

**EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY**

**Minutes of the meeting of the PRINCIPAL OFFICER APPOINTMENTS PANEL held at Roedean Fire Station, Roedean Road, Brighton at 09:30 hours on Thursday 30 April 2015.**

**Members Present:** Councillors Barnes, Howson (Chair), Lambert, Powell, Scott and Theobald.

N.B. Councillor Lambert attended the meeting in place of Councillor Butler having been nominated by the Deputy Monitoring Officer.

**Also present:** Mr D Prichard – Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive; Ms L Woodley – Deputy Monitoring Officer; Mr D Savage – Treasurer; Mr S Rose – Human Resources Manager; Mrs H Scott-Youldon – Head of Learning & Occupational Development and Mrs A Bryen – Clerk.

**1. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

- 1.1 It was noted that, in relation to matters on the agenda, no participating Member had any disclosable pecuniary interest under Section 30 of the Localism Act 2011.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

- 2.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Butler.

**3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS.**

- 3.1 There were none.

**4. ANY OTHER NON-EXEMPT ITEMS CONSIDERED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN**

- 4.1 There were none.

**5. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURE FOR APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF FIRE OFFICER & CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

- 5.1 The Panel considered a joint report of the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive and the Monitoring Officer. (Copy in Minute Book).
- 5.2 The report set out the terms of the reference for the Panel, a draft recruitment timetable and a job description and person specification for the post of Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive (CFO&CE).
- 5.3 Members discussed the implications of making a permanent appointment should a future merger with another authority happen. The CFO&CE confirmed that no discussions were currently taking place with any other authority on any amalgamation. The Treasurer advised Members about employment rights regarding redundancy payments.

- 5.4 Members discussed the combined post of Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive and were reminded that the combined role had been introduced after the Combined Fire Authority was established as an independent body. Members were informed that Kent FRS and Durham & Darlington FRS were structured differently, with a separate Chief Executive's post and a Head of the Operational Service. Members recognised that substantial additional costs could be incurred if the functions were split between two posts.
- 5.5 The Panel agreed that an appointment should be made to the post of Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive, and that the person appointed would need to demonstrate the necessary qualities to meet the demands of both roles.
- 5.6 The Panel considered the job description and the person specification for the post. The CFO&CE informed Members that there were no national standards relating to this appointment and that the Appointment and Promotion Regulations had been repealed. Fire Authorities had flexibility to determine how the appointment should be made. The Chief Fire Officers' Association (CFOA) and the Local Government Association (LGA) had developed an Executive Leadership Programme to replace the Brigade Command Course. Brigade Managers included the CFO, DCFO, ACFO and ACO. The Brigade Managers' Role Map had been considered against national occupational standards and the job description and person specification had been re-written to take account of best practice across the sector, and outside the sector.
- 5.7 The Panel discussed the qualifications required as set out in the person specification, and noted that the possession of a degree or equivalent professional qualification as essential demonstrated that an applicant had the intellectual rigour needed for the post. Members expected that an applicant for this level would have to *demonstrate* their evidence of continual professional development and agreed that this should be essential rather than merely desirable.
- 5.8 In considering the knowledge, skills and abilities required, the Panel agreed to delete the word 'substantial' in points 1 and 2, and asked that applicants should be able to demonstrate their knowledge of these issues.
- 5.9 Members discussed the rigour of the assessment process and agreed to the establishment of an assessment centre so that a wide range of applicants' skills could be assessed including their operational command competence.
- 5.10 The Panel considered the most appropriate means of advertising the post. The CFO&CE informed Members that the post would likely attract Deputy and Assistant Chief Fire Officers. The post could be advertised on the CFOA website (also linked to Eire), and by direct emails to other UK FRSs at almost nil cost, which would reach the target audience. The Panel agreed this method of job advertisement.
- 5.11 The Panel agreed that they should meet the short-listed applicants in an informal setting and agreed that they should share an evening meal prior to the interview day.
- 5.12 The CFO&CE informed Members that he had approached professional advisers from CFOA who had indicated their willingness to provide sector knowledge and expertise to the Panel. The Panel asked the CFO&CE to progress this.

- 5.13 Members discussed the current contract for the CFO&CE's post and noted the outstanding issues relating to the management structure and the Principal Officers' rota still to be resolved. The CFO&CE confirmed that the post was conditioned to the Gold Book. The Panel agreed it was preferable for the incoming post-holder to consider the management structure and resolve any outstanding issues relating to the Principal Officers' rota rather than to consider these at this stage.
- 5.14 Members considered the remuneration for the post, and whether it should be a single point salary or a 3 point annual increment salary scale.
- 5.15 The Treasurer reminded Members that an independent external review of Principal Officers' Pay had been carried out in 2010 against wide benchmarking and the Fire Authority had agreed to move to a single point salary for the post of CFO&CE together with a readjustment of the pay bands and a percentage link to the salaries of the DCFO, ACFO and ACO(s). There would be an impact on other Principal Officers' pay arrangements if the Panel wished to move to a 3 point annual increment scale for the CFO&CE. Should Members wish to consider changing the existing arrangements, any decision should be taken in the light of current benchmarking information to ensure relevant evidence underpinned the decision.
- 5.16 The CFO&CE informed Members of the salary for the most recently recruited CFO posts in Royal Berkshire, Leicestershire and Greater Manchester, all higher than ESFRS CFO&CE.
- 5.17 The Deputy Monitoring Officer advised Members that the Pay Policy for 2015/16 had been approved by the Fire Authority in February 2015. It stated, "The remuneration for this post on recruitment is £135, 931." The Localism Act required the full Fire Authority to approve the pay policy and this could not be delegated to a Panel. Any decision to alter the salary for the post of CFO&CE post would need to be considered as part of the Pay Policy.
- 5.18 Having taken into account the need for financial prudence and offering a salary at a level to attract suitable candidates, the Panel agreed that the post for CFO&CE should be advertised offering a single point salary of £135,931.
- 5.19 **RESOLVED** – That
- (i) the job description and person specification (as amended – paragraphs 5.6 and 5.7 above) for the post of Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive be approved;
  - (ii) the post being advertised via the CFOA website and email to UK FRSs be approved;
  - (iii) the timetable for the recruitment and selection process be approved, including the following key dates:  
Panel meeting for shortlisting – Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2015;  
Assessment Centre – Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> July;  
Panel meeting for final interviews – Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> July;

- (iv) the recruitment and selection process, including the establishment of an assessment centre be approved; and
- (v) the terms and conditions of service and remuneration at a single point salary of £135,931 for the post of Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive be approved.

6. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

- 6.1 **RESOLVED** – That there were no reports to be considered which the press and public should be excluded from the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 11:27 hours.

Signed

Dated this 23rd day of June 2015