



Job Description and Person Specification

Deputy Chief Fire Officer | 2026

Job Description

Deputy Chief Fire Officer



Directorate:	Response (but may differ)
Grade:	Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO)
Responsible to:	Chief Fire Officer
Responsible for:	Directorate level

Primary Purpose of the Role

To provide strategic support to the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive in delivering effective leadership for the Fire and Rescue Service (the Service). This includes driving the development and implementation of organisational strategy linked to delivery of the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), and statutory functions, embedding best practice, and maximising opportunities for collaboration.

A key aspect of this role is ensuring the successful delivery of both enabling and core strategies across the Service, while maintaining full compliance with all statutory obligations and national guidance applicable to the Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority).

Principal Responsibilities

- **Act as Deputy** for the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive, assuming full leadership responsibilities in their absence, in line with the Scheme of Delegations and Constitution.
- **Lead your Directorate**, creating a clear vision, driving performance, continuous improvement, and excellence in delivering the CRMP and core strategies.
- **Provide decisive leadership and guidance** to senior teams and staff, ensuring high corporate standards and fostering a culture of improvement.
- **Advise and report** effectively to elected Members, exercising political neutrality, acumen, transparency and strategic alignment.
- **Collaborate with stakeholders** including elected Members, public, private, and voluntary sectors, to shape and deliver community-focused plans that uphold governance and service quality.
- **Champion positive employee relations**, equality, fairness, and cultural standards across the Service, embedding these principles in all operations.
- **Optimise resource allocation**, identifying efficiencies and driving performance within your area of responsibility.
- **Represent and advocate** for the Service at national, regional, and local levels, influencing outcomes and building strategic partnerships.
- **Ensure health, safety, and welfare compliance**, adhering to corporate policies and statutory obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
- **Undertake additional duties** aligned with the scope and seniority of the role as required.
- **Champion and drive standards**, act as a role model and ambassador for the Service by displaying high standards in all areas and promote a positive modern culture in the workplace.

Job Description

Deputy Chief Fire Officer



Additional Responsibilities for Jobholders with Operational Competencies

- **Lead Multi-Agency Preparedness**
Actively contribute to joint planning initiatives, inter-agency training, and large-scale exercises to ensure personnel are fully prepared for major disasters and complex incidents. Build strong collaborative relationships with partner organisations to enhance resilience and interoperability.
- **Provide Immediate Operational Response**
When rostered as Duty Principal Officer, deliver decisive leadership during emergency situations, ensuring rapid and effective resolution. Maintain availability for consultation and operational support at all other times to safeguard public safety and Service integrity.
- **Assume Command at Critical Incidents**
Take command at significant fires or emergency incidents when necessary, or when circumstances demand proactive intervention on scene. Apply strategic decision-making and operational expertise to protect life, property and the environment.
- **Represent the Authority at Strategic Level**
Act as Fire and Rescue Service "Gold" Commander within multi-agency Strategic Coordinating Groups, providing authoritative leadership and influencing strategic decisions during major incidents and civil contingencies.

Person Specification

Deputy Chief Fire Officer



The requirements of this role are aligned to the principles outlined in the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Leadership Framework. The role will focus on 'Leading the Service' and candidates must be able to demonstrate the required levels of competence against the Framework, or the potential to meet those requirements within a reasonable time period upon taking the role. Candidates will also be required to demonstrate the skills and behaviours outlined in the other areas, Leading Yourself, Others and the Function.

Essential Qualifications and Training

The applicant must have:

- **Postgraduate-Level Qualification**
A Level 7 qualification or an equivalent management/professional qualification and experience in working at a strategic level.
- **Commitment to Further Study**
Ability and willingness to complete a 'Master in Business Administration' (MBA) or equivalent qualification within five years of appointment, if not already held.
- **Operational Command Competence**
Hold underpinning relevant or equivalent command experience and qualifications and have the capability to successfully pass a Level 4 Fire Operational Command Assessment, and Multi-Agency Gold Incident Command assessment as required, if not already held and current.
- **Continuous Professional Development**
Evidence of sustained professional development at a strategic leadership level.
- **Operational Command Experience**
Demonstrable experience in operational command, preferably within emergency service operations or a comparable environment, at both tactical and operational levels.
- **Additional Requirements**
Must be able to pass (if not already held) a qualification to drive an appropriate vehicle under emergency response conditions to the necessary standard.

Must also be able to pass the relevant annual fitness assessment and medical requirements of the role.

It is preferable that a successful candidate provides a residential base within or near to the borders of Herefordshire or Worcestershire, and must be able to respond promptly within both counties if Duty Principal Officer. Any base location will need to be approved by the Chief Fire Officer.

Due to the nature of the role and hours of work required the candidate must be able to demonstrate an ability to effectively and flexibly support the continuous duty rota system, respond promptly as required, and support operational and managerial commitments across both counties routinely.

Person Specification

Deputy Chief Fire Officer



Essential Experience

The successful applicant must demonstrate:

- **Extensive Senior Strategic Leadership Experience**
Proven ability to lead and manage a major function within a complex organisation, delivering core organisational objectives at a strategic level.
- **High-Level Corporate Leadership Under Pressure**
Significant experience operating in a demanding senior leadership environment, managing complex corporate challenges beyond operational command responsibilities.
- **Political and Governance Engagement**
Practical experience working with Elected Members and politicians, fostering constructive relationships and influencing the decision-making of political leaders.
- **Strategic Media and Reputation Management**
In-depth understanding of the impact of public image, including press, media, and social media, and experience in managing communications at a strategic level.
- **Track Record of Innovation and Continuous Improvement**
Substantial demonstrated success in driving strategic and operational improvements, delivering high-quality services through innovation and best practice.
- **Audit and Inspection Compliance**
Experience in achieving improvements aligned with auditor or inspector expectations and ideally including experience of engaging with His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS).
- **Complex Issue Analysis and Strategic Contribution**
Ability to analyse and interpret complex data, apply professional judgement, and then present complex issues effectively, both orally and in writing for both senior management and Authority level, contributing to strategic debate and constructive challenge at senior forums, preferably as part of a management board.
- **Change and Priority Management**
Proven capability to manage competing priorities, adapt to change, and deliver outcomes within tight deadlines on complex strategic matters.
- **Financial and Resource Management Expertise**
Substantial experience of financial management, budgetary control, and the ability to drive efficiencies and improve organisational performance.

Person Specification

Deputy Chief Fire Officer



Essential Knowledge

The applicant should demonstrate comprehensive knowledge and understanding of:

- **Public Service Challenges**
The evolving role, priorities, and challenges faced by public services, with specific emphasis on the Fire and Rescue Service and HMICFRS.
- **Political and Strategic Landscape**
The political environment and government influence on Fire and Rescue Services, including the strategic role of the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) in shaping national policy and leadership.
- **Contextual Awareness**
The political, economic, and environmental factors impacting the Fire and Rescue Service, and the significance of His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in driving performance and accountability.
- **Strategic vs Tactical Leadership**
A clear understanding of the distinction between strategic and tactical working within Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS), and the Deputy Chief Fire Officer's role in delivering strategic leadership.
- **Local Government Framework**
The structure, governance, and operational mechanisms of Local Government as they relate to Fire and Rescue Services.
- **Corporate Governance**
Must be conversant with all aspects of legislation, corporate and organisational governance in the Fire Service, delegated responsibilities and thresholds; moral, financial and legal.

Person Specification

Deputy Chief Fire Officer



Essential Skills and Abilities

The applicant should be able to demonstrate:

- **Executive Support and Challenge**
Ability to act as a trusted advisor and sounding board to the Chief Fire Officer, offering constructive professional challenge where appropriate.
- **Strategic Leadership**
Capability to lead and support all members of the Strategic Leadership Board (SLB) and all senior managers thereby fostering collaboration and high performance. Must be able to lead others, chair meetings and be able to listen carefully, reflect and seek consensus, as well as being able to lead and direct when necessary and take urgent and important decisions, take responsibility and assess risk.
- **Strategic Thinking and Innovation**
Proven ability to think strategically, develop creative solutions to complex issues, and build strong relationships internally and externally. Must be able to confidently take and assess risk and present clear ownership and responsibility for the organisation.
- **Political Acumen**
High level of political awareness and sensitivity to support policy development and decision-making processes alongside elected Members. Must be able to build relationships with all political leaders and influence those that govern the Service.
- **Values and Ethics Leadership**
Commitment to championing the values and ethics of the Fire Service (Core Code of Ethics), role modelling inclusive leadership, promoting diversity, inclusion, and equality of opportunity and demonstrating professional standards and values at the highest level.
- **Culture**
Have a current and clear vision of how to drive improvements in behaviours and culture across the organisation with an ability to lead effectively and personally demonstrate ethically sound and culturally appropriate leadership.
- **Trade Unions**
Demonstrate experience and the ability to work with, and manage relationships, with trade union officials.
- **Priority and Performance Management**
Ability to balance competing priorities, meet tight deadlines, and deliver results on complex strategic matters.
- **Business Planning and Evaluation**
Competence in planning, directing, and evaluating performance across all areas of business activity.

Person Specification

Deputy Chief Fire Officer



- **Vision and Influence**

Ability to articulate and gain ownership for a clear vision and direction, influence the direction of the organisation and inspire and lead others to achieve organisational goals. Also to help others to develop and implement the clarity and direction agreed upon by the Strategic Leadership Board.

- **Collaborative Leadership**

Skill in fostering mutual cooperation, enabling individuals to contribute to their full potential, and influencing stakeholders within the Service and wider community.

- **Interpersonal and Communication Excellence**

Highly developed interpersonal, public relations, oral, written, and presentation skills.

- **Resilience and Motivation**

High levels of energy, enthusiasm, and resilience, with the ability to remain focused and positive under pressure.

- **Credibility and Integrity**

Professional presence, visibility and credibility that commands trust and confidence from senior managers, officers, partners, and stakeholders, underpinned by a high degree of probity and integrity.

- **Professional Development**

High levels of self-awareness and the ability to consider and act on 360 feedback and improve personal performance and impact.

- **Decisive Leadership**

Competence in making sound, timely decisions in complex and dynamic environments.

Person Specification

Deputy Chief Fire Officer



Desirable Qualifications and Training

The applicant should ideally have:

- **Strategic Leadership Development**
Successful completion of a recognised strategic management development programme or executive leadership qualification, such as an Executive Leadership Programme.
- **Multi-Agency Gold Command Expertise**
Experience or formal qualification in Multi-Agency Gold Incident Command (MAGIC).
- **Advanced Academic Achievement**
A Master's degree, preferably an MBA or equivalent.
- **Strategic Operational Command Experience**
Proven experience in operational command at a strategic level preferably within emergency service operations, or an equivalent setting.
- **Health and Safety**
Demonstrate knowledge and competence in Health and Safety requirements and legislation and experience of leading and delivering organisational level Health and Safety alongside operational Health and Safety.
- **Professional Membership**
Membership of a relevant professional body.

Brigade Manager Role Map

Ref	Brigade Manager Role Map
EFSM1	Provide strategic advice and support to resolve operational incidents
EFSM4	Plan organisational strategy to meet agreed aims and objectives
EFSM5	Plan implementation of organisational strategy to meet objectives
EFSM7	Evaluate organisational performance against agreed measures
EFSM8	Lead organisational strategy through effective decision making
EFSM13	Select personnel for employment
EFSM14	Manage the performance of teams and individuals to achieve objectives
EFSM15	Develop teams and individuals to enhance work-based performance
EFSM16	Manage yourself to achieve work objectives
EFSM20	Exchange information to ensure effective service delivery

