



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**  
**Fire & Rescue Service**  
*Creating Safer Communities*

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham  
Fire and Rescue Authority  
Policy and Strategy Committee

# DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER VACANCY

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

**Date:** 16 November 2018

**Purpose of Report:**

To inform Members that the current Deputy Chief Fire Officer has tendered his resignation from the Service, and to seek approval to recruit a suitable candidate to the impending vacancy.

## CONTACT OFFICER

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Chief Fire Officer

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## **1. BACKGROUND**

The current Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) has been successfully appointed as the Chief Fire Officer in another fire and rescue service and has therefore resigned from Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service. The contractual notice period for Principal Officers is six months.

## **2. REPORT**

- 2.1 The resignation of the DCFO creates an opportunity to review the current structure and give consideration to potential changes.
- 2.2 The role of DCFO has three distinct facets, namely; the direct leadership and responsibility for a significant number of functions within the organisation; provision of strategic operational cover as part of the Brigade Manager on-call rota; and finally, the nominated deputy in the absence of the Chief Fire Officer.
- 2.3 In 2013 the then Chief Fire Officer undertook a review of the senior team, which at that time consisted of five Principal Officers. That revision led to one of the Assistant Chief Fire Officer roles being deleted in May 2014.
- 2.4 In October 2015 a further review under the current Chief Fire Officer led to the deletion of the Assistant Chief Officer role and a redistribution of functions to the remaining three Principal Officers. A number of changes were also made to the posts at the level below Principal Officer, in that individuals' responsibilities were increased and parity was created across 'Head of Department' roles.
- 2.5 Since 2015 additional challenges have emerged in terms of the Government's reform agenda, expectations contained within the Policing and Crime Act 2017 and the inspection regime by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services.
- 2.6 In recognition of the recent reductions within the number of strategic roles, and the growing expectations placed upon the Service, it is proposed that the current level of three Principal Officers is maintained. This is consistent with many other Services of a similar size.
- 2.7 The selection process for the DCFO post is extensive and will involve the convening of the Appointments Committee to assess the candidates and provide recommendations to the full Fire Authority, with an expectation that an appointment could be confirmed at the meeting in February 2019.
- 2.8 To support the process and ensure the relevant expertise is in place, it is proposed that external recruitment specialists are contracted to assist in the appointments process. A budget of £20k will be created from anticipated in year underspends to support this.

- 2.9 The service that the DCFO is moving to has asked for consideration to be given to reducing the six-months' notice period. If either an internal or external candidate is appointed to the vacant post in Nottinghamshire, it is likely that a deficiency will be created for a short period of time that will need to be managed internally.
- 2.10 Considering internal factors, releasing the DCFO on 11 March 2019 (six weeks early) is unlikely to affect any interim arrangements that may be required.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The use of external consultants to support the process is likely to cost in the region of £15-20k. This will be funded from anticipated in year underspends within the revenue budget.
- 3.2 The salary range for the post is £113,853 to £126,503 with the current post holder paid at top of scale. Appointment to the post would normally be at the lowest point and increase over two years so there is potential for short term revenue savings to be realised.

### **4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are significant human resources implications arising from this report, but all can be managed by the internal human resources team with the assistance of specialist external support for which a budget of £20k has been identified.

### **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken as this report does not suggest any changes to policy or service delivery functions.

### **6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

### **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The main aspects of this process will need to comply with appropriate employment and equalities legislation.

## **8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

The loss of such a senior role within the organisation carries the potential risk of loss of continuity and capacity. This will be managed by ensuring that all ongoing work is suitably carried by others during the transitional period. Any delay in the appointment has the potential to exacerbate this risk and the Chief Fire Officer will give consideration to this issue if required, and advise the Authority accordingly.

## **9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS**

There are no collaboration implications arising from this report.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members:

- 10.1 Task the Chief Fire Officer to work with the Clerk to the Authority to put in place a recruitment process for the impending Deputy Chief Fire Officer vacancy.
- 10.2 Give consideration to the request to reduce the notice period to four and half months and release the current incumbent on 11 March 2019.

## **11. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)**

None.

John Buckley  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**