

## Reasonable Adjustments Update

### Report of the Chief Fire Officer

For further information about this report please contact John Redmond, Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260201 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 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 have been made to support disabled employees in the past year, and the associated costs.

#### 4 Caseload

The Service currently has 81 reasonable adjustment cases, an additional 14 since March 2015, 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 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 83% of cases. Employees, who self-refer or are referred to the Equality and Diversity Officer, 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 cases have included back, neck and wrist problems, hearing and visual impairments and dyspraxia. 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 officers to discuss and agree an action plan. Only those recommendations that are agreed as necessary are put in place, which may include combinations of equipment, tuition, training, support, 'buddying', 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)
- Electronic dictionaries
- 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
- Documents, such as training presentations, provided in advance
- Adapting teaching styles to suit employees' needs
- Livescribe Echo pen

### **Employees with hearing impairments**

- Specialist headsets
- Hearing equipment

### **Employees with other impairments**

- Computer equipment, such as a specialist mouse
- Specialised chairs and/or desks
- 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 2015 to 29 February 2016 this Service has spent £19,637.72 on reasonable adjustments for employees. It has been possible to reclaim £16,651.86 from ATW, leaving a net cost of £2,985.86.

### **Cost per employee for reasonable adjustments (based on 19 current cases) to give an approximate indication**

Total cost per employee	£1,033.56
ATW funding tuition per employee	£876.41
Cost per employee to SFRS	£157.15

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)**

<i>Year</i>	<i>£p</i>
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	12,254.50
2015 – 16	19,637.72
(up to 29 February 2016)	

## 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 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

Greyed out areas represent actions completed in the previous year.

5	Dyslexia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-registered with Access to Work for further tuition support</li> </ul>
6	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>
37	Dyslexia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preliminary self-assessment adult checklist completed</li> <li>Completed a professional diagnostic assessment</li> <li>Meeting to discuss assessment completed</li> <li>Self-registered with Access to Work for tuition and computer packages</li> <li>Professional support tutor in place</li> </ul>
48	Dyslexia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional diagnostic assessment completed</li> <li>Meeting to discuss report and reasonable adjustments completed</li> <li>In process of self-registering with Access to Work for tuition and computer packages</li> <li>E&amp;D have made several follow-up calls</li> </ul>
56	Dyslexia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial checklist completed</li> <li>Professional diagnostic assessment completed</li> <li>Meeting to discuss report and reasonable adjustments completed</li> <li>Self-registered with Access to Work for tuition and computer packages</li> </ul>
63	Dyslexia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial checklist completed</li> <li>Professional diagnostic assessment completed</li> <li>Meeting to discuss report and reasonable adjustments completed</li> <li>Self-registered with Access to Work for tuition and computer packages</li> <li>Professional support tutor in place</li> </ul>
65	Dyslexia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial checklist completed</li> <li>Fire Brigades Union (FBU) assessment to be arranged, as not strong indication of dyslexia on checklist</li> <li>Assessment showed indication of dyslexia</li> <li>Professional diagnostic assessment completed</li> <li>Meeting to discuss report and reasonable adjustments completed</li> <li>Self-registered with Access to Work for tuition and computer packages</li> <li>Professional support tutor in place</li> </ul>
66	Dyslexia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial checklist completed</li> <li>Professional diagnostic assessment completed</li> <li>Meeting to discuss report and reasonable adjustments done</li> <li>Self-registered with Access to Work for tuition and computer packages</li> <li>Professional support tutor in place</li> </ul>

71*	Possible Dyslexia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial checklist and FBU assessment completed – no further action</li> </ul>
72*	Possible Dyslexia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial checklist completed</li> </ul>
73*	Possible Dyslexia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial checklist completed – no further action</li> </ul>
74*	Dyslexia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial checklist completed</li> <li>Professional diagnostic assessment completed</li> <li>Meeting to discuss report and reasonable adjustments completed</li> <li>Self-registered with Access to Work for tuition and computer packages</li> <li>Professional support tutor in place</li> </ul>
75*	Possible Dyslexia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opened and closed – no action</li> </ul>
76*	Dyslexia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial checklist completed</li> <li>Professional diagnostic assessment completed</li> <li>Meeting to discuss report and reasonable adjustments completed</li> <li>Self-registered with Access to Work for tuition and computer packages</li> </ul>
77*	Musculo-Skeletal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opened and closed</li> </ul>
78*	Dyslexia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial checklist completed</li> <li>Professional diagnostic assessment completed</li> <li>Meeting to discuss report and reasonable adjustments arranged</li> </ul>
79*	Dyslexia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial checklist completed</li> <li>Professional diagnostic assessment completed</li> <li>Meeting to discuss report and reasonable adjustments completed</li> <li>Self-registered with Access to Work for tuition and computer packages</li> </ul>
80*	Possible Dyslexia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial checklist completed - no further action as no indication</li> </ul>
81*	Possible Dyslexia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial checklist completed</li> </ul>

\* New cases

13 cases have been removed from support since the last report.

39	Dyslexia
40	Dyslexia
46	Dyslexia
49	Dyslexia
52	Dyslexia
54	Dyslexia
58	Dyslexia
59	Dyslexia
60	Possible Dyslexia
61	Back Pain
62	Dyslexia
64	Dyslexia
67	Dyslexia