

## Reasonable Adjustments Update

### Report of the Chief Fire Officer

For further information about this report please contact Rod Hammerton, Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260204 or Natalie Parkinson, Equality and Diversity Officer on 01743 260236.

#### 1 Purpose of Report

This report provides Members with an overview of the reasonable adjustments made to support employees in their work roles

#### 2 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the content of this report.

#### 3 Background

The Equality Act 2010 requires Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) to make reasonable adjustments to enable disabled employees to carry out their work.

This Report provides Members with an overview of the number and types of adjustments that are made to support our disabled employees in the past year, and the associated costs.

#### 4 Reasonable adjustments - caseload

SFRS currently has 94 reasonable adjustment cases, an additional 13 since March 2016, the majority of which are for dyslexic employees. The duration of cases varies according to an employee's needs, with support lasting from a few months to the whole of somebody's employment.

#### 5 Reasonable adjustments - process

Depending on their needs, employees are referred to an appropriate expert for advice on adjustments to their work processes, and equipment may be provided to enable them to carry out their work role.

Initial referrals may include Occupational Health and Access to Work for specialist advice and/or potential funding for workplace support and equipment. Dyslexia accounts for some 84% of our cases, and employees who self-refer or are referred to Equality and Diversity are assessed by a professional psychologist who diagnoses whether they are dyslexic and if so, the probable level and the type of support and equipment they need.

Other reasonable adjustment cases have included back, neck and wrist problems, hearing and visual impairments. These involve the provision of workplace equipment.

When an assessment is received the employee meets with the Equality and Diversity Officer and where appropriate with other officer(s) to discuss and agree an action plan. Only those recommendations that are agreed as necessary are put in place, and may include combinations of equipment, tuition, training, support, mentoring and training.

## **6 Adjustments**

The need for adjustments depends on individual circumstances. Among the more common are:

### **Dyslexic employees**

- Large PC monitor screens
- Changing text size and colour
- Changing the colour of the computer screen background to make it easier to read
- Using coloured paper instead of white
- Software such as Read and Write Gold and Claro-reader, to help with spelling and grammar and with writing long documents.
- Specialist dyslexia tuition to help with subjects including spelling, grammar, organisation skills, and memory techniques (mind mapping)
- Dictation machines to help with memory and organisational skills
- Highlighter pens for important information
- Notebooks to write down key words and definitions
- Coloured overlays to help with reading
- Audio documents and headphones
- Documents such as training presentations provided in advance
- Adapting teaching styles to suit employees' needs
- Livescribe Echo pen
- Easy read books on loan

### **Employees with hearing impairments:**

- Specialist headsets
- Hearing equipment

### **Employees with other impairments:**

- High/low desk – to work standing up
- Computer equipment, such as a specialist mouse

- Specialised chairs and seat inserts
- Specialist desk or vari desk (which sits on top of a desk)
- Additional equipment such as document holders
- Changes in rest times and/or working hours.

## 7 Costs

Every assessed employee is asked to contact Access to Work (ATW) to see if they can provide funding. ATW will only contribute towards tuition and similar costs, and do not support the cost of professional assessments, equipment or software packages. In the twelve months from 1 March 2016 to 16 February 2017 SFRS has spent £9431.37 on reasonable adjustments for employees. We have been able to reclaim £4710.90 from ATW, leaving a net cost to SFRS of £4720.47.

**Cost per employee for reasonable adjustments (based on 14 current cases) to give an approximate indication:**

|                                  |          |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| Total cost per employee          | £673.67  |
| ATW funding tuition per employee | £337.18  |
| Cost per employee to SFRS        | £336.49* |

- ★ Please note the cost to SFRS has increased this year due to purchasing a higher number of specialist chairs for employees which cannot be reclaimed from ATW.

These costs include:

- Professional diagnostic assessment
- Equipment - which can include workstation adjustments such as chairs, large monitors, computer packages, coloured overlays, notebooks, Dictaphones, headphones, and highlighters
- Professional support, including professional tutoring for dyslexia support for which funding is currently received from Access to Work

### **Year-on-year total costs of Reasonable Adjustment programme (excluding ATW funding)**

| Year                     | Cost       |              |
|--------------------------|------------|--------------|
| 2008 - 09                | £555.62    |              |
| 2009 – 10                | £3,146.33  |              |
| 2010 – 11                | £5,528.69  |              |
| 2011- 12                 | £6,612.94  |              |
| 2012 – 13                | £7,984.64  |              |
| 2013 – 14                | £9,088.73  |              |
| 2014 – 15 (up to 28 Feb) | £11,233.28 |              |
|                          | £12,254.50 | (annualised) |
| 2015-16 (up to 29 Feb)   | £19,637.72 |              |
| 2016-17 (up to 16 Feb)   | £9,431.37  |              |

## **8 Financial Implications**

All financial implications have been considered as part of the Business Planning process. Any new actions will be considered at the time and either absorbed in to current workloads or included within next year's Business Plans.

The as above analysis of year-on-year costs for the Reasonable Adjustments programme suggests that as the programme attracts more employees costs are likely to rise. Should ATW funding be withdrawn in future, costs of meeting the Authority's statutory obligations will rise further.

## **9 Legal Comment**

This is a summary of action taken and does not require legal comment.

## **10 Initial Impact Assessment**

This report contains merely statements of fact / historical data. An Initial Impact Assessment is not, therefore, required.

## **11 Equality Impact Assessment**

This report contains merely statements of fact / historical data. An Equality Impact Assessment is not, therefore, required.

## **12 Appendix**

Equipment and tuition for current cases.

## **13 Background Papers**

There are no background papers associated with this report.

## Equipment and tuition for current cases

|    |     |          |  |
|----|-----|----------|--|
| 6  | RDS | Dyslexia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-registered with Access to Work for further tuition support due to promotion requiring new skills</li> </ul>  |
| 42 | NU  | Back     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment completed by Access to Work awaiting report</li> <li>Report received, chair and desk ordered.</li> </ul>   |
| 56 | RDS | Dyslexia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial checklist completed</li> <li>Professional diagnostic assessment complete</li> <li>Meeting to discuss report &amp; reasonable adjustments complete</li> <li>Self-registered with Access to Work for tuition and computer packages</li> <li><a href="#">Emailed GST to see if further support is required</a></li> </ul>  |
| 62 | RDS | Dyslexia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">New review further to role change to crew manager.</a></li> <li><a href="#">Dictaphone issued</a></li> <li><a href="#">To arrange trial of software before purchasing to see if suitable</a></li> </ul>   |
| 63 | WT  | Dyslexia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial checklist completed</li> <li>Professional diagnostic assessment complete</li> <li>Meeting to discuss report &amp; reasonable adjustments completed</li> <li>Self-registered with Access to Work for tuition and computer packages</li> <li>Professional support tutor in place</li> <li><a href="#">Installed claro read on computer, checking status of tuition</a></li> </ul>                           |
| 66 | RDS | Dyslexia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial checklist completed</li> <li>Professional diagnostic assessment complete</li> <li>Meeting to discuss report &amp; reasonable adjustments done</li> <li>Self-registered with Access to Work for tuition and computer packages</li> <li>Professional support tutor in place</li> <li><a href="#">Waiting for summative report from tutor regarding progress and need for additional tuition.</a></li> </ul> |

|     |     |                   |  |
|-----|-----|-------------------|--|
| 74  | TC  | Dyslexia          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial checklist completed</li> <li>• Professional diagnostic assessment complete</li> <li>• Meeting to discuss report &amp; reasonable adjustments done</li> <li>• Self-registered with Access to Work for tuition and computer packages</li> <li>• Professional support tutor in place</li> <li>• Read and write gold, dragon software and dictaphone issued.</li> <li>• Received training on dragon and read and write software.</li> <li>• Requested different type of course/assessment.</li> </ul> |
| 79  | RDS | Dyslexia          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial checklist completed</li> <li>• Professional diagnostic assessment complete</li> <li>• Meeting to discuss report &amp; reasonable adjustments done</li> <li>• Self-registered with Access to Work for tuition and computer packages</li> <li>• Access to work (ATW) report received</li> <li>• Tuition completed</li> <li>• Follow up meeting arrange for February 2017</li> </ul>   |
| 82* | NU  | Back              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to work assessment completed and received</li> <li>• Specialist chair ordered and in place</li> </ul>  |
| 83* | RDS | Dyslexia          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial checklist complete – borderline</li> <li>• Referred to FBU for further assessment</li> <li>• Borderline, arrange full assessment as interim assessment cannot be arranged.</li> <li>• Full Assessment completed and awaiting report</li> </ul>  |
| 84* | RDS | Dyslexia          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial checklist completed</li> <li>• Professional diagnostic assessment complete</li> <li>• Meeting held to discuss report &amp; reasonable adjustments arranged</li> <li>• Extra tuition requested and agreed by ATW, further tuition arranged.</li> <li>• Completed recent ADC.</li> </ul>  |
| 86* | WT  | Back              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to work report received</li> <li>• Specialist chair and desk in place</li> </ul>   |
| 90* | WT  | Possible Dyslexia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial checklist completed</li> <li>• Awaiting professional diagnostic assessment.</li> </ul>  |

|     |     |                   |   |
|-----|-----|-------------------|---|
| 91* | NU  | Possible Dyslexia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial checklist completed</li> <li>Borderline</li> <li>Awaiting date for full assessment</li> </ul>  |
| 92* | RDS | Dyslexia          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial checklist completed</li> <li>Awaiting professional diagnostic assessment.</li> <li>Received report, arranging a meeting with E&amp;DO &amp; Shaun Baker</li> </ul> |
| 93* | RDS | Possible Dyslexia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial checklist completed – no further action</li> </ul>   |
| 94* | RDS | Possible Dyslexia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial checklist completed – no further action</li> </ul>   |

\* New Cases      Blue – new actions this year.

17 Cases removed from support since the last report

|    |     |                  |
|----|-----|------------------|
| 5  | RDS | Dyslexia         |
| 37 | RDS | Dyslexia         |
| 48 | RDS | Dyslexia         |
| 65 | RDS | Dyslexia         |
| 71 | WT  | No Dyslexia      |
| 72 | RDS | No Dyslexia      |
| 73 | RDS | No Dyslexia      |
| 75 | WT  | No Dyslexia      |
| 76 | WT  | Dyslexia         |
| 77 | WT  | Musculo-skeletal |
| 78 | NU  | Dyslexia         |
| 80 | RDS | No Dyslexia      |
| 81 | WT  | Dyslexia         |
| 85 | RDS | No Dyslexia      |
| 87 | RDS | No Dyslexia      |
| 88 | RDS | No Dyslexia      |
| 89 | RDS | No Dyslexia      |