

## County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service

Minutes of a meeting of the **Human Resources Committee** held at Fire HQ on **Tuesday 26 November 2024** at **10:00 hours**.

**Present:** Cllr S Zair in the Chair

**Durham County Council:** Cllrs A Batey, C Marshall, C Martin

**Darlington Borough Council:** G Lee

**Officers:** K Metcalfe  
C Williams (for item 4 only)

### Part A

#### 1 Apologies

There were no apologies.

#### 2 Minutes of previous meeting – 27 September 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

#### 3 Sickness Absence Performance Quarter Two 1 April 2024 – 30 September 2024

K Metcalfe introduced the report which provided an update on sickness absence performance for the period 1 April to 30 September 2024.

K Metcalfe noted that sickness has increased compared to the previous year and each area was discussed in turn.

The Benenden trial referrals and national fire service data comparison report was discussed

Cllr Lee queried dismissal on the grounds of capability. K Metcalfe noted that this option was only considered after sick pay had been exhausted.

The Committee **noted** the report.

#### 4 Health and Safety Performance Quarter two 1 April 2024 to 30 September 2024

C Williams introduced the report which provided Members with a summary of the Service's health and safety performance for the end of quarter two 2024/25 reporting period.

The Committee **noted** the report.

**5 Standards of Behaviour: The Handling of Misconduct in the Fire and Rescue Service**

K Metcalfe presented the report informing Members of the outcomes of the internal review of County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Services practices against the recommendations made in HMICFRS Standards of Behaviour: The Handling of Misconduct in Fire and Rescue Services report.

K Metcalfe highlighted the HMICFRS Handling of Misconduct Improvement Plan which sets out 15 recommendations and the outstanding actions were discussed in turn.

Cllr Zair passed on the committees thanks to K Metcalfe and her team for the work involved in the plan.

The Committee **noted** the report.

**6 Options for addressing HMICFRS Recommendation relating to the provision of a professional standards function**

K Metcalfe introduced the report which highlighted a range of options which would address the recommendation relating to the provision of a Professional Standards Function highlighted in the recent inspection report.

The options were discussed in turn.

Cllr Marshall queried the opportunity for Vital Fire Solutions to become involved.

The committee **agreed** with the proposed progression of option 2.

**Part B**

**9 Employee Relations Update**

K Metcalfe introduced the report which provided details of informal and formal complaints received by the Service from its workforce as well as the instigation of any disciplinary action for the period 1 April 2024 to 30 September 2024.

**ACTION:** K Metcalfe to add age to the disproportionality data.

The Committee **noted** the report.