

Corporate Health – Recruitment

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

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1 Purpose of Report

This report informs Members of the Senior Management Team's (SMT's) intention to recruit in the context of previous corporate health discussions.

2 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the report.

3 Background

Due to Service requirements officers are currently operating with a number of personnel detached to support projects and other work streams. The impact of such detachments are that deficiencies are created at watch level. These deficiencies impact on crewing levels with Area Command having to make arrangements to cover such shortages.

In order to cover deficiencies, the Service has adopted two main strategies. Firstly, officers have utilised overtime to cover the operational vacancies. Latterly, the Service has entered an agreement with Hereford and Worcester to temporarily second a number of uniformed personnel. The formal agreement with Hereford and Worcester is in place until December 2016. Currently, a total of 10 personnel are seconded.

4 Corporate Health

SMT has considered the current situation. Whilst a recruitment freeze has proved beneficial in avoiding the need to make redundancies, over the last year issues have begun to emerge from having a reducing pool of personnel. As previously noted by the Committee, over the past few years the promotion pool has reduced and created difficulties in selecting for risk critical positions in the Service.

SMT, therefore, made a decision to hold the first wholetime recruitment activity for 6 years in 2016. Recruiting will bring new ideas and talent to the Service and open up opportunities to find individuals with varying experiences, with the possibility of developing increased diversity. External recruitment can also provide new, innovative ideas creating a forward-thinking approach that stimulates both advancement, service development and growth.

5 Service Transformation – Crewing Models and Savings

During 2015/16 the Service has reviewed the current crewing model and the Fire Authority will be asked to determine the future model at its meeting on 3 May 2016. Irrespective of the model chosen, it will be necessary to hold a recruitment drive, due to current staffing numbers and predicted retirement forecasts for the forthcoming years.

The opportunity to realise savings from the change of crewing model will not, therefore, be impacted upon by the decision to recruit firefighters.

6 Partnership Working

After some research by the Human Resources Manager, SMT approved the use of West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service's on-line recruitment system, which they developed to meet their own recruitment needs.

As well as reducing the time and costs associated with managing paper applications, this system also allows a number of the selection tests to be conducted as part of the initial application. This again reduces the costs of managing these tests within the Service.

7 Legal Comment

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

8 Initial Impact Assessment

An Initial Impact Assessment has been completed and is attached to this report.

9 Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and is attached to this report.

10 Appendices

There are no appendices attached to this report.

11 Background Papers

There are no background papers associated with this report.