

Localism Act 2011: Recruitment of Deputy Chief Fire Officer

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

For further information about this report please contact Chief Fire Officer Rod Hammerton on 01743 260203.

1 Purpose of Report

This report proposes actions for the Fire Authority following receipt of the notice of retirement from Deputy Chief Fire Officer Andy Johnson.

2 Recommendations

The Fire Authority is asked to:

- a) Agree, in principle, to employ a Deputy Chief Fire Officer on a salary of over £100,000; and, if agreed,
- b) Delegate authority to the Brigade Managers' Employment Panel (the Panel) to review and amend the job description of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer;
- c) Agree to engage recruitment advisors to assist in the recruitment process; and
- d) Direct the Panel as a matter of urgency to commence the recruitment process for a new Deputy Chief Fire Officer, reporting back to the Fire Authority with its recommendations for appointment.

3 Retirement of Deputy Chief Fire Officer Johnson

Deputy Chief Fire Officer Andy Johnson joined Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service on 26 September 1991. His notice of retirement within the terms of the Firefighters Pension Scheme has been received and accepted by the Chair of the Fire Authority.

4 Localism Act 2011

Under the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 new posts at Brigade Manager level and the respective remuneration, where it exceeds £100,000 per annum, are subject to approval by the full Fire Authority prior to advertisement. The Fire Authority is, therefore, asked to agree, in principle, to employ a Deputy Chief Fire Officer on a salary of over £100,000.

5 Job Description

It is recommended that the Fire Authority delegates authority to the Brigade Managers' Employment Panel to review and amend, where necessary, the job description of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer.

6 Proposed Recruitment Process

In difficult financial times the Authority will be aware that it will be a fine balance between ensuring that the right candidate is selected for the role and not spending large sums of money in achieving this end. It is recommended that recruitment advisors are engaged to assist the Panel. It is envisaged that they will charge in the region of £6 to 8k plus an additional £750 per candidate for psychometric profiling.

In recent years, authority has been delegated to the Brigade Managers' Employment Panel to deal with the recruitment process for Brigade Managers, including the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, as vacancies have occurred. It is, therefore, recommended that the Panel is tasked with commencing the recruitment process as a matter of urgency with a view to reporting back to the Fire Authority with its recommendation for appointment.

A draft time-line is being drawn up, which shows the potential 'best case' timescales to complete the work. It indicates that, should approval be given, the earliest an offer of employment could be made would be June /July 2020. If the post attracts external candidates allowance must be made for a potential notice period of up to 12 weeks to be served by the incoming post-holder.

7 Financial Implications

It is anticipated that the cost of recruitment advisors would be in the region of £6 to £8k.

Other than recruitment costs, there is no direct cost to the Fire Authority resulting from Deputy Chief Fire Officer Andy Johnson's retirement. The national financial arrangements for the Firemen's Pension Scheme are such that the individual fire and rescue service incurs costs only if the retirement is on ill-health grounds.

8 Legal Comment

Under the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 new posts at Brigade Manager level and the respective remuneration, where it exceeds £100,000 per annum, are subject to approval by the full Fire Authority prior to advertisement.

9 Equality Impact Assessment

Officers have considered the Service's Brigade Order on Equality Impact Assessments and have decided that there are no discriminatory practices or differential impacts upon specific groups arising from this report. An Initial Equality Impact Assessment has not, therefore, been completed.

10 Appendices

There are no appendices attached to this report.

11 Background Papers

There are no background papers associated with this report.