
Update from Fire Services Management Committee 10 September 2007

1. The Fire Services Management Committee met on 10 September 2007. The Committee agreed its membership and office holders for 2007-8 (see appendix a).
2. The Committee agreed a work programme for 2007-08 comprising:

Priority 1 topics

- Route map document
- Future approach to the Fire and Rescue National Framework
- Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 settlement
- Performance assessment framework for fire and rescue authorities
- Equality and diversity
- Centre of Excellence
- Regional Fire Control Centres Project (FiReControl – including inter-dependencies with the Firelink project)
- New Dimension – long term capability management
- Contingency planning

Priority 2 topics

- Co-responding
- the Fire Gateway
- Firebuy – specifically, future funding arrangements
- IRMP guidance development

Update on current issues

3. It was agreed that the CFO of Gloucestershire will be invited to a future meeting of the Fire Forum (attending on 30 November) to talk about the summer 2007 flooding.
4. The Committee received updates from CLG on the forthcoming consultations on the Centre of Excellence, the National Framework and the Equality and Diversity Strategy all of which are due to be published during autumn 2007.
5. The Executive Leadership Programme will be formally launched on 6 November.

Business Continuity Planning - Fireguard

6. The Committee received an update from Barry Dixon, CFO Greater Manchester on Business Continuity Planning – Fireguard. Thirty-one fire and rescue services are now part of the ‘Fireguard’ project which is designed to enhance business continuity arrangements. In August an OJEU notice was published seeking expressions of interest from the market place. The aim of this exercise has been

to test the market to ascertain whether resilience can be strengthened in this way. A large amount of work still needs to be undertaken on this project.

Co-responding

- 7. The Committee received a presentation from Ian Hayton (CFOA) on co-responding. He explained that co-responding was focused in particular on the emergency response to cardiac arrest in partnership with the ambulance service. It was concluded that there are a number of other challenges hampering the expansion of co-responding including the absence of any requirement on emergency services to cooperate. There are wide-ranging issues on funding that also need to be addressed. The issue will be raised at the next meeting of the Central Local Partnership on 8 November.**

New Dimensions: future governance arrangements

- 8. CLG set out four options for long term governance arrangements for the New Dimensions project. Concerns were raised about the potential for legal liability on the part of the LGA but CLG gave assurances that there will be no legal liability for the LGA and this would be confirmed in writing. It was agreed that in the longer term the LGA would take on an oversight role for the arrangements for the strategic management of the capabilities by FRAs. This function could be fulfilled by becoming a core agenda item for the Fire Services Management Committee to allow for a sufficient level of oversight. A new sub-committee could be set up in due course to take this work forward if it was deemed necessary.**

LGA Fire and Rescue Route Map

- 9. It was agreed that the 10 Year Vision/Route Map task group should be reconstituted. Members agreed that a thematic approach was the best way of developing the route map. It was also agreed that work on the route map should be taken forward swiftly.**

The next meeting of the Fire Services Management Committee will be held on Monday 26th November at Local Government House.