



# Cheshire

## Fire & Rescue Service

### GUIDANCE NOTE FOR APPLICANTS

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

#### Our commitment to you is:

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

#### BEFORE COMPLETING YOUR APPLICATION:

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

You may submit either a typed or a handwritten application. If you hand write your application, please ensure that your handwriting is clearly legible.

**Please ensure that your supporting statement is no more than 1,000 words. Anything over this will be discarded and not marked against the sifting criteria.**

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

For example, if one of the requirements on the person specification is *'Excellent attention to detail'*.

**A poor answer would be** – *'I have excellent attention to detail.'*

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

You can see that the poor answer does not give us enough information, it is purely a statement; however, the good answer gives more information to clearly demonstrate that the person has experience of working with attention to detail.

When you have completed the supporting statement, you must make sure that you submit it and your CV to the HR Resourcing Team prior to the closing time and date.

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

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

Please ensure that you include a contact phone number and email address. It is important that you complete the **Equal Opportunities** section of the application as this helps us to monitor our recruitment process. You will also need to complete the declaration form.

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

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

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

If you are successful at interview and offered a contract of employment with Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service, we will conduct right to work checks and we will require copies of your original certificates for the educational qualifications you have declared on your application.

## **DATA PROTECTION ACT 2018 (DPA)**

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

The information you provide will be held by Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service for the purposes outlined above and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and other associated data protection legislation as well as our and duties under the Equality Act 2010. We will use the information collected from you to report on the composition of applicants. Your information will be used to form statistics and reports that are high level and will not identify you or any other individual.

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

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

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO RECEIVING YOUR APPLICATION.**