

6. Appointment of Treasurer (Section 151 Officer)

Purpose of report

1. To approve the appointment to the post of Treasurer (Section 151 Officer), as recommended by the Appointments Committee.
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Recommendation

The Appointments Committee recommends that the Fire and Rescue Authority approve the appointment of Mr Martin Reohorn, Director of Finance and Assets as Treasurer to the Authority (Section 151 Officer).

Background

2. Section 112.2(b) of the Local Government and Finance Act 1988 requires a Combined Fire Authority to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and that it designates one of its officers to be responsible for administering these activities. This is the same as the requirement under Section 6 of the Local Government and Housing Act and Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972. This statutory role whether under Section 112, Section 6 or Section 151 is generally termed the Section 151 Officer.
3. The current Treasurer, Mr Tony Wood, is the Section 151 Officer and was appointed on a temporary and interim basis pending the receipt and acceptance of the Audit Commission's report into the retirement of the former Chief Fire Officer. It was anticipated that this report would make reference to the Authority's statutory officers and their relationships with the Authority and would therefore have some influence upon the arrangements the Authority were likely to make in the long term.
4. The report, which was considered by the Audit Committee on 7 November 2011, contained the following recommendation in relation to the posts of Treasurer (Section 151 Officer) and Clerk/Monitoring Officer.

"The Authority should improve processes and arrangements in its governance arrangements (not operational) that could help safeguard the Authority against recurrence of a similar situation by:

- a. having a Monitoring Officer (Clerk) and Treasurer who are not remote to the operations of the Authority."*

5. At its meeting on 14 December 2011 the Authority resolved that a Treasurer (Section 151 Officer) should be directly employed and advised the Chief Fire Officer to complete detailed investigations for consideration by the Appointments Committee.

Appointments Committee

6. The Appointments Committee met on 25 January 2012 and considered a report from the Chief Fire Officer that sought to incorporate the role of the Authority's Treasurer (Section 151 Officer) within the remit of the Service's Director of Finance and Assets. The report explained that there were no legislative or internal standing orders that prevented the allocation of the functions of the role to a suitably qualified and experienced officer already employed by the Authority. Equally there was no impediment to the external recruitment to the role.
7. Whilst there would be a small increase in salary to take account of the extra duties involved this would be more than compensated for by the saving on the current interim arrangements that have been in place for 13 months.

Conclusion/Summary

8. The Appointments Committee has considered the qualifications and attributes of the Service's Director of Finance and Assets in relation to the role of Treasurer (Section 151 Officer). The Committee has agreed that the current Director of Finance and Assets is a suitably qualified and experienced senior officer therefore his appointment to the role as Treasurer (Section 151 Officer) be recommended to the Authority.

Financial Considerations

Consideration	Yes/No	Reference in Report i.e. paragraph no.
There are financial issues that require consideration	Yes	Paragraph 7

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	Yes	Paragraphs 2, 4 and 6

Additional Considerations

9. The table overleaf 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).	No	
Risk Management / Health & Safety (e.g. risk management and control measures, risk register score).	Yes	Paragraph 4
Consultation with Representative Bodies	No	

Background papers

Retirement of the Chief Fire Officer - Report by the District Auditor - 28 October 2011
 Audit Committee Agenda and Minutes – 7 November 2011
 Fire and Rescue Authority Agenda and Minutes - 14 December 2011

Contact Officer

Anne Brown, Clerk to the Authority
 (0845 12 24454)
 Email: abrown@hwfire.org.uk