



MINUTES OF THE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE held on Friday 12 December 2014 at Fire Service Headquarters, Winsford at 10am.

PRESENT: Councillors R Polhill (Chair), T Sherlock and J Weatherill

PART 1 – MATTERS CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC

PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor D Brickhill

2 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of Members' interests.

3 SHIFT SYSTEM REVIEW: FAILURE TO AGREE WHOLETIME DUTY SYSTEM

The Monitoring Officer introduced this item, taking Members through the main elements of the report. He explained the background leading to the need for the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) to convene. He went on to remind Members about the key components of the wholetime duty system, the requirements in the Scheme of Conditions of Service (the Grey Book) and the Working Time Regulations.

The Monitoring Officer made reference to the procedure to be followed in Part 2 and the Chair, Councillor R Polhill invited officers and Members to introduce themselves.

4 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

That under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Order 2006, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the items of business listed below on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A to the Act in the paragraphs indicated:

Item 2

Paragraph

Shift System Review –
Failure to agree Wholetime
Duty System

(4) Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.

PART 2 – BUSINESS DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE

5 SHIFT SYSTEM REVIEW: FAILURE TO AGREE WHOLETIME DUTY SYSTEM

The parties, following the procedure set out in Appendix 4 to the Item 2 report, presented their positions. Members asked a number of questions.

Members were disappointed that, notwithstanding an indication by the parties that they might be able to compromise on some issues, it was not possible to achieve a mutually acceptable outcome. It became clear that the Trade Union-side was unable to agree to the introduction of 12 hours shifts.

Although Members were unable to provide the necessary impetus to secure a mutually acceptable outcome, they wished to make the following conclusions known to the parties:

RESOLVED:

- [1] The case for 12 hour shifts appears compelling for the following reasons:**

Productivity will increase; non-cashable savings will be achieved; the Working Time Regulations will be complied with; and more importantly firefighter safety will improve.

This conclusion is supported, in particular, by the guidance and opinion of the Health and Safety Executive and outcome from the Resolution Advisory Panel dealing with Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service's proposal to move to 12 hour shifts (the conclusion of Dr William Brown, 23rd August 2013).

- [2] That 12 hour shifts should commence no earlier than 1 January 2016.**

This will provide the Employer-side and Trade Union-side with sufficient time to finalise all aspects of the new arrangements as well as allow sufficient time for the notification of the change to staff.