

**WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**2<sup>ND</sup> APRIL 2007**

**1. RECRUITMENT, INDUCTION AND RETENTION OF EMPLOYEES  
FROM UNDER REPRESENTED GROUPS IN THE SERVICE**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer.

**RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1 THAT the Committee approve the establishment of a Task and Finish group to examine and report on the issues contained in this report.

**2. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report is submitted to inform the Executive Committee of a proposal to establish a Task and Finish group to examine the recruitment, induction and retention of employees from under represented groups in the Service.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Members may recall that the Service has worked for many years to attract employees from groups that have historically been under represented in the Fire Service. Whilst, of course, positive discrimination is illegal, positive action to attract, employ and retain people from these groups has been part of the Authority's approach to employment over a number of years.
- 3.2 As part of the regular meetings with Lead Members for Performance Management and Equality and Diversity, officers discussed the progress being made in respect of attracting, recruiting, inducting and retaining uniformed personnel from groups traditionally under represented in the Service. These groups typically include women, black and minority ethnic staff and those with a disability.

- 3.3 Initial examinations of some of the available data reveals that some or all of the groups have different levels of difficulty at:
- 3.3.1 the advertisement stage, with many application forms initially sent out not being returned.
- 3.3.2 personnel not proceeding beyond:
- the application, medical and criminal check stage.
  - the general ability test stage.
  - the practical selection test stage.
  - the recruitment interview stage.
- 3.3.3 personnel finding it difficult to deal with the induction stages at Training Centre or station level.
- 3.4 Officers and Members discussed:
- 3.4.1 availability of existing data and data systems.
- 3.4.2 clarity of available data.
- 3.4.3 what it is possible to infer from the existing data.
- 3.4.4 what the readers are deducing from the data.
- 3.4.5 what actions are required to improve any aspect of the Authority's approach, that would lead to an increase in the employment of minority groups.
- 3.5 Officers and Members concluded that a practical way forward would be to provide Members with an initial data presentation at the Policy Planning Forum scheduled for 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2007. Subsequently they felt that a Task and Finish group should be established to examine the issues. The group would include, the Lead Members for Performance Management and Equality and Diversity and a number of officers from a range of disciplines.

- 3.6 Terms of reference, timescales and deliverables would be agreed at an initial meeting which would be chaired by the Lead Member for Performance Management. Subsequently there would be a full report back to the Authority.

4. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

In preparing this report an initial Equality Impact Assessment is not required and has not been carried out. This report does not represent a change in either the policy or functions of the Authority.

A Task and Finish group may produce proposals which would need to be the subject of an Initial Equality Impact Assessment.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The course of action recommended in this report does not raise issues which should be drawn to the attention of the Authority's Monitoring Officer.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Recruitment and Retention Data Files  
Race Equality Scheme  
Data Presentation on Recruitment, Induction and Retention – Policy  
Planning Forum – 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2007

F. J. E. SHEEHAN  
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER