



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority

PRINCIPAL OFFICER ESTABLISHMENT

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Date: 23 September 2022

Purpose of Report:

To seek the approval to amend the Principal Officer establishment and convene the Appointments Committee to recruit and appoint an Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) for Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Members:

- Agree to the deletion of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) post and creation of a substantive ACFO post.
- Task the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) with supporting the Authority in the recruitment of an Assistant Chief Fire Officer.

CONTACT OFFICER

Name: Craig Parkin
Chief Fire Officer

Tel: 0115 967 0880

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

Media Enquiries Contact: Corporate Communications Team
(0115) 967 0880

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Fire Authority will be aware that following the appointment of the current Chief Fire Officer on 15 April 2022, a temporary ACFO post was created in place of the substantive DCFO role. This has enabled a review of the operational/delivery needs of the Service at Principal Officer level and reflects the support needs of the Fire Authority as an Authority appointed role.
- 1.2 The temporary structure has operated in excess of five months and proven to be effective in meeting the needs of both the Service and in supporting the Fire Authority.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 By the learning from the temporary structure put in place by the Fire Authority from April 2022, the Chief Fire Officer has been able to consider the needs of the team in supporting the Fire Authority, leading the Service, but more importantly communities. It is the recommendation of the CFO that the current temporary structure be substantiated by the Fire Authority, deleting the DCFO post and creating an ACFO post on the permanent establishment.
- 2.2 The skills mix within the current team highlights the benefit of diverse experience and the ongoing demands for the sector specific aspects, covered within Service Delivery with prevention, protection and response. As such, this report recommends that the next ACFO appointment would have substantial experience and foundation operationally of the fire service. Whilst this approach limits the potential quantity of applicants, it meets the needs of the Service and may also reduce the recruitment costs associated.
- 2.3 The recruitment process will be a multi-stage approach and will include application, personal statement, written paper and presentation, profiling, a strategic operational exercise and media interview, stakeholder panel, and finally interview by the Appointments Committee.
- 2.4 The process will result in a report to the February 2023 Fire Authority meeting seeking to confirm the preferred candidate. As such, the process is planned to commence by December 2022 and gives sufficient lead in time to plan each stage in a realistic timeframe. Any appointment will also need to take in to account notice periods of the successful candidate, but ideally would see the appointment from April 2023.
- 2.5 As detailed within the financial implications, the removal of the DCFO post and creation of the ACFO post present a significant saving opportunity and given the projected and ongoing budgetary pressures, all levels and areas of the organisation needs to seek efficiencies over coming years, aimed at putting the community first.
- 2.6 The timescale for recruitment means the positive action opportunity should assist in generating a diverse range of applicants and communicating widely within the fire service sector will be key.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The deletion of the DCFO role and creation of the ACFO role, if appointed in line with the current Pay Policy at 90% of full pay (£109,300) and rising to 100% (£121,444) over a 3-year period and subject to annual increases within the salary scale following assessment of satisfactory performance and decision by the Chair of the Fire Authority, would realise circa £80K (inc. on costs) in savings and circa £20k savings each year thereafter.
- 3.2 With continuing financial pressures this would be a clear contribution to overall savings in budget yet retain the necessary capacity to deliver statutory duties and support the fire Authority.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Chief Fire Officer along with the Human Resources department will support the Authority in undertaking a temporary Assistant Chief Fire Officer selection process.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

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

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The substantiation of the Principal Officer structure will be one step to ensuring leadership stability, particularly in the face of future, budget-based challenges to Fire the Authority in delivering services to communities, satisfying both statutory duties and Community Risk Management Plan ambitions.

9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS

There are no collaboration implications arising from this report.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

10.1 Agree to the deletion of the DCFO post and creation of a substantive ACFO post.

10.2 Task the Chief Fire Officer with supporting the Authority in the recruitment of an Assistant Chief Fire Officer.

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

None.

Craig Parkin
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER