

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

CONSULTATION AND NEGOTIATION SUB-COMMITTEE

2 DECEMBER 2014

MINUTES

Present: Cllr Jimmy Mahon (Chair) Councillors Les Byrom,
Linda Maloney and Tony Robertson

Also Present: Cllr Dave Hanratty

Apologies of absence were received from: Cllr
Roy Gladden

3. Chair's Announcements

Prior to the start of the meeting, information regarding general housekeeping and confirmation of the recording of proceedings was provided by the Chair to all in attendance.

The Chair then declared the meeting open and recording of the proceedings commenced.

1. Preliminary Matters

Members considered the identification of declarations of interest, any urgent additional items, and any business that may require the exclusion of the press and public.

Resolved that:

- a) no declarations of interest were made by individual Members in relation to any item of business on the Agenda.
- b) no additional items of business to be considered as matters of urgency were determined by the Chair; and
- c) no items of business required the exclusion of the press and public during consideration thereof, due to the possible disclosure of exempt information.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the previous meeting of Consultation & Negotiation Sub-Committee, held on 2nd September 2014, were approved as a correct record and signed accordingly by the Chair.

3. **Industrial Relations Update**

(CFO/124/14)

Members considered Report CFO/124/14 of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, concerning matters of negotiation and consultation currently being discussed between Officers of the Authority and representative bodies, since the last meeting of the Consultation & Negotiation Sub-Committee of 2nd September 2014.

Members were provided with a comprehensive overview of the report, which highlighted the following key areas of progress:

- Consultation on 45 new or amended Service Instructions has been concluded successfully.
- Following 3 days of conciliation meetings, an implementation timescale for the introduction of a number of new Employment Policies was agreed. With the exception of the Firefighter Health & Fitness Service Instruction, which the FBU were not able to agree under instruction from their National Officials, the Policy documents were formally signed off by both parties on 14th November 2014 and transitional arrangements will be applied to implement the new and revised policies from January 2015.
- The extant Firefighter Health & Fitness arrangements will remain in place subject to further consideration.
- Dialogue is now in progress over the issue of 24 hour working, which includes the consideration of wider adoption of the Self-Managed Teams principle, the undertaking of wholetime Retained Contracts and potential for undertaking Voluntary Additional Hours. The rationale behind consideration of these options was explained in detail and Officers advised that they would hopefully be in a position to report back to Members shortly with the outcome of those discussions.
- A review of the move to 12 hour shifts for station based operational staff and Fire Control staff will be commencing shortly through the Joint Secretaries.
- In relation to the ongoing National dispute between the Government and the FBU over pension reform, Members were informed that a further 24 hour period of strike action has been called by the FBU over 9th and 10th December 2014, to coincide with the pension regulations being laid before parliament.

The Chair invited representatives from the Trades Unions to comment.

The Fire Brigades Union made comment to highlight the amount of work undertaken by the Joint Secretaries in relation to Service Instructions and reaching agreement over the new HR Policies. They also commented that

Industrial Relations are excellent at the moment, with issues being grasped and dealt with in an effort to create some stability for all moving forward.

Members of the Committee then made comments emphasising the positive industrial relations on Merseyside and welcoming the continuation of close working with the Representative Bodies through a period of ongoing significant change and uncertainty, in an effort to maintain the best service possible.

Members also suggested that it would be helpful to have a “Learning Lunch” for Members focusing on Service Instructions, to aid their understanding of the development and roll out process.

Members Resolved that:

- a) The progress being made to maintain effective and constructive industrial relations with representative bodies, be noted.
- b) The progress being made to deliver the Authority’s IRMP, be noted.
- c) Their thanks be recorded to everyone involved in maintaining excellent industrial relations.
- d) A “Learning Lunch” be arranged for Members concerning the development and implementation of Service Instructions.

Close

Date of next meeting Tuesday, 24 March 2015

Signed: _____

Date: _____