



MEETING: HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: PEOPLE SERVICES UPDATE

JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER/CHIEF EXECUTIVE (CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY) AND PERSONNEL ADVISOR TO THE AUTHORITY

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the committee on the year to date workplace activities undertaken by the HR Department.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The service has seen a real focus placed on the people side of the business in recent times. This has included a Thematic Inspection which has required the whole Service to demonstrate its approach to managing a number of HR related activities.
- 2.2 Whilst there has been additional demands placed on the people side of the business, there has also been a requirement to continue with the business as usual activities which are essential to maintain legislative requirements and continuous improvement.
- 2.3 As the Service looks forward to the next full HMI Inspection it will continue to balance the everyday business as usual demands, along with focusing on how the Service continues to improve. This includes identifying trends within the workforce, and working with the community to improve how we deliver our Services.

3 HR RELATED ACTIVITIES

- 3.1 The list below shows a number of HR related actions that have taken place since April 23. Whilst this list is not exhaustive it does give a good representation of how the Service is managing business as usual activities.

- **Managing Long Term Absences and those on alternative duties and or those unable to fulfil their full role.** – With oversight from the ACFO, a people partner within the HR Department, monitors those individuals who are absent from work for longer than a 28 day period, or are currently on alternate duties or unable to fulfil their full contractual role. We have had 36 occasions when this has occurred. Of the 36 there are currently 19 individuals who continue to be monitored.
- **Ill Health Retirement Applications** – We have seen five applications this year, all of which have now been concluded.
- **Discipline Cases (Including short term absence)** – There have been 20 discipline cases processed since Apr 23 with various outcomes applied. Five are currently still ongoing.
- **Grievances** – The Service has seen 19 grievances submitted since Apr 23, seven of these are still open.
- **Employment Tribunals Claims** – There have been two ET claims, one has been settled whilst the other is still ongoing.
- **Flexible Working Requests** – There have been 12 applications for flexible working, eight have been accepted and four declined.
- **Recruitment** – The service has undertaken a number of green book recruitment campaigns and grey book promotion processes resulting in 20 new grey book employees and 28 new green book employees. The most recent FF recruitment process started in Jan 2023 with 1041 applications, this has enabled two courses to be planned for 2024 each consisting of 24 new trainee Firefighters, due to the success of our positive action work, both course should have 50% of members from diverse/minority groups.
- **Leavers** – The Service has seen a total of 43 individuals leave the Service since Apr 2023.
- **Events attended** – The HR department has supported and attended a total of 20 external events since April 2023. These events are both to promote the role of a Firefighter through community engagement, and provided support to our network colleagues through positive action and reaching out to the community.

4 LOOK FORWARD

- 4.1 The new Head of Human Resources has recently been appointed and brings with her a wealth of experience and knowledge. The people side of the business will continue to evolve and improve in those areas that have been identified as part of recent inspections.
- 4.2 The immediate focus will be on addressing those recommendations highlighted within the Cultural Audit along with identifying any themes identified through the recent Hive survey. We also recognise that there will be demands placed on the

Service with the impending full HMI inspection due to start in the coming months.

- 4.3 As 43 individuals have left the service since April 2023, further work also needs to be undertaken to consider the reasons why individuals are leaving the Service outside of retiring.

5 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 It is recognised by all, that the people who work within the organisation are the biggest asset and resource. There is a requirement for continuous improvement in all areas of how we manage people related issues, which includes clear and concise policies and procedures. The recent thematic inspection has demonstrated that as a Service we are moving in the right direction and we have good foundations to build on.

6 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no equality and fairness implications in respect of this report.

7 HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no health and safety implications in respect of this report.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 Members are recommended to:
- a) Note the content of the report
 - b) Receive further reports / updates as appropriate.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

N/A

