

Report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer – Service Support

14. Update from the Joint Consultative Committee

Purpose of report

1. To inform the Committee of the activities of the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) since September 2015.
-

Recommendation

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

- (i) Policy on financial assistance for medical treatment***
- (ii) Project Arrow Update***
- (iii) Relocation of Service Headquarters (SHQ) to Hindlip***
- (iv) Logging of Pre-Arranged Overtime***
- (v) Wyre Forest Hub***
- (vi) Union recognition and consultation***
- (vii) Job Evaluation***
- (viii) Use of Agency Staff***

Background

2. The JCC acts as the main route for employee consultation. It comprises managers and employee representatives who meet on a monthly basis to discuss issues of mutual concern. 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, GMB, RFU and Unison.
4. The Committee is chaired by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer who is currently responsible for industrial relations. Other management representatives include the Head of Human Resources and the Area Commanders responsible for Operations and Operations Support.

Update

5. Since its last update to the Committee, the JCC has met on two occasions –13 October 2015 and 1February 2016
 - Policy on Financial Assistance for Medical Treatment: There is taxation on medical treatment provided over £500 and is classed as a workplace benefit which has to be declared on a P11D form. Martin Reohorn, Director of Finance, is awaiting advice from a tax advisor in terms of this moving forward. Consultation will then follow with Representative Bodies.
 - Project Arrow Update: Howard Robinson (ex-Leicestershire ACFO) has been appointed to review all existing Project Arrow work, making further investigations into the three areas below and to draft the joint report for the next Project Arrow Board.
 - Fire Control
 - Response
 - Operational Support Departments
 - Relocation of SHQ to Hindlip: Police collaboration involving Hindlip has been split into two distinct pieces of work – Operational Communications Centre (OCC) being one area and the new SHQ move being the other. The SHQ move is in the very early stages and work is ongoing as to how personnel physically move to Hindlip, ICT being particularly complex. Area Commander Keith Chance is leading on this work and will continue to explore what the new HQ will look like.
 - Logging of Pre-Arranged Overtime/Multiple Contracts: There are a large number of uniformed staff and several members of support staff who have multiple contracts and roles with the Service. The FBU have raised concerns regarding an individual undertaking an ‘unsafe’ number of hours although no evidence has been received of this and appears to be managed quite well by these individuals. Area Commander Jon Pryce has met with HR and Payroll to look at ways of picking up exceptions and exploring options through payroll when an individual’s earnings exceed a certain level for their line manager to discuss hours worked and managing their hours. A process will shortly be in place which will easily show multiple contracts and roles within HWFRS.
 - Wyre Forest Hub - The formal public consultation commenced on Tuesday 1 September for a period of twelve weeks and concluded on 27 November 2015. A range of engagement activities with external and internal key stakeholders have taken place. Findings and recommendations were considered by the Fire Authority on 17 February 2016. .
 - Job Evaluation – A review has been conducted and Jean Cole, Head of Corporate Services, took a report to SMB for options, costs and implications for the organisation. Three HR employees as well as one or two other Managers will undertake training for job evaluation in April.
 - Agency Staff – A report to representative bodies to be reinstated by HR providing information on the number of agency staff within the Service.

6. The JCC Chair continues to keep JCC members updated on any key issues and activities in which the Service is involved. These include:
- Workforce Planning/Secondment issues.
 - Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)/RDS Initiative.
 - Voluntary Redundancy/Voluntary Early Retirement.

Conclusion

7. 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 this Committee with an update on the current issues under discussion with employee representatives.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	Para 7 & 8
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications)	Para 7 & 8
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores)	None
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Para 7 & 8
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	No, not required – information only

Supporting Information

None

Contact Officer

Richard Lawrence, Deputy Chief Fire Officer
(01905 368206)

Email: rlawrence@hwfire.org.uk