

1204 RECRUITMENT & RETENTION POLICY

This policy sets out the guiding principles and procedures for all internal and external recruitment, selection and retention activity within Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service, and ensures that all relevant statutory and non-statutory requirements are met. This policy is applicable to Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS) operational, support, part time, full time and fixed term employees.

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OTHER (CROSS) REFERENCES:
 Corporate Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
[CFRS-#1153-Valuing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)
[CFRS-#1202-Disability Equality in Recruitment](#)
[CFRS-#1214-Reorganisation Procedure – All Staff](#)
[CFRS-#1215-Redeployment Procedure – All Staff](#)
[CFRS-#1230-Pay and Recognition](#)
[CFRS-#1189-Continual Professional Development Policy](#)
[CFRS-#1228-Exit Interview Policy](#)

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PART 1 – POLICY SECTION

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The recruitment and retention of all staff will be determined in accordance with this policy as adopted by Cheshire Fire Authority (CFA).
- 1.2 This policy sets out the guiding principles for all internal and external recruitment and selection activity within Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS). Nothing in this policy should be interpreted as contradicting the provisions made in employment legislation, statutory instruments or codes of practice or guidance, either in force at the present time or which may come into force in the future, The National Joint Council for Principal Fire Officers of Local Authorities' Fire Brigades ("The Gold Book"), The National Joint Council for Local Authorities' Fire Brigades, Schemes of Conditions of Service ("The Grey Book"), The National Joint Council for Local Government National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service ("The Green Book"), or the Service's Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).
- 1.3 Cheshire Fire Authority is committed to:-
- Ensuring that applicants are selected on the basis of their skills and experience, as laid out in the appropriate person specification/role map;
 - Promoting diversity and eliminating discrimination, including undertaking positive action initiatives as legally appropriate, delivering a workforce that more closely reflects the community we serve, whilst ensuring that all applicants are treated fairly and professionally and that the best candidate is appointed for each post using an open and accountable process;
 - Ensuring that both applicants and employees know and fully understand the recruitment and selection process;
 - Ensuring that employment legislation (as referred above) is complied with and appointments are non-discriminatory and fair.

2. SCOPE OF THE POLICY

- 2.1 This policy applies to all recruitment and selection activities undertaken within Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS) for uniformed employees, non-uniformed support staff, and covers permanent, temporary, and casual employment.

3. IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 Cheshire Fire Authority will:

- Make information about vacant posts available to all staff;
- Provide access to job descriptions/role maps for all staff; reviewed according to need, in consultation with the individuals concerned; and provide full job descriptions and person specifications/role maps for new appointments;
- Follow all national guidelines and implement them in line with the principles of this policy;

- Oversee the operation of this policy through the HR Department or through the relevant Authority Staffing Committee (in respect to Brigade Manager/Head of Department appointments); and
 - Comply with the statutory framework of employment legislation.
- 3.2 For the policy to be effective, it is essential that all recruiting line managers involved in the recruitment and selection process are fully aware of this policy and are committed to its implementation.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1 **Human Resources** will have overall responsibility for facilitating and managing the appointment process for all staff and will be responsible for maintaining an accurate record of the establishment structure and for ensuring that such establishment information is provided for payroll purposes.
- 4.2 **Managers** through CFRS' Scheme of Delegation, Heads of Department are empowered to make appointments below the level of Area Manager, both permanent and temporary and they should do so, normally, in accordance with this policy. They are also responsible for ensuring that arrangements are in place to implement and support this policy. Where Heads of Department delegate responsibility for recruitment to other Managers then they must ensure it is in accordance with this policy. It is also the responsibility of Heads of Department to bring to the attention of the Director of Transformation or their nominated representative, any issues/difficulties arising from the general operation of this policy.
- 4.3 **Elected Members** will only be involved in selection panels as provided for in accordance with legislation and the Fire Authority Constitution. This will mean that currently, they are able to make appointments to those posts, which are graded at Brigade Manager/Head of Department level or any statutory post within the Authority (i.e. Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Finance Officer).
- 4.4 Where Members are appointed to serve on the Staffing Committee to make appointments within CFRS to the level of Brigade Manager/Head of Department, then they will be required to have undertaken appropriate training and to act in accordance with the provisions of this policy.

5. TRAINING FOR RECRUITMENT

- 5.1 CFRS will provide recruitment training and development opportunities appropriate to the requirements of all recruiting managers who have responsibility for the appointment of employees within Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service.
- 5.2 It is a requirement of this policy that the appointing manager within any recruitment panel must be able to demonstrate that they have received training in recruitment and selection provided by CFRS or by another public sector organisation where the general principles of best recruitment and selection practice have been applied.

5.3 Wherever possible, other members of the recruitment panel should also have received appropriate training.

6. FAIRNESS AND EQUALITY OF TREATMENT

6.1 CFRS' Corporate Equality and Diversity Strategy commits the Service to offering equality of opportunity, the right to be treated with dignity and respect, and the elimination of unfair and unlawful discrimination in all its policies, procedures and practices.

6.2 The Service will ensure that every job applicant, internal and external, applying for a vacant post will receive fair and equitable treatment, whilst also seeking to recruit only the best people for the job. Selection is based on merit alone using the Service's recruitment and retention policy and guidance.

6.3 Internal applicants/candidates can complain using the appropriate internal grievance procedure.

6.4 External applicants/candidates can complain by writing to the Director of Transformation if they feel that there has been a mismanagement of the recruitment and selection process or if they feel that they have been unfairly treated or discriminated against.

6.5 It is essential for all those delegated to undertake recruitment and selection activities on behalf of CFRS to recognise that their actions as an individual or as part of a selection panel may need to be justified and the process adopted may be subject to scrutiny. Because of this, it is important that the relevant documentation and all other information, however stored, must be kept for a period of 12 months after each appointment exercise has been concluded.

7. POSITIVE ACTION

7.1 CFRS will actively participate in positive action initiatives, which will encourage people from under-represented and socially excluded groups to:

- apply for jobs in which they have been under-represented, and
- be given opportunities to apply for training programmes to help develop potential and so improve their chances of competing successfully for particular work.

7.2 In line with CFRS; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (#1153) the Service will commit to equality of opportunity, the right for any disabled applicant to be treated with dignity and respect and the elimination of unfair and unlawful discrimination in all its policies, procedures and practices. CFRS will guarantee an interview to any disabled applicant for employment who demonstrates that they meet the essential criteria given in the relevant person specification or where it is possible to offer reasonable adjustments to the work environment.

7.3 CFRS will in all cases appoint to vacant posts on the basis of merit, however the Service may in appropriate circumstances, where it can be demonstrated

that two candidates are **as qualified as each other** to undertake the role in question, appoint a candidate who has a protected characteristic in preference to another candidate who does not possess that particular characteristic. This is in accordance with the section of the Equality Act 2010 which permits this form of positive action for the purposes of increasing the number of staff from a particular under-represented group. This approach does carry risks and therefore selection decisions based on this approach should be carefully considered.

8. FLEXIBILITY IN APPLICATION

- 8.1 Whilst this policy needs to be consistent, it cannot take a 'one size fits all' approach; nor can it be updated for each set of circumstances. It is accepted that when applying this policy, recruiting managers may need to have some discretion and flexibility to interpret the policy whilst ensuring that this is within the overall framework of the policy. This is important if the policy is to operate effectively and not be instrumental in adversely affecting aspects of recruitment and selection practices that it was developed to improve. There must be prior consultation with the Director of Transformation or their nominated representative where divergence from this policy and the guidance is being considered.
- 8.2 For those posts at Head of Department level or above, elected members, with advice from the Director of Transformation will determine whether to use executive recruitment consultants as part of the selection process. If Consultants are to be used, then an appropriate procurement process will be undertaken.

9. RECRUITMENT TO THE SAME POST – GREEN BOOK POSTS

- 9.1 Where, within the previous 6 months, the same post or the same type of post has been advertised in accordance with this policy then it is permissible for recruiting managers to refer to the original applicants with a view to making an appointment.
- 9.2 Where a permanent member of staff has been occupying a temporary post for a period in excess of 6 months e.g. maternity leave and the substantive post-holder opts not to return to the post then, given that the post was originally advertised, that a formal selection process was undertaken, and that in the opinion of the line manager, the temporary incumbent is performing to a satisfactory standard, then that person can be offered the post on a permanent basis without the need for further advertising or an additional selection process. Advice should be taken from the HR department when a permanent appointment is being considered in these cases.

10. REDEPLOYMENT

- 10.1 In line with CFRS' Redeployment Policy ([CFRS-#1215-Redeployment Procedure – All Staff](#)) the HR department will check the current position regarding the Authority's redeployment register prior to undertaking a recruitment process for a vacant post.

- 10.2 If the role applied for will involve a promotion of more than one grade above the grade that the redeployee is currently being paid for then selection would normally be by open competition with any other applicants.

11. RE-ENGAGEMENT

- 11.1 In line with the CFRS Abatement and [Re-Employment Policy CFRS#1203](#) the HR Business Support Team will check the current position regarding the Authority's policy on re-employment and the legal requirements to be re-employed.
- 11.2 Re-engagement of an employee following retirement or redundancy will only occur in exceptional circumstances.
- 11.3 Member approval will not be required for the re-employment of a retired firefighter as an on-call role (Firefighter, Crew Manager or Watch Manager), where this is necessary for the operational effectiveness of the Service. Such appointments will require the approval of the Head of Service Delivery and the Director of Transformation.
- 11.4 The re-employment of an employee following retirement in all other circumstances will require the approval of Members.

Full details of the conditions associated with re-employment are contained within CFRS#1203 Re-Employment & Pension Abatement Policy (All Staff).

12. HPDS

An annual process will be run internally to identify and select appropriately talented individuals to join the HPDS scheme. The selection process will mirror that of the internal promotion boards at the middle manager level.

13. SECONDMENTS

- 13.1 There may be occasions when there will be a need for certain work to be undertaken which does not require the recruitment of external staffing resources. This will include secondment to a specific role within or external to CFRS, the need to cover for existing staff and/or undertake additional duties and responsibilities or indeed provide a developmental opportunity to broaden/extend existing skills, encourage retention and aid succession planning. Head of Department approval must be sought before an application for a secondment internal or external is made.
- 13.2 Such opportunities both within or external to CFRS are to be encouraged. However, it is essential to ensure that access to recruitment and selection is open and transparent and does not circumvent normal recruitment processes. Therefore, when one of these types of working arrangements is considered the most appropriate, then internal recruitment and selection will normally be in accordance with this policy with the opportunity being advertised as appropriate. This will ensure that employees will have the same opportunities to apply.

- 13.3 However, there will be occasions when the circumstances necessitate that a particular employee is clearly identified via their appraisal objectives for secondment, or a specific piece of work, because they are the only one with the necessary skills and experience, or indeed that this may provide them with the development opportunity that they need. When this arises every care must be taken by the recruiting manager to ensure that this is indeed the case and where there is any doubt then the opportunity must be advertised, ring-fenced if necessary, to a team, section or department. The Director of Transformation or their nominated representative must be consulted in each case.
- 13.4 Where possible a review period will be agreed prior to the commencement of a secondment arrangement in order to provide the opportunity to review arrangements for backfilling the role which has been left vacant. In circumstances where a secondment could potentially last for an extended period of more than one year, the Service reserves the right to the permanent backfilling of the secondee's substantive role. Any such decision would be in full consultation with the secondee who will have the choice to either agree to the extension or revert back to their substantive post. Where it is agreed that the secondee will relinquish their substantive post, the Service will commit to attempting to find them a similar post (normally on the same/similar grade) as the post that was relinquished, but this can not be guaranteed. Where there is no suitable alternative the provisions of the Redeployment Policy will apply.

14. CASUAL AND TEMPORARY EMPLOYEES

- 14.1 Whilst CFRS has processes in place to plan its workforce requirements, there will continue to be occasions when there will need to be a response to unplanned vacancies, cover for sickness absences and maternity leave, increased workloads for a specific period/task or demands for one off additional staffing for occasional events. Where sufficient time allows then the Service's normal recruitment process must be followed.
- 14.2 Only in exceptional circumstances and where appropriate CFRS will utilise zero hours contracts as a way of addressing a short term requirement to fill a role, where the amount of work to be done from week to week is expected to vary.

15. AGENCY WORKERS

- 15.1 In exceptional circumstances, and where CFRS is unable to recruit in part or in full through its normal recruitment process, additional assistance may be provided using relevant external employment agencies on the Service's preferred supplier list. This will have to be justified through one or more of the following, namely the urgency to fill the vacancy and implications of not doing so and/or the need to access a very limited resource of suitably qualified and/or experienced candidates. The HR department should be notified in these cases.
- 15.2 The Agency Workers Regulations 2010 which came into force on 1st October 2011 governs the terms and conditions of agency workers. It gives agency workers the entitlement to the same or no less favourable treatment as

comparable employees with respect to basic employment and working conditions, such as pay and holidays if and when they complete a qualifying period of 12 weeks in a particular job.

16. EXIT INTERVIEWS

- 16.1 CFRS will undertake an exit questionnaire and interview to gather relevant data from those employees, at all levels within the Authority, who leave CFRS voluntarily or change jobs/departments ([CFRS-#1228-Exit Interview Policy](#) refers). The purpose of exit interviews is to use the information obtained to help improve future selection, employee retention and to identify/resolve any particular departmental problems which the employee has felt unable to resolve sooner.
- 16.2 The information that is gathered from exit interviews is directed to relevant teams/managers for action where appropriate.
- 16.3 Key trends from exit interviews will be monitored by the Recruitment Team and reported back to the appropriate HR Business Partner as appropriate to ensure that any departmental or service wide issues e.g. bullying arising are identified and addressed appropriately.

17. PROCEDURE FOR FILLING POSTS

- 17.1 CFRS has clearly defined procedures for the recruitment and selection of employees based on the principles detailed in this policy. Those managers, who are delegated to recruit, select and make appointments to posts on behalf of CFRS must follow the principles outlined in this procedure and the accompanying guidance.
- 17.2 Whilst the processes and procedure will ensure consistency, equal treatment, opportunity and transparency it must also ensure that CFRS recruits and retains the best talent as well as encourages and supports diversity within the workforce.
- 17.3 All appointments to a promotional post that will result in a permanent appointment will require individuals to engage in a formal selection process or promotion board. [Pillar 7 Promotion Board Process](#) (Doc# 58 3069).
- 17.4 Any individual who successfully engages in any of the Step into Work programmes will be able to be treated as an internal candidate for all green book posts up to and including scale 4.
- Step into Work Programmes are; Princes Trust Teams, Volunteers, traineeships, apprenticeships and cadets.
- 17.5 Recruitment of family members/partners within the same department, where there is line management responsibility or where there may be a conflict of interests is not permitted.
- 17.6 Advertising
Any permanent posts will usually be advertised internally and externally at the

same time. Posts will only be advertised internally in the first instance if individual employees within the organisation may be potentially 'at risk' as a direct result of a reorganisation or if the role is of a temporary nature (if, however, specialist skills are called for which are clearly unobtainable internally, temporary posts may be advertised externally in conjunction with the internal advertisement). Identification of 'at risk' employees will be undertaken by the recruiting manager in consultation with the HR department. Where 'at risk' employees are identified then the advertising should be ring fenced to a particular department, section or team, depending on the circumstances.

- 17.7 CFRS will work in partnership with an appropriate advertising agency which will ensure that CFRS' recruitment advertising is placed and promoted in a professional, attractive and cost effective way.
- 17.8 CFRS will explore and utilise other cost effective opportunities to broaden the extent of its recruitment advertising in terms of local and national press coverage, professional and specialist journals, publications which serve minority groups, improved access to the local community, and extending the range of media used, including the internet and social media.
- 17.9 These services may be supplemented as necessary with specialist recruitment consultancy advice and assistance with search and/or selection. Where this is being considered then there should be prior consultation with and approval by the Director of Transformation or their nominated representative.
- 17.10 All advertisements will specify that the vacancy is available for part –time and/or job share if this has been agreed. Where a post is deemed to be unsuitable for job share, the rationale for this will need to be agreed by the relevant Head of Department/Area Manager.
- 17.11 Information for Applicants
There will be minimum standards set for providing consistent information to applicants. All information provided must be relevant to the job and within the accepted corporate style and quality and accessible to all applicants.
- 17.12 CFRS will work towards increasing the provision of specific job information as well as the facility to complete and return applications on-line. However, CFRS does recognise that not all those seeking employment, particularly those from certain socially excluded groups within parts of the community, may have access to on-line facilities. Procedures for recruitment will continue to ensure that these groups are reached, however all candidates will be encouraged to complete an electronic application in the first instance.
- 17.13 Application Form
Application forms will be made available in different formats (i.e. large print, braille etc.) upon request.
- 17.14 Any written material used during the selection process will be available in a form that is accessible to any disabled candidate (e.g. braille, large print or on tape).

- 17.15 Constabulary Vetting
Constabulary vetting is required by the Cheshire Constabulary's Chief Constable for all individuals who access non-public areas of Clemonds Hey unsupervised, its information systems or classified material. Accordingly, any CFRS staff that are required to work at Clemonds Hey will need to be vetted to the required standard of non police personnel vetting (NPPV). Any roles requiring constabulary vetting will be specified at the time of advertisement.
- 17.16 Monitoring and Evaluation
CFRS will adopt comprehensive monitoring and evaluation processes, to ensure that its objectives and standards for recruitment and selection are being achieved.
- 17.17 It is essential to monitor to ensure that no group of people is being treated unfairly and to obtain the facts on which decisions relating to further action can be based.
- 17.18 Short-listing
At the short-listing stage, the task of the panel is to assess the applicant's eligibility for selection based on information provided on the application form.
- 17.19 It is the chair of the short-listing panel's responsibility to ensure that one composite short-list matrix is completed to record the final decision of the group.
- 17.20 Applications from potential job sharers will be considered on an equal basis with those from other candidates and the decision made solely on the basis of the candidate's suitability to meet the requirements of the job description and person specification.
- 17.21 CFRS will guarantee an interview to any disabled applicant who demonstrates that they meet the essential criteria provided in the relevant person specification or where it is possible to offer reasonable adjustments to the work environment.
- 17.22 If an applicant with a disability has not met the minimum job requirements for the role then they will be offered full feedback on their application.
- 17.23 Where there are no suitable candidates for short-listing, consideration will be given to re-advertise. The panel in consultation with the HR department should review the quality of the whole process, particularly the requirements of the person specification, the content of the advert, length of time the advert was open, and the potential source of applicants.
- 17.24 Interviews and Selection
Short-listed candidates for interview must be given as much notice as possible of the arrangements for interview.
- 17.25 The HR Department will make arrangements for interviews, in consultation with the chair of the selection panel.

- 17.26 Short-listed candidates who participate in the selection procedure but who are unsuccessful will be provided with verbal feedback upon request.
- 17.27 Confirming the Appointment
The successful candidate will be informed as soon as possible after the decision has been made, normally by telephone of the details of the offer of employment, subject to any relevant employment checks.
- 17.28 All appointments will be subject to the receipt of satisfactory references, proof of academic or professional qualifications, compliance with the Asylum and Immigration Act, medical clearance (for new appointees), DBS disclosure checks (where appropriate), Constabulary Vetting (where appropriate) and any other pre-employment requirements that may be required through legislation or CFRS policy. No employee should be allowed to commence employment unless the appropriate checks have been completed.
- 17.29 References
All appointments are subject to satisfactory references being received. If a candidate has indicated on their application form they wish to be contacted before references are requested the candidate will be notified by the appointing manager.
- 17.30 All requests for references will be sent out by HR. The appointing manager will make the final decisions as to whether or not they believe the reference to be suitable. Where a reference is requested for a CFRS employee, these should not be given by managers below SO/Station Manager level.
- 17.31 Managers need to be clear if they are giving the reference as an employee of CFRS or a friend. No references given as a friend must in any way make reference to the referee's employment with CFRS or be given on CFRS headed paper.
- 17.32 Where the reference is given as a manager of CFRS where the responses to the questions asked would be subjective the following Statement must be included in the covering letter:
- 17.33 "CFRS has a policy to respond to reference requests. It does not respond to every question where it believes a response would be subjective. If there are any questions left unanswered, it is no reflection upon the individual about whom you have sought the reference".
- All references given must be forwarded to HR for filing on the PRF.**
- 17.34 CFRS is committed to not discriminating in employment matters on the grounds of race which includes 'nationality' and 'national origin'. However, this does not take precedence over the obligation to ensure that any prospective employee has a right to work in this country.
- 17.35 Confidentiality
All documents relating to the recruitment, selection and interviewing process are confidential and should be retained for 12 months from the date of appointment. Should a complaint be made about a specific recruitment

decision, scoring information may be requested and if this is the case it will be presented in an anonymised format.

17.36 Cheshire Constabulary Vetting failures

Where the required vetting standard has not been met, the service will explore other options as appropriate.

17.37 All new employees and workers will be provided with a statement of written particulars from their first day of employment.

18. MARKET SUPPLEMENT PAYMENTS

18.1 In circumstances where a job has been advertised **twice** within a 12 month period and there were no appointable candidates on both occasions (i.e. that were able to meet the minimum benchmark at interview stage) then consideration may be given to the application of a market supplement payment in order to aid recruitment to critical posts, in circumstances where other options i.e. job redesign, agency temps, outsourcing, does not meet the needs of the Service.

18.2 Market supplement payments will take the form of either a percentage enhancement or a lump sum added to the top of the salary range. It will be made clear on any offer letter / written statement of particulars that any market supplement payment:-

- is for a fixed period of 12 months; and
- is entirely separate from the substantive salary range for the role as determined by the Job Evaluation process.

18.3 A decision on whether to allocate a market supplement payment to a post will be made by the Director of Transformation following consideration of the business case put forward, incorporating relevant market data.

18.4 Where there is more than one postholder, the supplement should be awarded to all individuals who undertake the post; similarly, a decision to withdraw a supplement should apply to all postholders in receipt of it.

18.5 Individual/s will be given 3 months notice of the withdrawal of the market supplement and no pay protection will apply.

19. PROBATIONARY PERIOD

19.1 All non-uniformed support staff who join CFRS will be subject to a probationary period unless otherwise stated in their contract of employment. This will also apply to employees who are appointed on fixed term contracts of less than 6 months. Full details of the probationary period review process for non-uniformed staff are contained within [CFRS-#1218-Capability Procedure – Non Uniformed](#).

19.2 Uniformed employees will receive training appropriate to the role and be

assessed in accordance with the 'Development to Competent' policy document before being signed off as competent in role.

20. INDUCTION

- 20.1 CFRS will provide all new permanent and temporary employees, whether employed on a full-time or part-time basis with a programme of induction.
- 20.2 The purpose of induction is to integrate a new employee into the organisation in order that he/she is encouraged to become an effective and motivated member of the team. Effective induction is a major contributory factor in retaining newly appointed staff.
- 20.3 Responsibility for ensuring that a new employee is properly inducted into the Service lies with the relevant line manager.

21. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- 21.1 It is an objective of CFRS that all staff be trained to a standard which will enable them to meet the units/responsibilities of their role map/job description, and those of the Fire Service under its Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).
- 21.2 The Human Resources Team is responsible for the development of policy and strategy for staff development and training within CFRS. Support is given to all staff to meet the needs of their role, the Fire Service and for their own personal development.

22. PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL AND DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

- 22.1 Every employee who works for CFRS will receive both an annual and interim appraisal in which their performance against the Personal, Qualities, and Attributes (PQA's), Core Values and Role Maps/Job Description will be reviewed.

23. REVIEW OF POLICY

- 23.1 This policy is key to the effective recruitment and retention of employees in CFRS and as such it will be kept under review to ensure that it reflects current Conditions of Service, any subsequent employment legislation, the needs of IRMP and any changes via NJC Circulars.

PART 2 - PROCEDURES SECTION

Procedure 1 Filling a Vacancy

	Process/Action	Responsibility
1	To commence the filling of a vacancy click on the relevant link below	Manager
2	(one minute guide for grey and green book)	Manager

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: I am a manager, how do I permanently fill a support staff vacancy?

A: Firstly you should seek approval from the Head of Department to fill the vacancy, and if they are in agreement you should review the Job Description to check that it is still fit for purpose. If the post is not within your current establishment you should complete an Establishment Change Form. At this point you can discuss your requirements with the Resourcing Team in order to agree advertising and assessment process and timescales including wording of an advert. If the role is a support staff vacancy you should also complete a Vacancy Approval Form.

Q: I wish to fill my vacancy temporarily, should I use an employee on a fixed term contract or an agency worker?

A: Fixed term contracts will normally be used in circumstances where the vacancy is expected to last for a defined period (normally longer than 3 months), for example maternity leave cover or where the post is only funded for a finite period of time. Whereas the use of agency staff will normally be appropriate where the need to fill a post is likely to be for only a short period (i.e. weeks), or where the long term status of the post is uncertain, or where there is a desire to keep the post substantively vacant for the time being.

Q: Where should I advertise my post?

A: All posts will be advertised through the Service's internal channels, and where appropriate vacancies will be advertised externally as well. The Resourcing Team will work in partnership with an appropriate advertising agency to ensure that CFRS' recruitment advertising is placed and promoted in a professional, attractive and cost effective way, to ensure that the pool of potential suitable applicants is maximised.

Q: What process should I use to select the best candidate for the role?

A: The method of assessment should be discussed and agreed with the Resourcing team prior to advertising the post. Once a shortlist of potentially suitable candidates has been agreed, candidates will be invited to attend a selection process. As a minimum in all cases this will consist of a panel interview.

In addition to this managers may wish to consider the following methods of assessing each candidate's suitability:-

- presentation (prepared or unprepared)
- psychometric assessments
- practical tests
- online assessments
- role play
- in tray exercises
- group discussion/exercise

For operational Fire Fighter roles, the selection methods will be in accordance with national guidelines.

Q: I have just interviewed the ideal candidate, can I get them to start tomorrow?

A: No, for staff employed by the Service on permanent or fixed term contracts, there will be a requirement to undergo pre-employment checks, consisting of:-

- medical assessment
- references
- DBS check (where required)
- Constabulary Vetting form (where required)
- compliance with the Asylum and Immigration Act
- verification of qualifications
- any role-specific requirements

Successful candidates will not be allowed to commence employment until the above pre-employment checks have been satisfactorily completed. All offers of employment will be conditional on pre-employment checks being satisfactory.

Agency staff will be required to undergo relevant checks by their employing agency, prior to commencing their assignment with CFRS.

Q: I have recruited a new starter, and one of the references, DBS or Constabulary Vetting has come back indicating potential cause for concern. What should I do?

A: Where information received in a reference, DBS or Constabulary Vetting form is a cause for concern, consideration can be given to withdrawing the offer of employment. However advice should be sought from the Resourcing Team within the HR Business Support Unit, or the Constabulary Vetting Team in respect of vetting.

It is important to remember that opinions can be subjective and therefore negative opinions within a reference should be balanced against other available information, including any relevant comments from the prospective employee, in order for a considered decision to be made.

Q: A member of my team has submitted their resignation. What should I do with it?

A: You should ensure that the individual has submitted written confirmation of their notice of resignation. You must then pass it on to the Resourcing team as soon as possible to ensure that there is no overpayment of salary.

Normally you will be required to undertake an exit interview with the individual, and on their last day you will need to collect all of the items of Service property that may be in their possession such as I.D. badge, laptop, and uniform.