

**REPORT OF THE NORTH YORKSHIRE POLICE, FIRE
AND CRIME PANEL**

TO THE NORTH YORKSHIRE POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

**CONFIRMATION HEARING FOR
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, NY FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

1. On 16 May 2022, the Panel received formal notification from the North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner of the proposed appointment to the role of Chief Fire Officer for North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service.
2. This report describes the recommendations of the North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel (hereafter referred to as “the Panel”) in respect of the proposed appointment of Mr Jonathan Dyson to the role of Chief Fire Officer (hereafter referred to as “the CFO”), and is submitted to Zoë Metcalfe, the North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (“the Commissioner”) in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 6 of the The Fire and Rescue Authority (Police and Crime Commissioner) (Application of Local Policing Provisions, Inspection, Powers to Trade and Consequential Amendments) Order 2017 (“the Order”).
3. The report recommends that Mr Jonathan Dyson should be appointed to the role of CFO to the North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service.
4. The Panel would like to thank Mr Dyson for his attendance at the confirmation hearing on Wednesday, 25 May 2022.

NORTH YORKSHIRE POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME PANEL

5. The Membership of the Panel for the Confirmation Hearing was as follows:

Hambleton District Council	Cllr Peter Wilkinson
Harrogate Borough Council	Cllr Michael Chambers MBE
North Yorkshire County Council	Cllr Carl Les
Selby District Council	Cllr Tim Grogan
City of York Council	Cllr Darryl Smalley
Fraser Forsyth	Community Co-opted

Also in attendance at the meeting were the following:

Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner – Zoë Metcalfe (the Commissioner); Simon Dennis (Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer) and Caroline Blackburn (Interim Asst Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer),

POWERS OF THE NORTH YORKSHIRE POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME PANEL

6. In accordance with paragraph 6 of the Order, the Panel is enabled to:

- review the proposed appointment of a Chief Fire Officer (including that on an interim basis), by holding a Confirmation Hearing within three weeks of notification being given (a 'confirmation hearing' is a meeting of the Panel, held in public, at which the candidate is requested to appear for the purpose of answering questions relating to the appointment);
- make a report to the Commissioner on the proposed senior appointment;
- include a recommendation to the Commissioner as to whether or not the candidate should be appointed; and
- publish the report to the Commissioner made under this paragraph.

7. The Panel is also able to exercise a power of veto on the proposed appointment if two-thirds of the total Panel membership agree this.

8. Under the guidance provided by the LGA, Panels are required to review the proposed appointment, forming an assessment of whether the candidate meets the minimum standards expected in respect of both professional competence and personal independence. The Panel are cognisant that the Commissioner is the employing authority for a Chief Fire Officer and that there is no requirement for this postholder to retain operational independence from the Commissioner in the way that there is for say a Chief Constable. However, the Panel still needs to be satisfied that the CFO has the ability to advise the Commissioner effectively and to understand the need to respond constructively in situations when he might appear before the Panel alongside the Commissioner to address Members' questions on operational matters.

9. This review was therefore done through scrutiny of the supporting documents provided by the Commissioner and the candidate, in addition to asking questions of the candidate relating to the two general principles of professional competence and personal independence.

10. Under the powers enabled by the Order, the Commissioner may accept or reject the Panel's recommendation as to whether or not the candidate should be appointed. The Commissioner must also notify the Panel of the decision whether to accept or reject the recommendation.

CONFIRMATION HEARING

11. The Confirmation Hearing was held on 25 May 2022 at County Hall, Northallerton.

12. Drawing on the submission provided by the Commissioner and Mr Dyson's own personal statement, the Panel asked Mr Dyson a series of questions to assist them in establishing whether he met the minimum standards for the role relating to professional competence and personal independence.

13. The Panel asked Mr Dyson about the key priorities and challenges for the service over the next twelve months. Mr Dyson outlined that his vision is to deliver sustainability, transformation and inclusion; all of which he felt are linked. Mr Dyson referred to educating staff further around identifying vulnerabilities and understanding difference in a way which enables them to not only better serve the community but also to enable the service to be more attractive to a more diverse workforce. Mr Dyson felt that a collegiate, collaborative approach will be needed to help transform the service.
14. The Panel were keen to understand Mr Dyson's plans for tackling the need for urgent improvements to the fire estate in view of such a challenging budget position. Mr Dyson referred to the opportunities available to make efficiencies through the Enable programme and the need to drive forward collaborative opportunities with the police.
15. In relation to exercising independence of judgment, Mr Dyson provided examples of where he has given constructive challenge to senior leaders where there was disagreement on operational planning and also where he has resisted change for change's sake; where the impact derived would have been minimal while alienating a number of the workforce.
16. The Panel were also keen to understand Mr Dyson's personal values as a leader and his ambitions for making the service more diverse. Mr Dyson outlined his leadership style as being ethical and values-driven, with a strong advocacy for diversity and continued development. Mr Dyson highlighted that he feels greater education is needed within the workforce to ensure that the service can better identify issues surrounding someone's mental health, lifestyle and aspects that may lead to vulnerability as this will in turn enable them to better assess risk and better serve the community. He acknowledge the need to tackle internal biases and that this will in turn attract and retain a more diverse workforce.
17. The Panel welcomed Mr Dyson's outward-looking, collaborative vision and the focus given to diversity and inclusion as part of the service's ongoing transformation. Further to reviewing the combination of written and verbal evidence put before them prior to and at the Hearing, the Panel felt satisfied that Mr Dyson fully meets the required standard of professional competence and personal independence to be able to perform the role of Chief Fire Officer.

RECOMMENDATION

18. On the basis of the information provided by the Commissioner and Mr Dyson and the discussions held in the Confirmation Hearing, the Panel is delighted to endorse its recommendation of the appointment of Mr Jonathan Dyson to the role of Chief Fire Officer to the North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service.

Cllr Carl Les
CHAIRMAN

26 May 2022