



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

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham  
Fire and Rescue Authority

# RETIREMENT OF THE TREASURER TO THE FIRE AUTHORITY

Report of the Chair of the Fire Authority

**Date:** 05 June 2015

**Purpose of Report:**

To formally notify the Fire Authority of the impending retirement of the current Treasurer and to task the Appointments Committee with selecting a suitable replacement.

## CONTACT OFFICER

**Name :** John Buckley  
Chief Fire Officer

**Tel :** 0115 967 0880

**Email :** john.buckley@notts-fire.gov.uk

**Media Enquiries  
Contact :** Bridget Aherne  
(0115) 967 0880 bridget.aherne@notts-fire.gov.uk

## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At the meeting of the Authority on 27 February 2015 the Chair informed Members that the Treasurer had given notification of his intention to retire towards the end of year.
- 1.2 This report formally recognises that intention and seeks to identify the most appropriate method of securing a replacement.

## 2. REPORT

- 2.1 The impending retirement of the current Treasurer requires the Authority to give due consideration to the ongoing responsibility under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972, in that it requires every local authority in England and Wales to:

*“make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and shall secure that one of their officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs.”*

- 2.2 This report seeks approval of the Authority to task the Appointments Committee to undertake a robust process and select a suitable individual able to discharge the duties under Section 151 of the Act.
- 2.3 The current treasurer has been in post for a number of years and appropriate relationships have developed and are embedded that ensure statutory responsibilities are reliably discharged. The Treasurer, due to the independent nature of the appointment, has also proved invaluable in supporting the Authority in areas outside of finance; for example principal officer appointments and remuneration etc.
- 2.4 The retirement of the incumbent provides an opportunity to update and align the specification of services required to better reflect the current and future needs of the Authority. This is likely to formalise the need to be an advisor to the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer on financial issues, and also provide support to Members on other matters as appropriate.
- 2.5 The current Treasurer is answerable directly to the Authority and is independent of the Chief Fire Officer. The employment arrangements are that the post is directly employed by Nottinghamshire County Council and recharged to the Fire Authority. In effect the individual is contractually employed by the Council but works to the Fire Authority. There are however differing ways of securing the services of a Treasurer that could be considered and these are described below.
  - 2.5.1 **Continue to procure the services through a third party such as the County Council.** This maintains the independent nature of the role, however the current arrangements have very little in way of a

robust contract and this would need to be reviewed and updated, and therefore renegotiated prior to any appointment being made.

- 2.5.2 **Directly employ an individual in the role of treasurer.** This would maintain independence as the post would be answerable directly to the Fire Authority and not the Chief Fire Officer. This provides greater flexibility in that the terms and conditions of the post holder are directly controlled by the Authority and would negate the need to enter into a contract with a third party.
- 2.5.3 **Allocate the role of Treasurer to an existing employee.** This approach is not uncommon within Fire Authorities however it would remove the independent nature of the role, and also increase the workload and responsibilities of the individual.
- 2.6 In terms of cost, the current arrangement with the third party is in the region of £10.5k per annum, however this has not been reviewed for a number of years and would be subject to change during the renegotiation phase of the contract. The cost of directly employing an individual is likely to be similar to the cost of utilising a third party as both would be subject to securing resources at market rates. The option of allocating the role to an existing employee is likely to be the most expensive as an uplift would be in the region of £10-15k per year inclusive of on-costs.
- 2.7 Clearly the financial implications must be a consideration, however the differential in cost is likely to be marginal, and the overarching issue is to ensure that the Authority receives the appropriate flexible and reliable support in terms of treasurer services.
- 2.8 Either of the approaches in 2.5 above would satisfy the Section 151 responsibilities, however the Authority currently enjoys the benefit of an independent treasurer as this role not only provides an unbiased view on financial affairs, but is also able to provide advice on such matters that may affect other roles appointed by the Fire Authority. On this basis the option within 2.5.3 should be discounted.
- 2.9 The costs of the other two options are likely to be very similar, as any third party who provided a contracted service would need to secure the services themselves at market rates, and potentially add an administration charge. The benefit of directly employing an individual would allow the Authority to have greater control of the appointed individual, and vary terms on an ad-hoc basis without the need to refer to a third party, or pay any administrative charges. Therefore it is proposed that the approach within 2.4.2 is considered as the preferred option.
- 2.10 Indicative research would suggest that the services of a suitably qualified and experienced individual could be secured for a salary of £12k per annum. This would deliver an average contact time of one day per week ensuring that support is available for committee cycles, informal meetings and strategic planning events.

- 2.11 If the approach within 2.5.2 is determined to be the most appropriate route then a job description and person specification would be produced and an advert placed. The selection process would be agreed and conducted by the Appointments Committee, advised by the current Treasurer, with final approval being decided at a future Fire Authority meeting in line with other appointed roles.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The cost of treasurer services is factored within existing budgets and the slight variance suggested within the report would be contained within existing contingencies.
- 3.2 If a selection process is required costs will be met from within existing recruitment budgets.

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

Human Resources will provide advice to the Appointments Committee and support any recruitment process in line with normal procedures. The current Treasurer will provide advice to the Appointments Committee regarding requisite qualification and experience of candidates.

### **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

An equality impact assessment is not required for this report as it does not seek to change policy or the provision of services.

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

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

### **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Authority must ensure that the duties under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 are appropriately discharged, therefore the appointment of an appropriately qualified treasurer is a necessity.

### **8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

The main risk associated with this report is the potential that a suitable replacement cannot be identified, and that the role of Treasurer becomes vacant. To mitigate this risk other avenues would be explored to identify interim measures to ensure obligations under Section 151 are satisfied.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members:

- 9.1 Agree the most appropriate method of employment of treasurer services from the options within section 2.5 of the report.
- 9.2 Task the Appointments Committee with the responsibility of conducting a selection process and make recommendations of appointment to a future meeting of the Fire Authority.

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

None.

Councillor Darrell Pulk  
**CHAIR OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY**