

RECRUITMENT & SELECTION

STANDING ORDER 2/6

July 2014

Resourcing

Directorate: People Support Services

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE SERVICE
RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

**RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION STANDING ORDER
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1. STRATEGY

It is the policy of West Midlands Fire Service to recruit and select people with appropriate skills, knowledge and values to maintain a high performing service for the communities that we serve. We will recruit and retain a diverse, highly skilled, capable and talented workforce which is flexible and adaptable and committed to delivering excellent services to our communities.

This policy relates to both external recruitment and internal selection procedures.

Internal promotion and progression will follow the principles of this Standing Order and will be carried out in line with the Progression Model. The Progression Model can be found at Appendix 1 attached.

2. PROCEDURES

2.1 Advertising

All vacant positions will be reviewed by the Line Manager and appropriate Director prior to authorising a vacancy for release. Authorised vacancies will be advertised using the Careers section of the Services internet and intranet sites as appropriate. Positions may also be advertised using a wider range of media, for example local and national press, specialist publications, social media and external internet sites.

To progress our positive action work we will also actively use media which targets women, Black and Minority Ethnic communities and people with disabilities alongside other under represented groups. Advertisements will include positive statements to encourage applications from these groups.

HR Resourcing will advise and support Line Managers in the selection of appropriate media however wider use of advertising will be funded from local budgets.

All advertising materials will reflect the Services' Equality and Diversity Policy and media guidelines. Advertisements will be clear and unambiguous so that applicants will be able to determine their own suitability.

2.2 Application

The process of application for each position may vary due to the requirements of the role and will be detailed within each advertisement.

Application forms will be kept securely by HR Resourcing, for a period of 12 months following the final closing date of the advertisement. In all cases, application forms for successful candidates will be kept for the duration of the individual's employment.

2.3 Role Maps and Role Profiles

All posts will have a role profile or role map. These will be available via the Careers section of the Services internet and intranet sites when positions are advertised. To support applicants in identifying the more detailed requirements of the role, further information will be detailed within the advertisement for the position and the job summary. Criteria contained in these documents will be relevant, clearly justifiable and necessary to the requirements of the role.

2.4 Short listing

The short listing and selection process must be carried out by two or more people to ensure an impartial approach. All employees responsible for selection for positions within the Service will have received appropriate recruitment and selection training, or will be supported by a member of the HR Resourcing Team.

Short listing will be based on the information contained in the application against agreed criteria for the role applied for. Reasons for an application form being unsuccessful must be recorded. West Midlands Fire Service uses the Positive about Disability, two tick symbol and campaign to support our positive action strategy. This enables a guaranteed interview for an applicant who considers themselves disabled and who meets all of the essential criteria. This will happen regardless of whether or not the desirable criteria have been used during the short listing process for non-disabled applicants.

2.5 Selection

The process used for selection will be based on the behaviours and job requirements of the role and the Service uses processes that are objective and fair. A range or combination of selection methods may be used to ensure that the most appropriate applicant is selected and the candidate is selected on their merit against the selection criteria. HR Resourcing will provide advice to Line Managers on the range of selection methods available and will assist in the development of selection tools where required. Reasonable adjustments relevant to the process will be made for people with disabilities as appropriate.

Successful candidates who 1) live outside a 25 mile radius of their new place of employment and 2) be moving to a new residence which is appreciably nearer to their new place of employment, may be eligible for relocation expenses. For further information please see Appendix 4 Relocation Expenses.

2.6 Quality Assurance

A process of quality assurance of the recruitment and selection process will be carried out. Line Managers from across the Service will examine the justification for approval or non approval of those within the Service who wish to be considered for progression.

Quality assurance of the selection process will be carried out by HR Resourcing; this will include all stages of the process from advertisement through to selection of individuals. The quality assurance process will ensure compliance with employment and equality legislation and feedback will be provided for recruiting managers to support future development.

2.7 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

West Midlands Fire Service recognises and values the benefits of diversity and inclusion. We are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity and equal access in recruitment and selection and progression.

HR Resourcing will monitor all applications received and their success during the various stages of recruitment and selection in line with the Equality Act 2010. Equality monitoring data will be confidential and will not be used during the decision making process and this is separated and not shared with the selection panel. Data will only be used to identify potential areas and patterns of unfair / unlawful discrimination and to encourage best practice.

2.8 Positive Action

A key strategic objective is to ensure that West Midlands Fire Service has effective strategies embedded to support the Service in achieving equality outcomes for our diverse communities and workforce and to ensure that our workforce is representative of the community that we serve.

Under the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, West Midlands Fire Service has a positive duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and promote different groups working together. Under the provisions of the Equality Act, in broad terms the Service has the ability to under take positive action in recruitment where under representation can be evidenced.

Our Positive Action Strategy identifies that the Service is currently under represented of Black and Minority Ethnic people, People with Disabilities, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual people and women in uniformed roles. The demographic profile of the workforce will be monitored and our positive action strategy will be reviewed to ensure activity is targeted appropriately. West Midlands Fire Service will use Positive Action initiatives to attract and encourage potential applicants from under represented groups, to compete for posts on an equal basis. Such measures may include:

- targeted job advertisements and recruitment initiatives;
- providing training and access schemes; and
- open days and career events.

2.9 Reasonable Adjustments

Applicants will be selected on the basis of their abilities and merit measured against the role profile and job requirements. Reasonable adjustment to the recruitment and selection process will be made as appropriate, for disabled applicants. Adjustments will be considered based on information provided by the applicant and additional advice may be sought from Occupational Health to support this.

Before a disabled applicant is judged to have not met the requirements of the role profile, or to be less suitable than other applicants, consideration will be given to whether any reasonable adjustments can be made to the workplace, working environment or duties.

2.10 Canvassing

Approach made to HR Resourcing or Recruiting Managers, for anything other than information on the recruitment procedures or job role, may be classed as canvassing. Under no circumstances should individuals make contact with HR Resourcing in order to enhance a person's opportunity for appointment to a position within the West Midlands Fire Service. Should this prove to be the case then disciplinary action may be taken and/or individuals removed from the selection process.

2.11 Audit and review

All recruitment and selection activity is managed and monitored by HR Resourcing who will support each function to ensure that current employment legislation and Equality and Diversity policies are maintained in the most efficient, effective and economical manner.

The recruitment and selection processes and procedures will be continually reviewed by the HR Resourcing Team to ensure that they are undertaken in the most efficient and effective manner and that they remain compliant with appropriate policies and employment legislation.

2.12 Pre-employment controls

New employees will be subject to the Baseline Personnel Security Screening (BPSS) as part of compliance with Her Majesty's Government Security Policy Framework (HMG SPF). This comprises of verification of the following four main elements:

- Identity.
- Nationality and Immigration Status (including an entitlement to undertake the work in question).
- Employment history (past 3 years).
- Criminal record (unspent convictions only).

Additionally, prospective employees may be required to give a reasonable account of any significant gaps in employment history.

Information collected at each stage of the process must be reviewed and assessed, and recorded. Refusal by the individual to provide any of the required information should be taken into account in the employment decision.

For positions which involve frequent contact with Children or vulnerable adults, an enhanced criminal records check will be required (see Standing Order 2/34).

3. CROSS REFERENCES

Standing Order 2/13 Equality & Diversity Policy

Standing Order 2/5 Managing Vacancies

Standing Order 2/34 Criminal Records Information Policy

4. KEY CONSULTEES

Fire Brigades' Union

Fire Officers' Association

Unison

Operations

Fire Safety

People Support Services

5. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A full equality impact assessment has been carried out. This policy will assist in meeting our equality objectives with regard to the workforce profile and ensuring equality of opportunity. The EIA is available upon request.

6. OWNERSHIP

This policy did not require Corporate Board or Authority approval.

7. RESPONSIBILITY AND REVIEW/AMENDMENT DETAILS

7.1 Responsible Corporate Board Member/Department

Strategic Enabler of People Support Services/HR Resourcing

7.2 Created/fully reviewed/amended

This order has been created by the Senior HR Officer (Resourcing) 2014

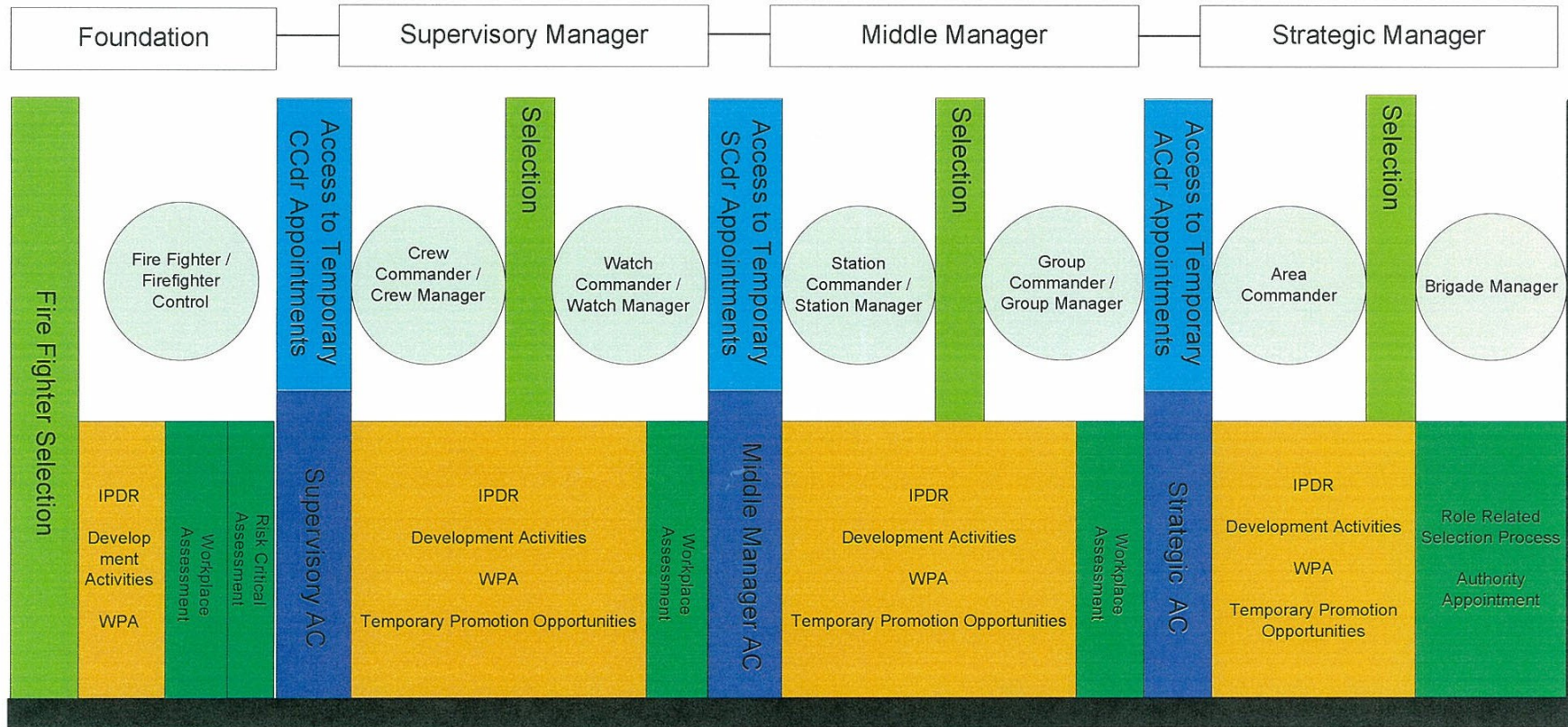
PROGRESSION MODEL

1. Objectives

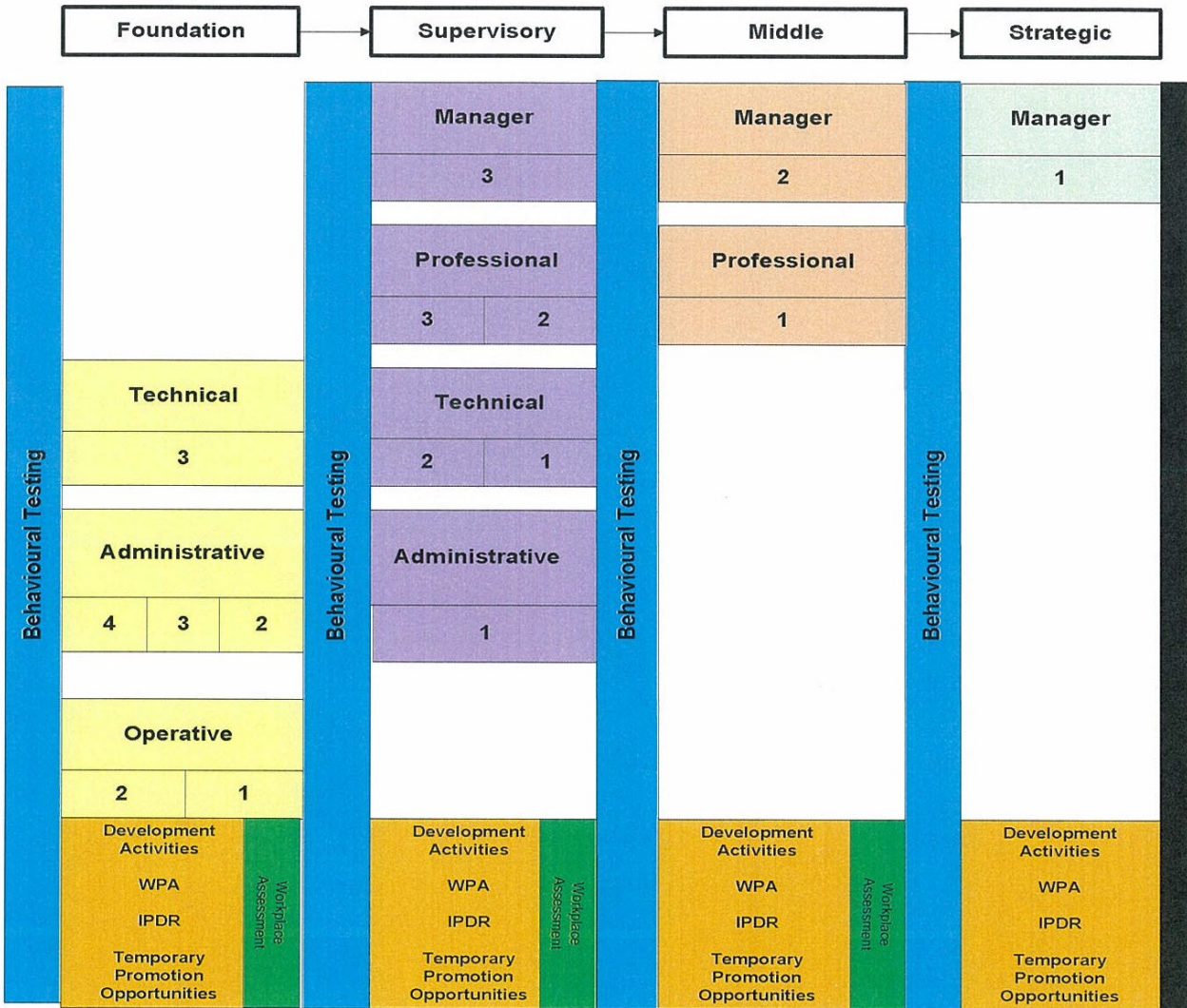
We will develop a skilled, motivated and flexible workforce reflective of our community, who are focused on continually improving the services by:

- Enabling and empowering leadership at all levels.
- Supporting all employees in identifying, acquiring and maintaining the knowledge and skills required to deliver organisational objectives effectively and efficiently.
- Enabling organisational learning across professional and sector boundaries to increase performance and deliver excellence.
- Building our people capacity to be more dynamic and responsive to managing change within the organisation.
- Ensuring that the needs of our diverse communities and workforce are reflected through equality outcomes aligned to organisational outcomes.

Grey Book Progression Model



Green Book Progression Model



Process Overview

West Midlands Fire Service continues to strive towards a position where excellence rather than competence is considered the norm. With a culture of organisational trust and transparency at the heart of all promotion and progression process, valid, reliable objective selection criteria underpinned by the behavioural framework will be used to identify the most suitable people for progression.

With a focus on development to achieve consistent high performance and to meet organisational priorities and objectives, selection will be based on the demonstration through selection of potential to perform at that level.

The progression model has been developed to provide clarity and consistency in the way in that people are selected and developed as they move between different roles and to different levels of the service. The model allows flexibility in the way that people learn and acquire knowledge; it supports development at an individual pace and allows individuals with advanced leadership potential to access higher levels of development.

The framework ensures that managers have ownership of selection for their own teams and that they are able to build teams to meet the requirements of the position and location.

Organisational Bands

There are four bands; Foundation, Supervisory, Middle, and Strategic. The following describes the progression route between these bands.

7.2.1 Individual Performance Development Review (IPDR)

Individuals wishing to enter development for the next band should discuss their intentions within their IPDR. This will be an opportunity for the line manager to consider with the individual how they are performing consistently in their role, demonstrating competence, talent, the ability to deliver excellence and the potential to operate confidently above current role requirements. The personal qualities and attributes demonstrated by the individual should feature strongly in the discussion in determining the aptitude to be a future leader.

Tailored Development – Selecting Development Activities

A range of development activities are available and can be accessed through the ECademy system. Line Managers should use a tailored approach to development and can utilise a wide range of opportunities which might include work shadowing, secondment, project work and management development programmes etc.

The individual and the Line Manager will consider which activities to include in the personal development plan in order to achieve the knowledge, understanding and experience required. This may also include a blend of self-directed learning where an individual can undertake a range of learning modules in their own study time which include core skills which are fundamental to the role.

Line Manager Support for Progression

All applications for progression to a higher role require the support of the individual's Line Manager.

In supporting or not supporting an application for promotion, Line Managers will use an evidential approach when carrying out an assessment of the individual's performance in their current role. The assessment will include a consideration of existing skills and knowledge, application of knowledge and performance and an assessment of behaviours at their current level.

If the Line Manager is in a temporary role their decision must be confirmed and countersigned by a substantive line manager at an equivalent level.

When the decision has been made whether the endorsement has been approved or refused the Line Manager will send a letter either confirming the endorsement or providing the rationale for their decision and areas of development.

All applicants have the right to appeal the decision of their Line Manager. *This should be in writing to their Line Manager within 5 working days, using form M1. You should clearly state the grounds for your appeal and your preferred resolution.*

7.3 Movement between Bands

Access to application for entry to each management band is achieved by each individual undertaking on-going Workplace assessment with their line Manager to include an assessment of behaviours (Personal Qualities and Attributes) and demonstration of competence in current role.

All Individuals are required to pass the appropriate level Assessment Centre and role specific selection process to be considered for conditional or substantive appointment.

7.4 Methods of Selection

When a vacancy becomes available, each position will be advertised on online and will include an advertisement which describes the position and entry requirements, the skills and knowledge requirements of the role, the types of activity related to the position and the personal qualities required. The advertisement will also include details of the application process.

The process used for selection will be based on the behaviours and job requirements of the role. A range or combination of selection methods will be used to provide a broad assessment of each individual and ensure that the highest performing applicant is selected.

HR Resourcing will provide advice to Line Managers on the range of selection methods available and will assist in the development of selection tools where required.

Success will be determined by individual performance across all exercises in relation to the requirements of the role.

Candidates who are not successful will have the opportunity to work with their Line Manager to address areas of development in preparation for future progression opportunities.

Those conditioned to Green Book terms and conditions may progress through pay bands and role profiles when there is an indication that there has been role progression due to the requirements of the role changing and that change is a permanent feature (see Pay and Grading Business Rules).

7.5 Temporary Promotion

Temporary promotions will be carried out in line with the Managing Vacancies Policy 2/5.

Short term temporary appointments may be filled using a local selection process. Short term is defined as a position which is likely to be vacant for **more than four weeks but no longer than 8 weeks**. Line Managers will identify a reversion date in all circumstances.

Any appointment where the end date is **unknown** or is likely to **exceed 8 weeks** will be filled using the process outlined in Recruitment and Selection Policy 2/6.

Movement between Directorates (Grey Book Employees)

Where an individual has identified or expressed an interest in moving to another directorate (e.g. Departmental Position to Operations) it is the responsibility of the individual and their Line Manager to put in place an appropriate work up schedule to enable them to acquire or update their knowledge and skills.

It is advisable to ensure that a reasonable length of time (for the individual and their existing Line Manager) is allowed for upskilling and that advice is taken on what may be required to demonstrate competence. In the case of moving back to Operations, this may include shadowing activity, assessment in incident command using Minerva, carrying out stand-by cover, attending brigade exercises etc.

Movement between Job Families (Green Book Staff)

Where an individual has identified or expressed an interest in moving to another Job Family (e.g. Professional to Management), it is the responsibility of the individual and their Line Manager where appropriate to put in place a development plan to support them in updating their knowledge and skills.

7.5.1 Vacancy Identified

In line with Managing Vacancies Standing Order 2/5, vacancies are filled having considered, redeployment and compulsory transfers etc. The recruiting manager is required to discuss each vacancy and method of selection with the HR Resourcing Team. Each vacancy as it is identified will be advertised online. The HR Resourcing Team will provide support, advice and quality assurance around the Recruitment process including advertisement and methods of application.

7.5.2 Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance will be carried out by managers from across the Service as appropriate. Quality assurance will involve discussion and an examination of the justification for approval or non approval, of those who wish to be considered for progression. Quality assurance of the selection process will be carried out by the HR Resourcing Team.

GUIDANCE FOR INDIVIDUALS AND LINE MANAGERS

In assessing an individual's performance and suitability for progression, the following provides an overview of the areas which could be considered.

When a post is advertised the recruiting manager will provide clear direction to line managers with regard to specific areas of endorsement required for that particular position

Making an objective assessment of:

- Melio/Development Plans – including role maps, role profile, quality of evidence statements and quality of evidence recorded against them.
- Development needs and development reviews;
- Assessment of core skills and competence;
- IPDR objectives and progress against these;
- Attendance (over the past three years excluding attendance linked to maternity or disability)
- Disciplinary records (over the past three years)

Areas to consider when identifying potential to perform in a higher role

- **Leadership**

Does the individual show the ability to lead a team and are they aware of their leadership style? Do they adapt their style to different circumstances? How do they lead others and have they moved the watch/team forward over the past 12 months? Do they challenge current practice, seeking continual professional development?

- **Development**

How has the individual developed over the past 12 months? What activities have they undertaken? What new activities have they exposed them self to?

- **Operations/Operational Preparedness**

Does the individual demonstrate high performance on the incident ground? Consider how the individual plans and delivers training or supports others in the team. Does the individual have the potential to perform at the next level? Do they link training and development to the operational debrief?

Departmental based staff – Have they actively maintained and took responsibility for their operational competence, if wishing to move to operations?

- **Prevention Based Activity**

Is the individual actively involved in the planning and delivery of PBA activities? Do they use innovation and creativity when developing and implementing activities? Are they involved in partnership activities / local meetings?

- **Communications**

They demonstrate excellent communication skills at all levels including team(s), partners and other stakeholders.

They demonstrate effective communication and influence at partnership level?

Demonstrate engagement with all their staff particularly ongoing communications and awareness around potential changes to the Service based on financial shortfalls.

Have the demonstrated improvements based on the outcomes of the Employment Opinion Survey?

- **Partnership/Collective Working**

Demonstrate a track record of working together with partners either internal or external to deliver outcomes

Demonstrate the ability to influence beyond their authority and role (partnership level, regional or national level)

They use innovation, creativity when developing, and implementing initiatives

They effectively drive partnership activity and participate in local meetings.

They act as advocate and ambassador for their station, section, command and West Midlands Fire Service.

Demonstrate the ability and importance of fully evaluating activities e.g. use of the Logic model to demonstrate a return on investment. They use business case to start or stop doing activities and use of evaluation to show a causal link between activities and outcomes.

- **Managing Change**

They can demonstrate examples of change management that have led to individual and organisational improvements.

PERSONAL QUALITIES AND ATTRIBUTES

- Commitment to Diversity and Integrity – embraces and values diversity and demonstrates a fair and ethical approach in all situations;
- Openness to Change – proactively supports change, adjusting approach to meet changing requirements;
- Confidence and Resilience – maintains a confident, controlled and focused attitude in highly challenging situations;
- Working with Others – leads, involves and motivates others both within the Service and in the community;
- Effective Communication – communicates effectively both orally and in writing;
- Commitment to Development – committed and able to develop self, individuals, teams and others to improve organisational effectiveness;
- Problem Solving – understands and applies relevant information to make appropriate decisions and create practical solutions;
- Situational Awareness – maintains an active awareness of the environment to promote safe and effective working;
- Commitment to Excellence – leads others to achieve excellence by the establishment, maintenance and management of performance requirements;
- Planning and Implementing – creates and implements effective team plans in line with organisational objectives;
- Political / Organisational Awareness – recognises the potential political impact and implications of actions from a strategic perspective

Feedback

When the decision has been made whether the endorsement has been approved or refused the Line Manager will send a letter either confirming the endorsement or providing the rationale for their decision and areas of development.

All applicants have the right to appeal the decision of their Line Manager. *This should be in writing to their Line Manager within 5 working days, using form M1. You should clearly state the grounds for your appeal and your preferred resolution.*

Movement between Directorates

Where an individual has identified or expressed an interest in moving to another directorate (e.g. Departmental Position to Operations) it is the responsibility of the individual and their Line Manager to put in place an appropriate work up schedule to enable them to demonstrate competence in the required areas.

It is advisable to ensure that a reasonable length of time (for the individual and their existing Line Manager) is allowed for upskilling and advice taken on what may be required to demonstrate competence. In the case of moving back to operations, this may include shadowing activity, assessment in incident command using Minerva, carrying out stand-by cover, attending brigade exercises etc.

Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance at the entry stage will be carried out by Group/Operations Commanders or Department Heads. The process of quality assurance will include a discussion with Station Commander/Department heads and a review of the evidence and criteria used to support or refuse an application.

At the interview stage, the method of selection, selection criteria and selection decision will be quality assured by a member of the HR Resourcing team.

RELOCATION EXPENSES

Scheme for reimbursement of relocation expenses upon appointment for green, grey and gold book employees.

The Service is prepared to assist with certain relocation expenses when recruiting to specific jobs. To qualify as an approved case for relocation expenses, the employee must move house as a result of accepting the appointment and in order to carry out the duties of the post and, in addition must

- i) Live outside a 25 mile radius of their new place of employment;
- ii) be moving to a new residence which is appreciably nearer their new place of employment

The scheme is intended to cover genuine costs incurred for the relocation of any employee or a couple jointly (where both take up employment with the Service) in the sale and purchase of one property only.

Note: The Strategic Enabler will ultimately determine whether a vacancy should attract relocation expenses or not, and whether an employee qualifies as an approved case, However the agreement must also be countersigned by The Strategic Enablers for People Support and Finance & Resources.

CONDITIONS:

Reimbursement of expenditure must be agreed within an appropriate timeframe and where possible this should be in the financial year appropriate to the employment. However an extension can be agreed by the appropriate Strategic Enabler.

Expenses will only be reimbursed where they are submitted on the Service's Relocation Expenses Claim form, and where supported by relevant receipts/invoices.

All or part of the expenses claimed are to be repaid by the employee if they leave the Service's employment voluntarily within a two-year period on the following scale:

100% of the sum paid in the event of leaving the Service within 1 year of commencing the appointment.

50% of the sum paid in the event of leaving the Service after 1 year and within 18 months of commencing the appointment.

25% of the sum paid in the event of leaving the Service after 18 months and within 2 years of the date of commencing the appointment.

The employees signature to the claim will be taken to represent their acceptance of the conditions, in particular their liability to repay as set out in the previous paragraph.

SCALE OF REIMBURSEMENT

The scale of reimbursement is reviewed periodically by the Strategic Enabler for People. At the point of discussing recruitment to a vacancy the amount to be paid in relocation expenses will be agreed (this is currently up to a maximum of £25,000 which is the standard amount across the Public Sector). This can be worked out in relation to the post and pay band/role but must not exceed the maximum amount.

Reimbursement is made up as follows:

Category Maximum Entitlement

- (a) Legal fees (see (a) below) As required
- (b) Removal fees (see (b) below) As required
- (c) Incidental Expenses
- (d) Lodging/Renting Expenses
- (e) Travelling home or partner/family visits As required

RELOCATION COSTS

Reimbursement or payments by the Service will be limited to the items shown below. Payment will not normally be made before the appointment is taken up.

(a) **Legal and Other Fees**

Estate agents' fees on sale or own advertising costs.

- Legal Fees: Sale
- Purchase
- Mortgage
- Stamp Duty on purchase
- Valuation Fees on mortgage obtained. The cost of any structural survey undertaken for the benefit of the employee will not be reimbursed.

Any claim for fees must be supported by accounts which can be paid direct to the firm or reimbursed to the employee, using the relocation expenses claim form.

(b) **Removal Costs**

- Removal of household effects
- Transit insurance
- Essential storage

Actual reasonable removal costs are paid but at least three quotations must be obtained and submitted (after the move) with a completed relocation expenses claim form, and invoice(s) or receipt(s) for the costs incurred. The amount paid will not exceed the lower quotation.

(c) **Incidental expenses**

Up to £1,500 (including VAT) may be reimbursed towards the incidental costs of moving house such as

- Alteration or replacement of carpets and curtains
- Reconnection charges
- Purchase/installation of household appliances

Claims must be submitted after the move, using the relocation expenses claim form with the necessary invoice or receipts.

Where an item is purchased to replace an item that was used in the old home, reimbursement will be limited to the net cost after deducting any proceeds from the sale of an item replaced.

(d) **Lodging and renting expenses**

Additionally, the distance from the original home may make daily travelling impracticable (e.g. if the average one way journey exceeds one hour) during the period between taking up the appointment and relocating. Where the employee is financially contributing to the costs of their existing home, the Service will pay, in approved cases, weekly expenses for lodging/rented accommodation up to £140 per week. This will be paid for a period not exceeding 9 months, and subject to the overall reimbursement not exceeding the limit of the Scheme. Payment may be made direct to the landlord on production of an invoice or reimbursed on production of a receipt. All claims should be made on a relocation expenses claim form.

(e) **Travel**

In approved cases, an employee living away from home during the week, whilst awaiting removal, may claim the 2nd class return rail fare home each weekend for a maximum period of 9 months. If the employee has a leased car, and uses the car for the home journey, the cheapest of 2nd class rail fare or leased car mileage rate should be claimed.

Claims must be submitted using the relocation expenses claim form.

All rail fares referred to in relation to relocation expenses are subject to the shortest route.

Note: Up to the first £8000 of expenses claimed is tax free, however anything over that amount will be subject to tax which will be deducted from the employees monthly salary. The Payroll Team will also inform HMRC how much has been paid in expenses to the employee at the end of each financial year.