

## Note of decisions taken and actions required

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<b>Title:</b>	Fire Services Commission
<b>Date and time:</b>	Friday 24 September 2010, 11.00
<b>Venue:</b>	The Westminster Suite (8 <sup>th</sup> floor), Local Government House

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Item	Decisions and actions	Action by
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**1 Membership of the LG Group Fire Commission and meeting dates 2010 / 11**

Members noted the Commission membership and the proposed dates for Commission meetings in 2010 / 11.

The Chairman reminded Members that some of the political groups had a number of Commission balancing places still to be filled.

**2 Report from the Fire Services Management Committee**

The Chairman informed Members of the discussions held at the Fire Services Management Committee held on 10 September 2010. These discussions included items on FiReControl, Fire Futures and the future of national functions.

**3 FiReControl**

Roger Hargreaves, Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) updated the Commission on progress with the FiReControl project, noting that Ministers were increasingly frustrated with EADS' performance. Roger added that the Government was keen to shortly resolve the future of the project, so as to be able to offer certainty to Fire and Rescue Services and to the taxpayer.

Roger said that CLG's focus was on ensuring that FiReControl progressed as planned, but added that, in the event that the current project should fail, the Government would take swift and decisive steps to ensure that Fire and Rescue Services continued to have sufficient resilience capacity. FiReControl had already achieved some notable positive outcomes, and it was important, in the event that FiReControl did not proceed, that these positive outcomes be incorporated in to any future

project.

Members said that it was vital that the future of the project be decided quickly and asked whether the Government would continue to meet costs incurred by Fire and Rescue Services as a result of the delay to the project. Roger confirmed that CLG would continue to meet those costs.

Members said that the quality of the equipment provided to date by EADS was of concern. Members added that EADS had suggested a counter-proposal on the future of the project which would see ownership of FiReControl transferred to EADS. Roger responded that CLG had not seen any such proposals.

### ***Decision***

*Members noted the update.*

*Members agreed that correspondence from CLG to CFOA be circulated.*

### **Action**

Officers to circulate correspondence from CLG to CFOA.

**Paul Johnston**

## **4 LG Group Fire Futures draft submission**

The Chairman noted that the Commission had convened to consider the LG Group submission as set out within the agenda, but added that all Fire and Rescue Authorities were welcome to submit their own submissions to Government on Fire Futures.

The Committee received updates on the project from Max Hood, Brian Robinson and Cllr Paul Shannon, three of the four Fire Futures workstream leads.

Officers said that, of particular note in the draft submission, was the need for the power of general competence to be granted to all Fire and Rescue Authorities, and the incorporation of the Group's proposals for place based budgeting within the submission.

Some Members said that the proposal within the submission for a single service provider for some or all emergency services was currently unnecessary.

Members noted that some of the issues raised within the separate workstreams were cross-cutting, and suggested that the project would need to take a similarly cross-cutting approach to avoid repetition and duplication across workstreams.

Members said that the project represented a great opportunity to re-examine the interaction between Government and Fire and Rescue Authorities and that the project should lead to greater local decision-making responsibilities.

***Decision***

*Members noted the draft submission and the next steps for the Fire Futures project.*

**Action**

Officers to draft the Fire Services Management Committee's submission to Government on Fire Futures, and to clear the submission with Lead Members of the Fire Services Management Committee.

**Helen Murray**

**5 Legislative Changes to Fire Safety in Rented Accommodation**

The Commission received a presentation from Cllr Mark Healey, Chairman, Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority.

Copies of the presentation are available via [www.local.gov.uk](http://www.local.gov.uk)

***Decision***

Members agreed that the Chairman write to Adrian Sanders MP to express the Commission's support for the Fire Safety (Protection of Tenants) Bill.

Members agreed that FRAs lobby in support of the Bill.

**Action**

Officers to prepare draft correspondence for the Chairman to express support for the Fire Safety (Protection of Tenants) Bill.

**Paul Johnston**

Officers to circulate a draft letter template to FRAs for use in

**Clive Harris /**

lobbying activity supporting Mr Sanders' Bill.

**Greg Taylor**

**6 Retained Duty System project update**

The Committee received a presentation from Cllr Kay Hammond on the Retained Duty System project. Cllr Hammond noted that there was still an opportunity for Fire and Rescue Services to contribute toward the project, and that work was currently being undertaken to ensure that the results of separate work undertaken by CFOA and previously by the then Office of the Deputy Prime Minister were fed into the LG Group piece of work.

Cllr Hammond said that a Members' seminar on the project would be held on 23 November, and that the project should be finalised in time for the LG Group Fire Conference in early 2011.

Members welcomed the project, noting that it corresponded well with the Government's policy of the Big Society.

**Action**

Officers to support arrangements for the Members' seminar on 23 November.

**Helen Murray /  
Lucy Ellender**

**7 Note of the last meeting**

The note of the Fire Services Forum held on 18 June 2010 was agreed as a correct record.