

5. Appointment of Deputy Chief Fire Officer

Purpose of report

1. To consider the appointment of a new Deputy Chief Fire Officer and to seek the Committee's recommendations to the full Authority for an appointment in this post.
-

Recommendation

The Appointments Committee recommends to the Authority the appointment of Temporary Deputy Chief Fire Officer Richard Lawrence to the substantive post of Deputy Chief Fire Officer.

Background

2. The Authority has had a vacancy for the post of Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) since 31 July 2012. The DCFO is an important strategic position and one of four posts in the Authority that must be appointed by Members, normally following a recommendation from the Appointments Committee. Richard Lawrence has recently been carrying out the role of DCFO on a temporary basis since June 2011.
3. Members will be aware that Richard Lawrence has recently and successfully been through an externally advertised appointment process, including a Members' Panel, for the position of Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO). Richard has held the rank of ACFO on a temporary basis for more than 3 years and is considered by the Chief Fire Officer to be the only suitably qualified candidate for the DCFO post within the Service.

Options

4. The following options are put forward for consideration by the Committee:
 - (i) The Authority holds a full appointment process commencing with an advertisement across the UK. This would allow all suitable candidates to apply and compete for the role.
 - (ii) The Authority does not advertise the post and appoints Richard Lawrence who has been carrying out the role of DCFO for over 12 months.
5. It is normally considered best practice to use option (i) for senior level appointments unless there are circumstances that dictate otherwise. On this occasion the Chief Fire Officer believes that it is not in the best interests of the Authority to select option (i) and therefore recommends the selection of option

- (ii). The Chief Fire Officer's preferred option has been discussed with the Group Leaders of the Authority.
6. The Chief Fire Officer considers option (ii) to be in the best interests of the Authority for a number of reasons as detailed below.
 7. Richard has been carrying the full responsibilities of DCFO for over 12 months and has done so in an exemplary manner. He has a proven track record at this level having the qualifications, knowledge and wide experience required, as set out in Appendix 1. (Please note that the information set out in Appendix 1 relates to an individual, therefore in the opinion of the Clerk to the Authority is exempt information and will not be made available to the public or press.)
 8. The appointment of Richard Lawrence will also realise the following benefits:
 - Expense will not be incurred on recruitment and relocation if an external candidate were to be appointed. An external appointment at Principal Officer level would normally cost approximately £10,000 and in addition would require a significant amount of managerial and Member time.
 - There will be continuity of position and work at this level, notably within the strategic lead area of safety critical operational training.
 - Internal promotions will backfill down through the structure which will ultimately lead to a saving of one post at approximately £35,000 per annum. The Committee will be aware that an internal candidate has very recently and successfully been through an Assistant Chief Fire Officer promotion process involving Members and this position will be substantiated.
 - Career progression opportunities will flow down through the structure.
 9. When considering the above, notably paragraph 6, it is the opinion of the Chief Fire Officer that the Authority already has an excellent and ideally suited candidate. Therefore, it is the Chief Fire Officer's belief that an external advertisement and process would be unnecessary in terms of expense and managerial and Member time.
 10. The Chief Fire Officer does recognise that option (ii) is not considered best practice, notably when considering the wider diversity issues within the Fire and Rescue Service. However, on this occasion he considers the benefits of option (ii) to outweigh the need to follow normal practice as this option will provide the best outcome for the Authority.

Conclusion/Summary

11. It is the Chief Fire Officer's professional view that the appointment of Richard Lawrence into the post of Deputy Chief Fire Officer represents an excellent candidate taking the position whilst also realising other benefits to the organisation.

Financial Considerations

Consideration	Yes/No	Reference in Report i.e. paragraph no.
There are financial issues that require consideration	Yes	Paragraph 8 – potential savings to be realised.

Legal Considerations

Consideration	Yes/No	Reference in Report i.e. paragraph no.
There are legal issues e.g. contractual and procurement, reputational issues that require consideration	No	

Additional Considerations

The table below sets out any additional issues arising from the proposals contained in this report and identifies the relevant paragraphs in the report where such issues are addressed.

Consideration	Yes/No	Reference in Report i.e. paragraph no.
Resources (e.g. Assets, ICT, Human Resources, Training & Development, Sustainability).	No	
Strategic Policy Links (e.g. IRMP, Authority Plan, Equality & Diversity, Partnerships, Environmental Impact).	Yes	Equality and Diversity implications considered, paragraph 10.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (e.g. risk management and control measures, risk register score).	No	
Consultation with Representative Bodies	No	

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 (Exempt) – Fire and Rescue Service Career (R. Lawrence)

Contact Officer

Mark Yates, Chief Fire Officer
(01905 368202)
Email: myates@hwfire.org.uk