

Appointment of Director of Communications and Engagement

Report to:

London Fire Commissioner

Date:**Report by:**

Cliff Morton, Interim Chief HR Officer

Report classification:

For decision

For publication

I agree the recommended decision below.



Andy Roe
London Fire Commissioner

**This decision was remotely
Date signed on 28 August 2024**

PART ONE

Non-confidential facts and advice to the decision-maker

Executive Summary

This report recommends a permanent appointment to the role of Director of Communications and Engagement.

Recommended decision

That the London Fire Commissioner appoints Janine Mantle as the Director of Communications and Engagement.

1 Introduction and background

- 1.1 Following the departure of the Director of Communications in January 2024, recruitment for a permanent replacement began in April 2024 with the job title being amended to Director of Communications and Engagement to represent the full scope of the role. Sanderson King undertook the executive search for the permanent position.
- 1.2 1,045 applications for the vacancy were received and reviewed with four candidates being interviewed by the London Fire Commissioner (LFC), the interim Assistant of Director of Communications and Engagement, Director of Communications & Corporate Affairs at Transport for London and the Executive Director, Resources and Business Improvement at the Greater London Authority. Candidates also took part in a stakeholder panel made up of Directors, colleagues in the Communications directorate and a representative from LFB's Community Forum. In addition, they completed an equality, diversity and inclusion exercise.

2 Recommendation from the panel

- 2.1 The panel's recommendation is that Janine Mantle is appointed as Director of Communications and Engagement.

3 Objectives and expected outcomes

- 3.1 The appointment of a new Director of Communications and Engagement will provide the LFC with permanent and stable leadership of the communications and engagement function and support the LFC to deliver its strategic objectives and manage the wide-ranging communications and engagement challenges

4 Equality comments

- 4.1 The LFC and the Deputy Mayor for Fire are required to have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) when taking decisions. This in broad terms involves understanding the potential impact of policy and decisions on different people, taking this into account and then evidencing how decisions were reached.

- 4.2** It is important to note that consideration of the Public Sector Equality Duty is not a one-off task. The duty must be fulfilled before taking a decision, at the time of taking a decision, and after the decision has been taken.
- 4.3** The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership (but only in respect of the requirements to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination), race (ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality), religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex, and sexual orientation.
- 4.4** The Public Sector Equality Duty requires decision-takers in the exercise of all their functions, to have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct.
 - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
 - foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 4.5** Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic where those disadvantages are connected to that characteristic.
 - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it.
 - encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- 4.6** The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.
- 4.7** Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
- tackle prejudice
 - promote understanding.
- 4.8** Sanderson King were asked to identify candidates from diverse backgrounds using targeted networks and online advertising.
- 4.9** 1,045 candidates applied with all applicants submitting their diversity data. 57% declared themselves as male and 43% declared themselves as female. 84% of the candidates stated their ethnic group was white, with 16% candidates stating to be from an ethnic minority. Out of the four candidates that progressed to final interview, one was female, no candidates stated that they were from an ethnic minority.
- 4.10** There is no evidence of the process having any adverse impact on those applicants with a protected characteristic.

5 Workforce comments

5.1 The respective representative bodies have been informed of the outcome of the recruitment process.

6 Sustainability comments

6.1 There are no sustainability comments.

7 Procurement comments

7.1 The sourcing process and contract concluded with Sanderson King for the provision of specialist executive search services for this appointment was conducted compliantly in accordance with the Brigade's relevant standing orders/governance.

8 Communications comments

8.1 The appointment of the candidate will be communicated to the communications and engagement directorate, and then to all staff.

9 Financial comments

9.1 This report seeks approval for the appointment of the Director of Communications. This post is part of the establishment in Communications Directorate and the cost will be met from the existing directorate budget. The creation of the post was approved in the LFC decision LFC-0627, and appointment is to be made at the grade confirmed in that report at TMG A*.

10 Legal comments

10.1 Section 1 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 states that the London Fire Commissioner is the fire and rescue authority for Greater London. Section 327A (5) of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 requires the Commissioner to secure that the London Fire and Rescue Service is efficient and effective. This means the personnel, services and equipment secured by the London Fire Commissioner for the purposes of carrying out the Commissioner's functions.

10.2 In accordance with Section 5A Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (FRSA 2004), the London Fire Commissioner, being a 'relevant authority', may do 'anything it considers appropriate for the purposes of the carrying out of any of its functions'. This is a matter coming within that power.

10.3 The appointment of an individual to a Director role as a permanent member of staff may amount to a decision under paragraph 3.1 c of the Mayoral Directions dated 2018 (matters that can reasonably be considered as novel, contentious or repercussive) and in such circumstances the Deputy Mayor for Fire should be consulted. In this instance it was agreed by the Deputy Mayor that senior officer of the GLA be a member of the decision making panel.

List of appendices

Appendix	Title	Open or confidential*
1	None	

Part two confidentiality

Only the facts or advice considered to be exempt from disclosure under the FOI Act should be in the separate Part Two form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a Part Two form: No