

# TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL

## Fire and Rescue Service: Retained Duty System

*To Review the Retained service in Suffolk and bring forward recommendations intended to secure its sustainability over the next 10-years*

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It has been agreed that the Policy Development Panel will consider issues under the following headings:

1. The Role of Retained Firefighters
2. Recruitment of Retained Firefighters
3. Selection and progression of Retained Firefighters
4. Retention of Retained Firefighters
5. Training and development of Retained Firefighters
6. Remuneration arrangements for Retained Firefighters

This document has been prepared to establish clear terms of reference under each of these headings. These terms of reference will be used to guide the work of the panel, and also to support the initial research that will inform this work.

### 1. The Role of Retained Firefighters

1. To capture and record details of the current role of Retained firefighters in Suffolk
2. To analyse the community safety activities in which Retained firefighters actually engage across the county e.g. number of emergency incidents of various types attended, number of Home Fire Safety Checks completed
3. To analyse the number of information-gathering visits that are carried out by Retained staff, to high-risk premises, under section 7.2(d) of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.
4. To analyse the percentage of time Retained fire appliances are not available to attend emergency incidents – either due to mechanical defects or shortage of riders
5. To examine the extent to which the introduction of three Full Time Equivalent posts has contributed to increasing the number of emergencies attended by Retained fire appliances

To examine whether the role of all Retained firefighters should encompass their involvement in proactive community safety activity

### **The Role of Retained Firefighters (cont'd)**

6. To examine the expectations on, and workload of, Retained officers
7. To examine whether Retained firefighters would, generally, be able to commit more time to their work for Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service
8. To examine whether Retained firefighters should continue to be available to respond to the wide range of emergency incidents that they are currently expected to attend
9. To assess whether the role of Retained firefighters, in selected areas of the county, should be broadened to include availability for co-responding duties, on a voluntary basis
10. To examine the appetite for using selected Retained fire stations as shared community facilities, and to assess their suitability for this purpose
11. To make recommendations associated with necessary changes to the role of Retained firefighters in Suffolk

### **2. Recruitment of Retained Firefighters**

1. To examine the current approach to recruiting Retained firefighters in Suffolk
2. Examine the mechanism for setting establishment levels at Retained fire stations
3. To identify and examine areas of the county in which recruitment of retained firefighters has been particularly difficult
4. To explore issues that may impact on the Service's ability to recruit into the Retained service in the future e.g. demographic change
5. To identify national good practice for recruiting into the Retained service e.g. targeted recruitment initiatives, incentive schemes etc
6. To consider the CLG report: *The Retained Duty System: A survey of local employers*, in order to identify mechanisms for encouraging local employers to release staff to undertake firefighting duties
7. To make recommendations intended to improve arrangements for recruitment into the Retained service

### 3. Selection and progression of Retained Firefighters

1. To examine the historical arrangements for selection into the Retained service
2. To assess the impact on selection rates, from potential recruits, of the recently-introduced National Firefighter Selection tests (NFST's)
3. To examine whether the NFST's should be used as the mechanism to recruit staff into the Retained service
4. To review selection practice employed in other FRS's
5. To make recommendations regarding future arrangements for selection into the Retained service
6. To examine arrangements for promotion in the Retained service and, in particular, the extent to which they support having adequate numbers of staff to fill managerial posts
7. To review arrangements for promotion selection employed in other FRS's
8. To make recommendations associated with improving arrangements for promotion in the Retained service

### 4. Retention of Retained Firefighters

1. To examine the distribution of SFRS Retained staff across various primary employment groups: Self-employed, primary employment with SFRS, primary employment with public service employer (other than SFRS), primary employment with private sector employer, no primary employment
2. To examine reasons why staff decide to join the Retained service in Suffolk
3. To quantify the number of staff leaving the Retained
4. To examine reasons why staff decide to leave the Retained service. This issue should be considered within the context of CLG Fire Research Technical Report 8/2008: *A survey of current and ex-firefighters in England*
5. To identify good practice in other FRS's, associated with retention of Retained
6. To make recommendations associated with improving retention of Retained staff in SFRS

## **5. Training and Development of Retained Firefighters**

1. To quantify the amount of training 'contact time' Retained staff have with SFRS
2. To compare the amount of training 'contact time' in Suffolk with that for Retained firefighters in other, similar FRS's
3. To examine the training requirements for Retained firefighters
4. Examine the extent to which the Integrated personal development system has impacted upon training and development of Retained staff in Suffolk
5. To assess whether Retained staff have sufficient training 'contact time' with SFRS
6. To make recommendations associated with the training and development of Retained firefighters in Suffolk

## **6. Remuneration of Retained Firefighters**

1. To document details of the way in which Retained firefighters are currently remunerated in Suffolk
2. To consider the impact on remuneration arrangements of the House of Lords Test Case re Part-time workers (less favourable treatment) judgement of April 2008
3. To examine current arrangements for providing and monitoring the availability of Retained staff in Suffolk
4. To compare arrangements for providing and monitoring availability in SFRS with those of other FRS's
5. To profile expenditure on Retained pay over the 5-years to April 2008
6. To examine alternative arrangements for remunerating Retained staff employed in other FRS's (salary schemes etc)
7. To make recommendations associated with improving arrangements for remunerating Retained firefighters in Suffolk