

Note of last Fire Commission meeting

Title:	Fire Commission
Date:	Friday 24 May 2019
Venue:	Bevin Hall, Ground Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

Attendance

An attendance list is attached as **Appendix A** to this note

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
1	Welcome, apologies and Declarations of Interest Cllr Stephens introduced members to meeting.	
2	Home Office's Fire Reform Agenda - Luke Edwards, Director Fire & Resilience Luke Edwards gave a presentation on current work in the Home Office. He focused on the progress of the Fire Reform programme, where services were and preparing for the Spending Review. Luke outlined the three pillars of the Fire Reform programme: Efficiency and Collaboration; Accountability and Transparency; and Workforce Reform. Luke highlighted successes so far including £22 million of commercial savings and that national contracts are now in place. He stressed that benchmarking is needed across the sector to monitor progress and acknowledged there are still significant challenges across the sector, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learning from Grenfell and new requirements around building safety• Delivery or renewal of national capabilities: Emergency Services Network, National Resilience and information systems• Understanding future demand, technology and its implications for capability and skills• Capacity to respond to major incidents• Leadership, diversity and workforce reform Luke then outlined the work of the Senior Sector Group and expectations of the Spending Review: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health spending commitments have taken up any extra available funding within government, other departments are therefore likely	

to have settlements going forward as any increase would cause a deficit in other areas.

- There is a need to continue delivering more outputs with the same staffing levels as currently exist.
- The aim is to submit a case to Treasury by the end of June to argue the case for funding for the sector as part of the Review.
- In order to mitigate the flat-rate settlement the sector need to be looking at what efficiencies could be made such as further improvements in procurement so for example capacity could be built into protection.

Members made the following comments:

- On the duty to collaborate, the fire service has worked with the police, but the sector has not seen the same collaboration with the NHS in all areas. Matt Hancock, Minister for Health and Social Care, is behind this work, the Home Office needs to be equally supportive in terms of resource.
- Discussions around the Spending Review need to factor in county council fire budgets are not ring-fenced and so their budgets are particularly vulnerable. Any business case also needs to be clear about the differences between urban and rural services and differing needs which are poorly understood now.
- National recruitment, particularly of on-call firefighters, is really important, but does the Minister recognise there is problem with the fairness of on-call pay?
- The Home Office may need to be willing to highlight to the Treasury that reductions and efficiencies in the fire sector may have been bottomed out.
- The Home Office needs to consider the unions in their plans to broaden any role or strengthening collaboration.
- Climate change is starting to create challenges for emergency services in the UK. How does the Home Office see that affecting the firefighter's role?

Luke Edwards responded:

- There have been examples of collaboration across the NHS with the fire service, but a lot more can be done with the support of the Home Office.
- The Home Office is keen to continue working to understand the detail across the different services in the context of the Spending Review.

- The Home Office will seek the Minister's view on on-call pay, the environmental challenge and how to manage long term change in firefighter activities.

Rod McLean

Rod McLean, Head of the Fire Safety Unit, Fire and Resilience Directorate gave a presentation on the Call for Evidence in The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

The Fire Safety order applies to the common parts of buildings and has been in place since 2006, with light touch reviews of the Order in 2009 and 2013. A full review is now therefore timely and will take into account the findings from the Hackitt Review.

Rod highlighted that as this is a call for evidence rather than a consultation, it is important that stakeholders within the sector do feed into the Home Office on the sector's understanding of the effectiveness of Fire Safety Order in practical terms. Bespoke changes to the legislation are likely to be made following the review and guidance will be updated.

Rod detailed the next steps for the call for evidence feedback, with the findings being published in parallel with the Building Safety consultation paper, around June 2019. There will be a joint stakeholder and communications plan with the Minister of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Members made the following comments:

- This needs to actually be an independent fire safety review.
- There is a concern that the sector does not have the capacity to deliver key pieces of the refreshed legislation, as it is likely to be. For example, a low volume of fire engineers in the fire sector and the long lead-in time for training these professionals.
- A key part of the review should be around the independence and rigour of fire risk assessments for buildings.
- Other stakeholders like the Fire Industry Association need to input in to the review to give a representative response.
- 2020 is hugely frustrating as a timeline for progress around changing the sector, as the Hackitt Review was published in 2018. Some of the implementation plans are taking too long. We have been aware of the fire engineer issue, government should help services use the apprenticeship levy to address this issue.
- The use of sprinklers has been made compulsory in Wales in residential buildings, will a similar call be made in England?

Rod McLean responded:

- Efforts have been made to ensure the fire safety review is as

independent as possible.

- The Home Office is aware of the capacity issues around fire engineers, would like to help address this and shares the frustration about pace.
- The issue of sprinklers in high-rise buildings is part of Approved Document B which sits with MHCLG and will be considered as part of their technical consultation.

Decision

Members noted the presentation.

3 Local Government Association and National Fire Chiefs Council Fire & Rescue peer support offer

Gary Hughes and Jess Norman gave an update to Fire Commission on the LGA and National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) peer support offer, including elements currently under review.

Jess Norman gave an overview of the Masterclasses on Culture, Inclusion and Diversity across 2019/20 and requested authorities to volunteer their services as venues for these training days.

Decision

Members agreed to disseminate information on the new Leadership Essentials programme and consider whether their authority would be willing to host a Masterclass.

Action

Contact Greater Manchester to host a master class.

4 Workforce update

Gill Gittins & Clair Alcock gave updates to Fire Commission on matters in relation to fire services industrial relations and pensions matters at present.

Decision

Members noted the report.

Action

The report to come a presentation to a future Fire Commission.

5 Building Safety

Charles Loft gave an update to Fire Commission on the LGA's building

safety related work, including progress with implementing the recommendations from the Hackitt Review.

Members comments:

- Member commented that if new results on different types of cladding are expected by the end of June the sector needs to be prepared to manage ones that fail.

Decision

Members noted the report.

6 NFCC: Central Programme Office Update

Phil Loach reported on the current work of the National Fire Chiefs Council Central Programme Office.

Members made the following comments:

- There should be a NFCC update on the On Call project and the community risk program.
- What is the impact of the delay of the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme for the sector as a whole, in individual services procurement of new equipment has been delayed.
- The sector has had a lot of discussion on Health and Wellbeing and it would be important to hear more from the NFCC in this.

Phil Loach responded

- NFCC is more than happy to present any details the FSMC and Fire Commission would need to hear about.
- Ann Millington supports NFCC on wellbeing and can bring an update to a future meeting.

Decision

Members noted the report.

7 Fire Commission and outside bodies update

Jess Norman outlined issues of interest to the Commission not covered under the other items on the agenda.

Decision

Members noted the report.

8 Notes from the previous meeting

Members agreed the minutes of the previous meeting.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman Vice-Chairman Deputy-chairman	Cllr Ian Stephens	Isle of Wight Council
Members	Cllr David Norman MBE Cllr Kevin Buttery Cllr Rebecca Knox Cllr Roger Price Cllr Terry Hone Cllr Nick Chard Cllr John Riddle OBE Cllr Eric Carter Ms Fiona Twycross AM Cllr Denise Turner-Stewart Cllr Debbie Kennard Cllr Peter Harrand Cllr Carol Theobald Cllr Keith Aspden Cllr Colin Spence Cllr Mark Healey Cllr Chris Pillai JP Cllr Nikki Hennessy Cllr Shaun O'Neill	Gloucestershire County Council Amber Valley Borough Council Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority Hertfordshire County Council Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority Northumberland Council Telford and Wrekin Council Greater London Authority Surrey County Council West Sussex County Council West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority East Sussex Fire Authority North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service Suffolk County Council Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council Lancashire County Council Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Apologies	Cllr Jayne McCoy Cllr Tig Anthony Outlaw Cllr Chris Lamb Cllr Barry Curran Cllr Andy Crump Cllr Zafar Iqbal MBE JP Cllr Peter Hogarth MBE Cllr Paul Downing Jane Gardner Cllr Ian Morris Cllr Simon Coles Cllr Donald Davies Cllr Iain McCracken Cllr Roger Reed Cllr Kevin Reynolds Cllr Bob Rudd Cllr Janice Brunton-Dobson Cllr Sue James Cllr Janet Willis Cllr Sara Randall Johnson Cllr Spencer Flower	Sutton Council Isle of Wight Council Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council Sunderland City Council Stratford-on-Avon District Council Birmingham City Council Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council Central Bedfordshire Council Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Northamptonshire County Council Somerset County Council North Somerset Council Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service Cleveland Fire Authority Cornwall Council Cumbria County Council Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue

Cllr John Robinson JP	Service
Mr Roger Hirst	County Durham and Darlington Fire & Rescue Authority
Cllr Christopher Carter	Essex County Council
Cllr Roger Phillips	Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr John Briggs	Herefordshire Council
Cllr Les Byrom CBE	Humberside Fire Authority
Cllr Rowland Rees-Evans	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Mark Kiddle Morris	Ceredigion County Council
Cllr Stuart Tranter	Norfolk County Council
Cllr Frank De Molfetta	Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Meirick Davies	Lancashire Combined Fire Authority
Cllr Miles Parkinson OBE	North Wales Fire Authority
Cllr Nicholas Rushton	Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service
	Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Combined Fire Authority
Cllr Nick Worth	Lincolnshire County Council
Cllr Judith Heathcoat	Oxfordshire County Council
Cllr Tudor Davies	South Wales Fire Authority
Cllr Alan Atkin	South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr John Edwards	West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Alistair Auty	Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
Cllr Jason Ablewhite	Huntingdonshire District Council
Cllr Sharon Sullivan	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Leigh Redman	Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Colleen Atkins MBE	Bedfordshire Combined Fire Authority
Cllr Greg Brackenridge	City of Wolverhampton Council
Cllr Ron Clarke	Staffordshire County Council
Cllr Christopher Jackson	Bristol City Council
Cllr Steve Marshall-Clarke	Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr James Roberts	Liverpool City Council
Cllr Mick Stoker	Cleveland Fire Authority
Cllr David Wood	Suffolk County Council
Cllr Fran Oborski MBE	Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Ruth Skelton	Derby City Council