

Purpose: Decision

Date **4 October 2017**

Title: Deputy Chief Fire Officer Role

Report of the Chief Fire Officer



**HAMPSHIRE  
FIRE AND  
RESCUE  
AUTHORITY**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report contains a proposal for the recruitment of an Interim Deputy Chief Fire Officer (CFO), on a temporary contract, for a period of up to 18 months. This will allow a review of the Deputy CFO role and its position within the senior management structure to take place over the next year. As this will be a temporary appointment, it is recommended to delegate the recruitment process and decision to appoint to the existing Deputy CFO, Neil Odin, in consultation with the Chairman of the Authority.
2. This report is urgent and it was not possible for it to be published in the usual manner prior to the Fire Authority meeting because the Deputy CFO vacancy has arisen as a consequence of the decision on the evening of 28 September 2017 to appoint the existing Deputy CFO, Neil Odin, to the Chief Fire Officer role. As a result of Neil Odin's appointment, a decision in respect of the appointment process for the Deputy CFO vacancy that will arise when he takes up post, needs to be made urgently in order to ensure continuity from 1 January 2018. If this matter is left to the next meeting of the Authority in December 2017, there is a significant risk that there will be no Deputy CFO in post on 1 January 2018, leaving the Authority and Service exposed to operational risk.

## BACKGROUND

3. The existing Chief Officer, Dave Curry, is retiring from HFRA with effect from 31 December 2017. A recruitment process has recently been undertaken to appoint a new Chief Officer. This culminated in a decision by the Appointments Committee on the evening of 29 September 2017 to appoint the existing Deputy CFO (Neil Odin) as the new Chief Officer.
4. When Neil Odin takes up the post of Chief Officer on 1 January 2018 there will be a vacancy for the Deputy CFO. Neil has considered the position in respect of the Deputy CFO vacancy in conjunction with the outgoing CFO and the Chairman of the Authority.
5. In light of the national landscape, including changes to governance arrangements for Fire and Rescue Services, it is recommended that a full and detailed review of the Deputy CFO role and its position within HFRA's senior management structure should take place over the course of the next year.

However, pending the outcome of this review, an Interim Deputy CFO should be appointed on a temporary contract. This will ensure continuity, operational resilience and safety in the absence of the Chief Officer.

6. As the Interim Deputy CFO will be a temporary position, the appointment process needs to be both proportionate and swift to ensure the right officer is in post by 1 January 2018.
7. Under HFRA's constitution, the appointment of the Chief Officer and Deputy CFO are decisions of the Authority. However, the Authority may delegate these decisions to officers or a committee (but not to an individual member). In respect of appointment to the Deputy CFO role, it is normal for the Chief Officer to play a key part in the decision.
8. In the circumstances and in light of the proposed interim nature of the Deputy CFO appointment, it is recommended that the recruitment process and appointment decision is delegated to Neil Odin (as the next Chief Officer) in consultation with the Chairman of the Authority. This will enable a proportionate and reasonable recruitment process to be undertaken over the next six weeks and an appointment to be made by end of December 2017 to ensure operational resilience. The appointment will be reported back to a future meeting of the Authority.
9. In light of the temporary nature of the appointment and the need for the process to be undertaken swiftly, it is recommended that the process is ring fenced to internal candidates only.
10. Following the review of the Deputy CFO role next year, further recommendations about the future of the role will be brought back to the Authority at a later date.

#### SUPPORTING OUR SERVICE PLAN AND PRIORITIES

11. Appointing an Interim Deputy Chief Fire Officer who will be in post from 1 January 2018 and who has the right skills to deputise for the Chief Officer is vital in order to support the Service Plan and Safer, Stronger priorities.

#### CONSULTATION

12. Public consultation is not required, as this is an internal employment matter.

#### RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

13. The recruitment process for the Interim Deputy CFO will need to be appropriately resourced. HR will provide support as part of business as usual

HR Processes. Legal and Democratic Services support will also be provided as required. Otherwise, there are no resource implications of the proposal.

### LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

14. The Authority is able to delegate the decision as to appointment of an Interim Deputy CFO to the existing Deputy CFO, in consultation with the Chairman.
15. Implementation of the recruitment process will need to meet the Authority's statutory equality obligations. Decision making must be in accordance with constitutional and other legal requirements. Legal and HR advice will be given throughout the process as required in order to ensure appropriate compliance.

### PEOPLE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

16. The proposals in this report are compatible with the provisions of equality and human rights legislation.

### OPTIONS

17. The Authority has the options of:
  - (a) delegating responsibility for appointing an Interim Deputy CFO to officers; or
  - (b) to a Committee of the Authority; or
  - (c) Reserving the decision to Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority, as a decision of the full Authority.
18. In light of the temporary nature of the appointment and the fact that this is very much an operational decision, it is considered that the most efficient and proportionate option is to delegate to Neil Odin as the existing Deputy/new Chief Officer, in consultation with the Chairman of the Authority.

### RISK ANALYSIS

19. Option (a) above is the recommended approach for reasons of efficiency and effectiveness.
20. Options (b) and (c) are potentially disproportionate in light of the temporary, nature of the appointment. These options could also lead to delay in the process leaving the Authority and Service without a Deputy CFO in January 2018.

### CONCLUSION

21. For the reasons set out in this report it is recommended that option (a) set out at paragraph 17 above is adopted, as per the recommendations below.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

22. That the Authority agrees the proposals in this report that the incoming Chief Officer undertakes a review of the role of the Deputy CFO over the course of the next year and in the interim a temporary, Deputy CFO is appointed.
23. That, the Authority agrees the process for recruiting an Interim Deputy CFO should be ring-fenced to suitably qualified and experienced internal candidates.
24. That the Authority delegates responsibility for devising and implementing an appropriate recruitment process and making the decision as to the appointment of an Interim Deputy CFO to Neil Odin, in consultation with the Chairman of the Authority, with the decision to be reported back to a future meeting of the Authority.

## APPENDICES ATTACHED

### BACKGROUND PAPERS

25. None

Contact:

Neil Odin