



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

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

ESTABLISHMENT OF A FIRE ENGINEER POST

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Date: 01 May 2020

Purpose of Report:

To present Members with the proposal to increase the establishment and create a Fire Engineer role.

Recommendations:

That Members approve an increase to the permanent establishment with the creation and recruitment of a Fire Engineer role.

CONTACT OFFICER

Name : Craig Parkin
Deputy Chief Fire Officer

Tel : 0115 967 0880

Email : craig.parkin@notts-fire.gov.uk

**Media Enquiries
Contact :** Therese Easom
(0115) 9670880 therese.easom@notts-fire.gov.uk

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) has a statutory duty as the Fire Safety Regulator under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order, 2005.
- 1.2 Since the tragic events at Grenfell Tower in 2017, the sector has seen a greater focus on fire safety in the built environment. The Hackett Review and the Grenfell Tower Inquiry have been instrumental in driving change within this area.
- 1.3 Changes have been consulted on in relation to fire safety legislation, regulatory processes and requirements of fire and rescue services. The forthcoming Fire Safety Bill and further changes to legislation are due during 2020.
- 1.4 The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) has, in February 2020, published the Competency Framework for Fire Safety Regulators. This stipulates that all Fire Safety Regulators (which includes NFRS) must have access to the services of a competent Fire Safety Engineer.
- 1.5 NFRS has observed a recent increase in the requirement to engage a Fire Engineer in relation to complex constructions within the county, consultancy for HS2 and enforcement issues relating to building conversions in the city.
- 1.6 At the February meeting of the full Fire Authority, Members approved the Transformation and Efficiency Strategy which outlined the Service's ambition to establish a Fire Engineer role.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 Due to the retirement of a Group Manager who was qualified as a Fire Engineer, the Service does not currently have a qualified Fire Engineer role within the establishment. Current fire engineering advice is therefore procured from Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service or from the private sector on an 'as and when required' basis.
- 2.2 Whilst it is not a statutory requirement for fire and rescue services to employ a qualified Fire Engineer, the Competency Framework for Fire Safety Regulators stipulates that a competent Fire Engineer is someone who holds a degree in fire safety engineering, or equivalent, and can advise Fire Safety Regulators on scientific and engineering principles related to fire safety.
- 2.3 It details their role of reviewing all building control consultations, including fire engineering submissions, and providing guidance to Fire Safety Regulators on fire engineered buildings. This does not preclude fire safety engineers who do not have an operational background.

- 2.4 In addition, the provision of a qualified Fire Engineer enhances corporate knowledge and applicable fire safety experience within the organisation. It is envisaged that this will enhance the development of other personnel within the Service and enable a greater level of competence in relation to fire safety.
- 2.5 As the Service continues to increase the number of fire safety activities across Service Delivery, it is proposed that the additional capacity and support that a Fire Engineer role would bring to the Service would assist in the delivery of the aims outlined in the Safer Communities Strategy and the Corporate Plan.
- 2.6 In order to ensure future resilience and enhance recruitment options, it is proposed that a new post is established as a Green Book (support) role within the Fire Protection department.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The proposed role has been assessed by the Job Evaluation Panel and has been graded as a Grade 7 role.
- 3.2 Including on-costs, this role attracts costs of between £47,242 and £52,431 dependent upon the experience of the individual.
- 3.3 Funding for the post was built into the base revenue budget and agreed by Members in February.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

The proposed role would be advertised in line with the recruitment policy.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

The Service will advertise the role through a range of external platforms in order to attract a diverse group of applicants and to engage with all parts of the community.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

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

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS

NFRS is a signatory of the regional memorandum of understanding (MOU) for fire engineering. This MOU outlines the sharing of fire engineering resources between Services. The proposed role would enable the Service to contribute to this MOU and would allow the Service to reclaim any costs associated with providing fire engineering advice to neighbouring Services.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members approve an increase to the permanent establishment with the creation and recruitment of a Fire Engineer role.

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

None.

John Buckley
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER