

MINUTES of the **STAFF APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE** meeting held at the Millicent Room, Endeavour House, Russell Road, Ipswich on 16 October 2013 at 2.00 p.m.

Present: Councillors Stephen Burroughes, Derek Hackett, Michael Ladd, Sandy Martin and Colin Spence.

Officers Present: Sally Marlow, Head of Strategic Human Resources, Jaime Milton, HR Manager and Sue Morgan, Head of Democratic Services.

64. Election of Chairman

Councillor Colin Spence was proposed as Chairman for the meeting by Councillor Michael Ladd and seconded by Councillor Stephen Burroughes. There were no other nominations and Councillor Spence was elected the Chairman for the Committee and took the chair.

65. Apologies for absence and substitutions

There were no apologies for absence.

66. Declarations of interest and dispensations

There were none declared.

67. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2012 were approved as an accurate record and were signed by the Chairman.

68. Business Case for the recruitment of a Chief Fire Officer

The Committee considered Agenda Item 5, a report by Sally Marlow, Head of Strategic Human Resources, seeking approval of the business case for the recruitment of a permanent Chief Fire Officer and, subject to that appointment, to provisionally authorise the business case for the appointment of a permanent Deputy Chief Fire Officer and the respective recruitment processes.

In response to questions from members, it was confirmed that although the salaries for senior officers are set through a designated process with the NJC over time there may be reviews and pay rises. Salaries in Suffolk have remained the same for 4 years. It was also established that the role of Chief Fire Officer is usually an operational officer but does not have to be and there is no obligation to advertise vacancies externally.

Members discussed the merits of internal appointments, the potentially reduced number of applicants this may provide and emphasised the importance of the process of recruitment and assessment. Members were reassured that the process would be consistent with that used for recent appointments of Directors within the Council and just as robust, irrespective of the number of candidates.

For the appointment of the Chief Fire Officer, it was intended that there would be a technical advisor to the panel from another Fire and rescue authority. For the post of Deputy Chief Fire Officer, the incoming Chief Fire Officer would be a technical advisor to the selection panel.

With regard to the proposed salary, it was recognised that if the post were advertised externally, this may not attract a significant number of candidates with the required experience and they could require time to develop in their role.

Members heard that the internal advert would be notified to the fire and rescue service staff, any of whom could apply. Returned applications would be sifted as necessary, using agreed criteria, and an interview shortlist drawn up. Members would sit on a formal interview Panel with a technical advisor. The process would also include stakeholder feedback and psychometric testing specific to the leadership role.

It was confirmed that in the event that the Committee felt that there was not a suitable candidate, the Committee could decide that an external recruitment process would be necessary.

Decision: the Committee agreed by a unanimous decision that:

- a) The business case for the recruitment of a permanent Chief Fire Officer be approved; and
- b) The existing salary point is maintained for the post; and
- c) Subject to the outcome of the appointment to the Chief Fire Officer, provisionally approve the business case for the appointment of a permanent Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) together with the recruitment process; and
- d) That the recruitment for both posts is carried out internally and is advertised at this stage to internal applicants only.

Reason for Decision: The Committee was satisfied with the information provided in relation to the proposed appointments, recognising the potential benefits in terms of timing and cost, of an internal recruitment process.

Alternative Proposals: The Committee could have decided to make an appointment on a temporary or acting up basis for an interim period for the either the Chief Fire Officer post or the Deputy Chief Fire Officer post. The Committee could also have decided to carry out an external recruitment process for the Chief Fire Officer Post and/or the Deputy Chief Fire Officer post.

Declarations of interest: None reported

Dispensations: None reported.

The meeting closed at 2.29 p.m.