following the Annual Meeting of the Fire Authority.

Before the appointment of the Vice-Chair took place, Councillor Mrs Holyoak asked the meeting to stand for a minute's silence in memory of Councillor Lloyd, who had been Chair of the Human Resources Committee.

2 Appointment of Vice-Chair

It was proposed by Councillor Hartin and seconded by Councillor Davies:

That Councillor Picken be appointed Vice-Chair of the Human Resources Committee to hold office until the meeting of the Committee immediately following the Annual Meeting of the Fire Authority.

There being no other nominations, Councillor Picken was duly appointed Vice-Chair for the ensuing year.



3 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Hussey and Mrs Swift.

Councillor Hussey, as an Independent Member has taken the place of Councillor Lloyd, who was also an Independent Member, on the Human Resources Committee.

Councillor Mrs Swift is unable to attend any meetings of the Committee, as they take place on a Tuesday. The Committee felt that this was unacceptable and agreed that future Human Resources Committee meetings should be scheduled for Thursday mornings to allow all Members of the Committee to attend.

The Chief Fire Officer informed the meeting that following the refit of Oswestry Fire Station, an employers' evening is being held there on 14 December 2006. Councillor Lloyd's widow will be invited to attend the evening and to unveil a plaque in remembrance of Councillor Lloyd. The Committee felt that this was an appropriate memorial for him.

4 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

5 Non-Exempt Minutes

Members received the non-exempt minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting held on 12 July 2006.

Resolved: *that the non-exempt minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting, held on 12 July 2006, be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.*

6 People Strategy

This report sought formal approval from the Human Resources Committee of the attached People Strategy for Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority.

Members felt that the document was comprehensive and easy to understand.

Resolved: *that the Human Resources Committee:*

- a) *Recommend to the Fire Authority that the People Strategy, attached as an appendix to the report, be adopted for the period 2006 to 2009; and*
- b) *Agree to review progress against the People Strategy annually in October.*

7 Update on the Progress of the Disability Equality Scheme

The purpose of this report was to make the Human Resources Committee aware of the progress of this Scheme and the proposed arrangements for adoption of the completed Scheme.



Councillor Davies asked if the development of the Disability Equality Scheme was linked to findings of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA), which had identified disability equality as an area for improvement. The Equality and Diversity Officer explained that this was not the case and that there was a legal requirement for the Fire Authority to have a Disability Equality Scheme in place by 4 December 2006. It was agreed, however, that the Scheme would help to support future CPAs.

Councillor Mrs Holyoak asked what a focus group was. The Equality and Diversity Officer explained that that they are meetings to which people are invited to give their comments on a particular issue, in this case people with disabilities were invited to attend.

Councillor Dr Drummond asked if people with learning disabilities had been invited to take part. The Equality and Diversity Officer confirmed that there had been representation from Taking Part at the focus groups.

Councillor Davies asked about levels of attendance. The Equality and Diversity Officer said that attendance had not been as good as expected but other methods had been used to gather feedback as well, such as home visits.

Resolved: *that the Human Resources Committee agree the proposal for the progression and adoption of the Disability Equality Scheme on 4 December 2006, pending approval under the urgency procedures, and subsequent referral for final approval to the next Fire Authority meeting on 20 December 2006.*

8 Updated Race Equality Scheme

This report sought approval from the Human Resources Committee of the draft of the updated Race Equality Scheme, so that it may proceed to public consultation.

Councillor Davies asked if action 42, which is to issue a summary of the Race Equality Scheme to all staff by the end of 2006 would be completed. The Equality and Diversity Officer confirmed that it would.

It was confirmed that the Race Equality Scheme will be reviewed every three years. It is also a living document, which can be updated as necessary.

Councillor Hartin asked how long the public consultation period would be. The consultation will last for four weeks, with the document then being brought to the Fire Authority for approval.

Resolved: *that Members approve the updated Race Equality Scheme.*

9 Shropshire Partnership Equalities Forum

This report informed the Human Resources Committee of the progress to date of the Shropshire Partnership Equalities Forum, as requested by the Fire Authority.

Councillor Mrs Holyoak was pleased that a Trust had been established to manage equality and diversity funding awards. The Equality and Diversity Officer is a member of the Trust and has been involved in several of the decisions to make awards. Councillor Davies commented on the increase in membership of the Equality Forum.



The Assistant Chief Officer mentioned the official launch of the Hate Crime campaign, which Fire Service representatives had attended and Councillor Hartin mentioned that there are Hate Crime advertisements on fire engines.

Resolved: *that the Committee note the content of the report.*

10 Telford Race, Equality and Diversity Partnership

This report informed the Human Resources Committee of the progress of the Telford Race, Equality and Diversity Partnership, as requested by the Fire Authority.

Councillor Mrs Holyoak asked if a Chair had been recruited for the Board. It was confirmed that this process was ongoing.

Councillor Hartin queried why the Hate Crime campaign was not mentioned in the report. This is because the Partnership has not joined up to this initiative. The Telford Partnership has a different focus to the Shropshire Partnership Equalities Forum, which was discussed in the previous agenda item. This is because, after the closure of the Race Equality Council, an external consultant reviewed the County and the conclusion was that two separate groups were needed to address the issues that affect Telford and Shropshire. The two partnerships do link on some projects, such as training and this joint working is something that will, perhaps, develop further in the future.

Resolved: *that the Committee note the contents of the report.*

11 Revised Health Panel Procedures

This report sought the formal approval by the Human Resources Committee of the attached revised Health Panel Procedures.

Resolved: *that the Human Resources Committee approve:*

- a) *The revised Health Panel procedures and form HP1; and*
- b) *That a panel of two senior managers (taken from the Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Assistant Chief Officer) hear initial considerations of cases.*

12 Member Development Plan 2006-07

This report sought the formal approval by the Human Resources Committee of the attached Member Development Plan.

The Assistant Chief Officer explained that a summary of the reviews undertaken had shown that some training needs were greater than others. Some of these issues had already been addressed through the Budget Scrutiny training and a one-day seminar is to be arranged to address some of the more urgent needs.

Councillor Hartin asked for clarification that the Development Plan was the document that was attached to the report as an appendix. The Assistant Chief Officer confirmed that it was. Councillor Hartin felt that the process had been useful and needed to be continued and built upon. Councillor Mrs Holyoak felt that the process linked well with local council processes.



Resolved: that Human Resources Committee approve and recommend to the Fire Authority:

- a) The areas constituting the Member Development Plan for 2006-07;
- b) That a Members' seminar is arranged for early 2007 to provide high level input to Members on some of the common areas of identified need;
- c) That further ½ day sessions are booked in advance throughout the year to enable forward planning of development activity;
- d) That, where practicable, pre-meeting or post-meeting sessions could also be arranged for specific topics; and
- e) That the Development Review process for Members be repeated in 2007.

13 Local Government Act 1972

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 and 2.

14 Exempt Minutes (Paragraphs 1 and 2)

Members received the exempt minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting held on 12 July 2006.

Resolved: that the exempt minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting, held on 12 July 2006 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

15a Applications to Undertake Outside Employment (Approved Provisionally) (Paragraphs 1 and 2)

This report informed Members of nine applications from Fire Authority employees to undertake outside employment, which had been approved provisionally by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee.

Resolved: that Members confirm the provisional approval given by the Chair and Vice-Chair.

15b Applications to Undertake Outside Employment (Paragraphs 1 and 2)

This report informed Members of four applications from Fire Authority employees to undertake outside employment.

Resolved: that Members approve the applications made for outside employment.

16 Request under Regulation 31 (the 85 year rule) of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Paragraphs 1 and 2)

This report provided information to enable Members to consider a request to retire early under Regulation 31 (the 85 year rule) of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS).



Resolved: *that Members recommend the acceptance of this request to retire early under the 85 year rule to the Fire Authority for approval.*

The meeting closed at 11.35 am.

Chair:.....

Date:.....

**Definitions of Exempt Information
Local Government Act 1972 – Schedule 12A**

**Part 1
Descriptions of Exempt Information: England**

- Paragraph 1** Information relating to any individual
- Paragraph 2** Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
- Paragraph 3** Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding the information)
- Paragraph 4** Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
- Paragraph 5** Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
- Paragraph 6** Information which reveals that the authority proposes:
- (a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
 - (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.
- Paragraph 7** Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

