

# PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

## RECRUITMENT FOR ON-CALL FIRE-FIGHTERS AT LANCASTER FIRE STATION 9 March 2015

### REPORT OF THE HR AND OD MANAGER

#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update members on information received from Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) in relation to the request to assist in the promotion of the on-call fire-fighter recruitment process.

**This report is public**

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the Committee note the additional information provided by Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service.
- (2) That the Committee determine whether or not it wishes the Council to support LFRS in its efforts to recruit on-call Fire Fighters in Lancaster from the Council's workforce, through promotional material on the intranet and on noticeboards.

#### 1.0 Background

1.1 At its meeting on 3 February 2015, the Personnel Committee considered a report which set out a request from LFRS, to support recruitment of on-call fire-fighters in Lancaster.

1.2 The Committee resolved:

*That the Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager be requested to write to Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service with an expression of support for their work, and a request for further information on the likely time implications for people who successfully applied to become on-call firefighters.*

1.3 The HR & OD Manager wrote to LFRS stating:

*'As I am sure you are aware, the Council's priorities are the delivery of its statutory services and objectives set out in its Corporate Plan. Whilst the Council is keen to assist LFRS in its efforts to promote the role of 'on call fire fighter' clarity is needed in relation to the role the Council might play during any promotional process.*

*To assist LFRS and ensure effective communication is maintained across the workforce, it would be helpful if you would; provide more detailed information on, what support you would be looking for from the Council, and how this would dovetail into the recruitment processes and timeline which LFRS are working to?*

*In the interests of clarity the Council would not wish to mislead any of its employees into thinking that the promotion of any LFRS vacancies in some way means that the Council would automatically accommodate any successful application that is made. Clearly the Council will seriously consider each case on its own merits at the time'.*

## **2.0 Details**

2.1 LFRS have responded by telephone and offered to meet the HR & OD Manager to explain the plans which have been developed and provide more detailed information on the activities of the On-Call Fire Fighter.

2.2 On 24 February 2015, the HR & OD Manager met with representatives of LFRS who explained the following:

- LFRS have received positive feedback from the major local employers
- The Recruitment campaign is now running and will close on 1 May 2015. The aim is to recruit between 12 and 14 Officers for Lancaster. The actual number will be determined by the level of commitment each applicant can offer. Successful applicants will undertake an initial two week recruit training course which will commence 20 July 2015.
- The 'On-Call' commitment from an individual is expected to be in the region of 80 – 100 hours per week, although in certain circumstances this can be as low as 40 hours per week.
- Lancaster has around 300 call-outs per year but the majority are outside daytime working hours
- LFRS try to manage the impact on an Officers' day to day work commitments by working with the individual to develop a viable relationship / on-call structure.
- Employers will have within their workforce employees who are qualified firefighters, trained in fire safety, first aid and health and safety.
- Key issue is the catchment area for Lancaster Fire Station which calls for a 5 minute response time from work or home. However, there is flexibility in relation to an individual's on-call commitment which due to the location of their home could possibly be at different operational sites.
- This particular request for support by LFRS relates to Lancaster. However, LFRS are always looking to recruit to other fire stations to meet demand.

## **3.0 Implication as an employer**

3.1 The implications for the Council remain unchanged from those reported to Personnel Committee on 3 February 2015. If an employee of the Council were to make an application to become an On-Call Fire Fighter, then the Council, would apply the same process that is already in place, in that requests would be considered on a case by case basis.

## **4.0 Recommendations**

That Personnel Committee note the additional information provided by Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service.

That the Personnel Committee determine whether or not it wishes the Council to support LFRS in its efforts to recruit on-call Fire Fighters in Lancaster from the Council's workforce, through promotional material on the intranet and on noticeboards.

**CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**(including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)**

None relating to this report in the context of assisting LFRS in their promotion of the role of 'On-Call Fire Fighter'.

**LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no specific legal issues arising out of this report

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct finance implications arising from this report. Services would be required to manage any resource implications arising from within existing budgets.

**OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS****Human Resources:**

The HR & OD Manager is the author of the report. As each request would be considered individually, it is not possible to say which cases may be supported and which wouldn't. In considering any request, managers will be required to give due consideration to the potential impact any 'On-Call' duty might have on the employees ability to undertake their contracted duties, without detriment to the operation of the Council.

**Information Services:**

N/A

**Property:**

N/A

**Open Spaces:**

N/A

**SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The section 151 officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

**MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Deputy Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Personnel Committee - 3 February 2015

**Contact Officer:** Stuart Hampson

**Telephone:** 01524 582076

**E-mail:** shampson@lancaster.gov.uk

**Ref:** HR/Ctees/Personnel.