

## **Report of the Assistant Chief Fire Officer - Director of Protection and Assets**

### **Update from the Joint Consultative Committee**

#### **Purpose of report**

1. To inform the Committee of the activities of the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) since the last update provided on 15 November 2022.
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#### **Recommendation**

***It is recommended that the following new and existing items currently under discussion by the Joint Consultative Committee be noted:***

- (i) Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Contracts/Policy - Outcome of National Review***
- (ii) Duty Systems - 12hr days and Day Crewing***
- (iii) Fitness and Attendance Management Policies***
- (iv) Promotion Processes***
- (v) Industrial Action***
- (vi) Core Code of Ethics Steering Group***
- (vii) Safeguarding Training Competency Framework***
- (viii) Time in Motion Review***
- (ix) Staff Survey Update***
- (x) Property Update***
- (xi) Project Updates - National Operational Guidance (NOG), On-Call, and Unwanted Fire Signals***
- (xii) Mid-term Financial Plan (MTFP) Update***

#### **Background**

2. The JCC acts as the main route for formal employee consultation. It consists of managers and employee representatives who meet every six weeks to discuss issues of mutual interest. The JCC is not a decision-making body.
3. Employees are represented on JCC by members from each of the Representative Bodies (RBs) in Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service, namely the FBU, FOA, FRSA and Unison.
4. The Committee is chaired by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer who is currently responsible for industrial relations. Other management representatives include the Assistant Directors / Area Commanders responsible for Protection, Prevention, Response and Assets, as well as the Head of HR and Development.

## **Update**

5. The Joint Protocol for Industrial Relations SPI provides the framework for communicating, consulting and negotiating with all Trade Unions.
6. Following a review of how the JCC operates, all new items raised at JCC meetings are now categorised under one of the following headings thus enabling a more structured flow of information between management and RBs:
  - For consultation
  - For negotiation
  - Service Policy and Instructions (SPI) undergoing formal consultation
  - Items for information / updates for TU Reps
  - Requests for information / issues raised by TU Reps
  - Other Items
7. The JCC has met on 3 occasions since the previous update delivered to the Committee on 15 November 2022 (16 January 2023, 8 March 2023, and 20 April 2023).

## **New issues under discussion since the last update**

### USAR Contracts / Policy - Outcome of National Review

8. The USAR contracts and policy has gone through formal consultation and been agreed. However, much of this will depend on the National Review of USAR. The Service has now received formal notification that a decision to defer a reduction in USAR teams for at least another year has been made by the Minister, to April 2025.

### Policies

9. The main focus over the coming months in terms of policies is currently as follows:
  - Fitness Policy - The Health & Safety Working Group have been working alongside HR on the Fitness Policy. The focus is to ensure that support is in place for individuals if they fail a fitness test.
  - Attendance Management Policy - Formal consultation has now been completed and comments are being reviewed.
  - Day Crewing Policy. With the agreed move to introduce a revised Day Crewing model at Evesham, Droitwich and Malvern Fire Stations, the Day Crewing Policy has been agreed.
  - 12hr Duty Systems Policy. Following a successful trial of a variation of the 12hr Duty system, an amendment to the existing policy to include the variation as an agreed duty system within the Service has been through formal consultation, with comments currently being reviewed.

### Promotion Processes

10. Following the last Committee update, the proposed 2023 programme for promotion processes was published. Since January the following processes have been completed; Principle Officers, Area Commander / Assistant Director, and Group Commander. A wholetime Fire Fighter recruitment campaign has also commenced and is due to complete by July 2023, and a Crew Commander (Control) process is also on-going.

### Industrial Action

11. Discussions have been held locally concerning industrial action, and the subsequent pay offers.

### Core Code of Ethics Steering Group

12. JCC members have been updated concerning the work of the Core Code of Ethics Steering Group, alongside the Cultural Review being completed by Dr Willoughby, and the introduction of a confidential reporting line into the Service.

### Safeguarding Training Competency Framework

13. An update has been provided concerning competency training plans, legislation and frameworks concerning safeguarding, and the formation of a Safeguarding Group which will meet quarterly to review work in this area.

### Time in Motion Review

14. A brief update has been discussed with the group concerning the fire station(s) 'time in motion' review that has completed its first 12 months. It was noted that once the data has been studied it would be shared with the group.

### Staff Survey Update

15. JCC members were provided with a brief update concerning the recent results of the staff survey completed by the consultancy 'People Insight'. Additionally, it was confirmed that an online all staff presentation would be recorded for staff to view.

### Property Update

16. A brief overview was provided concerning the progress made in the capital property programme, specifically; Broadway, Redditch and Hereford Fire Stations, and the Strategic Training Facility at Leominster.

### Project Updates

17. The main focus over the coming months in terms of projects is as follows:
  - NOG Competence and Command Excellence - There will be a launch in June and then materials rolled out over the next 12 months.

- On-Call - This project is progressing with an internal team now led by a Group Commander. Station specific recruitment profiles and a rebranding exercise is being completed by a specialist consultancy to target local demographics and assist with on-call recruitment.

#### Mid-term Financial Plan Update

18. The Director of Finance attended JCC on the 16 January 2023 to provide an overview of the Mid-term Financial Plan (MTFP).

#### **Conclusion**

19. The Policy and Resources Committee has responsibility to monitor and review staffing matters discussed by the JCC and as such is required to receive regular reports on these matters. This report provides Members with an update on the current issues under discussion with employee representatives.

#### **Corporate Considerations**

<b>Resource Implications</b> (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	None.
<b>Strategic Policy Links &amp; Core Code of Ethics</b> (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and align to the Core Code of Ethics)	The JCC forum links to the successful discharge of the People Strategy.
<b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores)	None.
<b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Consultation has been carried out on all significant policy changes as per Service procedures.
<b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	All significant policy changes are fully supported by EIAs.
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b> (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)	N/A