



Shire of Northam
Heritage, Commerce and Lifestyle

Shire of Northam

Minutes

Bush Fire Advisory Committee

12 November 2019

UNCONFIRMED

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1. DECLARATION OF OPENING

The Presiding Member, Cr T M Little declared the meeting open at 5:35pm.

2. ATTENDANCE

Voting Committee:

Councillor – Shire of Northam	Terry Little
Deputy Bush Fire Control Officer	Mathew Macqueen
Inkpen Bush Fire Brigade	Nic Dewar
Clackline Muresk Bush Fire Brigade	Blair Wilding
Bakers Hill Bush Fire Brigade	Steve Gray
Grass Valley Bush Fire Brigade	Sam Moss arrived at 5:37pm
	Rob Herzer
Irishtown Bush Fire Brigade	Brett Smith
Jennapullin Bush Fire Brigade	Murray McGregor
Northam Central Bush Fire Brigade	Jeffrey Roberts
Wundowie Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service	Greg Montgomery
Northam Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service	

Non Voting

District Officer Northam	Darrel Krammer
Department of Parks and Wildlife (Wheatbelt)	Graeme Keals

Staff:

Executive Manager Development Services	Chadd Hunt
Community Emergency Service Manager	Brendon Rutter
Executive Assistant - CEO	Alysha McCall

Gallery:

Grass Valley Bush Fire Brigade	Chris Marris
Clackline Muresk Bush Fire Brigade	Mathew Letch
Clackline Muresk Bush Fire Brigade	Joe Marasco
Clackline Muresk Bush Fire Brigade	Bob Stockman
Inkpen Bush Fire Brigade	Ben Dewar
Public	One unknown

2.1 APOLOGIES

Department of Parks and Wildlife (Perth Hills)	Michael Pasotti
Deputy Bush Fire Control Officer	Simon Peters

2.2 APPROVED LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Cr C P Della has been granted leave of absence from 11 November 2019 to 30 November 2019 (inclusive).

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Nil.

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Mr Sam Moss entered the meeting at 5:37pm.

4.1 COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 10 SEPTEMBER 2019

RECOMMENDATION / COMMITTEE DECISION

Minute No: BFAC.236

Moved: Mr Nic Dewar

Seconded: Mr Murray McGregor

That the minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory meeting held 10 September 2019 be confirmed as a true and correct record of that meeting.

CARRIED 11/0

Clarification was sought in relation to the decision in the minutes relating to contacting the Rural Fire Division (RFD) to request an update on progress of the RFD implementation, advice on how the RFD will be structured and where the Bush Fire Brigades will sit in that structure, a timeframe of when this is likely to occur and a response by 31st October 2019 to enable the response to be tabled at the November pre-season BFAC. The Community Emergency Services Manager advised that staff have not yet received a response and will follow this up.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

5.1 COMMUNITY EMERGENCY SERVICES MANAGER REPORT

Address:	N/A
Owner:	N/A
Applicant:	N/A
File Reference:	5.1.3.1
Reporting Officer:	Brendon Rutter, Community Emergency Services Manager
Responsible Officer:	Chadd Hunt, Executive Manager Development Services
Officer Declaration of Interest:	Nil
Voting Requirement:	Simple Majority
Press release to be issued:	No

BRIEF

For the Committee to receive and note the update provided by the Community Emergency Services Manager.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Open BFAC Decisions.

A. BACKGROUND / DETAILS

N/A.

B. CONSIDERATIONS

B.1 Strategic Community / Corporate Business Plan

Theme Area 3: Safety and Security

Outcome 3.1: Shire of Northam residents are able to pursue the fullest life possible without fear of or hindrance from crime and disorder.

B.2 Financial / Resource Implications

Nil.

B.3 Legislative Compliance

Nil.

B.4 Policy Implications

Nil.

B.5 Stake Holder Engagement / Consultation

Nil.

B.6 Risk Implications

Risk Category	Description	Rating (consequence x likelihood)	Mitigation Action
Financial	N/A	N/A	N/A
Health & Safety	N/A	N/A	N/A
Reputation	N/A	N/A	N/A
Service Interruption	N/A	N/A	N/A
Compliance	N/A	N/A	N/A
Property	N/A	N/A	N/A
Environment	N/A	N/A	N/A

C. OFFICER'S COMMENT

2019/2020 Bush Fire Season

The season is upon us and although it is a relatively calm restricted period, we are 4-5 weeks ahead of the 5yr average in regards to the curing rates, and fuel loads.

The experts are predicting a longer season with higher rates of extreme fire weather which we are already seeing out in the Eastern Goldfields with multiple school closures in the past few weeks due to the forecast 'Catastrophic' FDR.

R2R Reallocation

The first stage of the outcomes generated through the R2R process have been completed. All appliances that formed part of the re-allocation have now been completed, with all signage, and radio programming completed and ready for the coming season.

Officers appreciate the assistance given from the brigades throughout this process, it was a big undertaking and one which was being watched by surrounding areas as they are to embark on a similar process.

Thank you to all brigades' members & in particular the Captains for your assistance whilst the project was finalised.

Annual Servicing

The contract for the annual servicing has been awarded, and the annual servicing of the truck (Cab Chassis only) is almost complete, all operational systems including PTO's have been serviced by Frontline Fire & Rescue services which included the annual test and tagging of all lay flats hoses.

Each brigade had hoses that had failed the test and as such any remedial work has been completed so all systems are now certified to manufacturer specifications.

This process highlighted a significant amount of systems & equipment that were not up to standard and as a result a further \$25,000 has been spent on the fleet to ensure that all systems are operating as required, including the rebuilding of 15 hose reel branches, pump panel repairs and the professional recalibration of all tank vision gauges to prevent appliances from suffering from airlock and losing prime due to inaccurate water level gauges.

Bakers Hill Fire Station

The Bakers Hill Fire Station location has been decided, and an agreement has been reached with the Bakers Hill Golf Club for the apportionment of a small section of the reserve with access onto Tames Rd to allow this critically important facility to be constructed,

The tender documents are now being prepared and a report will be prepared for Council to award the tender contract in due course. Expected completion at this stage is mid 2020.

Inaugural Bush Fire Forum

The Bush Fire Forum is being held this year at the Recreation Centre on the 29th November 2019. I'm hoping to have a presentation via the State Operations Centre Meteorologist (SOCMET) to give a brief overview of the seasonal forecast for the predicted fire weather, that is contextualised to this area.

There will also be a presentation from the DFES Wellness Branch to ensure all members are aware of what services are available to all registered members and their families.

I've invited the WA Police Arson Squad along also to give a brief talk about how to identify the point of origin (POO) of a fire and how to identify and protect the area of ignition, to preserve any potential evidence that may be onsite. I'll confirm closer to the date as the availability of the Arson Squad detectives will depend on operational requirements.

Recruitment

DFES have launched the recruitment campaign for all volunteer emergency services. Research has shown that the frontline volunteering is relatively stable

for the past 10 years, however the bush fire service is declining in outer regions as there is a shift of the population base moving closer to the outer metro regions such as the Avon Arc, this means that the pool of potential volunteers is slowly increasing however more work needs to be done on recruiting these people to all services.

Staff have been involved in multiple conversations regarding a social media presence specifically for volunteer emergency services within the Shire of Northam, however a focus on a collaborative, coordinated & centralised approach seems to be the preferred model, rather than encouraging each brigade to run their own social media presence.

Feedback will be sought from tonight's meeting to develop a strategy to raise the social media presence of all volunteer services however specifically the Volunteer Bush Fire Service within the Shire of Northam.

Additional to this, DFES has produced some printed material such as business cards that can be placed in each appliance that can be handed out to prospective members with the local contact details written on it.

Automatic Electronic Defibrillator

At the 2019 WAFES conference the DFES Commissioner made the announcement that after campaigning by WALGA and the AVBFB, AED devices are now an eligible item to be supplied and supported through the LGGS funding scheme. DFES will be going out to the open market and once an approved type has been chosen, the purchase of the AED's will be coordinated by DFES who will then supply to each LGGS supported appliance with a device through the regional office. Any additional training required for members is also supplied at the time of delivery as required.

Staff are aware of brigades that have purchased their own devices over the years through fundraising activities. These will be replaced by the approved type on each appliance as they become available.

Brigades will then make a decision on what they would like to do with their old AED's, staff encourage brigades to discuss at a brigade meeting to determine the next step, such as disposal to another deserving community group etc.

There is a process for the disposal of any brigade equipment, staff are happy to provide a disposal form to the brigade that needs to be authorised by the CEO prior to the disposal being finalised.

PPC

All outstanding PPC will arrive in the coming weeks and will be distributed to brigades in due course. Staff have approved the supply of the navy proban cargo pants to replace the orange over pants, as well as the supply of

embroidered polo shirts as part of the standard uniform issue. Please note that these are official uniforms and cannot be altered or personalised, this is to ensure consistency and provide for a uniformed appearance at public events etc.

Staff are still negotiating with the LGGS committee for the provision of the blue dress shirt to be included as part of the standard issue uniform, details will be provided as this discussion progresses.

Volunteer Hub

DFES has completely revamped the Volunteer Portal and with its name change to Volunteer Hub comes with it an entirely new look & feel for the hub, with ease of access to information about training, incident attendance activity, DFES circulars and has resulted in information being easier to obtain.

Staff encourage all members to log in and review to see the completely new user experience that has been developed as a direct result of extensive collaboration with end users, the volunteers.

E-academy 2.0

As part of the changes to the volunteer suite, E-academy is also undergoing an extensive transformation, again as a direct result of extensive consultation with volunteers from all services.

The new look and feel is built more like a website, and provided ease of access to important information such as training records, including archived/superseded training competencies.

Each member will be able to edit and update personal information such as medical and dietary requirements which is important information for the IMT to have access to on the fire ground, once this information is brought into the DFES Incident Resource Management System, things like catering to dietary requirements will be made a lot easier.

The official launch of E-academy 2.0 is yet to be confirmed, but a tentative release date is 1st January 2020, staff will keep members informed of progress as information comes to hand.

Bush Fire Service Training Program

The 20129 WAFES Conference also seen the launch of the new Bush Fire Service Training Program, this has been extensively workshopped with representatives from the Association of Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades (AVBFB) and has resulted in a streamlined approach to training, with a clearly defined path to the various positions filled by our frontline firefighters. A workshop was held in October with all training officers to go over the program, so please speak to

your training officer for more information. A copy of the program will be sent with this agenda.

RECOMMENDATION / COMMITTEE DECISION

Minute No: BFAC.237

Moved: Mr Murray McGregor

Seconded: Mr Mathew Macqueen

That Council:

- 1. Note the Community Emergency Services Manager Report as provided.**
- 2. Endorse the proposed location of the new Bakers Hill Fire Brigade Shed on a portion of Reserve 4200 as provided in Attachment 2 of this report.**

CARRIED 11/0

Clarification was sought in relation to the disposal of brigade equipment and why the Shire would be involved if this was purchased by the brigade. The Executive Manager Development Services advised that if it is not the property of the Shire of Northam this disposal process referenced in the report does not apply.

Discussion was held around social media for the Shire of Northam Bush Fire Brigades. Some comments were made in relation to this being a useful tool however there would need to be clear guidelines on what can be placed on this. Discussion was around having one social media account for Shire Bush Fire Brigades as opposed to an individual account for all brigades.

Clarification was sought in relation to whether the Bush Fire Forum is proceeding. The Community Emergency Services Manager advised that invited will be sent out by the end of the week.

Discussion was held around the new fire shed location for Bakers Hill Bush Fire Brigade. Mr Steve Gray advised that the size of the site allocated limits the brigade to expand in the future and the brigade wished to have their concerns noted. The Community Emergency Services Manager advised that there is a clearing process to go through process which can be undertaken when and if this is required. It was also raised that there is no parking on the road and there is limited parking on the site. The Community Emergency Services Manager advised that he will raise the concerns with the Shire's Engineering Services department. Clarification was sought in relation to the size difference with the current site. The Community Emergency Services Manager advised that the site is smaller than the current site however the structure is larger.

Attachment 1

Date	Motion No	Item No	Subject	Motion	Action By	Comment	Status
17-Jul-19	C.3713	11.3	BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 9 JULY 2019	<p>That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Note the Chief Bushfire Control Officer Report as provided. Note the Community Emergency Services Manager Report as provided. Endorse the Resource to Risk document and approve the delivery of the following action items to deliver on the proposed outcomes: Endorse the reallocation of current appliances across brigades as follows and identified in Section 5 of this document, commencing in the 2019/2020 bush fire season: <p>Brigade Inkpen BFB LT - Formerly Irishtown LT/2 2.4R Wundowie BFB LT Formerly Irishtown LT/1 Bakers Hill BFB LT 2.4U Clackline BFB LT 2.4R Northam Central BFB New Brigade 2.4R Formerly Irishtown 2.4R Irishtown BFB 1.4B Formerly Inkpen 1.4B Southern Brook BFB 1.4B Grass Valley BFB 1.4B Formerly Clackline 1.4B 4.4B</p>	CESM	<p>Update 06/09/2019</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> No action required. No action required. No action required. Reallocation underway with training being offered for the re-allocated appliances. To be determined/finalised. Not yet complete. No action required. Complete. Complete. Complete. To be undertaken periodically as required. Complete. To be undertaken periodically as required. Discussion to be held at September BFAC in relation to the positions. No action required. <p>Meetings to be scheduled as determined.</p>	Open

Date	Motion No	Item No	Subject	Motion	Action By	Comment	Status
				<p>5. Endorse the creation of the Northam Central BFB to be housed in a location as approved by the Chief Executive Officer.</p> <p>6. Endorse the creation of an Emergency Services Cadet Unit.</p> <p>7. Appoints the following Fire Control Officers for the 2019/20 Season in accordance with the criteria set in section 5 of the Shire of Northam Bush Fire Manual:</p> <p>Inkpen - Nic Dewar. - Sim Kuiper - (Weather Officer Only)</p> <p>Wundowie BFB - TBA – Brigade AGM 20/07/2019</p> <p>Bakers Hill - Simon Peters. * Nominations excluding Simon Peters are to be referred back to the brigade and BFAC for further consideration.</p> <p>Clackline / Muresk - Mathew MacQueen. - Matthew Letch</p> <p>Irishtown - Robert Herzer. - Murray McGregor - (Further training required before formal designation of BFCO)</p> <p>Jennapullin - Aaron Smith – (Weather Officer Only)</p>			

Date	Motion No	Item No	Subject	Motion	Action By	Comment	Status
				<p>Grass Valley</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Christopher Marris - Paul Reynolds - (Further training required before formal designation of BFCO) - Philip Lloyd – Weather Officer + (Further training required before formal designation of BFCO) <p>Southern Brook</p> <p>Paul Antonio – (Further training required before formal designation of BFCO)</p> <p>Wundowie VFRS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jeffery Roberts (Further training required before active status) <p>Northam VFRS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greg Montgomery <p>Shire of Northam</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brendon Rutter. - Kellee Walters (Administrative Only) - Chris Turkich (Administrative Only) <p>8. Allocate honorarium payments to the positions of the Volunteer Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (CBFCO) & Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (DCBFCO's) of up to \$10,000 and \$1,500 respectively.</p> <p>9. Incorporate the honorarium within the draft budget for a fixed total of \$13,000.</p> <p>10. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to pay the honorarium in equal monthly instalments in arrears to the relevant officer.</p>			

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Date	Motion No	Item No	Subject	Motion	Action By	Comment	Status
				<p>11. Review the honorarium payments annually to ensure the amount is reflective of the workload on these critical positions.</p> <p>12. Formally appoint the following qualified Bush Fire Control Officers to the position of Chief and Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chief Bush Fire Control Officer – Mathew Macqueen - Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer – Simon Peters <p>13. Schedule Bush Fire Advisory Committee meetings on the second Tuesday of March, June, September and November each year.</p>			
18-Sep-19	C.3759	11.1	BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 10 SEPTMEBER 2019	<p>That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the Community Emergency Services Manager Report as provided. 2. Note the Chief Bushfire Control Officer Report as provided. 3. Appoints Kristafer Brown as a Fire Control Officer for the 2019/20 Season in accordance with the criteria set in section 5 of the Shire of Northam Bush Fire Manual. 4. Contact the Rural Fire Division (RFD) to request: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. An update on progress of the RFD implementation; b. Advice on how the RFD will be structured and where the Bush Fire Brigades will sit in that structure; c. A timeframe of when this is likely to occur; d. A response by 31st October 2019 to enable the response to be tabled at the November pre-season BFAC. 5. Present the SOP to the Fire Control Officer meeting on 13 September 2019 and subsequent brigade meeting prior to being reconsidered by BFAC. 6. Refer the matter relating to the restricted burning date / creation of two zones to Fire Control Officer meeting on 13 September 2019 for further discussion. 	CESM	<p>Update: 03/10/2019</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Complete 4.ongoing 5. workshopped, draft SOP under development 6. Complete, unable to split district under Bush Fires Act 1954 7.ongoing 8.Complete 9. Currently in Bush Fires Manual 10. Protocols and procedures are in place, no change of operational capability 11.Ongoing, closes on Oct 7th will provide update once advertising closes 12. Complete 13.Complete 	Open

Date	Motion No	Item No	Subject	Motion	Action By	Comment	Status
				<p>7. Refer the following structure to the Bush Fire Brigades to endorse:</p> <p>a. Chief Bush Fire Control Officer position is to become a paid role under the Shire of Northam;</p> <p>b. Appointment of 2 Deputy Chief Bush Fire Officers; and</p> <p>c. 1 Senior FCO (deputy in training); and</p> <p>d. Honorarium stays in place for the x2 deputies</p> <p>8. Include an agenda item for 'General Business' to future BFAC meetings for discussion/general business.</p> <p>9. Develop a detailed and fully supported succession plan/s for the Chief and Deputy/s positions.</p> <p>10. Develop a plan on how Council will manage fires in the 2019/2020 season.</p> <p>11. Advertise for a Chief Bush Fire Control Officer for the 2019/20 bush fire season;</p> <p>12. Appoint Mathew Macqueen and Simon Peters as Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officers for the 2019/20 bush fire season; and</p> <p>13. Appoint Chris Marris as Senior Fire Control Officer for the 2019/20 bush fire season.</p>			

Attachment 2



5.2 APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF BUSHFIRE CONTROL OFFICER

Address:	N/A
Owner:	N/A
Applicant:	N/A
File Reference:	5.1.3.1
Reporting Officer:	Brendon Rutter, Community Emergency Services Manager
Responsible Officer:	Jason Whiteaker, Chief Executive Officer
Officer Declaration of Interest:	Nil.
Voting Requirement:	Simple Majority
Press release to be issued:	No

BRIEF

Upon appointment of the Fire Control Officer's for the 2019/20 fiscal year, Council is required to appoint a Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (CBFCO) and Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (DCBFCO).

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.

A. BACKGROUND / DETAILS

Mr Mathew Macqueen, was appointed as CBFCO by Council on the 9th July 2019, due to personal reasons Mr Macqueen tendered his resignation from the position on the 1st August 2019, vacating the position as of 1st October 2019.

At the BAFC meeting in September 2019, it was resolved to advertise for the position of CBFCO as no other nominations were received from the Brigades. It was also resolved and endorsed by Council to appoint Mathew McQueen and Simon Peters as Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (DCBFCO's) and Chris Marris as a Senior Bush Fire Control Officer.

The purpose of this report is to present the outcomes of the advertising and to recommend to BFAC and Council the appointment of a CBFCO for the 2019-20 period.

Section 38 (2C) of the Bush Fires Act 1954 requires Council to fill any vacancy of the CBFCO position within 1 month.

B. CONSIDERATIONS

B.1 Strategic Community / Corporate Business Plan

Theme Area 3: Safety and Security

Outcome 3.1: Shire of Northam residents are able to pursue the fullest life possible without fear of or hindrance from crime and disorder.

B.2 Financial / Resource Implications

Nil.

B.3 Legislative Compliance

Section 38 (2C) of the Bush Fires Act 1954 states as follows-

The local government shall fill any vacancy occurring in the office of Chief Bush Fire Control Officer or Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer within one month after the vacancy occurs and if the local government fails or neglects to do so within that time, the FES Commissioner may by notice in writing require the local government to appoint a person to the vacant office within one month after service on it of such notice.

B.4 Policy Implications

Nil.

B.5 Stake Holder Engagement / Consultation

The issue of appointing a CBFCO has been discussed at BFAC meetings and a recent Captains Meeting. In addition staff have been in contact with DFES staff to advise of the current process being undertaken.

B.6 Risk Implications

Risk Category	Description	Rating (consequence x likelihood)	Mitigation Action
Financial	Person appointed may have unexpected financial costs	Low(1)	Council has endorsed an honorarium of up to \$10,000 for the CBFCO position
Health & Safety	The health and safety of volunteer brigade members in an operational perspective	High (16)	The use of two experienced DCBFCO in major events
Reputation	Council must consider the all options to ensure the best outcome is delivered in line with community expectations.	High (12)	Council has endorsed the minimum training standards for the position of Chief Bush Fire Control Officer. Additional

			training and mentoring to be provided to any applicant that doesn't meet the criteria.
Service Interruption	N/A	N/A	N/A
Compliance	Council must appoint a CBFCO as per the obligations under s38 Bush Fires Act 1954 Council must consider potential for legal ramifications based on decision to appoint.	High(12)	Staff have provided options for Council to consider. Council has endorsed the minimum training standards for the position of Chief Bush Fire Control Officer.
Property	N/A	N/A	N/A
Environment	N/A	N/A	N/A

OFFICER'S COMMENT

As per BFAC resolution 235 Council advertised for the vacated position of Chief Bushfire Control Officer (CBFCO) position.

As a result of the advertisement, two applications were received from registered members of Shire of Northam Bush Fire Brigades. Both are currently appointed as Fire Control Officers for the Shire of Northam. One application was received after the nominated closing date however in general discussion with Brigade representatives this was agreed to be acceptable.

Each applicant will be assessed against the criteria of a Chief Bush Fire Control Officer as outlined in section 5.1B, also assessed against the minimum training standards as defined under section 5.1C of the Shire of Northam Bush Fires Manual.

Section 5.1C of the Bush Fires manual states the following:

5.1C Qualifications of Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

"Completion of the DFES training core modules and a minimum of 3 years as a BFCO and 5 years firefighting experience in the last 3 years preferably as an executive officer within the brigade.

Persons currently holding the CBFCO's position will have until 2025 to comply with the below training requirements. Any persons newly appointed must hold the below training certifications prior to appointment".

Completion of required courses are:

- AllMS Awareness
- Introduction to Fire Fighting
- Bush Fire Fighting
- Machine Supervision
- Structural Fire Fighting
- Advanced Bush Fire Fighting
- Crew Leader
- Ground Controller
- Sector Commander
- AllMS 4 or 2017
- Incident Controller Level 1
- Fire Control Officer (in the Last 5 Years)

In order to assist with the assessment process, interviews are to be held with both applicants with the assistance of Craig Stewart, CBFCO for the Shire of Toodyay to provide an independent perspective. There has been a delay in completing the second interview due to the availability of Mr Stewart. The purpose of the interviews is to gain an understanding of the applicants' ability to comply with Clause 51.B of the Bush Fire Manual- "Criteria of a Bush Fire Control Officer against the following criteria,

5.1B Criteria of a Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

- Knowledge of managing a volunteer organisation.
- Knowledge of all Fire Response Plans in the Shire
- Working Knowledge of the Local Emergency Management Arrangements
- Knowledge of the Bush Fires Act 1954 and Bush Fires Regulations 1954
- Knowledge of the State Emergency Management Policy No 4.8 (Traffic Management During Emergencies)
- Ability to attend further fire and emergency management training.
- Effective Interpersonal Skills.
- Good Written and Verbal Communication Skills.
- Leadership Skills.
- Management Skills.
- Experience in managing operations.
- Ability to perform under stressful conditions.
- Current appointment as Fire Control Officer.
- Experienced in firefighting operations within the Shire.
- Currently holds all of the preferred qualifications of the Fire Control Officer.

- *Be a member of the DOAC, BFAC and LEMC*

A confidential selection report will be prepared and forwarded to BFAC representatives as soon as available following the second interview. The selection report will detail the training and experience of each of the applicants and assessment against the above criteria.

Options

In looking at options for the CBFCO position there are several that available to BFAC and Council. It is clear that the Shire of Northam is required to have a CBFCO – there are however several ways that this can be achieved.

Option 1 – Appointment of existing FCO to the position

This is the preferred option from staff's perspective, provided that there is sufficient support for the incumbent from all parties including, Brigades, existing Fire Control Officers, DFES, Council and staff. Historically the CBFCO position has been a volunteer member of the Bush Fire Brigades and staff are of the opinion that this should continue in the short to medium term.

Option 2- Not appoint anyone

Failure of the local government to appoint a CBFCO would trigger a response from the DFES commissioner, as outlined by the below excerpt from Section 38 (2C) & (2D) of the Bush Fires Act 1954

Section 38 (2C) & (2D) states the following,

(2C) The local government shall fill any vacancy occurring in the office of Chief Bush Fire Control Officer or Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer within one month after the vacancy occurs and if the local government fails or neglects to do so within that time, the FES Commissioner may by notice in writing require the local government to appoint a person to the vacant office within one month after service on it of such notice.

(2D) Where a local government that has been served with a notice pursuant to subsection (2C) fails or neglects to comply with the requirements of that notice, the FES Commissioner may appoint a person who is not employed in the Department to the vacant office.

This is not supported by staff due to the concerns raised with respect to who may be appointed and their individual skills and abilities. Similarly there are concerns that the appointed person may not have the ability to communicate with the Brigades.

Option 3 – Council requests DFES appoint a CBFCO

Another option available to Council is to exercise the option provided for under Section 38A(1) of the Bush Fires Act 1954, whereby the local government

writes to the Commissioner of DFES to appoint a staff member of the department as the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer for the 2019/2020 bushfire season.

38A. FES Commissioner may designate person employed in Department as Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

(1) At the request of a local government the FES Commissioner may designate a person employed in the Department as the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer for the district of that local government.

Similar to option 2 – there is concerns that the person appointed to the position may not have the necessary skills required to deal with the volunteer bush fire brigades.

Given the above information it recommended that BFAC and Council appoint the most suitable candidate from the applications received. It is important to note that in making this recommendation there is training that is required to be completed and that significant support will need to be provided to the CBFCO in undertaking this role.

At the time of completing this report a final recommendation on the appointment of a CBFCO has not been completed due to the delay in conducting a second interview.

A recommendation and confidential assessment report will be provided as soon as available.

RECOMMENDATION

A recommendation for appointment will be provided at the meeting.

The Executive Manager Development Services reiterated the options listed within the report and outlined the recommended option.

The below motion was moved and seconded. The Chairperson asked if there were any speakers against the motion. It was requested that the vote be undertaken by secret ballot. An election was undertaken in accordance with the Local Government Act 1995 and the Local Government (Elections) Regulations 1997, by secret ballot. The Executive Manager Development Services conducted the count and at the conclusion announced that Mr Chris Marris was elected as Chief Bush Fire Control Officer.

MOTION / COMMITTEE DECISION

Minute No: BFAC.238

Moved: Mr Murray McGregor

Seconded: Mr Nic Dewar

That Council appoint Mr Chris Marris as Chief Bush Fire Control Officer for the 2019/20 Bush Fire Season.

CARRIED 10/1

Discussion was held around establishing a succession plan for Kris Brown who has indicated an interest in becoming Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (CBFCO). It was raised that the CBFCO and Deputy CBFCO's need to actively support Kris Brown to enable him to learn the role. Mr Marris advised that support will be provided subject to Council endorsing him as the CBFCO.

6. MOTIONS OF WHICH PREVIOUS NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

6.1 CALL OUT SMS MESSAGES AND PROCEDURE

BACKGROUND

Motion has been moved to stop unnecessary callouts and stand-downs in non-"emergency" situations, i.e. spring & winter conditions.

MOTION

Moved: Mr Blair Wilding

Seconded: Mr Steve Gray

That Council endorse the following procedure for call out and SMS messages:

- **1st crew (brigade area where fire is) is to turn-out and investigate the fire.**
- **2nd Crew (Adjoining Brigade area) is to remain on standby until a report is received from the 1st crew.**

Clarification was sought in relation to:

- Whether this would apply throughout the entire year i.e. in high and low risk conditions. It was confirmed that this was the intent. Concerns were raised as there are other items which must be considered when determining the number of brigades to turn out to incidents, such as the weather conditions, topography of the land etc. It was raised that common sense would prevail, however further concerns were raised in relation to this motion restricting this.
- The current procedures in place. Discussion was held around whether these need to be reviewed and updated. Through this process the issues can be identified and solutions put in place to address these.

AMENDMENT TO MOTION

Moved: Mr Nic Dewar

That the motion be amended to add the words 'excluding the Bush Fire Season' and 'subject to consultation with the Bush Fire Brigades'.

WITHDRAWN

With the approval of the mover and seconder the motion was amended to include the intent of the proposed amendment.

MOTION / COMMITTEE DECISION

Minute No: BFAC.239

Moved: Mr Blair Wilding

Seconded: Mr Steve Gray

That Council endorse that the mobilisation risk matrix be circulated for consultation with the Shire of Northam Bush Fire Brigades and VFRS for further consideration at the March 2020 BFAC meeting.

CARRIED 11/0

Clarification was sought from the Gallery as to whether the notification can be sent to brigades quicker when incidents occur, the incident on 12 November 2019 was referenced. The Community Emergency Services Manager advised that the advice was sent to brigades within one minute of the notification being received by the Community Emergency Services Manager.

OFFICERS COMMENT

The mobilisation of brigades is assessed on a case by case basis, whilst it may in some cases be reasonable for a single brigade turnout during the winter months, the information provided by the communications centre will determine what resources are mobilised.

All calls are activated by a 000 call from a member of the public, the call triggers a group call to the CESM, CBFCO, DCBFCO's and Senior BFCO.

The first officer who answers the call will assess the information provided by the COMCEN Officer, and make a decision on mobilisation at their discretion, and will mobilise further resources as more information comes to hand. The notification is completed in accordance with the Shire of Northam Bushfire Response Plan that can be found in section 2 of the Bush Fires Manual.

All mobilisation will continue to be at the discretion of the officer who takes the call, this complies with the DFES SOP 2.01.02 as set by the Commissioner for the Department of Fire & Emergency Services as the hazard management agency for all fires within Western Australia, the Shire of Northam bushfire serviced is a combat agency only.

7. URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY DECISION

Nil.

8. GENERAL BUSINESS

8.1 IDENTIFICATION TAGS FOR FCO'S

Can these be purchased to assist new members? The Community Emergency Services Manager advised that FCO's have these and may be a matter of them not using them.

8.2 SERVICING INFORMATION BEING PASSED ONTO BRIGADE'S

There was an issue where information was being passed onto the brigade from the servicing contractor when vehicles were being serviced. The Community Emergency Services Manager advised that this was a communication issue that was previously raised and addressed, procedures have now been put in place.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

10 March 2020.

10. DECLARATION OF CLOSURE

There being no further business the Presiding Member, Mr Mathew Macqueen declared the meeting closed at 6:41pm.

"I certify that the Minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting held on Tuesday, 12 November 2019 have been confirmed as a true and correct record."

_____ Presiding Member

_____ Date