



NFCC

National Fire
Chiefs Council

Election of the Chair of the National Fire Chiefs Council

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Message from Nick Ross, Independent Chair of Trustees

The NFCC is unquestionably growing in importance. The transition from CFOA is behind us and the NFCC has become the standard-setter in fire and rescue with the NFCC Chair now also the government's principal adviser on fire and rescue. And whilst the initial shock of Grenfell may have lessened somewhat, the tragedy and its consequences are still very much with us and it has undoubtedly helped to emphasise the strategic importance of fire prevention in public policy, the need for constant research and re-evaluation and the importance of investing in fire and rescue services. We have another window of opportunity to displace complacency and influence change when the final report of the inquiry is published later this year. But we should be under no illusion that NFCC leadership is a major task. Grenfell revealed shortcomings, including in the professional response to the disaster. The fire and rescue service is rightly under intense scrutiny for failings in culture alongside instances of racism, misogyny and bullying. We urgently need improvements in culture and inclusion across services and a re-building of trust and confidence. We also want to build more bridges with the unions. Whoever heads the NFCC has the challenging task of convincing an incoming government of the importance of fire and rescue. Without sensitive leadership, Home Office myopia and separatist sentiments in the devolved nations could undermine the UK-wide shared professionalism and standards. The UK economic outlook is currently poor and we know that local authorities are cash-strapped with the prospect of frozen or reduced budgets for fire and rescue. The list of challenges is significant.

Yet the opportunities are significant and equally conspicuous. The UK fire and rescue services have a justifiably proud history with some of the best response times, most professional training and highest standards in the world, and the NFCC is reaching out to build alliances and raise Britain's status across the globe. The NFCC's commercial arm has grand ambitions and has the makings of a big success story. And while the future of the proposed College of Fire and Rescue has yet to be decided, there is every opportunity for the NFCC to establish solid partnerships and to do much of this work ourselves. The NFCC is a charity. Its professionalism is key but its purposes are entirely in the public interest. This role requires true leadership: the ability to think radically and yet act carefully, be persuasive and yet be consensual.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees I thank you for your interest and very much look forward to working closely with the successful individual.

Nick Ross,
Chair of the Board of Trustees

National Fire Chiefs Council

Message to NFCC Members

To be the NFCC Chair has been an honour and privilege – to represent the fire and rescue service that I have been part of for so long has been a highlight of my career.

The fire and rescue service will always face new challenges, in doing so I believe the NFCC has built on our success through our collective strength of voice and action. We are better placed than ever to support our membership as they deal with the emerging challenges and opportunity.

We have worked hard to embed a clear structure that supports the aspirations of a strong UK-wide Council and our charitable aims through our Trustees. Our internal leadership and functions have now been clearly established under Susannah Hancock, as our Chief Executive Officer. This enables the NFCC Chair to have a much greater focus on areas that directly support the profession and to maintain and build on the strong relationships we have with a wide range of UK and overseas partners. This is all with the confidence the NFCC team is well led and managed to support you in this work. The staff team has grown and developed into an effective and efficient team that runs the charity to create a sustainable NFCC offering good value to our members.

The next NFCC Chair is in a great position to build on these strengths and continue to support fire and rescue services to improve in areas such as culture and inclusion, funding, safeguarding, building safety, operational guidance and organisational learning, Grenfell Tower and Manchester Arena inquiry recommendations and emerging risks such as cyber security, energy technology and climate change.

This NFCC Chair role has provided me with the opportunity to experience the fire and rescue service and wider UK and international fire sector from a very broad and different perspective to having been a Chief Fire Officer – and it is a role I would recommend to colleagues. I am immensely proud of our fire and rescue services, all of those who work within them and the role NFCC plays in leading and supporting our profession. Thank you to all of you who engage and support our work; without you, our members, there is no NFCC.

Mark Hardingham, NFCC Chair

Context

The role of the NFCC Chair was established in 2017 when the National Fire Chiefs Council was first formed. The role is part of the structure of the organisation that is detailed within the charity's governance document – [NFCC Articles of Association](#).

The role is ultimately accountable to the [Board of Trustees](#) for the fulfilment of the role. It is the Board of Trustees who are responsible for determining the role and also for establishing the framework for the election of the NFCC Chair. The role is also accountable to NFCC Council and to the wider membership.

The role has now been in existence for over 5 years with two different post holders who will have both served the full 2 years + 2 years optional extension tenure.

The NFCC is a membership organisation and the recruitment of the role of Chair includes an election by the individual membership. This is an important feature of ensuring that the Council and its Chair remain engaged with, and representative of, the sector beyond Chief Officers.

Recruitment process

Eligibility

Anyone who meets the person specification within the job description is eligible to seek nomination and appointment to the role. Relevant experience must be within the last two years.

All serving Chief Fire Officers / CEOs of FRSs and Chief Fire Officers /CEOs who retired from service within the last two years.

Nominations

Nominations will need to be supported by a minimum of five Individual Members three of which should be from Chief Fire Officers and nominated candidates will be expected to provide:

- A short CV
- A candidate statement of no more than 1000 words covering:
 - A description of your experience relevant to the role of NFCC Chair
 - An outline of your future vision for the NFCC and UK Fire and Rescue Services
 - A summary of your priorities for the NFCC for 2025 – 2029.

This information will be published. The names of the supporting Individual Members will also be published.

National Fire Chiefs Council

NFCC Chair 2025 recruitment pack

Please note that completed nomination forms and candidate's statements (as specified above) must be returned by no later than 1700 on 31st July 2024 to helen.nightingale@nfcc.org.uk.

Ballot

In the event of more than one nomination, there will be an election across of the NFCC Individual Members. This will be in the form of a ballot over a three-week period from 0900 on 2nd September 2024 – 1200 on 30th September 2024. The ballot will be administered by an independent third-party. Balloting details will be sent directly to Individual Members.

The ballot result will be announced the week commencing 7th October 2024.

Single nomination

In the event of a single nomination being received, the candidate statement will be shared with all members for information for a one week period. As no election would be required, the Board of Trustees would receive the nomination for appointment.

Appointment

It is envisaged that the full-time role would commence on 1 April 2025. There may be opportunity for handover period where the incoming chair can shadow the current chair – this will be discussed with the successful candidate as part of the appointment process.

If you would like to discuss the role or any associated arrangements in complete confidence, you can contact Mark Hardingham, NFCC Chair, on 07827 281979 or Susannah Hancock, NFCC Chief Executive Officer, on 07815 028847.

Role of the NFCC Chair

The job description for the role of the NFCC Chair is attached at Appendix A. The role will:

- Be full-time
- Be paid at the advertised salary with an annual inflationary uplift aligned to the NFCC pay policy. Other terms and conditions will be aligned to Gold Book.
- Attend the NFCC Board of Trustees meetings as an advisor but is not a trustee
- Be a member of the NFCC Senior Leadership Team, working alongside the NFCC CEO and wider SLT members.
- Need to spend a significant amount of time in travelling. This is expected to be two to three days per week, often including meetings in London, and will include UK-wide and international travel.
- Be a two-year appointment with a potential additional two year extension.

The NFCC Chair will be supported by two vice-chairs nominated by the NFCC Chair and ratified by the Council. These will be unpaid, part time roles to support and advise the NFCC Chair in their work and which can also provide cover, for example, in the event of absences.

Heads of Terms – Employment of the NFCC Chair

Please note: There may be some flexibility to reflect individuals' circumstances.

Employment arrangements

The Chair will be employed by the NFCC and must have the right to work in the UK.

Some flexibility may be possible at the beginning of the tenure i.e. short, initial period of secondment. Where this is the case, the new Chair will retain no operational or line management responsibility within their home FRA.

The Chair will be subject to an NFCC employment contract and will be able to access the NFCC pension scheme (NEST). The NFCC is not part of the Fire Fighter pension scheme.

Candidates are encouraged to discuss their individual potential arrangements with the NFCC team ahead of the nomination period.

Salary

Salary is set by the NFCC based on a scale and includes annual inflationary uplifts.

Contract period

Initially fixed-term for two years. This may be extended by mutual agreement, and subject to satisfactory performance, by two years.

Changes during the contract period

It is conceivable that the Chair might, if they had not been elected to the Chair, have expected to retire during the period of the contract of employment. In the position of Chair, this would raise employment considerations, including abatement and taxation implications. These would need to be indicated and resolved prior to election.

Notice

Six months by either party.

Performance

The performance of the NFCC Chair will be managed by the NFCC Performance Committee. There is no performance related pay.

Location

The role-holder will be a 'homeworker', however they will be required to spend the necessary time in other locations across the UK, predominantly London, with some international travel. Estimated 3 days a week.

Travel and expenses

Reasonable travel expenses including overnight accommodation will be paid and in line with policies established by the Trustees. Equipment including mobile telephone and a laptop will be provided by NFCC.