

6. Appointment of Deputy Chief Fire Officer

Purpose of report

1. To ratify the appointment to the post of Deputy Chief Fire Officer, as recommended by the Appointments Committee.
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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.
3. The Appointments Committee met on 6 September 2012 to consider the appointment of a new Deputy Chief Fire Officer.

Options

4. The Committee considered the following options with regards to the appointment of the post:
 - (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 on a temporary basis for over 12 months.
5. Although it is normally considered best practice to use option (i) for senior level appointments, on this occasion the Committee agreed that it was not in the best interests of the Authority to select option (i) and therefore recommended the selection of option (ii) for a number of reasons as detailed below:
 - a) Mr Lawrence has been carrying out the full responsibilities of DCFO for over 12 months and has done so in an exemplary manner. The Committee considered that he has a proven track record at this level and has the qualifications, knowledge and wide experience required.

- b) 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.
- c) There will be continuity of position and work at this level, notably within the strategic lead area of safety critical operational training.
- d) Internal promotions will backfill down through the structure which will ultimately lead to a saving of one post at approximately £35,000 per annum.
- e) Career progression opportunities will flow down through the structure.

Conclusion/Summary

- 6. When considering the above, the Appointments Committee concluded that the Authority already has an excellent and ideally suited candidate and that an external advertisement and process would be unnecessary in terms of expense and managerial and Member time.
- 7. It is recognised 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 it was agreed that the benefits of option (ii) outweighed the need to follow normal practice as this option will provide the best outcome for the Authority.

Financial Considerations

| Consideration | Yes/No | Reference in Report i.e. paragraph no. |
|---|--------|---|
| There are financial issues that require consideration | Yes | Paragraph 5 – 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

- 8. 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 7. |
| Risk Management / Health & Safety (e.g. risk management and control measures, risk register score). | No | |
| Consultation with Representative Bodies | No | |

Supporting Information

Background Papers – Appointments Committee Papers – 6 September 2012

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