

AGENDA ITEM 6

Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel	EPFCP/03/18
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Report title: Confirmation Hearing: ECFRS Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive

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1. Purpose of report

The Police, Fire and Crime Panel is required to undertake a confirmation hearing to review and endorse the appointment of a new Chief Fire Officer.¹

This report sets out the process undertaken by the PFCC to recruit a new ECFRS Chief Fire Officer. It seeks confirmation from the panel of the PFCC's preferred candidate, Ms Jo Turton.

2. Recommendation

That the Police, Fire and Crime Panel endorse the confirmation of Jo Turton as the new Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service on a salary of £147K.

The new appointment will commence on the 1st April 2018.

3. Background

Roger Hirst became the PFCC (FRA) on the 1st October 2017. On appointment, he announced plans to recruit a new Chief Fire Officer. The current Chief Fire Officer, Adam Eckley, had confirmed prior to the 1st October that he would retire at the end of March 2018.

¹ The report is prepared in line with the Policing and Crime Act 2017 schedule A2 (8(1)) with ref to section 28 (5) of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act / Schedule 8, in relation to the confirmation of a new Chief Fire Officer.

The PFCC committed to undertake an open, transparent and rigorous recruitment process to ensure that the best possible candidate was selected for the role.

4. Recruitment process:

- 4.1 As reported to the Panel at their 7th December meeting, the PFCC went out to tender through an open recruitment process and appointed Gatenby Sanderson, an independent recruitment agency with considerable experience in senior public sector appointments, to run the recruitment campaign.
- 4.2 A recruitment campaign was run for 3 weeks from 17th October 2017, with advertisements placed in a range of media and online recruitment websites. The recruitment pack is attached at Annex A and the advert at Annex B. Applications were encouraged from a range of professional backgrounds, including those with direct operational experience of Fire and Rescue services and those with skills in public service transformation and culture change.
- 4.3 At the end of the application period, all applications were reviewed and scored in relation to the published Job Description and Person Specification. A longlist of 9 candidates was selected.
- 4.4 Each of the longlist candidates was then interviewed by the recruitment agency to assess their skills, experience and suitability for the role.
- 4.5 On 28 November, a shortlisting meeting took place to assess and score the 9 longlist candidates. The meeting involved the PFCC, Deputy PFCC, OPFCC Chief Executive, lead recruitment consultant and members of the interview panel as follows:
 - Peter Holland – Home Office Fire and Rescue Senior Advisor
 - Lyn Carpenter – Chief Executive Thurrock
 - Ian Davidson – Chair of Safer Essex
 - Mark Coxshall – Local authority councillor
- 4.6 The assessment meeting resulted in 4 candidates being shortlisted for interview on the 12th Dec.
- 4.7 In the week prior to the 12th Dec, each of the 4 shortlisted candidates undertook a number of psychometric tests, facilitated by Gatenby Sanderson, to assess their leadership capabilities. The results of these tests were then fed into the interview and assessment day.
- 4.8 The 12th Dec assessment day comprised of the following elements:

- Panel interview with the 6 panel members, which included a presentation from the candidate on culture change and a range of questions from panel members to test experience, skills and suitability.
- Meeting with the Chief Constable and Deputy Director East of England Ambulance Service to discuss collaboration
- Media scenario test
- Written test – Candidates asked to draft an internal staff briefing around culture change

- 4.9 Each of the exercises were individually scored and the scores combined to produce a total for each candidate. **The candidate who scored the highest was Jo Turton.**
- 4.10 The PFCC and panel members felt that Jo had excellent leadership skills and extensive experience in delivering culture change across complex, multi-stakeholder environments. Her experience as a local authority Chief Executive at Lancashire County Council, alongside her prior experience at the Audit Committee, stood her in good stead to deliver the transformation and cultural change needed at ECFRS.
- 4.11 A copy of Jo Turton's CV and personal statement is attached at Annex C.

5. Proposal:

The panel is asked to confirm the appointment of Jo Turton as the new Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service.

On confirmation, Jo Turton will commence in post on the 1st April 2018.

6. Next steps:

Once in post, in discussion with the PFCC, Jo Turton will develop her new senior team. This may involve changes to the previous Fire Authority's decision on senior management team structure and may include the appointment of an operational deputy. This would be a similar to the model adopted in Fire and Rescue Services such as Kent.