

Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel

A meeting of the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel will be held at the Jeffrey Room, The Guildhall, St Giles Street, Northampton NN1 1DE on Tuesday 20 February 2024 at 12.30 pm

Agenda

1.	Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitute Members
2.	Declarations of Interest Members are asked to declare any interest and the nature of that interest which they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting.
3.	Chair's Announcements To receive communications from the Chair.
4.	Urgent Business The Chair to advise whether they have agreed to any items of urgent business being admitted to the agenda.
SCRUTINY OF THE POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER	
5.	Confirmation Hearing – Chief Fire Officer for Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service
a)	Confirmation Hearing Procedure (Pages 5 - 10)
b)	Proposed appointment by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire of a Chief Fire Officer (Pages 11 - 26)
6.	Exclusion of Press and Public In respect of the following item the Chair may move the resolution set out below, on the grounds that if the public were present it would be likely that exempt information (information regarded as private for the purposes of the Local Government Act 1972) would be disclosed to them: The Panel is requested to resolve: "That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that if the public were present it would be likely that exempt information under Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act of the descriptions against each item would be disclosed to them."

7.	Report and recommendation to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire on the proposed appointment of a Chief Fire Officer Exemption under Paragraph 1 – Information relating to any individual.
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Catherine Whitehead
Proper Officer
12 February 2024

Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel Members:

Councillor David Smith (Chair)	Councillor Gill Mercer (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Fiona Baker	Councillor Jon-Paul Carr
Councillor André González De Savage	Councillor Dorothy Maxwell
Councillor Zoe McGhee	Councillor Ken Pritchard
Councillor Russell Roberts	Councillor Winston Strachan
Miss Pauline Woodhouse	

Information about this Agenda

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence and the appointment of substitute Members should be notified to democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk prior to the start of the meeting.

Declarations of Interest

Members are asked to declare interests at item 2 on the agenda or if arriving after the start of the meeting, at the start of the relevant agenda item

Local Government and Finance Act 1992 – Budget Setting, Contracts & Supplementary Estimates

Members are reminded that any member who is two months in arrears with Council Tax must declare that fact and may speak but not vote on any decision which involves budget setting, extending or agreeing contracts or incurring expenditure not provided for in the agreed budget for a given year and could affect calculations on the level of Council Tax.

Evacuation Procedure

If a continuous fire alarm sounds you must evacuate the building via the nearest available fire exit. Members and visitors should proceed to the assembly area as directed by Democratic Services staff and await further instructions.

Access to Meetings

If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named below, giving as much notice as possible before the meeting.

Mobile Phones

Please ensure that any device is switched to silent operation or switched off.

Queries Regarding this Agenda

If you have any queries about this agenda please contact James Edmunds, Democratic Services, via the following:

Tel: 07500 605276

Email: democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk

Or by writing to:

West Northamptonshire Council
The Guildhall
St Giles Street
Northampton
NN1 1DE

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NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME PANEL

20 FEBRUARY 2024

Report Title	Confirmation hearing in relation to the proposed appointment by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire of a Chief Fire Officer for Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service.
Report Author	James Edmunds, Democratic Services Assistant Manager, West Northamptonshire Council James.edmunds@westnorthants.gov.uk

List of Appendices

None

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The report is intended to advise the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel of the procedure to be followed for a confirmation hearing in relation to the proposed appointment by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire of a Chief Fire Officer for Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The report summarises the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel's statutory responsibilities relating to reviewing and making a report on the proposed appointment by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire of a Chief Fire Officer for Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service. A report by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner providing information on the proposed appointment is included separately on the agenda for the hearing.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel reviews and makes a report on the proposed appointment by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire of a Chief Fire Officer for Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service.

- 3.2 Reasons for Recommendation(s) – The recommendation is intended to enable the Panel to carry out its statutory responsibilities to review and make a report on the proposed appointment of a Chief Fire Officer.

4. Report Background

- 4.1 The Policing and Crime Act 2017 makes provision for a Police and Crime Commissioner for an area to be the fire and rescue authority for that area. This position has applied in Northamptonshire since 1 January 2019. The responsibilities of a Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) created under the 2017 Act include the function of appointing, suspending or dismissing the chief fire officer.
- 4.2 The Fire and Rescue Authority (Police and Crime Commissioner) (Application of Local Policing Provisions, Inspection, Powers to Trade and Consequential Amendments) Order 2017 part 2 chapter 1 specifies that a PFCC must notify the relevant Police, Fire and Crime Panel of the proposed appointment of a chief fire officer. In such cases the PFCC must also notify the Police, Fire and Crime Panel of the following information:
- a) the name of the person whom the PFCC is proposing to appoint (“the candidate”);
 - b) the criteria used to assess the suitability of the candidate for the appointment;
 - c) why the candidate satisfies those criteria; and
 - d) the terms and conditions on which the candidate is to be appointed.
- 4.3 When a Police, Fire and Crime Panel is notified of such a proposed appointment it is required to review the proposed appointment and to make a report on it to the PFCC. The report must state the outcome of the review by the Panel. In the case of the proposed appointment of a chief fire officer these outcomes are:
- a) A recommendation as to whether or not the candidate should be appointed, or
 - b) A veto of the proposed appointment, if at least two-thirds of the people who are members of the Police, Fire and Crime Panel at the time vote in favour of making that decision.
- 4.4 The 2017 Order requires that a Police, Fire and Crime Panel must review the proposed appointment at a confirmation hearing. A confirmation hearing is defined as: “A meeting of the Panel, held in public, at which the candidate is requested to appear for the purpose of answering questions relating to the appointment.” Supporting guidance produced by the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) advises that a confirmation hearing should not be dealt with as an item of business at a standard Panel meeting but conducted as a separate meeting.
- 4.5 The process of reviewing and reporting on a proposed appointment must be completed within three weeks of a Police, Fire and Crime Panel being notified of it by the PFCC.

5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1 This confirmation hearing of the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel (“the Panel”) has been convened to enable the Panel to review and make a report on the proposed appointment by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire (“the Commissioner”) of a Chief Fire Officer for Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service following notification of the proposed appointment by the Commissioner.
- 5.2 A report by the Commissioner providing information on the proposed appointment is included separately on the agenda for the hearing.

Confirmation Hearing Procedure

- 5.3 It is proposed that the Panel conducts the confirmation hearing according to the following process, which reflects statutory requirements and good practice and has been used successfully in the past:
- a) The Panel Chair will welcome the candidate to the hearing and invite Panel members and host authority officers present to introduce themselves.
 - b) The Chair will ask the Panel’s secretariat officer to outline briefly the format of the hearing. The Chair will invite Panel members to ask any related questions.
 - c) The Chair will invite the Commissioner to outline the proposed appointment and introduce the candidate. The Chair will invite members to ask any related questions to the Commissioner.
 - d) The Chair will invite Panel members to ask questions of the candidate. The Panel secretariat will work with Panel members to draw up these questions ahead of the hearing. The questions should reflect the principles set out in paragraphs 5.4 – 5.6 of this report.
 - e) When all Panel members’ questions have been asked and addressed the Chair will invite the candidate to clarify any answers that they have given during the hearing and to ask any questions of the Panel, for example about the next steps in the process.
 - f) The candidate will then withdraw from the meeting.
 - g) The Panel will be asked to agree a resolution to exclude the press and public from the meeting before it considers its report to the Commissioner.
 - h) The Panel will consider its report and conclusions. The possible outcomes that may result from a review of the proposed appointment of a chief fire officer are discussed in paragraphs 5.7 – 5.10 of this report.
 - i) The Panel will send its report to the Commissioner by the end of the working day following the date of the confirmation hearing.
 - j) The Panel will publish its report an appropriate time after the confirmation hearing, normally in liaison with the Commissioner, to reflect that the Commissioner will also publish his own final decision on the proposed appointment following the hearing.

Focus of questions to the candidate

- 5.4 LGA / CfGS guidance recommends that confirmation hearings should focus on the following areas:
- a) Professional competence: i.e. the candidate's ability to carry out the role, for example, their professional judgement and insight; and
 - b) Personal independence: i.e. the need for the candidate to act in a manner that is operationally independent of the PFCC.
- 5.5 The guidance further recommends that Police, Fire and Crime panels should think in terms of minimum standards applying to particular attributes: i.e. there should be minimum standards below which it would not be appropriate to appoint a candidate under any circumstances. Above this level, the Panel might have concerns but the candidate would still be 'appointable' at the discretion of the PFCC.
- 5.6 This focus is intended to reflect that confirmation hearings should complement rather than duplicate a PFCC's systems for making the appointment in question: hearings are not intended to represent a re-staging of a previous selection process.

Possible outcomes of the review

- 5.7 The Panel should use the confirmation hearing to form a view about the professional competence and personal independence of the candidate and whether or not they meet the minimum standards for the role. Based on this it should agree the conclusion about the proposed appointment that it wishes to report to the Commissioner.
- 5.8 The Panel essentially has the following options:
- a) If the Panel is satisfied that the candidate meets the criteria set out in the role profile for the post it can recommend to the Commissioner that the appointment be made. The Commissioner may accept or reject such a recommendation, and must notify the Panel of his response.
 - b) If the Panel considers that the candidate meets the criteria set out in the role profile for the post but has a query or concern about their suitability it can make a recommendation to this effect to the Commissioner. Ultimately, the Panel has the option of recommending to the Commissioner that the appointment not be made. The Commissioner may accept or reject such a recommendation, and must notify the Panel of his response.
 - c) If the Panel considers that the candidate clearly does not meet the required minimum standards in the role profile for the post the Panel can veto the proposed appointment. A decision to veto a proposed appointment must be supported by at least two-thirds of the people who are members of the Panel at the time when the decision is made. In the event that the Panel vetoes a proposed appointment the Commissioner must not appoint that candidate. The Commissioner must then propose another – reserve – candidate for appointment. This proposed appointment will be subject to review by the Panel at a second

confirmation hearing, resulting in a report to the Commissioner making a recommendation about the appointment of the reserve candidate. The Commissioner may accept or reject such a recommendation, and must notify the Panel of his response.

- 5.9 LGA / CfGS guidance anticipates that a recommendation not to appoint should be used very rarely by Police, Fire and Crime panels, based on the principles that candidates will have already been subject to a recruitment process.
- 5.10 LGA / CfGS guidance emphasises that the veto should only be used in exceptional circumstances. A PFCC's power to appoint a chief fire officer should be backed up by appropriate human resources functions and appointment procedures designed to provide a 'due diligence' check on the suitability of the candidate that a PFCC proposes for appointment. A proposed appointment should only be vetoed if a Police, Fire and Crime Panel considers that there has been a significant failure of this 'due diligence' check, to the extent that the candidate is not appointable.

6. Implications (including financial implications)

6.1 Resources and Financial

- 6.1.1 There are no resources or financial implications arising from the proposal.

6.2 Legal

- 6.2.1 There are no legal implications arising from the proposal.

6.3 Risk

- 6.3.1 There are no significant risks arising from the proposed recommendation in this report.

7. Background Papers

Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011

The Police and Crime Panels (Precepts and Chief Constable Appointments) Regulations 2012

Police and Crime Panels Guidance on Confirmation Hearings Local Government Association and Centre for Public Scrutiny (August 2012)

Policing and Crime Act 2017

Fire and Rescue Authority (Police and Crime Commissioner) (Application of Local Policing Provisions, Inspection, Powers to Trade and Consequential Amendments) Order 2017

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Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel

20th February 2024

Office of the Northamptonshire Police Fire & Crime Commissioner

Formal Notification to the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel of the Proposed Appointment to the Position of Chief Fire Officer for Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service as required under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and the Fire and Rescue Authority (Police and Crime Commissioner) (Application of Local Policing Provisions, Inspection, Powers to Trade and Consequential Amendments) Order 2017

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report formally notifies the Police Fire and Crime Panel (the Panel) of the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner's (PFCC's) preferred candidate for the role of Chief Fire Officer.
- 1.2 The Police, Fire and Crime Panel is required to undertake a confirmation hearing to review the appointment of a new Chief Fire Officer.
- 1.3 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 Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner must notify the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel of his preferred appointment to the post.
- 1.4 The Commissioner must include the following information in the notification:
 - a) the name of the person whom the commissioner is proposing to appoint ("the candidate");
 - b) the criteria used to assess the suitability of the candidate for the appointment;
 - c) why the candidate satisfies those criteria; and
 - d) the terms and conditions on which the candidate is to be appointed.
- 1.5 The Police, Fire and Crime panel must hold a public confirmation hearing before making a report and recommendation to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner in

relation to a proposed senior appointment. At this meeting, the candidate is requested to appear to answer any questions relating to the appointment.

- 1.6 The Police, Fire and Crime Panel may, having reviewed the proposed appointment, veto the appointment of the candidate. A decision to veto the appointment must be supported by at least two-thirds of the persons who are panel members at the time when the decision is made for it to be carried and this power is only exercisable in relation to a proposed appointment during the three-week appointment process. If the panel vetoes the appointment of the candidate, their report must include a statement that the panel has vetoed it and the PFCC must not appoint that candidate as Chief Fire Officer.
- 1.7 If the panel does not veto the proposed appointment, but makes recommendations, the PFCC may accept or reject the panel's recommendation and must notify the panel of their decision whether to accept or reject any recommendation.

2. Proposed Appointment

- 2.1 The recruitment process started in August 2023 when the OPFCC appointed Gatenby Sanderson who are a leading public sector recruitment company to promote and advertise the role. All applicants were given the opportunity to discuss the role and ask any questions they may have with Gatenby Sanderson. A copy of the application pack is included in appendix A of the report.
- 2.2 We initially had 15 applicants and started the process of shortlisting. During this process one of the shortlisted candidates withdrew and we temporarily re-opened applications to ensure the strongest possible field. The re-opening resulted in 3 additional applications and a final shortlist of 4 was drawn up. Between shortlisting and interview a further individual withdrew from the process.
- 2.3 The remaining 3 shortlisted candidates undertook psychometric testing, provided through Gatenby Sanderson, to ascertain a greater understanding of their leadership styles.
- 2.4 The interview process consisted of 2 parts. Candidates met a panel of strategic stakeholders to discuss their approach to partnership working and answer questions from the stakeholders. The Panel consisted of representatives from the two unitary local authorities (both political and senior officers), the police, the local Independent Advisory Group, and the third sector. The Panel then gave feedback to the PFCC about each of the applicants and indicated their preferred candidate.
- 2.5 It had been hoped to hold an internal stakeholder panel, but this was replaced by applicants responding to pre-submitted questions from staff and firefighters. (The responses to which were shared with the organisation via the Fire Service intranet.)

2.6 A formal interview followed. General competency and experience questions were asked as well as questions tailored to each candidate based on the results of their psychometric testing.

2.7 The interview panel consisted of:

- Stephen Mold – Police Fire and Crime Commissioner
- Helen King – Chief Finance Officer and Section 151 Officer OPFCC/NFRS
- Suzanne McMinn – Head of Human Resources
- Chris Strickland QFSM – Chief Fire Officer, Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service

David Peet, the former Interim Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer for the OPFCC & NFRS was in attendance to facilitate the process and ensure compliance with the process.

2.8 Following detailed discussion between the interview panel, and consideration of the feedback provided as part of the stakeholder session, a decision was reached on a referred candidate.

2.9 The PFCC is therefore naming Nikki Watson as his preferred candidate for the role of Chief Fire Officer.

2.10 Following a 36-year career in policing, Nikki Watson is an experienced senior leader in the emergency services and in public safety. Nikki is a skilled civil contingencies gold commander and is a qualified leader in events; counter terrorism; public order; CBRN; roads policing and strategic firearms command. She has also been lead officer for Prevention and Protection.

2.11 Nikki was the Chair of the Avon and Somerset Local Resilience Forum for five years, where she led on multi-agency collaboration and emergency preparedness.

2.12 Nikki has significant experience of managing cultural change within large organisations, having taken a lead responsibility for this business area in Avon and Somerset.

2.13 Nikki was awarded the Queen's Police Medal for her work during the Covid-19 pandemic, when she led Avon and Somerset Police's local response and was also part of the national team responsible for liaising with the Home Office on the development of Covid legislation and then preparing guidance for police forces across the country in enforcing changing regulations.

3 Terms and conditions of employment

3.1 The PFCC proposes to appoint Nikki Watson for a fixed term for a period of three years with the option to extend for up to two years.

3.2 The PFCC proposes to appoint Nikki Watson on a spot salary of £155,000 per annum, subject to nationally negotiated pay increases.

- 3.3 The terms and conditions of employment will be in accordance with the provisions of the Joint Negotiating Committee for Brigade Managers of Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services (Gold Book) and supplemented by local and/or provincial agreements and any other local provisions. The terms and conditions will not be less favourable than those applicable to NCFRA employees subject to the National Joint Council; Authority Fire and Rescue Services (Grey Book).
- 3.4 Subject to confirmation of the proposed appointment by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel and other pre-employment clearances, the PFCC would look to commence Nikki's employment at the earliest opportunity.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 The Panel is requested to review and confirm the proposed appointment of Nikki Watson to the position of Chief Fire Officer for Northamptonshire as set out above.

Appendix A – Application Pack

Appendix B – Nikki Watson CV

APPENDIX A



Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service

Chief Fire Officer Candidate Pack

 GatenbySanderson

August 2023

 INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE | **GOLD**

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A message from the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner



Dear applicant

In the four years since I took on the governance of Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service, I am proud of what we have achieved.

The Service is now resilient, we have recruited more firefighters and have spent more than £10million in capital investment on estates, digital and essential equipment and fleet renewal – including eight new appliances.

At almost £30m in 2023/24, the Fire budget is over £7m more than the budget transferred as part of the governance arrangements – that's an increase of over 30% since 2018.

But the greatest asset we have is our people, they are what keeps the county safe. I would like to recruit as our next Chief Officer someone who has the people of this service at the very heart of their thinking. They must create a culture where the firefighters and staff who serve Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service with pride, are motivated to do their best. We ask a lot of our staff, they deserve the best leaders who will work constructively with them and their representative bodies to create a modern, innovative and dynamic service with a supportive, constructive culture.

If you are up for that, if you can show outstanding leadership skills and are up for the challenge of leading Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service so that it delivers an outstanding service to the community, I look forward to receiving your application.

Yours sincerely



Stephen Mold

Job description

Title: Chief Officer for the Fire and Rescue Service
Organisation: Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS)
Location: Wellingborough

Job purpose:

The challenges which our county faces are changing at pace and our services need to respond to successfully deliver the outcomes we aspire to achieve for the residents and communities we are here to serve. As the Chief Officer for the Fire and Rescue Service you will lead the development of a modern, responsive, partnership focussed service which will deliver the objectives of the Police, Fire and Crime Plan and contribute to the wider partnership priorities of the county as a whole.

You will lead our Fire and Rescue Service to support the outcomes of the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Plan. Reporting directly to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, you take full operational responsibility to ensure that our Fire and Rescue Service fully discharges its statutory obligations and duties in line with the Fire and Rescue National Framework and the needs of the people and communities of Northamptonshire.

You will be given the autonomy needed to transform our Fire and Rescue Services to provide the best outcomes for our residents. Working with our emergency services partnerships you will shape and develop opportunities within and across our partnership borders. Fire service experience would be helpful, but it is not essential for this leadership role. What will be key is a strong focus on outcomes, with the ability to drive performance improvement and transformation in a large operational business.

You will be available on call, as required to meet the exigencies of the service.

Key Responsibilities

- Be responsible for the service delivery of fire and rescue functions ensuring that intended outcomes and agreed service levels are achieved through effective management against key performance indicators, with a particular focus on resilience and safety.
- Be responsible for significant delegated financial budgets and resources ensuring that they are allocated effectively for the delivery of intended outcomes in a manner which demonstrates value for money and compliance with relevant policies and guidelines.
- In conjunction with the Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer advise the Commissioner accordingly to ensure standards of governance are maintained.
- Be accountable for delivering against the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).
- Direct and lead the Service through transformational change at a strategic level to ensure it successfully achieves its business objectives and accommodates the challenges facing the Authority, including effective use of the resources available.

- Deliver cultural transformation to develop the Fire and Rescue service in Northamptonshire into a fully inclusive workplace, representative of the communities that it serves
- Provide strong, visible and collective leadership across the Fire Service and its partners which builds a culture of high performance, inspires people and supports the delivery of the Fire Authority's strategic objectives.
- Champion the benefits of a safe, inclusive and diverse workplace to the business of the Authority. Ensure that the Service operates and promotes fair and open practices relating to employment and service delivery. Utilise the relevant legislation relating to equality, fairness to present the Service as an employer of choice.
- Proactively build and maintain collaborative relationships and partnerships. Build constructive relationships with staff representative organisations to develop and foster a positive industrial relations climate that facilitates change.
- Assume the role of Principal Officer within a multi-agency Strategic Co-ordinating Group as Chief Officer for the Fire and Rescue Service during a major emergency. (Where appropriate candidates will be supported to gain relevant service knowledge.)
- Working with the Commissioner, make submissions to influence policy decisions that will affect people in Northamptonshire. Set the pace for the organisation; providing and actively promoting clear, consistent, highly visible leadership across the service to build a culture of trust, highperformance and continuous improvement. Lead, manage and develop a highly effective Service Leadership Team that works strategically, collaboratively, and promotes a corporate 'one team' approach.
- Positively contribute to and champion a safe working environment; proportionately apply Health and Safety, Risk Management, Business Continuity and Safeguarding policies and procedures. Process personal data fairly and lawfully as identified within the Data Protection Act 1998.
- Lead and drive a culture of continual improvement for the Fire Service ensuring that business processes are effective and efficient and enable the highest possible levels of service quality to be provided.
- One of the primary roles for the Chief Officer for the Fire and Rescue Service will be leading on the Fire Service Integration and Collaboration with partners.
- You will be required to undertake routine medical examinations throughout your employment and it is your responsibility to maintain a level of physical fitness to meet the requirements of the role.

Person specification

Essential criteria

- Substantial track record of operating within a leadership role at Management Board level, within an organisation of comparable scale and complexity
- Proven track record and significant experience of leading substantial transformational change within a strongly unionised environment. Particularly organisational, behavioural and cultural transformation, with a demonstrable ability to lead people through the transformational change journey
- Strong and demonstrable people leadership skills, with a proven ability to manage resources effectively and efficiently, providing inspiration and motivation across a diverse workforce.
- Demonstrable track record of operating strategically; providing innovation and creativity to organisational challenges with the credibility and ability to contribute positively to policy and strategy development at a local, regional and national level
- Significant track record of effectively working with and managing diverse stakeholder relationships across a range of disciplines and at a breadth of levels.
- Positive track record of establishing sustainable working partnerships and relationships fostering collaboration and joint working
- Experience of leading a public sector or public sector related organisation/significant division/operation, and positively impacting the relationship with associate unions.

Desirable criteria

- Significant experience of having worked at a senior level in a political environment.
- Proven transformational and visionary leader with proven ability to lead a strategic team at a similar level through customer services and leadership capability.
- Ability to lead across a multi-agency environment including local authorities, emergency organisation, the private sector and the third sector.
- Strong awareness of the requirements of strategic (Gold) command during a major incident/civil emergency.
- Possession of a thorough understanding of the political and economic context of the fire and rescue service terms of government, governance, stakeholders and the community.
- Evidence of continuous and professional development.

Skills and Abilities

- Clear connection and commitment to the values of the organisation and commitment to the Nolan principles for public life.
- Proven leadership and motivational skills, especially in the context of service transformation
- Highly motivated and not easily discouraged, with resilience and tenacity
- Ability to make clear decisions in a variety of circumstances
- Highly effective written communication skills including drafting and interpreting strategic plans, policies and reports
- Personal and professional demeanour that commands credibility, confidence and respect
- Able to engage effectively with a range of people and stakeholders at all levels
- Financially astute able to manage budgets in all contexts
- Excellent ability to deliver effective PR and media messages
- An effective and balanced decision maker who leads by example
- Excellent negotiation, persuasion and communication skills, including media management and negotiation with internal and external agencies
- To be self-assured, confident, assertive and approachable.

Timetable of appointment

Closing date for applications (08:00 Monday)	2 October 2023
Longlisting meeting (for information only)	9 October
Preliminary interviews with GatenbySanderson (virtual)	Following longlisting
Shortlist meeting (for information only)	20 th October
Psychometric profiling	Following shortlisting
Final Panel Interviews and final assessments	6 th and 7 th November

How to apply

How to apply: We are seeking to appoint based on a combination of your written application, video submission, assessments and final interview. To apply please visit our recruitment partner's website at: <https://www.gatenbysanderson.com/job/GSe102041> or by using the 'search for jobs' function at www.gatenbysanderson.com and entering Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue service or the reference number **102041**.

Register, and submit the following no later than **08:00 on the closing date**:

1. A tailored CV (**maximum of 2 pages**), setting out your work history (paid and voluntary), responsibilities and achievements as they relate to this role;
2. A cover letter (**maximum of 2 pages**), outlining your suitability for the role, including your experience of driving cultural change in a comparable setting
3. If successful at the shortlisting stage, you will be asked to provide the following:
 - i. The names and contact details of two referees;
 - ii. Relevant identification (i.e. Passport/driving licence).

Equality Monitoring Information: During your online registration process, you will be asked to submit **diversity monitoring information**. This is very important and will be kept entirely separate from the application process.

If you have a recognised disability and are applying under the **Disability Confident Scheme** you will be asked to declare it as you apply, and also to let us know, if called for interview, what reasonable adjustments you may require.

Should you encounter any issues during your application process, please contact charley.cordrey@gatenbysanderson.com quoting the job title/reference number.

Arrangements for interview: Selected candidate will be asked to attend for a stakeholder panel, and staff engagement exercise which will take place in Wellingborough on 6th November. There will be an overnight stay required followed by a final panel interview on the 7th November.

If required, overnight accommodation will be arranged and funded by Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service. This will include evening meal and breakfast. Other expenses incurred by candidates during the recruitment process, including travel to and from the venue, will **not** be reimbursed, except in exceptional circumstances and only when agreed in advance.

As an inclusive employer, if you do require any reasonable adjustments or particular arrangements to be made, please do let Charley Cordrey know when you are called for interview.

Please let us know as soon as possible if you are unable to meet the proposed interview dates. It may be possible to arrange an alternative date, but this cannot be guaranteed.

Further Information: If you have any questions about the role itself or would like to discuss the post and your fit within the organisation, please contact GatenbySanderson and speak to Duncan Collins on **07586 705 475** or Peter Buffoni on **07964 877 654**.

Complaints: If you feel your application has not been treated in accordance with the recruitment principles or you wish to make a complaint, in the first instance, please raise it with Peter Buffoni, Partner and Head of the Community Protection Practice at peter.buffoni@gatenbysanderson.com.

If you prefer, or if the matter remains unresolved, please feel free to contact Mark Turner, Managing Partner at GatenbySanderson at mark.turner@gatenbysanderson.com.

Advertisement

Role:	Chief Fire Officer
Organisation:	Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service
Location:	Wellingborough, Northamptonshire
Salary:	In the region of £150,000 to £155,000

With around 500 firefighters and staff serving a county of more than 700,000 people, Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service has a big job to do. We are looking for a new Chief Fire Officer to fill that role.

Through hard work and focus, the Service has come a long way in the last few years and is resilient, stable and ambitious in its vision to 'Make Northamptonshire Safer'. This means making sure that we can deliver a fast, effective and high-quality response to a wide range of emergencies; that we have an effective approach to Prevention, which educates and makes people safer; that our Protection service provides advice to a range of stakeholders and has robust enforcement when it is needed.

In a county that is at the heart of the country's strategic road network, is the site of major new infrastructure to support HS2, is home to some major logistics hubs and significant historic as well as its significant stately homes, this is a significant challenge.

We are proud of how we serve the county and know that there is much to do to meet the challenge of the future, ensuring that we are data driven, technologically enabled and working with partners to support the community.

The Fire Service nationally is under scrutiny more than ever before, and our Chief Officer will need to be an inspirational leader and role model who will live our Code of Ethics, who will capture the best of what we do and inspire our people to be their best: they will help us create a supportive and welcoming culture where our firefighters and staff can be their best.

To find the right person to lead Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service, we are willing to look outside the norm. There are many excellent senior leaders in the Fire sector both in this country and overseas – we know that the right leaders would be open to individuals coming into the sector from other relevant operational settings, to bring diversity, fresh thinking and innovation for the good of the sector as a whole.

We want the best person for Northamptonshire, and so are open minded about the leadership experiences you bring. What matters is that you share the vision of collaboration and dedication to serving the people of this county and can inspire and support our people and build a culture that builds on the pride they have in what they do. Full details about the role and the personal characteristics and experience required can be found in the candidate information pack at on our recruitment partner's site at www.gatenbysanderson.com/GSe102041

If, having read the candidate information pack, you would like additional information, or an informal discussion, please contact Marnie Lodhi on 0077 95654 812at GatenbySanderson.

Closing date for applications is: **08:00, Monday 2 October 2023**

CV

Nicola Watson QPM Deputy Chief Constable Avon and Somerset Constabulary

Telephone
Email:

Professional profile

An ambitious people focussed inclusive leader with nine years executive experience who has played a pivotal role in leading the transformation of Avon and Somerset Constabulary (ASC) to be graded as good or outstanding in several areas by HMICFRS and recognised as one of the most digitally and data progressive UK forces. An experienced, influential, and collaborative leader who has influenced key stakeholders including Local Authorities and Category 1 & 2 providers to build local contingency resilience; as well as national partners including the Home Office, Cabinet Office, and National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC), to successfully deliver the national Covid pandemic response. NPCC lead for Nuclear Emergencies and chair of the National Nuclear Blue Light working group.

Executive skills

- Organisational transformation and change
- Financial management
- Performance continuous improvement
- Negotiating and influencing
- Enforcing professional standards
- Embedding organisational culture promoting values and ethics
- Strategic organisational decision making
- Gold Public Order Commander (9 yrs.)
- Gold Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear (CBRN) Commander (7 yrs.)
- Multi-Agency Gold Incident Command (MAGIC) (7 yrs.)
- Strategic Firearms Commander (9 yrs.)
- Counter Terrorism (CT) Commander (5 yrs.)
- Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion expert.

Career summary**July 2021 – Present Deputy Chief Constable, Avon and Somerset Constabulary (ASC)**

Currently leading the organisational and operational performance delivery and improvement with responsibility for setting and maintaining standards and leading force change (budget £370m)

Key responsibilities

- Setting the organisational and operational strategy to provide an effective and efficient policing service to mitigate risk and drive improvements in service delivery
- Accountable for improving performance, and leadership for HMICFRS Inspections
- Support the development of organisational culture, embedding values and ethics
- Responsible for achievement of professional standards to enhance confidence and legitimacy
- Delegated lead for the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion strategy
- Accountable for Organisational Health and Safety monitoring, compliance, and improvements
- Responsible for strategic Information Governance, performing the SIRO function
- Deputise for Chief Constable

Key achievements

- Led redesign of performance framework aligning it to HMICFRS Inspection framework which has improved performance ratings to Outstanding and Good in several areas
- Led redesign of Change portfolio to maximise efficiencies and sequence activity to maximise capacity. £8m savings identified this year
- Led the review of corporate risk process giving assurance to Police and Crime Commissioner and independent Audit Committee that risks are mitigated to acceptable levels

April 2016 – June 2021 Assistant Chief Constable Investigations and Operational Support, ASC

Led two Operational Directorates revenue cost of £51.5m to deliver Complex Investigations, Intelligence, Operational Support, Operational and Contingency Planning, Criminal Justice and Custody

Key responsibilities

- Supported NPCC national Covid Silver lead chairing national meetings with politicians, officials, Unions and staff associations

- Led the Avon and Somerset area response to the Covid Pandemic charring partnership Strategic Co-ordinating Group (SCG) meetings
- Executive chair of the Avon and Somerset Local Resilience Forum (LRF)
- Improving Performance Delivery against Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) set Priorities

Key achievements

- Negotiating the implementation of Covid regulations with the Home Office and Ministers, developing guidance with the College of Policing and communicating changes to the Service
- Led effective partnership response to outbreak management and the local vaccine programme
- Contributed significantly to £5.5m force savings and demand efficiencies. This was key to securing a grading of 'Outstanding' from HMICFRS in 'Efficiency' for understanding demand and managing resources

May 2015 – April 2016 Assistant Chief Constable Protect and Manage, ASC

Led First point of contact, call handling, Criminal Justice, Safeguarding and Offender management

Key responsibilities

- To improve public call handling standards and reduce abandoned calls
- Commissioned review of safeguarding and development of Multi-agency safeguarding hubs (MASH) to reduce risk to vulnerable people

Key achievements

- Maximised use of new technology call handling abandoned rates reduced from 15% to less than 5%
- MASH's established in every Local Authority area

June 2014 – May 2015 Temporary/Assistant Chief Constable Local Policing, ASC

Implemented the new Local Policing Structure redefining the roles of response and neighbourhood policing.

Introduced and led the new Force wide Continuous Performance framework

Key responsibilities

- Strategic local stakeholder management with four Unitary and five District Local Authorities
- Led the force wide continuous improvement process
- Led the efficiency and effectiveness change programme for my portfolio contributing £900,000 to force savings target

Key Achievements

Force performance improved in majority of areas and significantly in PCC priority area - Victim Satisfaction increased by 10%. Savings targets met. Strong relationships established with partners.

May 2013 – June 2014 Chief Superintendent Area Commander Somerset and North Somerset, ASC

Led the Basic Command Unit's covering seven Local Authorities and 80% of force area (100 square miles), 720, 000 population with 1100 officers, staff and volunteers. Budget £44m.

Key achievements

Renegotiated Service Level Agreement with Glastonbury Festival Events achieving full cost recovery from what is the largest festival in Europe helping to create one of the safest festivals in the world.

October 2006 – May 2013 Chief Superintendent BCU Commander Somerset East, ASC

Led the rural BCU (470 square miles), 250,000 population, 470 officers and staff, budget £16.5m.

Key achievements

Excellent working relationships established with key local stakeholders and communities leading to the establishment of 250 Community Speedwatch Volunteer scheme to tackle the number one community priority, the implementation of the first Community Justice Panel delivering community led restorative justice.

Feb 2006 – Oct 2006 Superintendent Firearms & Roads Policing, ASC

Sept 2004 – Feb 2006 Superintendent Drugs Intervention Seconded to Bristol City Council

Sept 1997 – May 2003 PC to Chief Inspector Avon and Somerset Constabulary uniform, CID & planning

Education and qualifications

- **National Policing Strategic Command Course** – Bramshill training centre 2015
- **Level 5 Coaching** - Institute of Leadership & Management 2012
- **BA Geography Hons, 2(2)** - Liverpool University 1987
- **A Levels English, Geography Biology** – King James College Henley - 1984
- **9 O Levels** – Cranford House Girls School, Oxfordshire – 1982