

22 June 2018

## **FSMC Policy Priorities for 2018-19**

### **Purpose of report**

For discussion and decision.

### **Summary**

This paper sets out proposals for the Fire Services Management Committee (FSMC) priorities and work programme for 2018-19 for comments. The proposals are based on both corporate LGA priorities and options for broader work based on a combination of areas of interest previously indicated by Board members, ongoing work and recent policy announcements by Government. Subject to members' views, officers will develop a work programme to deliver these priorities.

### **Recommendation**

That the FSMC discuss the FSMC's priorities and work programme for 2018-19.

### **Action**

Officers will undertake the projects set out in the report.

**Contact officer:** Lucy Ellender  
**Position:** Adviser  
**Phone no:** 0207 664 3321  
**E-mail:** [lucy.ellender@local.gov.uk](mailto:lucy.ellender@local.gov.uk)

22 June 2018

## **FSMC Policy Priorities for 2018-19**

### **Background**

1. Last year FSMC members agreed that our priorities for 2017-18 would cover:
  - 1.1. Governance
  - 1.2. Transparency and standards
  - 1.3. Workforce
  - 1.4. Collaboration
  - 1.5. Procurement and value for money
  - 1.6. Funding
  - 1.7. Grenfell tower
2. The priorities also incorporated work that the LGA Leadership Board asked the Boards to undertake based on the overall priorities of the organisation. The priorities were first discussed in June 2017 before being agreed at the September 2017 meeting.
3. This paper provides an outline of the work that has been undertaken over the last year as well as looking at potential priorities for the next year. It is expected that the priorities for the forthcoming political year will remain broadly similar subject to member's views.

### **Achievements for 2017-18**

#### **Governance**

4. We have provided support to the four fire and rescue services that are affected by the locally contested plans of three PCC's to take on the governance of fire and rescue services in their area.
5. We provided input into the Home Office's work on the Independent Assessment of PCCs business cases. We raised concerns about the potential for challenge if the decision was not made by a Panel with a range of expertise. We continued to raise concerns throughout the process.
6. The FSMC and Safer and Stronger Communities Board published a guide to the fire and rescue service for members of Police and Crime Panels. This is available on the LGA's [website](#).

22 June 2018

### **Transparency and standards**

7. We have worked with Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) on the introduction of the new inspection regime through their External Reference Group. We have also responded to HMICFRS's consultation on the methodology framework. We have continued to raise concerns about the potential for the new inspection process to introduce new burdens for the fire and rescue service, particularly if the inspection covers areas that are not statutory duties. There are also concerns about the burden on FRSs to meet the practical requirements for inspection.
8. The work on peer challenge is continuing, however the pace has slowed to match the introduction of the inspection process. We plan to hold a meeting with the peer challenge task and finish group shortly and will be inviting the HMICFRS pilots to the meeting as well.
9. Through our membership of the Fire Professional Standards Project Board, we have continued to raise concerns about the possibility of creating a new standalone standards body on financial grounds for the sector and additional burdens. This the Professional Standards Board will no longer be a standalone body but will instead be a part of the NFCC's Central Programme Office.
10. The LGA responded to the consultation on the National Fire Framework. We wanted to ensure that the IRMP remained the basis for all fire and rescue activity and that the National Framework would continue to require it. We raised some concerns that there were some disparities in terms of the expectations on PCC style FRAs and other types of FRA. We also raised concerns about the resources and powers of Police and Crime Panels.

### **Workforce**

11. The LGA promoted the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed last year through the inclusive fire service document for the 2017 Fire Conference as well as the case studies on inclusion and recruitment we published for the 2018 Fire Conference.
12. In April we ran a summit with the signatories of the MoU to discuss how the MoU is being embedded and to inform our work on this issue. This informed a report that went to the Fire Commission in May which outlined further work on this issue for the next political year.
13. Inclusion and diversity is now a part of our two Fire Leadership Essentials programmes. Both the sessions on these issues have been very well received at the leadership programmes. We also ran a Masterclass on inclusion and Diversity in September 2017. We plan to do further leadership style events on inclusion and diversity next year as well as continuing to provide two leadership essential courses.

### **Collaboration**

14. We held a number of sessions on collaboration at the Fire Conference in March having opened up the workshops for bidding from fire and rescue services. We had sessions on

22 June 2018

collaboration with the Unions, on procurement with the police and more generally on the legal implications on collaboration.

15. We have continued to support and contribute to the fire/health coordination committee.

### **Procurement and value for money**

16. The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) have been continuing to lead this agenda. The LGA have been playing a supporting role and the NFCC are happy to lead this agenda, a position we have checked with them.

### **Funding**

17. The LGA made a number of requests for further funding for the fire and rescue service to cover the cost of a pay increase for firefighters to help increase collaboration. We highlighted the costs of further work coming out of the Grenfell fire to the sector and continue to undertake further work on this issue in partnership with the NFCC to provide an up to date figure on the one off and ongoing costs as a result of the fire.

18. Following discussions at the FSMC, the LGA will continue to lobby for funding based primarily on the basis of risk.

### **Grenfell tower**

19. FSMC has contributed significantly to the LGA's response to the Grenfell tragedy. This work has involved assisting MHCLG and councils with identifying council and other social housing blocks with aluminium composite material (ACM) cladding systems similar to that on Grenfell Tower, and working with councils on the removal of that cladding.

20. The LGA also successfully called for a review of building regulations and fire safety. The interim report from Dame Judith Hackitt reflected all the significant points the LGA had made in its submission to the review, and her final report, published in May, sets out how the regulatory system for high-rise buildings can be made fit for the twenty-first century. The LGA continues to work on issues related to fire doors, enforcement powers, identifying ACM cladding on private blocks and the impact this may have on leaseholders.

### **Priorities for 2018-19**

21. Members are asked to consider whether there are any particular issues that are missing from the below list or if there are any priorities that are less relevant for the next year. Lead Members discussed these in the May meeting.

21.1. Governance: continuing work associated with the greater involvement of PCCs in fire and rescue service governance structures, and to provide advice and assistance to fire and rescue authorities around this agenda.

21.2. Transparency and standards: continue to engage with HMICFRS around the inspection process, ensuring that the impact of inspection on fire and rescue services is understood and any new burdens highlighted to government. The LGA

22 June 2018

will be updating the Fire Peer Challenge and Operational Assessment offer to the sector alongside the NFCC to ensure that it provides value to the sector and complements the inspection regime. The LGA will be a part of the new Fire Standards Board.

21.3. Workforce: the LGA will work with members to provide a leadership training programme on Inclusion and Diversity. We will continue to promote the Memorandum of Understanding and hold another Summit in April 2019 to discuss what work has happened over the past year.

21.4. Collaboration: the Committee has consistently supported increased collaboration between the fire service and the other emergency services. It has also highlighted to government the increasing role taken by the service in supporting broader health objectives, and the value of this role has been increasingly recognised.

21.5. Procurement and value for money: the National Fire Chiefs Council will be pressing ahead with improving procurement practices and obtaining better value for money from its purchases. So far the Committee's role in progressing this agenda has been purely supportive, but it may be that a more active role is needed to help make progress in this area in the year ahead. The Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme may need further examination over the coming year as the implications of the delay of the programme are further understood.

21.6. Funding: The Comprehensive Spending Review, the Fair Funding Review and the impact of the Hackitt Review will all have an impact on the work of the fire and rescue service. The LGA will respond to these issues to ensure that the fire and rescue service continues to be funded primarily based on risk.

21.7. Grenfell tower: the impact of Grenfell tower on the fire and rescue service will continue for the foreseeable future. The LGA will respond to the Hackitt Review's final report, work with government on delivering a regulatory system fit for the twenty-first century, and respond to the government consultation to ban the use of combustible materials on the exterior of high-rise residential. We will also take forward the recommendations from the sprinklers working group, and we will lobby for any new burdens to be fully funded as well as monitor the impact on FRAs of increased inspections post Grenfell.

22. Members are asked to comment on whether these are the right priorities for the Committee over the next year and if any further priorities need to be considered. Members' views will be used to inform the priorities paper brought to the Committee in September.

### **Implications for Wales**

23. Fire and rescue related policy is a devolved matter and much of the Committee's work has focused on changes for Fire and Rescue Authorities in England, with the Welsh Local Government Association leading on lobbying for Welsh Fire and Rescue Authorities in Cardiff.

22 June 2018

**Financial implications**

24. The policy and improvement budget is still being set for the forthcoming year.