

AVON FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING:	Avon Fire Authority
MEETING DATE:	Wednesday, 5 October 2022
REPORT OF:	The Clerk
SUBJECT:	Appointment of new Assistant Chief Fire Officer

1. **SUMMARY**

This report summarises the recruitment process for a new Assistant Chief Fire Officer which process concluded on 9 August 2022 and seeks Fire Authority ratification of the appointment made by the People and Culture Committee.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Avon Fire Authority is asked to formally appoint Mr Richard Welch as the new Assistant Chief Fire Officer for Avon Fire & Rescue Service, such appointment to take effect on 17 October 2022.

3. **BACKGROUND**

3.1 On 11 February 2022, the Fire Authority formally appointed Simon Shilton as the new Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive of Avon Fire and Rescue Service (AF&RS) with effect from 1 April 2022. His appointment created a vacancy for a new Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO).

3.2 The People and Culture Committee Terms of Reference include: "*To undertake the recruitment and appointment of SLB members and Statutory Officers*". The full Fire Authority is then collectively responsible for formally appointing members of the Service Leadership Board and Statutory Officers (paragraph 2.1(g) of the Constitution on page 8).

4. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The salary for the new Assistant Chief Fire Officer is set out in the Pay Policy Statement 2022/23 recommended by the People and Culture Committee on 4

March 2022 and approved by the full Fire Authority on 30 March 2022. The salary for an ACFO is set at 75% of the salary of the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive and is currently £111,179.

5. KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 At an extraordinary meeting of the People & Culture Committee on 18 May 2022, Members of People and Culture Committee ratified temporary appointments to the role of ACFO and approved the recruitment process for a substantive ACFO. On 19 May 2022 an advert went live inviting applications for the role of ACFO by 21 June 2022. Shortlisting of candidates took place by Elected Members of People and Culture Committee on 1 July 2022. Four candidates were taken forward to participate in a stakeholder engagement forum, business continuity exercise and briefing/presentation to elected Members. Of those candidates, People & Culture Committee decided to invite three candidates to a final interview.
- 5.2 Following final interviews on 9 August 2022, the People & Culture Committee unanimously decided to appoint Richard Welch, Deputy Assistant Commissioner for South East Area Operations at London Fire Brigade. During his career Richard has worked across a wide diversity of roles within London Fire Brigade and brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the Service Leadership Board. He has attended many large-scale incidents including Incident Commander at Grenfell Tower and Parsons Green terrorist attack, declaring Major Incidents at both. He has received several awards and commendations both for operational incidents, community engagement, leadership and partnership working.

6. RISKS

- 6.1 There are risks to operational cover for the Authority should a substantive ACFO appointment not be undertaken by the Authority.

7. LEGAL/POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 An advert on the National Chief Fire Officers (NFCC) Jobs web page attracted several good quality applicants from both within and outside the Service. The recruitment process followed ensured equality of opportunity and fairness in selecting the successful candidate.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Paper for the Extraordinary People and Culture Committee meeting entitled 'Ratification of temporary appointments to the role of Assistant Chief Fire

Officer (ACFO) and appointment process for a substantive ACFO'. Dated 18 May 2022.

9. APPENDICES

None.

10. REPORT CONTACT

Amanda Brown, Clerk and Monitoring Officer, extension 347.