

APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE

SUMMARY

1. Under the Constitution, it is the role of the Appointments Committee to recommend the appointment of a Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive for endorsement by the full Fire Authority.
2. At its meeting on 24 April 2017 the Authority received a paper regarding the process to be adopted to appoint to the post, including proposed timeline, eligibility for application and the breadth of advertisement.
3. In accordance with the agreed process Members of the Appointments Committee interviewed three shortlisted candidates on 23 May 2017 and also received feedback from the Partners Panel and the media assessment. The Members agreed unanimously to recommend that Mr Chris Blacksell be appointed Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive with effect from 9 September 2017 subject to the recommendation being ratified by the full Fire Authority on 5 June 2017.

RECOMMENDATION

4. Members are asked to ratify the appointment of Mr Chris Blacksell as Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive.

BACKGROUND

5. Following the announcement by Mr Dene Sanders of his decision to retire as Chief Fire officer and Chief Executive on 9 September 2017 the Authority at its meeting on 24 April 2017 agreed a process to be followed in making an appointment.
6. Under the Constitution, it is the role of the Appointments Committee to recommend the appointment of a Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive for ratification by the full Fire Authority.
7. 9 candidates applied from different backgrounds. The Appointments Committee unanimously shortlisted 3 of those candidates, rejected 1 on the grounds that it was received after the closing date, and 4 on the grounds that they did not meet the agreed essential criteria set for the role. 1 candidate withdrew prior to shortlisting for personal reasons. It was confirmed by the Appointments Committee that this candidate would have been eligible for shortlisting had she not withdrawn.
8. 2 of the 3 shortlisted candidates were internal candidates and the 3rd candidate was external to the Service and was from a non-operational background.
9. Members of the Appointments Committee interviewed the 3 shortlisted candidates on 23 May 2017 and also received feedback from the Partners Panel and the media presentation exercise. The Members agreed unanimously to recommend that Mr Chris Blacksell be appointed Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive with effect from 9 September 2017 subject to the recommendation being endorsed by the full Fire Authority on 5 June 2017.

10. The Members of the Appointments Committee would like to take this opportunity to record their appreciation of the commitment of five senior officers from Partner organisations who participated in the Partner Panel assessments.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPATIBILITY

11. In order to meet its aims and objectives of the Strategic Plan, the Service must be led by an appropriately qualified and skilled executive leader. The recommended appointment has been made in accordance with the process agreed by the Authority on 24 April 2017 aimed at ensuring a robust and fair process in selecting this leader.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCES/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

12. The advertising costs for the process were as follows:

Yorkshire Post	£ 575
The Guardian	£1400
The Times	£1500
The Telegraph	<u>£1000</u>
Total	£4475

As this process was undertaken internally with no recourse to agency, it was significantly less expensive than previous Director processes.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

13. The adoption of a fair selection process will reduce any potential risk of employment legal claims.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/HR IMPLICATIONS

14. The process followed was compliant with equal opportunities legislation and recruitment best practice.

CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

15. The recommendation set out in this report supports the governance of the Authority.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

16. None arising directly.

COMMUNICATION ACTIONS ARISING

17. The final decision and rationale for reaching it will be communicated to staff and all stakeholders.

DETAILS OF CONSULTATION AND/OR COLLABORATION

18. The approved appointments process included a Partners Panel comprising 5 senior officers from Partner organisations and Members of the Appointments Committee received feedback from the Panel of their assessment of the candidates on the basis of a report presentation. The current Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive provided technical advice to the Appointments Committee.

BACKGROUND PAPERS AVAILABLE FOR ACCESS

19. None.

RECOMMENDATIONS RESTATED

20. Members are asked to ratify the appointment of Mr Chris Blacksell as Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive.

**M BUCKLEY
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