

AVON FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING:	Avon Fire Authority
MEETING DATE:	Wednesday, 20 March 2024
REPORT OF:	Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive The Clerk
SUBJECT:	Appointment of new Assistant Chief Fire Officer

1. **SUMMARY**

- Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) Steve Imrie has given notice of his intention to retire on 31 May 2024 and the Fire Authority will therefore have a vacancy for an ACFO from 1 June 2024.
- The Fire Authority Terms of Reference include establishing a Panel that will be engaged in a selection process for an ACFO. The Panel are consulted with in advance of the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive (CFO/CE) making an appointment decision (Fire Authority Terms of Reference FA4(o)).
- The Fire Authority are asked to approve the ACFO Job Description, advert, and recruitment process.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 The Fire Authority is asked to:

- a) Approve the advert and Job Description for the Assistant Chief Fire Officer vacancy.
- b) Approve the selection process for a new Assistant Chief Fire Officer.
- c) Approve the commencement of the process to appoint into the position of Assistant Chief Fire Officer.

3. **BACKGROUND**

3.1 Under the new Fire Authority Scheme of Delegation, the CFO/CE has operational independence (SD8) and takes all decisions to maintain the operation of the Service. Under the Fire Authority Terms of Reference, the CFO/CE makes the final decision to appoint an ACFO, as a member of the Service Leadership Board (SLB), with a Panel of the Fire Authority to be

engaged in the selection process and consulted in advance of the CFO/CE making an appointment decision.

- 3.2 The role is an operational uniformed position and requires the post holder to provide operational cover as part of the Principal Officer rota, and, as such, is subject to the 'Gold Book' Terms and Conditions of Service and operational competence.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Fire Authority has established a policy that Principal Officers role below that of CFO/CE and the Statutory Officers would be paid as a proportion of the locally agreed CFO/CE base pay rates. Accordingly, as show in the table below, an ACFO would attract a salary of £123,263:

Post	Pay award: 01 Jan 24
CFO	£164,351
ACFO (75%)	£123,263

- 4.2 Funding for staffing costs is contained within existing budgets.

5. KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 Due to the requirement to ensure operational resilience this position is subject to 'Gold Book' Terms and Conditions of Service and will provide operational response on the Duty Principal Officers' rota. Currently within the Service Leadership Board (SLB) there are only three officers on the Duty Principal Officers' rota (the CFO/CE and 2 x ACFO). Three Principal Officers on the operational rota is considered to be a very lean model and any reductions in the capability will adversely increase the risk to the Authority in its ability to comply with its statutory duty.

- 5.2 The vacant position will be advertised nationally to ensure equality and fairness and to afford the Authority the opportunity to attract a diverse range of applicants from Fire Service backgrounds, ensuring the best possible candidate for the role.

- 5.3 The selection process will consist of the following elements:

- National advert on the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Jobs web page
- Application form

- Stakeholder engagement forum (staff and external stakeholders)
 - Critical Incident and Business Continuity Exercise
 - Presentation and formal interview by the CFO supported by a Fire Authority Panel.
- 5.4 The shortlisting of applications will be taken by the CFO and a Panel of the Fire Authority, with the Clerk and HR acting as advisors. The Service will manage the stakeholder engagement forum and critical incident and business continuity exercise.
- 5.5 The Fire Authority Panel will be provided with the results of the selection process for each candidate, and a decision will be taken as to which candidates will be invited to a presentation and final interview by the CFO supported by the Fire Authority Panel. The final appointment decision will be taken by the CFO after consultation with the Panel Members.
- 5.6 The anticipated timeline for recruitment is:
- Friday 22 March – advert live on NFCC website for 5 weeks.
 - Tuesday 30 April – advert closing date.
 - Thursday 9 May – shortlisting of candidates to start the selection process.
 - w/c 13 May – stakeholder engagement forum for all candidates.
 - w/c 13 May – Critical incident and business continuity exercise for all candidates.
 - w/c 27 May – determine candidates to be invited to presentation and interview.
 - Monday 3 June – presentation and interviews to CFO and Fire Authority Panel.
 - 8 July – earliest state date (one month's notice), may be 9 Sep 24 (3 months' notice) with CFO to appoint temporary cover.

6. **RISKS**

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

7. **LEGAL / POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 National adverts would ensure equality of opportunity and enable the Authority to attract a range of applications for the role.

8. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

9. APPENDICES

1. Job Description.
2. Advert.
3. Application Form.

10. REPORT CONTACT

Simon Shilton, Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive, and
Amanda Brown, Clerk/Monitoring Officer to Avon Fire Authority, Ext. 347.