

Fire Services Management Committee Update Paper

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

The report outlines issues of interest to the Fire Service Management Committee not covered under the other items on the agenda.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report. Members are asked to agree to the proposal to open up session at the Fire Conference for bidding as outlined in **paragraph 14**.

Action

Officers to continue to provide updates to members.

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Fire Services Management Committee Update and Outside Bodies Paper

Government

PCCs and fire governance

1. The Statutory instrument to change the governance of Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service has now been [published](#). This will come into force on 1 August. There have been no statutory instruments laid for the changes in governance in Hereford and Worcester, Shropshire and Cambridgeshire.
2. In April the Home Office confirmed that the Northamptonshire PCC would take on the governance of the fire and rescue service. This has not been contested locally.
3. In June the Home Office announced that the Home Secretary had approved the [transfer of governance](#) to the North Yorkshire PCC.
4. The LGA has been providing support to the FRAs affected by contested PCC business cases.

Enabling PCCs to sit and vote on Combined Fire and Rescue Authorities

5. The Government announced in mid-June that they will be bringing forward legislation to enable PCCs to be represented on their local FRAs subject to the consent of the FRA, voting rights provisions were already in place for Mets and counties so the purpose of this legislation is to bring combined FRAs into the same place. This was in response to a consultation that the Government had carried out on their proposal to vary the combination schemes of Combined FRAs.
6. 91 per cent of affected Combined FRAs agreed to the proposed amendments, with two FRAs objecting to the proposed amendments. The Government will hold an inquiry to better understand their concerns
7. The consultation response outlined a number of themes where FRAs had either actively objected or sought further information. There were some concerns around membership allowances for PCCs, membership numbers and the impact on political balance. There were also some issues around the right of a PCC to appoint a deputy to attend FRA meetings on their behalf. There were some concerns about what this would mean in practice, would the Deputy PCC have voting rights? Should they be able to speak and influence decisions?
8. The Government's response to the consultation can be found on the Government's [website](#).

Fire Standards Board

9. The Fire Minister has announced a new Fire Standards Board. The aim of the Board will be to ensure standards are nationally coordinated to a high level across the sector. It will be for the board to determine its work-plan but initial issues the Board could consider include:
 - 9.1. workforce issues like leadership and development;
 - 9.2. the identification and mitigation of risks; and
 - 9.3. fire prevention and the approach to protecting the public from other emergencies .
10. The Fire Standards Board will have membership from the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), the LGA, the College of Policing and the Home Office. The revised [National Fire Framework](#) requires all FRAs to implement the standards approved through this work and the inspectorate will have regard to these standards as part of their inspections.

Inspection

HMICFRS Consultation and External Reference Group

11. Officers attended the HMICFRS Chairs and Chiefs Engagement day to hear from the pilot inspection authorities. The pilots identified a number of learning points including:
 - 11.1. Governance differences and the impact that this had on how the inspection was carried out. This was particularly true in the case of county authorities where there were different structures and different policies in place as the fire service was a part of a wider organisation. It was felt that the inspectorate had taken these issues on board but there was still further learning needed.
 - 11.2. There had been a very big focus from the inspectorate on the IRMP and how this should be understood across the organisation. The pilots felt that it would be a key consideration for FRAs in the future to think how the IRMP is seen and understood within their FRA
 - 11.3. Focus on benchmarking: the pilots noted that it was important that like was compared with like. There were very different ways across the pilots of benchmarking their work which would have an impact on how this activity was seen by the inspectorate. They had emphasised that all FRAs will be different because of communities different needs
 - 11.4. Differing pilot experiences. There was an evolution across the pilot inspection process of the HMICFRS approach.
 - 11.5. Impact on the service: Each of the services had seen an impact on the work of the service to prepare for and facilitate inspection.

- 11.6. Managing expectations: the reports from the inspection would take a number of months to be published, for example those in tranche one would not receive their reports until November 2018, when the inspections would be starting in July 2018.
- 11.7. Relationship with service liaison leads: This was the key relationship for each FRA going forward and would be the first point of contact for FRSs before the inspection started
- 11.8. Finally they concluded by saying that that the Inspectorate was willing to adapt and learn as the pilots had progressed.

Local Government Association

LGA Fire leadership Essentials

- 12. The LGA will be holding two fire leadership essentials in 2018-19. The November programme will be held at Warwick Conference Centre on 28-29 November.

LGA Fire Conference

- 13. The 2019 conference will be held on 12-13 March at the Hilton Metropole Brighton. This was available on Member's preferred dates and has got a sprinkler system. Further investigation highlighted that the Jury's Inn in Brighton was not suitable.
- 14. Following the 2018 Fire Conference we would like to open the workshop sessions out for bidding again to the sector to encourage a wide variety of FRAs to showcase their innovative work as a part of the conference. If members are happy with this approach the bidding process will be launched over the Summer.
- 15. The LGA will be publishing a short write up from the Fire Conference on our website to highlight some of the key discussions and themes from the conference.

Outside Bodies - Strategic Resilience Board

- 16. Councillor Ian Stephens and Councillor Les Byrom attended the Strategic Resilience Board at the Home Office on 24 April. The Board discussed resilience issues generally as well as specific items on the Kerslake Report into the Manchester Arena Bombing and a presentation on the response to the Novichok nerve agent use in Salisbury.