



**Friday,  
1 December 2023  
10.00 am**

**Meeting of  
Staffing Committee  
Clemonds Hey  
Winsford  
CW7 2UA**

Contact Officer:  
Donna Linton  
Democratic Services

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## **Cheshire Fire Authority**

### **Notes for Members of the Public**

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#### **Attendance at Meetings**

The Cheshire Fire Authority welcomes and encourages members of the public to be at its meetings and Committees. You are requested to remain quiet whilst the meeting is taking place and to enter and leave the meeting room as quickly and quietly as possible.

All meetings of the Authority are held at the Training Centre, Sadler Road, Winsford. If you plan to attend please report first to the Reception Desk where you will be asked to sign in and will be given a visitors pass. You should return your pass to the Reception Desk when you leave the building. There are some car parking spaces available on site for visitors at the front of the building. Please do not park in spaces reserved for Fire Service personnel.

If you feel there might be particular problems with access to the building or car parking please contact the Reception Desk at Sadler Road Winsford Tel (01606) 868700.

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#### **Access to Information**

Copies of the Agenda will be available at the meeting. A copy can also be obtained from the contact officer named on the front of the Agenda. Alternatively, the Agenda and individual reports are available on the Authority's website ([www.cheshirefire.gov.uk](http://www.cheshirefire.gov.uk))

The Agenda is usually divided into two parts. Most business is dealt with in the first part which is open to the public. On some occasions some business may need to be considered in the second part of the agenda, in private session. There are limited reasons which allow this to take place, e.g. as confidential information is being considered about an individual, or commercial information is being discussed.

**This agenda is available in large print, Braille, audio CD or in community languages upon request by contacting; Telephone: 01606868414 or email: [equalities@cheshirefire.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@cheshirefire.gov.uk)**

#### **Recording of Meetings**

The Authority audio records its meetings. Please contact Democratic Services for a copy of the recording via [DemocraticServices@cheshirefire.gov.uk](mailto:DemocraticServices@cheshirefire.gov.uk). The recordings are not kept indefinitely.

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## **MEETING OF THE STAFFING COMMITTEE**

**FRIDAY, 1 DECEMBER 2023**

**Time: 10.00 am**

**Fire Conference Room - Fire Service HQ, Clemonds Hey, Winsford,  
Cheshire, CW7 2UA**

### **AGENDA**

#### **Part 1 - Business to be discussed in public**

##### **1 PROCEDURAL MATTERS**

##### **1A Apologies for Absence**

##### **1B Declaration of Members' Interests**

Members are reminded to disclose any interests that are relevant to any item on the Agenda.

##### **1C Minutes of the Staffing Committee**

(Pages 5 - 8)

To approve the minutes of the Staffing Committee held on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

##### **2 Exclusion of Press and Public**

(Pages 9 - 10)

#### **Part 2 - Business to be discussed in Private**

##### **3 Appointment of Head of Service Improvement**

(Pages 11 - 30)

The meeting has been arranged to allow Members to interview shortlisted people for the position of Head of Service Improvement and agree an appointment.

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STAFFING COMMITTEE held on Monday, 20 November 2023 at Fire Conference Room - Fire Service HQ, Clemonds Hey, Winsford, Cheshire, CW7 2UA at 12.00 pm**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Stef Nelson (Chair), Gina Lewis, Stuart Parker, Margaret Simon, Laura Smith and Peter Wheeler

**1 PROCEDURAL MATTERS**

**A Recording of Meeting**

Members were reminded that this meeting would be audio recorded.

**B Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Rob Moreton and Karen Mundry (Councillor Laura Smith attended as a Substitute Member for Councillor Karen Mundry).

**C Declaration of Members' Interests**

There were no declarations of Members' interests.

**D Minutes of the Staffing Committee**

**RESOLVED:**

**That the minutes of the Staffing Committee held on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.**

**2 ANNUAL WORKFORCE PLANNING UPDATE**

The Group Manager, Organisational Performance presented the report which provided an update as of November 2023 of the current operational staffing levels and overview of the workforce planning process that was used to plan for and recruit the required number of operational firefighters.

It was noted that there had been an increase in staff leaving the Service to both external employers and other fire and rescue services who were facing similar issues with their retirement profiles. In the four-year period to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2027, it was anticipated that there would be approximately 111 leavers, which represented employee turnover of 28%.

In the last 12 months 38 appointments to wholetime firefighter roles had been made, with 27 leavers. Future recruitment was planned to fill 8 positions through an On-Call

Migration course in March 2024 and 12 positions on a Wholetime Recruits course in April 2024.

A Member asked how many female firefighters were now employed by the Service. In response, the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive advised that in total there were 72 female firefighters employed across the Service.

The latest round of promotion boards for Crew, Watch and Station Managers were completed in October 2023 which had resulted in 4 permanent Group Managers appointments, 10 permanent Station Manager appointments; 2 permanent Watch Manager appointments; and 14 permanent Crew Manager appointments.

The Chair asked that all Members received an update on 'Succession Planning and Talent Management' at the next Member Planning Day in January 2023.

**RESOLVED: That**

**[1] the Workforce Planning Update be noted.**

### **3 DISCIPLINE AND GRIEVANCE UPDATE**

The Head of People and Organisational Development presented a report which provided an update on discipline cases, grievances, dignity at work complaints and performance improvement/capability procedures within the Service.

The Head reported that the discipline figures for 2022 showed a small increase when compared to those in 2021. Although, the data for 2023 was incomplete, there already appeared to be a significant increase in discipline cases compared with the previous years.

There had been a decrease in grievances submitted in the past two years, with the number of grievances submitted in 2023 looking like they had returned to pre-2022 levels.

A Members asked for clarity on conduct cases and what these involved. In response, the Head advised on the themes that conduct cases may involve, such as, external, or internal complaints, failure to adhere to health and safety regulations etc. Conduct cases had been under scrutiny at a national level since the HMICFRS published their spotlight report into values and culture in the fire and rescue service. The Service believed that it was taking a balanced approach to ensure that any serious breaches of conduct were dealt with robustly, whilst ensuring that the Service did not overuse the discipline procedures. The criticism within the spotlight report was that Services were not effectively using their procedures to tackle inappropriate behaviour.

**RESOLVED: That**

**[1] the Discipline and Grievance Update be noted.**

#### **4 PRESENTATION ON THE PEOPLE STRATEGY 2022-25**

The Head of People and Organisational Development gave a presentation which provided an update about developments associated with the People Strategy 2022-25 (the Strategy).

Members were informed that the Strategy was predicated on the 'Steps Framework' which now consisted of four main elements: Step In; Step Forward; Step Up; Step Away. An overview was provided in respect of each of the elements, confirming activities carried out to-date and future intended activity.

The presentation provided further information on the following:-

- 2023 a year of change;
- New Challenges in 2023;
- Step in – Recruitment and Training;
- Impact of Positive Action on our Workforce;
- Gender Split for Recruit Courses
- Work experience year 10's and year 12/13's;
- Performance and Development;
- Progression and Leadership;
- Workforce Planning and Retirement;
- 2024-25 People Priorities

A Member welcomed the work experience initiative and asked how this was publicised. In response, the Head of People and Organisational Development advised that the offer was communicated to local schools, and that details were published on the website and included in social media posts.

**RESOLVED: That**

**[1] the People Strategy Update be noted.**

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## CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

**MEETING OF:** STAFFING COMMITTEE  
**DATE:** 1<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2023  
**REPORT OF:** GOVERNANCE AND CORPORATE PLANNING  
MANAGER  
**AUTHOR:** DONNA LINTON

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**SUBJECT:** EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

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### Exclusion of the Press and Public

**Recommended:**

That under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Order 2006, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the items of business listed below on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12 A to the Act in the paragraphs indicated:

#### Item 3

#### Appointment of Head of Service Improvement

#### Paragraph

(1) Information relating to any individual

**CONTACT OFFICER:** DONNA LINTON, FIRE SERVICE HQ, WINSFORD  
**TEL:** [01606] 868804

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:** NONE

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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