

SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

**MINUTES OF THE HR & EQUALITIES MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY, 5 JULY, 2021**

HELD REMOTELY VIA STARLEAF CONNECTION

1. PRESENT:

Councillor	Left	Authority
P Drake (Chair		Vale of Glamorgan
A Roberts (Deputy Chair)		Rhondda Cynon Taff
D Ali		Cardiff
M Colbran		Merthyr Tydfil
S Evans		Torfaen
G Holmes		Rhondda Cynon Taff
A Hussey		Caerphilly
H Jarvie		Vale of Glamorgan
D Naughton		Cardiff
R Shaw		Bridgend
H Thomas		Newport
A Lister		Cardiff
S Malson		Torfaen
T Davies		Caerphilly
S Bradwick		Rhondda Cynon Taff
V Smith		Monmouth
A Roberts		Rhondda Cynon Taff

APOLOGIES:

C Elsbury	Caerphilly
D White	Bridgend

ABSENT:

W Hodgins	Blaenau Gwent
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OBSERVORS:

OFFICERS PRESENT:- ACO A Reed – Director of People Services, ACFO R Prendergast – Director of Technical Services, AM B Thompson – Head of Training & Development, A Jones – Head of HR, Mrs S Watkins – Deputy Monitoring Officer, CM Dave Crews – Mental Health Officer, SM Kevin Yates - IIP Officer, Ms R Hazell - Occupational Health Nurse

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Each Member declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in each agenda item which affected their Authority.

3. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair welcomed new Members.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous HR & Equalities meeting held on 22 February 2021, were received and accepted as a true record of proceedings.

5. TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT - INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

SM Yates gave a thorough presentation and overview to the group on 'Investors in People' accreditation and the Service's recent success in achieving Gold. It was noted that SWF&RS was one of only 16% of organisations worldwide have received and the first Organisation in Wales to receive Silver in Wellbeing.

RESOLVED THAT

Members approved the contents of the report, including the Investors in People reports for People and Wellbeing attached to the report as Appendix 1 and 2.

6. STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN 2020 - 2025 ANNUAL REVIEW

The Head of HR gave a brief overview of the Equality Plan and advised that a first year review has been completed. Some activities had been curtailed due to COVID-19 but have been able to restart.

RESOLVED THAT

Members noted and approved the content of this report and Appendix 1.

7. UPDATE ON PERSONAL REVIEW PROCESS

The Director of People Services and Head of HR advised that as part of the previous Investors in People Survey which took place in 2017 one of the recommendations was to have a consistent approach to the Performance Appraisal Process. This new process was piloted with a

number of groups and after positive feedback was launched across the Service in April 2021. A formal review will take place at the end of the year.

RESOLVED THAT

Members agreed to note the content of the report.

8. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH UNIT (OHU) ACTIVITY REPORT 1 APRIL 2020 TO 31 MARCH 2021

The Occupational Health Nurse informed Members that the presented Occupational Health Unit Activity report spanned the period from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. The Occupational Health Unit and staff have had to adapt and change during the last year, and were able to have over the telephone consultations wherever possible. The report provided data on services and expenditure, updates on occupational health initiatives and an outline of strategic development. It was raised why the fitness equipment budget had decreased and the Head of HR advised that the Service had invested heavily in gyms and equipment over the last few years and the result being not so much equipment required replacing.

RESOLVED THAT

Members unanimously agreed to note the content of the report.

9. FIREFIGHTER PENSION SCHEMES - WALES GOVERNMENT CIRCULARS 2021 / 2022

The Director of People Services went through the Circulars received since January 2021 from Welsh Government which have been noted or actioned as appropriate.

RESOLVED THAT

- 9.1 Members unanimously agreed to accept the Welsh Government Firefighters' Pension Scheme Circulars and emails that had been received in the 2021/2022 year to date.
- 9.2 Members agreed to note the actions that have been implemented for each of the circulars.

10. REPORT OF ANNUAL SICKNESS ABSENCE - 1 APRIL 2020 TO 31 MARCH 2021

The Head of HR Manager presented a report to Members on the Annual Sickness Absence from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. Despite a difficult year dealing with the evolving COVID-19 Pandemic the following key areas were highlighted:-

- Sickness absence figures across the Service had reduced by 9.5% on the previous year
- The number of shifts/days lost to long term sickness was reduced by 12.1% on the previous year
- A small increase from 11 to 15 injuries on duty leading to sickness absence.

The report also provided Members with a snapshot of the areas of focus for improving wellbeing and mental health activities.

RESOLVED THAT

Members agreed to note the contents of the report.

11. ANNUAL REPORT ON GRIEVANCE & DISCIPLINE ACTIVITIES - 1 APRIL 2020 TO 31 MARCH 2021

The Head of HR presented a report which provided Members with a summary of grievance and discipline matters investigated by the Resolution Unit during the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. Of the two appeals that have taken part in the last year both were upheld.

RESOLVED THAT

Members noted and accepted the contents of the report.

12. REPORT ON MENTAL HEALTH PROJECT AND ACTIVITIES

Crew Manager Crews presented a report which provided Members with an update on the key work-streams the Service was undertaking in relation to the Mental Health Project.

RESOLVED THAT

Members agreed to note the contents of the report.

13. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME FOR HR & EQUALITIES COMMITTEE 2021 / 2022

The Director of People Services provided Members with the Forward Work Programme for 2021/2022.

RESOLVED THAT

Members agreed the content of the Forward Work Programme for 2021/2022.

14. TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRPERSON DEEMS URGENT (PART 1 or 2)

There were no items of urgent business to discuss.