

Chairman's report

Purpose of report

For noting.

Summary

This paper summarises the meetings and events that the Fire Commission Chairman has attended since the Commission's last meeting.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the content of this report.

Action

Officers will take action as directed by members.

Contact officer: Helen Murray
Position: Head of Programmes
Phone no: 020 7664 3266
E-mail: Helen.murray@local.gov.uk

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1. This paper provides information on the meetings and engagements that the Chairman of the Fire Services Management Committee has attended on behalf of member fire and rescue authorities.
2. On 11 December I attended a local **members' information day on Emergency Responsibilities and Terrorist threat levels** given by Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority. The day highlighted the preparation of the service for the current risks faced within this community and I heard from the Emergency Planning college on the responsibilities of elected members regarding civil resilience and emergency planning.
3. On the evening of 11 December, I attended the **LFEPA's annual Carol Service**, marking the end of a challenging but productive year for Fire and Rescue Services across England and Wales.
4. On 12 December I visited **Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Authority**, to discuss the challenges they are facing, and how we can help them. I also spoke to Lead Members of the Fire Authority.
5. I attended a **bi-lateral with Brandon Lewis MP** on 8 January. We discussed a range of issues, including the progress of the current dispute between government and the FBU over pension reforms. I pressed the Minister on the likely publication date for the Knight Review. It is clear that there are still discussions on-going between government departments on the response, particularly in relation to the future governance arrangements for the fire service. We know from previous statements that the Minister is not in favour of top-down reform of the sector.
6. On 29 January I attended the **Fire Service College Management Board**, to discuss a number of issues, including the emergency services academy, the development of a business strategy and received an update from the Customer Advisory Board.
7. On 29th January I spoke to the senior officers in the current cohort on the **Executive Leadership Programme**, setting out the role of the LGA, some of the challenges facing the sector and how we can work together so that these can be addressed.
8. We are still waiting for details of this year's council tax referendum arrangements. In our meeting, I reiterated the call by the sector for further exemptions for fire and rescue authorities from the referendum limits.