

Fire Services Management Committee Work Programme 2009-10

Summary

This paper sets out a programme of work for the Fire Services Management Committee for 2009-10. In doing so, it

- attaches a broad priority to each topic;
- proposes LGA objectives and activity for each issue.

Recommendation

1. Members to decide whether the work programme set out below reflects their view of the issues on which the LGA should focus in 2009-10.

Action

If agreed, this programme will form the basis of action for members, officers and advisers over the coming months

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Background

1. In May 2009 the LGA Group published its 2009-10 business plan. The plan is the result of the six organisations within the group working together to agree a common set of priorities. The LGA, Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA), Local Government Employers (LGE), Local Authority Coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS), Local Partnerships and the Leadership Centre for Local Government (LCLG) have started to work together more closely in order to deliver better on our shared ambition of making an outstanding contribution to the success of local government. This is the first time we have worked together to set common goals for the year ahead, so this business strategy is a groundbreaking first for the group.
2. The Business Plan 2009-10 sets out the priorities for the LGA over the coming year to enable us to best support local authorities. The priorities are firmly based on evidence and research, identifying the issues most important to our member authorities. By identifying and focusing on joint shared priorities we will ensure that LGA Group will be more efficient and effective in the way we serve local government throughout the coming year. This year's overarching priorities for the LGA group are:
 - **Recession** – the economic downturn, and the role of authorities in supporting their communities through, and leading them out of recession sets the context for our campaigning and lobbying activity across every policy area;
 - **Improvement and the reputation of local government** – as authorities prepare for the new CAA, our focus will be on supporting them, and their partners, to deliver improvements for local people. Our support to authorities on high profile issues like children's and adults' safeguarding, the economy, and responding to emergencies, will focus on helping authorities build their reputation locally and nationally;
 - **Efficiency and value for money** – the LGA has frozen or reduced its membership subscriptions in 2009/10 as part of its continued drive to improve value for money to member authorities. We will continue to seek to secure savings across the year, whilst at the same time lobbying at every opportunity to safeguard or secure additional government funding that reflects the cost of delivering existing or new services areas.

FSMC Work Programme

3. The FSMC work programme falls under the LGA business plan broad priorities, while being flexible enough to recognise that events will inevitably introduce new issues and raise others up the agenda. The priority work areas are:

Recession

- Gathering evidence for the next spending review
- Supporting FRAs in facing the recession

Improvement and the reputation of local government

- Lead on the development of a sector-led improvement programme for FRAs, including the first set of Comprehensive Area Assessment results (with IDeA)
- Support FRAs in the implementation of the national Equality and Diversity strategy (with IDeA)

Efficiency and value for money

- Pensions and workforce (LGE leads)
- FiReControl project
- Long term funding and governance for national functions, including Firebuy
- Fire Conference 2010
- Account management arrangements

There are also other areas of work of lower priority that will require some input from the LGA in the coming period:

- Close down of Fire Gateway
- Co-responding
- Contingency planning
- IRMP guidance review

A table setting out LGA objectives and proposed next actions for each of these issues is attached at Appendix A.

Links with the Safer Communities Board

4. In 2007-08 a task group, established under the Safer Communities Board, completed a piece of work around fire suppression and sustainable buildings. Members are asked to give consideration to possible work streams that could provide closer links with the Safer Communities Board or other Boards across the LGA Group.

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