

**KENT AND MEDWAY FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**  
**HUMAN RESOURCES AND EQUALITIES COMMITTEE**

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MINUTES of a meeting of the Human Resources and Equalities Committee held at Kent Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, The Godlands, Tovil, Maidstone on Thursday 8 November 2012.

PRESENT:- Mr B R Cope (Chairman), Mr D A Hirst (Vice-Chairman), Mrs A Allen, Mr M J Angell, Mr R B Burgess, Mr A R Chell, Mr P Godwin, Mr W A Hayton, Mr P J Homewood, Mr S J G Koowaree, Mr T G Mason, Mr M J Northey, Mr R J Parry and Mrs Stockell.

OFFICERS:- The Chief Executive, Miss A Millington; the Assistant Director, Planning and Development, Mr P Flaherty; the Head of HR Strategy and Policy, Mrs K Banfield; the Head of HR Services, Mrs K Irvine; the Area Manager, Operations, Mr M Adams; and the Clerk to the Authority, Mr S C Ballard.

**UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**

**15. Minutes – 3 July 2012**

*(Item A3)*

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 3 July 2012 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**16. Total Reward – Preferential Discount Scheme for Staff**

*(Item B1 - Report by Chief Executive)*

- (1) Members were advised that a number of retailers and outlets were willing to offer discounts to the employees of emergency services, and considered proposals for development of a Preferential Discount Scheme to bring these discounts together and actively publicise them to the Authority's employees.
- (2) RESOLVED that development of a Preferential Discount Scheme accessible to all the Authority's employees, as described in the report, be approved.

**17. Extension of Voluntary Redundancy Package**

*(Item B2 - Report by Chief Executive)*

- (1) The Committee was reminded that at its meeting on 16 October 2007 (Minute 17) it had approved a policy, time-limited until 31 March 2011, on the exercise of the Authority's discretions under the Discretionary Compensation Regulations 2006 and Regulation 52 of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Regulations, to pay compensation to staff eligible for membership of the LGPS (i.e. service support staff) whose employment was terminated early by reason of redundancy or in the interests of the efficiency of the service. That policy had been extended for a further two years by the Committee at its meeting on 19 January 2010 (Minute 19), but would expire on 31 March 2013 unless renewed.
- (2) RESOLVED that the Redundancy Compensation Policy set out at Appendix 1 to the report be continued for a further two years until 31 March 2015.

**18. Declaration by Staff of Secondary Employment and other Outside Interests**  
*(Item B3 - Report by Chief Executive)*

- (1) Members considered a report setting out the actions taken to implement the recommendations of an Internal Audit report in 2010 relating to potential conflicts of interest of staff, and proposing further measures to identify such conflicts, and to introduce controls to remove or minimise any such conflict which may be identified.
- (2) RESOLVED that the approach outlined in the report to address recommendations identified by Internal Audit and strengthen the Authority's mechanisms to ensure that potential conflicts of interest of staff were identified, and steps taken to address any concerns raised, be approved.

**19. Equality Update**  
*(Item C1 - Report by Chief Executive)*

- (1) The Committee received an update on progress by the Authority towards achieving the characteristics of an organisation performing at the 'Excellent' level of the Equality Standard for Local Government.
- (2) RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

**20. Review of the Flexible Duty System**  
*(Item C2 - Report by Chief Executive)*

- (1) Members were advised of changes to the managerial and command response to operational incidents which had been introduced as a result of the recent review of the Flexible Duty System.
- (2) RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

**21. Career and Succession Planning**  
*(Item C3 - Report by Chief Executive)*

- (1) The Committee received a report describing the revised procedures and processes for the progression of staff and the related issue of succession planning in the Authority.
- (2) RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

**22. Performance Update**  
*(Item C4 - Report by Chief Executive)*

- (1) Members were given details of progress against strategic corporate health indicators, with a focus on performance data relating to the age profile of employees.
- (2) RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

**23. Pensions Update**  
*(Item C5 - Report by Chief Executive)*

- (1) Members were updated on recent developments and next steps regarding the Government's review of public sector pension schemes, and on the latest position on the backdating of pensions for former retained staff following the outcome of the Part-Time Workers' legal case.
- (2) As a correction to paragraph 4 of the report, the Head of HR Strategy and Policy advised Members that the Fire Brigades Union had not so far agreed to

8 November 2012

the proposed Heads of Agreement relating to the Firefighters' Pension Schemes.

- (3) RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.