



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Audit and Standards Committee

Tuesday, 15 October 2019, 10:30

Chairman: Cllr M Hart

Vice-Chairman: Cllr A Amos

Minutes

Members Present: Ms P Agar, Mr A Amos, Mrs E Eyre BEM, Mr I D Hardiman, Mr M Hart, Mrs K Hey, Dr K Pollock, Mr L Stark, Mrs D Toynbee

149 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Mr S Bowen and Mr R Morris.

150 Named Substitutes

There were no named substitutes.

151 Declarations of Interest (if any)

There were no interests declared.

152 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Standards Committee held on 30 July 2019 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

153 Annual Audit Letter 2018/19

The External Auditor presented the Annual Audit Letter 2018/19 from Grant Thornton UK LLP which summarised the findings from the 2017/18 audit.

RESOLVED that the Annual Audit Letter 2018/19 from External

Auditors, Grant Thornton UK LLP be noted.

154 Internal Audit Progress Report 2019/20

The Head of Internal Audit Shared Service presented Members with an update on the delivery and progress to date on the 2019/20 Audit Programme.

[Cllr E Eyre entered the meeting at 10.37am]

Members were informed that the Internal Audit Plan for 2019/20 was progressing steadily and it was anticipated that any recommendations that were made in regards to the reports produced throughout the year would be addressed through robust management action plans and in a timely manner.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

155 Annual Statement of Assurance 2019-20

The Chief Fire Officer presented the Annual Statement of Assurance 2019-20 to be considered and approved.

Members were informed that this was the Authority's seventh Annual Statement of Assurance and upon approval would be published on the Service's website.

RESOLVED that the Committee adopts the draft Statement of Assurance 2019-20 and approves it for publication.

156 Employment Monitoring Report 01 April 2018 – 31 March 2019

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented a report summarising progress against the Public Sector Equality Duty, prior to the publication of the Employment Monitoring Report 2018-19 on the Service's website.

It was highlighted to Members that the actual number of staff employed by the Service was 683.

[Cllr K Hey entered the meeting at 10.50am]

It was noted that in relation to protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010, the references to 'gender' should instead refer to 'sex'.

Members were pleased to note the reduction in disciplined cases and that

the Service was working at reducing the gender gap.

There was concern regarding the decrease of female staff, however the Chief Fire Officer reassured Members that this was partly due to the redundancy of support staff and he had no concerns.

RESOLVED that the following areas be noted:

i) there have been minimal changes to the overall make up of the Service's workforce since the previous employment monitoring report for 2017-2018.

ii) the Employment Monitoring Report 2018-19 is approved for publication.

157 Health & Safety Committee Update

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented Members with an update on the activities and items of significance from the Service's Health and Safety Committee.

Members were advised that 13 out of the 15 recommendations made during the regional Health and Safety audit of March 2018 had been completed.

Members were also informed of the ongoing issues at Droitwich Fire Station where appliances were pulling out of the station into speeding traffic. Members were advised that this was being monitored closely and Cllr Clayton was very interested in this matter as the Health and Safety representative.

There was concern regarding the national reporting of cancer in retired Firefighters. Members were advised that remedial action in the Service had been taken with regard to the washing regime following attendance at an incident and the Service were awaiting further guidance from the NFCC.

Members were also pleased to note the low number of violence/ aggression incidents.

RESOLVED that the following issues, in particular, be noted:

i) Health and Safety performance information recorded during April 2019 to June 2019 (Quarter 1).

ii) The involvement of the Service in a number of Health and Safety initiatives.

The Meeting ended at: 11:23

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman