

**WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**16 FEBRUARY 2015**

1. **SUBSTANTIVE APPOINTMENT TO THE POST OF DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 THAT the Authority select a preferred option from either 1.1.1 or 1.1.2 below to enable recruitment to the post of Deputy Chief Fire Officer.

1.1.1 internal recruitment process be followed for the appointment on a substantive basis to the post of Deputy Chief Fire Officer or;

1.1.2 an external recruitment process be followed for the appointment on a substantive basis to the post of Deputy Chief Fire Officer.

- 1.2 THAT the role description at Appendix 1 be noted as the basis for the recruitment.

2. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report is submitted to Members to decide on the appropriate process to facilitate the appointment on a substantive basis to the post of Deputy Chief Fire Officer.

3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 At the Authority meeting on 21 July 2014, Members considered and approved the recommendations made within the 'Review of Principal Management' report. As part of this review it was agreed to introduce the new Strategic Enabling Team arrangements with effect from 1 September 2014.

[IL1: PROTECT]

- 3.2 The implementation of the Strategic Enabling Team has enabled for savings of £235K to be made. In order to facilitate this new senior management structure Members approved the disestablishment of the Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Technical and Operational Support post and the removal of 2 Director posts.
- 3.3 The implementation of the Strategic Enabling Team demonstrates the Service's continued proactive and innovative commitment to making efficiencies, maintaining and improving Service Delivery and ensuring value for money.
- 3.4 As set out in the 'Principal Management Review' report, the Chief Fire Officer will undertake a 12 month evaluation of the Strategic Enabling Team to ensure it remains fit for purpose. This will be followed by a three yearly review in accordance with the Service's strategic planning cycle.
- 3.5 The Strategic Enabling Team is led by 3 Brigade Managers:
- Chief Fire Officer
  - Deputy Chief Fire Officer
  - Assistant Chief Fire Officer

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (who has responsibility for Service Support functions) supports the Chief Fire Officer in providing leadership and strategic direction to a large organisation in the context of a changing environment.

As one of the 3 Brigade Managers the Deputy Chief Fire Officer discharges responsibility for emergency incident command at 'gold' level on a continuous duty basis.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Assistant Chief Fire Officer posts are currently being undertaken on an 'acting up' temporary basis.

- 3.6 The current acting up arrangements have been successful. This has enabled for a review of the Brigade Management structure and provided the evidence for the disestablishment of the Assistant Chief Fire Officer post Technical and Operational Support as well as enabling the delivery of a joint Fire Control Project.

3.7 This paper seeks to gain Authority approval on the approach to be taken for the substantive appointment to the Deputy Chief Fire Officer position. An overview of the benefits and disadvantages of the two approaches can be viewed at Appendix 2.

### 3.8 External Recruitment

An external recruitment process would allow for full, open competition and in theory would be compatible with affording potential candidates with protected characteristics the opportunity to apply. This method of recruitment would demonstrate a proactive approach to equality and diversity. This would be in line with the Service's Resourcing Policies and Workforce Planning Strategy. Our Workforce Planning Strategy specifically states that 'diversity will be at the core of all talent management' and that 'we will continue to seek diversity in senior roles through our positive action work'.

In addition, the Service's Recruitment and Selection Policy provides the outline for our recruitment and selection decisions. It confirms that 'authorised vacancies will be advertised on the intranet and that positions may also be advertised on a wider range of media'. This wider media helps us to progress our positive action which works to address the under-represented groups in our workforce.

This approach would encourage a wider scope of applicants who have experience of managing at an executive/strategic level within a fire and rescue service or other service but do not necessarily possess direct operational experience.

It is important to note that this option would also support internal applicants applying for the position of Deputy Chief Fire Officer. It is envisaged that both processes would run concurrently. However, there is some scope to have a short period of time for internal candidates only to apply. This would have a negative impact on achieving our tight timescales for the appointment of this role.

### 3.9 Internal Process

If the appointment to the Deputy Chief Fire Officer position on a permanent basis is managed as an internal appointment there could be several advantages. It would avoid an extended delay in the post being filled; it would provide continuity of service at a time when there are several important change initiatives progressing, the costs associated with an external recruitment process would be reduced.

An internal candidate would already have contacts and credibility within the Service and have a clear picture on our values and ways of working.

## 4. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1 In considering the equality implications of the Authority's preferred option, Members are advised that the learning outcomes arising from the full Equality Assessment Implications (EIA) undertaken in respect of the appointment of the Chief Fire Officer have formed the basis and provided the evidence that that an equality impact assessment is not required.
- 4.2 This EIA confirmed that the approach to recruitment and appointment of the Chief Fire Officer was not unlawfully discriminatory. This decision was based upon the diversity of those potential applicants from West Midlands Fire Service senior management comparing favourably with the diversity of potential applicants from other Fire and Rescue Services.
- 4.3 Given that those eligible to be recruited to the post of Deputy Chief Fire will be drawn from the same pool of potential candidates as for the Chief Fire Officer, it is reasonable to draw the conclusion that an internal recruitment process will not be unlawfully discriminatory and therefore a full equality impact assessment is not required.

## 5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Constitution of the Authority provides for the appointment of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer to be by the Appointments Committee. The Authority should approve the job description and personal specification including the level of salary.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Recruitment to the post of Deputy Chief Fire Officer is in line with arrangements within the approved Strategic Enabling Team staffing arrangements, therefore continuing to achieve the cost savings identified in paragraph 3.2 and ensuring safe and effective working arrangements.
- 6.2 The process of external recruitment is likely to incur some modest recruitment costs, but could incur relocation costs of up to £25,000.

The contact name for this report is Phil Loach, Chief Fire Officer, 0121 380 6909.

**Phil Loach**  
**Chief Fire Officer**

## Appendix 1

**WEST MIDLANDS FIRE SERVICE**

Strategic Enabling Team Job Description

<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Deputy Chief Fire Officer (Service Support)</b>
<b>Job Summary</b>	<p>As outlined in 'The Plan', the jobholder performs a specific individual leadership role as part of an accountable, empowered and sustainable management structure, the 'Strategic Enabling Team', with personal accountability for enabling delivery of key priorities set out in 'The Plan'.</p>
<b>Gold Command Responsibilities</b>	<p>As one of 3 Brigade Managers, the DCFO discharges responsibility for emergency incident command at 'Gold' level on a 'continuous duty' basis as either No. 1, No. 2 or No. 3.</p>
<b>Strategic Enabling Team Responsibilities</b>	<p>Whilst being personally accountable for their individual areas of expertise and functional areas, members of the Strategic Enabling Team share the following common strategic responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Contributes to delivering key priorities set out in 'The Plan' through a focused and collaborative approach to planning and delivering activities in Level 2 Service Delivery Plans and Supporting Strategies.</li><li>◆ Adds value to strategic decision making through meaningful and constructive evidence-based contributions.</li><li>◆ Enables and sustains responsive, supportive and effective working relationships with all members of the Strategic Enabling Team and personally demonstrates the core values.</li></ul>
<b>Reports to:</b>	<b>Chief Fire Officer</b>
<b>Direct reports:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Strategic Enabler of HR &amp; Administration</li><li>◆ Strategic Enabler of Finance &amp; Resources</li><li>◆ Strategic Enabler of ICT</li><li>◆ Strategic Enablers (x2) Service Support Area Cdrs</li></ul> <p>To take executive responsibility for such references as may be allocated by the Chief Fire Officer and to contribute to the direction and corporate management of the Organisation and to deputise for the Chief Fire Officer when required.</p>
<b>Managerial / Service Responsibilities</b>	<p><b>MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Takes executive responsibility for such references as may be allocated by Chief Fire Officer.</li><li>b) Supports the Chief Fire Officer in advising West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority, its committees and elected members, on the discharge of statutory responsibilities in the provision of an efficient and effective Fire Service.</li></ul>

### Benefits and Disadvantages of an External Recruitment Process

<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Open competition.</li> <li>▪ Opportunity to attract new talent to the Service.</li> <li>▪ More compatible with attracting candidates with protected characteristics that may be under-represented in our Service.</li> <li>▪ Proactive approach to Equality and Diversity.</li> <li>▪ In line with our Workforce Strategy and Resourcing Policy.</li> <li>▪ New vision, ideas, approaches.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Additional cost but these can be kept to a minimum with the use of on line resources.</li> <li>▪ A relocation package of upto £25,000.</li> <li>▪ An external appointment would not assist with reducing job numbers;</li> <li>▪ Possibly longer commencement dates.</li> <li>▪ Possibly longer time for successful candidate, if not current employee, to embed into the Service.</li> </ul>

### Benefits and Disadvantages of an Internal Recruitment process

<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Opportunity to promote from within.</li> <li>▪ Reduced recruitment costs and no relocation fees.</li> <li>▪ Opportunity to further review structure as new vacancy arises.</li> <li>▪ Possibly reduced timescale to commencement date.</li> <li>▪ Continuity of service/approach.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reduces opportunity of improving Equality and Diversity at a senior level within the Service.</li> <li>▪ Reduces opportunity to inject new views and contributions at an executive level.</li> <li>▪ Smaller pool to attract candidates from.</li> <li>▪ Reduces selection pool.</li> </ul>