

# CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF: STAFFING SUB-COMMITTEE  
DATE: 29 MARCH 2017  
REPORT OF: CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
AUTHOR: MATTHEW MAGUIRE

---

**SUBJECT: CONSULTATION – RE-ENGAGEMENT OF  
SENIOR FIRE OFFICERS POST-RETIREMENT**

---

## Purpose of Report

1. This report provides an overview of a Government consultation on proposals to limit the practice of the re-engaging senior fire officers who have retired, through an amendment to the Fire and Rescue National Framework (the Framework). It includes a draft response to the consultation.

## Recommended: That

- [1] The consultation be considered and a response be finalised for submission to the Government.

## Background

2. Cheshire Fire Authority has adopted a policy which already prohibits the re-engagement of senior fire officers after they have retired. The Re-employment and Pension Abatement Policy was considered and adopted by the Policy Committee at its meeting on 25 June 2014.

## Information

1. The re-engagement of senior fire officers has been a controversial issue for a number of years, having been raised and criticised by subsequent fire ministers. This consultation is the first time the Government has taken definitive steps to restrict the practice, which they intend to do by amending the Framework, which all local fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) must have regards to.
2. The consultation sets out a number of proposed amendments to the Framework, to make it clear exactly what is expected of FRAs. A full copy of the consultation is attached as Appendix A to this report. The proposed amendments are as follows;
  - FRAs must not re-appoint principal fire officers after retirement to their previous (or a similar) post, save for in exceptional circumstances when such a decision is necessary in the interests of public safety.
  - Any such appointment must be transparent, justifiable and time limited.

- In the exceptional circumstance that a re-appointment is necessary in the interests of public safety, this decision should be subject to agreement by a vote of the elected members of the FRA, or a decision by the appropriate elected representative of the FRA.
  - FRAs must publish the reason why the re-appointment was necessary in the interests of public safety and alternative approaches were deemed not appropriate.
  - The officer's pension must be abated until they cease to be employed by a FRA.
  - All principal fire officer posts must be open to competition nationally.
3. None of the principles outlined above contradict the local policy agreed in 2014. Therefore, the suggested draft response to the consultation, attached as Appendix B to this report supports the principles behind the proposed restrictions and changes to the Framework while making the point that local FRAs are already able to introduce these requirements, as is the case in Cheshire.

### **Financial Implications**

4. The consultation has no additional financial implications for the Authority, as the existing Re-employment and Pension Abatement Policy already restricts re-engagement.

### **Legal Implications**

5. FRAs are required to have regard to the Framework. Therefore, if the Government decides to proceed and amend the Framework all FRAs will be subject to these requirements.

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

6. There are no equality or diversity implications arising from the consultation. Any issues identified under the Authority's Re-employment and Pension Abatement Policy have been captured through the Equality Impact Assessment.

### **Environmental Implications**

7. There are no environmental implications arising from the consultation.

**CONTACT: JOANNE SMITH, FIRE SERVICE HQ, WINSFORD**  
**TEL [01606] 868804**  
**BACKGROUND PAPERS: NONE**