

Review of Member Role Descriptions

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

For further information about this report please contact Rod Hammerton, Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260204 or Germaine Worker, Head of Human Resources and Administration, on 01743 260210.

1 Purpose of Report

This report asks Members to review the Role Descriptions for the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Standards and Human Resources Committee and the Role Description and Skills and Competencies for the Fire Authority's Independent Person.

2 Recommendations

Members are asked to review the Role Descriptions for Chair and Vice-Chair of the Standards and Human Resources Committee and the Role Description and Skills and Competencies for the Fire Authority's Independent Person and recommend any required changes to the Fire Authority for agreement.

3 Background

Under its Terms of reference, the Standards and Human Resources Committee is required to review the Role Descriptions for its Chair and Vice-Chair and for the Fire Authority's Independent Person. The Committee is, therefore, asked to consider whether any amendments are required to these Role Descriptions.

4 Review

Having carried out a review of the three Role Descriptions, officers do not propose any changes to them.

The Committee is however, able to review the Role Descriptions, which are attached as appendices to the report, and recommend any amendments that it considers necessary to the Fire Authority.

5 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

6 Legal Comment

There is no statutory requirement for role descriptions to be set for the Independent Person or the Standards and Human Resources Committee Chair or Vice-Chair. It does, however, represent good practice for the role descriptions to be clearly set out and regularly reviewed. In particular, the Role Description for the Independent Person assists, when appointing to that role.

It should be noted that the eligibility and appointment process for the Independent Person must comply with section 28 of the Localism Act 2011. Accordingly, if the Committee is considering any changes to the criteria at Appendix C2 of this report this legislation must be considered.

7 Initial Impact Assessment

This report merely requires the Committee to review the existing Role Description for the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee and for the Fire Authority's Independent Person. An Initial Impact Assessment is not, therefore, required.

8 Equality Impact Assessment

Officers have considered the Service's Brigade Order on Equality Impact Assessments (Human Resources 5 Part 2) and have decided that there are no discriminatory practices or differential impacts upon specific groups arising from this report. An Initial Equality Impact Assessment is not, therefore, required.

9 Appendices

Appendix A

Chair of Standards and Human Resources Committee Role Description

Appendix B

Vice-Chair of Standards and Human Resources Committee Role Description

Appendix C

Fire Authority Independent Person Role Description and Skills and Competencies

10 Background Papers

There are no background papers associated with this report.

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority

Role Description Chair of Standards and Human Resources Committee

Office:	Chair of Standards and Human Resources Committee
Allowance:	None
Responsible to:	Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority

Purpose of Role

The overall purpose of the role is:

- To chair the Standards and Human Resources Committee; and
- To provide leadership in matters concerning that Committee

Main Responsibilities

The main responsibilities of the office holder are:

- To work closely with the Chief Fire Officer and the Chair of the Fire Authority in order to promote and maintain a high standard of conduct by Members
- To work closely with the Chief Fire Officer and the Chair of the Fire Authority in order to contribute to the delivery of an efficient and effective fire and rescue service, taking into account the needs of all sections of the community
- To maintain the integrity of the Fire Authority's Standards and Human Resources Committee
- To represent the Fire Authority and its policies in a positive and professional manner
- To chair meetings of the Standards and Human Resources Committee, including attendance at pre-meeting briefings
- To sit on the Brigade Managers' Employment Panel
- To sit on the Pensions Panel
- To participate in Hearings Panel meetings, when called upon to do so

- To attend relevant conferences and meetings, as appropriate
- To participate in the recruitment process for Independent Persons or to nominate a member of the Standards and Human Resources Committee to participate in the recruitment process on his / her behalf
- To undertake such training as is recommended by officers for the effective performance of duties across the Standards and Human Resources Committee and Hearings Panel remit
- To undertake, in addition, all of the duties specified in the Fire Authority's Member Role Description

Accountability

The tasks and duties outlined in this role description relate to the Member level activities of the Fire Authority.

Accountability for Members' performance overall is through the political and electoral process.

The responsibilities outlined are without prejudice to the separate duties and responsibilities exercised by officers of the Fire Authority, for which they are accountable as employees of the Fire Authority as a whole.

When carrying out this role the Chair must have regard to the Fire Authority's Protocol on Member / Officer Relations, which can be found in the Members' Handbook.

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority

Role Description Vice-Chair of Standards and Human Resources Committee

Office:	Vice-Chair of Standards and Human Resources Committee
Allowance:	None
Responsible to:	Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority

Purpose of Role

The overall purpose of the role is:

- To deputise for the Chair of the Standards and Human Resources Committee, as required; and
- To support and assist the Chair of the Committee in providing leadership in matters concerning that Committee.

Main Responsibilities

The main responsibilities of the office holder are:

- To assist the Chair in working closely with the Chief Fire Officer and the Chair of the Fire Authority in order to promote and maintain a high standard of conduct by Members
- To assist the Chair in working closely with the Chief Fire Officer and the Chair of the Fire Authority in order to contribute to the delivery of an efficient and effective fire and rescue service, taking into account the needs of all sections of the community
- To assist and support the Chair in maintaining the integrity of the Fire Authority's Standards and Human Resources Committee
- To represent the Fire Authority and its policies in a positive and professional manner
- To chair meetings of the Standards and Human Resources Committee, including attendance at pre-meeting briefings, as required in the absence, or inability to act, of the Chair

- To sit on the Fire Authority's Pensions Panel in the absence, or inability to act, of the Chair of the Standards and Human Resources Committee
- To participate in Hearings Panel meetings, when called upon to do so
- To undertake such training as is recommended by officers for the effective performance of duties across the Standards and Human Resources Committee and Hearings Panel remit
- To undertake, in addition, all of the duties specified in the Fire Authority's Member Role Description

Accountability

The responsibilities outlined in this role description relate to the Member level activities of the Fire Authority.

Accountability for Members' performance overall is through the political and electoral process.

The responsibilities outlined are without prejudice to the separate duties and responsibilities exercised by officers of the Fire Authority, for which they are accountable as employees of the Fire Authority as a whole.

When carrying out this role the Chair must have regard to the Fire Authority's Protocol on Member / Officer Relations, which can be found in the Members' Handbook.

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority

Role Description Independent Person

Office:	Independent Person
Allowance:	None
Responsible to:	Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority and Telford & Wrekin Council

Purpose of Role

The overall purpose of the role of the office holder is to assist the Fire Authority and the Council in promoting high standards of conduct by elected and co-opted Members and, in particular, to uphold the Code of Conduct, adopted by the Fire Authority and the Council and the seven principles of public office, namely selflessness, honesty, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness and leadership.

Main Responsibilities

The main responsibilities of the office holder are:

- To be consulted by the Fire Authority and the Council through the Monitoring Officer and/or the Standards and Human Resources Committee before it makes a decision on an investigated allegation and to be available to attend hearing meetings of the Standards and Human Resources Committee for this purpose, if required
- To be available for consultation by the Monitoring Officer and/or the Standards and Human Resources Committee before a decision is taken as to whether to investigate a complaint or to seek local resolution of the same
- To be available for consultation by any elected Member, including a town or parish councillor, who is the subject of a standards complaint
- To develop a sound understanding of the ethical framework as it operates within the Fire Authority and the Council, its town and parish councils
- To participate in training events to develop skills, knowledge and experience and in networks developed for Independent Persons, operating outside the Fire Authority's and Council's area

- To attend training events organised and promoted by the Fire Authority's and/or Council's Standards and Human Resources Committee, if required
- To act as advocate and ambassador for the Fire Authority and the Council in promoting ethical behaviour

Liaison with

- Monitoring Officer
- Members of the Fire Authority's Standards and Human Resources Committee and the Council's Standards Committee
- Officers and Members of the respective authorities and Town and Parish Councillors within the Borough of Telford & Wrekin
- Other key stakeholders within the community

Accountability

The Independent Person will be accountable to the Fire Authority and the Council.

The tasks and duties outlined in this role description relate to the Member level activities of the Fire Authority.

When carrying out this role the Independent Person must have regard to the Fire Authority's Protocol on Member / Officer Relations, which can be found in the Member Handbook.

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority

Skills and Competencies Independent Person

Essential Criteria

The Independent Person will have:

- A keen interest in standards in public life
- A wish to serve the local community and uphold local democracy
- The ability to be objective, independent and impartial
- Sound decision-making skills
- Leadership qualities, particularly in respect of exercising sound judgement

The Independent Person will:

- Be a person, in whose impartiality and integrity the public can have confidence
- Understand and comply with confidentiality requirements
- Have a demonstrable interest in local issues
- Have an awareness of the importance of ethical behaviours
- Be a good communicator
- Be contactable at all times during normal working hours by telephone or email
- Be available to attend hearings, which may be held in the day time and at a relatively short notice

Desirable Criteria

- Working knowledge / experience of local government or other public service and / or of large complex organisations
- Awareness of, and sensitivity to, the political process
- Knowledge and understanding of judicial / quasi-judicial or complaints processes

Eligibility for Appointment

A person cannot be appointed as an Independent Person, if they are:

- Or were within a period of 5 years prior to appointment, a member, co-opted member or officer of any other relevant authority (this includes parish, district, county and unitary councils and Police and Fire Authorities); or
- A relative or close friend of the above; or
- Actively engaged in local party political activity.