

GUIDANCE NOTE FOR APPLICANTS

Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service embraces change and prides itself on being one of the most dynamic and successful fire services in the United Kingdom. An excellent organisation however needs excellent employees at all levels. We are committed to providing the best possible recruitment service and are working to remove barriers to Equal Opportunity at all stages of the recruitment process and are striving to be excellent.

Our commitment to you is:

- ✓ We will treat you in a polite, helpful and friendly manner at all times.
- ✓ When we write to you, a contact name and number will be clearly provided.
- ✓ Information that you provide will be treated as confidential and will be seen only by those involved in the recruitment process.
- ✓ Any disabled applicant that meets the essential requirements of the role will be invited to the next stage of the process and not de-selected for any other reason.
- ✓ If you do not hear from us within 3 weeks of the closing date please assume that on this occasion you have been unsuccessful, unfortunately we cannot provide feedback at this stage.
- ✓ If you are selected to progress to the next stage you will be advised as soon as possible.
- ✓ We will aim to give you at least one week's notice prior to assessment.
- ✓ We will make any special arrangements needed to enable you to attend.
- ✓ We will remove all personal information from your application to ensure that the short listing panel are not aware of who's application they are assessing.
- ✓ We ask you to complete an equal opportunities questionnaire – this information is only used to monitor our recruitment process.
- ✓ In line with the Service's policy on job sharing, all posts are suitable for job sharing unless stated to the contrary.
- ✓ We will not contact your referees unless you give your permission. We will however need to obtain references before offering employment.
- ✓ A decision will be made as soon as possible after assessment and you will be informed, normally within 1 week.
- ✓ Unsuccessful applicants will be offered feedback at interview stage. Unfortunately we are unable to offer feedback at the application stage due to the high number of applications received.

GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION 2018 (GDPR)

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 it is good practice to know the composition of people applying for roles within the Service so that we can build an accurate workforce picture. Through the application form we ask for your name so we can effectively manage the logistics for application and the interview and assessment process thereafter (if your application is successful). Your name, or any identifiable information will not be shared with other organisations, and will not be used for any other purpose. We ask for your help to develop an understanding of workforce diversity so we can monitor any potential barriers faced, however providing this information is voluntary.

The information you provide will be held by Cheshire Constabulary and Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service Joint Corporate Services for the purposes outlined above and in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation and other associated data protection legislation as well as our and duties under the Equality Act 2010. We will use the

information collected from you to report on the composition of applicants. Your information will be used to form statistics and reports that are high level and will not identify you or any other individual. Your name, or any identifiable information will not be shared with any other organisation or used for any other purpose.

Your information will only be held in an identifiable form for as long as is necessary by the Service and in accordance with their retention schedule. You have certain rights under the GDPR and associated data protection laws regarding your personal data, which includes the right to access data held about yourself, to ensure it is accurate and to ask it is deleted or no longer processed. You also have the right to complain about the processing of your information if you are not happy about any aspect of the processing.

For more information about your rights please see our full privacy notice on the Service website <http://www.cheshirefire.gov.uk/about-us/key-documents/data-protection>. You can also contact the Service via email, telephone or written letter.

BEFORE COMPLETING YOUR APPLICATION:

Your application is the first stage of the recruitment process and it will be looked at by a panel of Cheshire Fire & Rescue staff, including a senior manager from the department that has the vacancy. From the application, the panel will consider your suitability for the post, and measure the information that you give against the job description and person specification.

You may submit either a typed (in font Arial 12) or a hand written application. If you hand write your application please ensure that your handwriting is clearly legible.

The '**supporting information**' is a very important part of your application, so it is important that you take some time to complete this. Therefore, you should carefully read the job description and person specification and ensure that you possess all 'essential' requirements and as many as possible of the desirable points listed. Your supporting information should reflect your ability to meet the requirements on the person specification. This is important as when your application is marked we will be looking for evidence that you have the skills and experience that we require. You should then draft your 'supporting information' on a spare piece of paper before you write up your final statement on the application form. You should ensure that your supporting information reflects your ability to meet all of the requirements on the person specification.

For example, if one of the points on the person specification is '*Attention to detail*'.....

A poor example would be – 'I have good attention to detail.'

A good example would be – 'I have good attention to detail. For example, when carrying out a task I ensure that I have all the relevant information and equipment before I start. I then follow a check list that I designed to make sure that no element of the task is missed. Before handing the work onto the next person, I run a final check to make sure that all of the data is complete and correct. Where possible I ask for feedback so that I can make improvements for next time.'

You can see that the poor example does not give us enough information; however the good example gives more information and demonstrates clearly that the person has experience of working with attention to detail.

When you have completed the application form you must make sure that you submit it to the HR Business Support Team prior to the closing date.

In the event that your application form is received after the closing date, your application form will not be considered.

Please note that you **should not** send a CV in place of completing the supporting information.

It is helpful to you to keep a copy of your application, which you can use to jog your memory should you be invited for assessment.

Please ensure that your '**personal information**' is completed, including a contact phone number. This must be legibly written. It is important that you complete the **Equal Opportunities** section of the application as this helps us to monitor our recruitment process. You will also need to complete the declaration form.

We will ask you for **2 referees**. As previously stated they will not be contacted without your permission, but we will require references before a contract of employment can be issued.

All applicants are required to disclose details of any unspent convictions in accordance with the **Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974**. Any disclosure of an unspent conviction will not automatically disqualify your application unless the nature of the offence renders you unsuitable for the post. All such disclosures will be considered on an individual basis.

For employees who will have contact with children or vulnerable adults in the course of their duties, an **Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check** will be carried out. For further information on DBS checks, please refer to www.homeoffice.gov.uk/dbs

If you were to be successful at interview and offered the position you applied for we would require seeing and taking copies of your original certificates for the educational qualifications you have declared on your application.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO RECEIVING YOUR APPLICATION.