

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

30 SEPTEMBER 2019

1. BRIGADE MANAGER RECRUITMENT PROCESS 2019

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 THAT members note the decision taken on the 5th July 2019 under the 'Arrangements to Act in Matters of Urgency' (Constitution, Standing Orders, Part 7, (17), to delegate the Authority to the Chief Fire Officer, to revise the establishment of the Brigade Management Team, through the establishment of an additional Assistant Chief Officer role and to commence the recruitment of a Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Assistant Chief Officer.
- 1.2 THAT members note the decision made by the Appointments Committee as set out in its minutes of 9th September 2019.
- 1.3 THAT members note the commencement of the recruitment process for the appointment of an additional Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO).

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform members of the approach taken under the Authority's Constitutions Standing Orders, Part 7 (17), Arrangements to Act in Matters of Emergency and the resulting outcomes and of a further recruitment process to appoint to a new ACFO role.

3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 On the 5th July the Chair and Chief Fire Officer (CFO) considered a paper which proposed revising the Brigade Management Team (BMT), to remove the role of a Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) and replace this role with an Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO), as well as increase the establishment of the BMT from 3 Brigade Managers to 4, by introducing an additional ACFO role. The proposed establishment was:
- Chief Fire Officer
 - 3 Assistant Chief Officers
- 3.2 This was an outcome of the review of the Strategic Enabling Team (SET), where the composition of the BMT and SET was considered. It was recommended through this review, that the BMT increase from the current establishment of 3 to a future establishment of 4. The existing approach to operating with 3 Gold Command roles for the Service, providing gold cover on a 24/7 basis was not a sustainable approach and provided less ability for resilience and contingency planning across the BMT.
- 3.3 It was also recognised that there is a duty of care for the Authority in operating any duty system to take into consideration the impact of this on work life balance.
- 3.4 The proposed approach would support the effective leadership of the Service in continual improvement, the delivery of the Plan through the 3 programmes of People, Process and Culture, as well as a more balanced approach to operating the gold command rota system, aligned to the Gold Book recognised approach.
- 3.5 This reconfiguration of posts would be achieved in a broadly cost neutral way, through disestablishing the role of the DCFO and reducing the current establishment of 6 Area Managers to 4.

- 3.6 As part of the restructure of SET and consideration around the expectations of the four Area Managers, there is a proposal to recognise these arrangements with a 10% enhancement. The remuneration is proposed for the work that is considered to be outside of the Area Manager Role map.
- 3.7 Whilst the proposal supported an approach which recognised continued funding constraints, the Fire Authority considered the size of the Service, the complexities of the area it covers and communities it serves; and that these supported the need for a DCFO role to be retained (notwithstanding the additional salary cost compared to an ACFO role), in addition to recruiting an additional ACFO role as part of the Brigade Manager establishment.
- 3.8 It was agreed by the Chair on 5th July 2019 to increase the establishment of the BMT to 4, whilst retaining the role of the DCFO and recruiting an additional permanent ACFO role and to commence the recruitment process immediately.
- 3.9 The paper setting out the detailed recommendations and resolutions are set out in Appendix 1.
- 3.10 **DCFO Recruitment**
- 3.10.1 The DCFO role was advertised nationally on the 24th July 2019 and a selection process took place between 9th August and 9th September, which included:
- Initial Officer Sift of applications, undertaken by CFO
 - Assessment of professional qualification and experience of Incident Command Level 4 and Gold Command, undertaken by CFO
 - Psychometric testing
 - Appointments Committee – Members' Introduction session
 - Professional discussion with CFO
 - Appointments Committee appointment of DCFO
- 3.10.2 The decision of the Appointments Committee is set out in its minutes of the 9th September 2019.

Ref. AU/2019/Sept/91309193

3.10.3 The advertisement for the DCFO role attracted 12 applicants. All applicants were male, of which 3 were White British, 1 White Irish and 8 Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME).

No candidate declared a disability.

4 candidates progressed to the Appointments Committee, one of which was BAME.

A review of this process will be undertaken in due course, for consideration of the Appointments Committee.

3.11 **ACO Recruitment**

3.11.1 Following the DCFO appointment a process will need to commence to appoint to the new ACFO role on a permanent basis.

3.11.2 This process to appoint an ACFO will need to consider the current outcomes of the review of Area Managers and the SET review. The process will therefore commence once the proposal around the review of the Area Managers has progressed through the Employee Relations Framework and the consideration, or where appropriate, the application of the Reorganisation, Redeployment and Redundancy Policy.

3.11.3 The appointments process for an ACFO role will be aligned to organisational policy.

4. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

In preparing this report an initial Equality Impact Assessment has not been carried out. The policies referenced in this report are subjected to a Equality Impact Assessment.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 This report supports a more sustainable approach to the delivery of Gold Command across 4 Brigade Manager roles, providing increased resilience and contingency planning across the BMT.

- 5.2 This approach is recognised as good practice through the Gold Book and supports the Authority’s accountability in their duty of care.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The impact of the establishment changes are shown below:
£’000

Establishment of additional ACO Post	173
Dis-establishment of Area Commander (x2)	(188)
Salary Adjustment to Area Commanders (x4) (provisional)	35
Net cost	20

7. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no environmental implications.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Constitution 2018

Arrangements to Act in Matters of Urgency - Establishment of Brigade Management Team and commencement recruitment and appointment process for Assistance Chief Officers – 5th July 2019

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Ref. AU/2019/Sept/91309193

Appendix 1

Arrangements to Act in Matters of Urgency – WMFRA Constitution, Standing Orders, Part 7, (17)

Establishment of Brigade Management Team and commencement recruitment and appointment process for Assistance Chief Officers

On 5th July 2019 the Chair agreed the following resolutions under the above arrangements.

It was resolved that

1. The CFO is delegated the authority to revise the current Brigade Manager establishment to include an additional ACO as a permanent appointment; thereby increasing the 'current' establishment as set in the ACO appointment paper, from 3 gold command roles, returning to the gold book recognised 4 role gold command rota and retaining the position of a DCFO.
2. The CFO will commence the recruitment process for the DCFO and the new ACO position immediately, aligned to the overall timelines set out in the paper.
3. The convening of the appointments committee to appoint the DCFO and ACO role as set out in resolution 1 and 2.
4. This decision and rationale will be retrospectively reported to the Fire Authority in September 2019.

Notes from 5th July meeting between Chair and CFO

Also present: Monitoring Officer, Section 151 Officer and Clerk

Summary of discussion aligned to ACO appointment paper (set out below)

The Chair recognised the need for the paper and the circumstances set out within. Specifically, the need for enough cover to provide a sustainable gold command capability across the Service area, aligned to the recognised approach as set out in the Gold Book.

Ref. AU/2019/Sept/91309193

The need for temporary arrangements to be implemented for the short term whilst the recruitment of established roles was discussed, to ensure maintenance of gold command resilience. In addition, the Fire Authority's preference to retain the role of a DCFO and establishing an additional ACO role was highlighted.

Whilst the proposal in the paper supported an approach which recognised continued funding constraints, the Fire Authority considered the size of the Service, the complexities of the area it covers and communities it serves; and that these supported the need for a DCFO role to be retained (notwithstanding the additional salary cost compared to an ACO role), in addition to recruiting an additional ACO role as part of the Brigade Manager establishment. The recruitment process for both these posts are to commence immediately through a national recruitment process. It was anticipated that the appointments process would commence in August 2019 for the established DCFO and new ACO role, through the appointments committee.

It was recognised that the CFO will temporarily recruit two ACOs to ensure gold command cover is provided (for the short term) as soon as is possible, as proposed in the paper above, to enable gold command cover whilst a recruitment process takes place for a permanent DCFO and additional ACO (see resolutions below).

Paper submitted for Chairs consideration on 5th July

Arrangements to Act in Matters of Urgency – WMFRA Constitution, Standing Orders, Part 7, (17)

Establishment of Brigade Management Team and commencement of recruitment and appointment process for Assistance Chief Officers

It is recommended that:

1. The Chair approve the delegation to the Chief Fire Officer to revise the establishment of the Brigade Management Team as proposed in this paper.
2. The Chair approve the commencement of a recruitment and appointment process of two Assistant Chief Officers, as an outcome of the SET review 2018/2019.

Ref. AU/2019/Sept/91309193

Background:

Currently the established structure of the Brigade Management team consists of the following three roles:

- Chief Fire Officer
- Deputy Chief Fire Officer
- Assistant Chief Officer

To enable the operation of Gold Command for the Service, these three roles plus an additional Area Commander (AC) from the Strategic Enabling Team (SET) operate on a rota system, providing gold cover on a 24/7 basis.

It is important to note that the Gold Book recognises a 4 person gold command rota system. The current approach operated at WMFS provides three established gold command roles. The SET member supporting the gold command rota to bring this to the recommended 4 is not a sustainable approach, as this role is not recognised as part of the continuous duty rota. This provides less ability for resilience and contingency planning across the Brigade Management (BM) team.

There is also a duty of care for the Authority in operating any duty system to take into consideration the impact of this on work life balance.

As part of the SET review the composition of the BM and Strategic Enabling teams were reviewed and it is recommended through this review, that the BM team

increase from the current establishment of 3 to 4. This will support the effective leadership of the Service in continual improvement, the delivery of the Plan through the 3 programmes of People, Process and Culture, as well as a more balanced approach to operating the gold command rota system, aligned to the Gold Book recognised approach.

To support this change, an additional two ACO roles would be recruited into the BM team on a permanent basis, replacing the DCFO role and enabling an additional ACO role to be established.

This reconfiguration of posts would be achieved in a cost neutral way, through disestablishing the role of the DCFO and reducing the current establishment of 6 Area Commanders to 4.

Ref. AU/2019/Sept/91309193

It is proposed that this revised structure is established for the BM team and a recruitment process to commence immediately for the two ACO posts, supporting the replacement for the DCFO post by the end of August, thereby supporting the continuation of the gold command rota.

This delegation will be undertaken within the Authority's approved policy: Arrangements to Act in Matters of Urgency – WMFRA Constitution, Standing Orders, Part 7, (17), as set out in Appendix 1.

Timelines for recruitment and appointment:

- 2 ACO positions:
- recruitment process to commence immediately – July
- Appointments Panel to convene in August 2019

Appendix 1

Part 4, section 17. Arrangements to Act in Matters of Urgency

- (1) The Authority shall make arrangements for its function to be discharged, in cases of urgency, as follows:-
 - (a) by delegation to the Executive Committee which shall deal with all matters of an urgent nature which cannot be reasonably delayed until the next ordinary meeting of the Authority or appropriate Committee; or
 - (b) in cases of extreme urgency, by delegation to a Chief Officer. This Standing Order shall not apply to the functions which are properly undertaken by the Appointments Committee, the Audit and Risk Committee, the Standards Committee, or the Appeals Committee.
- (2) Where a Chief Officer proposes to act on a matter of urgency, such action must be within approved Authority policy. A Chief Officer proposing to act under these arrangements must:-
 - (a) seek the agreement of the Clerk that he/she is satisfied that the matter in question constitutes a genuine matter of urgency, that all other avenues for the determination

Ref. AU/2019/Sept/91309193

of the matter have been exhausted and that the urgency has not arisen due to a failure to finalise reports in time under normal procedures; 18 Sept 2018
2016 West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority –
Constitution Part 4

- (b) consult the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Authority on the action the Chief Officer proposes to take.
- (3) The Chief Officer concerned shall record the urgent circumstances which make it necessary for action to be taken before the next ordinary meeting of the Authority or relevant Committee concerned.
- (4) Where action is taken under any of these circumstances, a report of that action, including a note of the circumstances which made it necessary, must be reported to the next ordinary meeting of the Authority.