

## **Police, Fire and Crime Panel – 29<sup>th</sup> April 2019**

### **Section 151 Roles – Staffordshire Police, Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Fire and Rescue Authority and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner**

#### **Appointment of Director of Finance**

Staffordshire Commissioner for Police | Fire and Rescue | Crime

#### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 This report is to provide background information that supports the considerations of the Police, Fire and Crime Panel in confirming the appointment of the Director of Finance for both the Fire and Rescue Authority and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (the Staffordshire Commissioner's Office).

#### **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 That the Panel note the contents of the report in considering the appointment of David Greensmith in the role of Director of Finance for the Staffordshire Commissioners Office.

#### **3. Background**

- 3.1. Prior to taking on the governance of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2019, the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) was required to complete a business case for consideration and approval by Government. The Staffordshire business case, which was approved, proposed that the three Chief Finance Officer (s151) roles could be reduced to two roles as a direct result of the change.
- 3.2. There were three posts with the s151 responsibility; one for the PCC, one for the Chief Constable and one for the FRA (and Fire and Rescue Service (FRS)). The PCC and FRA role is now combined within the Staffordshire Commissioner's Office and as such, there is no necessity for three roles.
- 3.3. However, in order to make the change from three roles to two roles and ensure that there is clarity as to how work is managed, different options were considered. The report attached, authored by the three s151 officers previously in role, is a consideration of the options available. It favoured the option of one s151 officer for Staffordshire Police and one for the PCC / FRA (and FRS) –

option 2 in the attached report (Appendix A). Appendix B is the Draft Job Description for the new Director of Finance role.

- 3.4. It should be noted that another aspect of the Fire and Rescue business case is to bring together the enabling services from Staffordshire Police and the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent FRA and create a single service. The two finance functions will become one, probably in late 2019/20.

#### **4. Practical Considerations**

- 4.1. There are challenges in moving from three s151 roles to two. These are mostly practical in nature and in particular, require workload and then job roles to be clarified. These issues are not confined to the two roles and there will be impact on other staff that work for the two post holders.
- 4.2. Discussions have taken place with the senior management of both Staffordshire Police and the FRS to iron out any areas of concern and practical issues leading up to the implementation of the proposal. These discussions have not raised any issues of major concern. A risk register has been developed however to assure management of the practical risks that exist.
- 4.3. The specific practical changes that are necessary to ensure that the reduction in one post has no negative impact are primarily workload related.
- 4.4. The FRA / FRS will change the role of the current Director of Finance, Assets and Resources so that it has a narrower focus than at present. Currently the role has responsibilities for the following areas of business; Finance (s151 officer), Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO), Information Technology, Asset Management and Development (mainly Estate / PFI). In future the intention is that the role will lose responsibilities for information management and information technology, but maintain a watching brief on assets until a collaborated service is in place with Staffordshire Police. This will enable the role to be a more traditional Director of Finance, freeing up capacity to manage across the OPCC and FRA (and FRS) functions.
- 4.5. The role of the Chief Finance Officer & Section 151 Officer for Staffordshire Police will also change as a result of the proposal. Given the past challenges that have existed in the police finance function, as identified in both internal and external audits, the s151 OPCC role has had to take on a more detailed range of duties than expected, or required by the role profile. The Staffordshire Police s151 officer has restructured and recruited to his finance team strengthening capability and capacity and addressing audit issues. As a result, much of the detailed work can either transfer back to him, or be taken on by him and his team, enabling the OPCC role to adapt to the more strategic nature set out in the role profile. Specifically the Chief Finance Officer & Section 151 Officer for Staffordshire Police will take responsibility for: -

- The preparation of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy;
  - Supporting treasury management arrangements developed by the SCO s151 role;
  - Accounts closure;
  - Supporting the management of the capital programme and the Minimum Revenue Provision policy, developed by the SCO s151 role;
  - Supporting the preparation of the Reserves policy, developed by the SCO s151 role;
  - Liaison with internal and external auditors;
  - The delivery of all financial services as set out in a Memorandum of Understanding between Staffordshire Police and the OPCC.
- 4.6. The changes set out above will mean that the PCC / FRA (and FRS) s151 officer role can focus more exclusively on providing assurance, strategic management and oversight of finance on behalf of the Commissioner. In practice this means a range of key responsibilities that involve governance and assurance, compliance with best practice, strategy, policy development, oversight over the production of financial reports and statements, addressing the financial implications of major changes and advising the Commissioner on financial matters, including precept.

## **5. Implementation**

- 5.1. Discussions took place with all three current s151 officers and their line managers, to ensure full involvement in the development of the proposals. All those consulted with were supportive of the proposal.
- 5.2. Approval for the structural change being implemented was gained from the Commissioner, the Chief Constable and the Chief Fire Officer in February 2019. The statutory Audit Panel was also consulted prior to approval and asked for their views; they were comfortable with the proposal
- 5.3. Of the three officer directly affected, one of those (the OPCC s151 officer) was an interim, agency worker and therefore, not employed by the Commissioner. Her contract came to an end on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2019 and therefore, from this date, it was intended that the change proposed, took place.
- 5.4. Role profiles have been changed accordingly and evaluation of job roles will also take place. Further to this, the change will be kept under review and any issues arising managed through existing governance arrangements.

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