

**Minutes of the Meeting of
Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority
Human Resources Committee
held at Brigade Headquarters, Shrewsbury
at 2.00 pm on Tuesday, 21 February 2006**

Present: Councillors Davies, Dr Drummond, Hartin, Lloyd and Picken

1 Apologies for Absence

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

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Minutes

Resolved: *that the non-exempt minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting, held on 1 November 2005, be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.*

4 Member Training and Development

The report of the Chief Fire Officer asked the Committee to approve the amended Member training and development questionnaire and to recommend to the Fire Authority a process for Member personal development review.

Members were concerned about the amount of time they would have to spend in collating evidence of development into their Personal Development File. It was clarified that it would not be necessary to put together a detailed portfolio, but that the evidence might be in the form of a letter regarding training or a course completion certificate. Members agreed that this would be acceptable.

A discussion ensued on whether member training and development could be built in as a mandatory requirement by the Fire Authority. The Committee was informed that the Authority was unable to do this, but it was felt to be unnecessary, as the majority of Members would agree to take part. It was suggested that Group Leaders be informed of any Member, who did not wish to participate.

Resolved unanimously: *that the Committee:*

- a) *Agree the amended Member training and development questionnaire; and*
- b) *Recommend to the Fire Authority the process for Member personal development review.*



5 Co-Responder Legal Case Funding

The report of the Chief Fire Officer sought the opinion of the Human Resources Committee, in response to the request made by the Employers in Circular EMP/01/06, that Fire and Rescue Services share the cost of the impending legal action by Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire in relation to co-responding. The response to the Assistant Chief Officer's e-mail, attached as Appendix C, was tabled for Members' information (a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes).

Members discussed the role of the co-responder and requested further information on what training was involved and how the scheme worked. Officers agreed to provide this information to all Fire Authority Members.

The Committee was informed that the Integrated Risk Management Planning process for 2006/07 would identify whether there was a need for Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service to be involved in the co-responder scheme. Three retained firefighters were already trained as co-responder volunteers outside their position with the Fire Service.

Members discussed the request for funding at length, but felt that there was too much uncertainty regarding the total cost implications of the court case. It was also unknown how many other authorities would agree to provide funding. The Committee was, therefore, unable to make a decision without more information. The Fire Authority had initially responded that a decision could not be made by 21 February, as this was the date that the Human Resources Committee was due to meet. Members went on to discuss the various funding options available and tasked officers to provide a report for decision to the next full Fire Authority meeting on 10 May 2006, outlining the options discussed by the Committee.

Resolved: *that officers be tasked to provide a report, outlining the options discussed by the Human Resources Committee, to be considered by the full Fire Authority on 10 May 2006. The options discussed being:*

- a) *Agree to contribute, providing a significant majority of other fire authorities also make a contribution;*
- b) *Propose a specific amount to be contributed; or*
- c) *Contribute, but on wholetime firefighter figures and not on the number of uniformed personnel as a whole, i.e. excluding Retained personnel.*

6 Retained Firefighters and the Part-Time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations – House of Lords Listing

Members received the Fire Brigades National Employers Circular EMP/20/50, which advised them of the position regarding legal costs in the above case.

The Assistant Chief Officer informed Members that the case had been lost, but had since been taken to the House of Lords. The hearing was due to be held on 11 and 12 January but the outcome had not been published at the time of the meeting.

Resolved: *that the Circular be noted.*



7 Draft National Human Resources Strategy

This report informed the Committee of the draft UK Fire and Rescue Service Human Resources Strategy, written by the Chief Fire Officers' Association, which had been issued for consultation. The closing date for the responses was 15 March 2006.

The Assistant Chief Officer informed Members that she had been involved in producing the consultation document, which was attached as an appendix to the report. With this knowledge, Members were happy to accept the content and had no further comments to add. It was, therefore,

Resolved: *that the report be noted.*

8 Response to the Draft Learning and Development Strategy

The report of the Chief Fire Officer gave the Committee the opportunity to comment on the consultation paper from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister on Leadership and Development in the Fire and Rescue Service.

The Assistant Chief Officer highlighted the additional information, which had been included in the Authority's response at questions 3, 5, 8 and 12.

Resolved: *that Members agree the response questionnaire attached as an appendix to the report.*

9 Next Steps for the Integrated Personal Development System

This report provided an update on the discontinuation of the Integrated Personal Development System Hub and the progress made to date within Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service.

Resolved: *that the report be noted.*

10 Personal Insurance for Firefighters

Members received Fire Service Circular 4-2006, which provided information on personal insurance for firefighters.

Members requested that the Circular be brought to the attention of all firefighters within the Brigade.

Resolved: *that Fire and Rescue Service Circular 4-2006 be noted.*

11 Firefighters' Pension Scheme

Firefighters' Pension Scheme Circular FPS 1/2006 provided an update on development of the new pension arrangements and related matters and a question and answer briefing.

Members requested that the Circular be brought to the attention of all firefighters within the Brigade.

Resolved: *that the report be noted.*



12 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 paragraph 1.*

**13 Exempt Minutes
(Paragraph 1 – Information relating to a Particular Employee)**

Resolved: *that the exempt minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting, held on 1 November 2006, be signed by the Chair as a correct record.*

**14 Applications to Undertake Outside Employment
(Paragraph 1 – Information relating to a Particular Employee)**

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

Resolved: *that the Committee’s decision be confirmed in writing in accordance with the procedure agreed.*

The meeting closed at 3.20 pm.

Chair:.....

Date:.....

