

Note of decisions taken and actions required

Title:	Fire Services Management Committee
Date and time:	Monday 18 July, 11.00am
Venue:	Rathbone Room 1 & 2 (7th floor)

Attendance

Position	Councillor	Council
Chairman	Cllr Brian Coleman	London FEPA / Barnet LB
Vice chair	Cllr Fred Walker	Greater Manchester FRA
Deputy chair	Cllr Paul Shannon	Greater Manchester FRA
Deputy chair	Cllr Christopher Newbury	Wiltshire FA
Members	Cllr Richard Hobbs	Warwickshire CC
	Cllr Kay Hammond	Surrey CC
	Cllr Maurice Heaster OBE	London FEPA / Wandsworth LB
	Cllr John Bell	Greater Manchester FRA
	Cllr Ann Holland	Essex FRS
	Cllr David Topping	Cheshire FA
	Cllr Sian Timoney	Bedfordshire & Luton FRA
	Cllr Jeremy Hilton	Gloucestershire FRS
	Cllr Roger Price	Hampshire FRA
	Cllr John Joyce	Cheshire FA
Substitutes	Cllr Les Byrom CBE	Merseyside FRA
Apologies		
Officers:	Helen Murray; Eamon Lally; Gill Gittins; Stephen Service; Commissioner Ron Dobson (LFEPA); David Cartwright (LFEPA)	

Item	Decisions and actions	Action by
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1 Fire Service College

Mr David Cartwright (LFEP), Chair of the Fire Service College working group set out the group's conclusions.

The Chairman noted that the final report on the college had been endorsed by the Fire Commission.

Members debated the issue of land ownership, and historical debt, and the importance of CLG resolving these issues before new arrangements are in place.

David Cartwright clarified a point about broadening the scope of the college's use to include other emergency services such as the police and the armed forces. He stressed that the LG Group and CFOA's continued presence on the College boards would ensure that Fire would remain the priority for the college.

Commissioner Ron Dobson agreed that the college has been used for a range of activities in the past and that spare capacity definitely exists. He said that broadening the emergency services using the college could help develop a multi agency response.

In answer to a question on the sale of a piece of land, David Cartwright said that the sale had already gone through and that the proceeds went to central government.

It was therefore agreed to formally submit the paper to the Minister, with a covering note reflecting the issues raised within the discussion which need urgent resolution.

The Chairman asked members to present the LG Group's position on the college to the Minister.

Decision

Members endorsed the working group's report as a sector position; and encouraged further collaboration between CFOA and LG Group Officers to undertake detailed discussions with CLG.

Action

Officers to draft a covering letter for the Chairman to send to the Fire Minister with a copy of the working group's final report suggesting a meeting with Lead Members to discuss further.

**LG Group officers
(attached as Appendix A)**

2 Health and Safety in FRS

Helen Murray introduced this item. She emphasised that the key point for members was that authorities were encouraged to use the report findings as a trigger for their own reviews and highlighted paragraph 10 in the report stating that all FRSs are expected to conduct internal inspections.

Commissioner Dobson reassured the Committee that all brigades that had already been inspected had resolved any issues identified.

On the issue of Operational guidance, Commissioner Dobson said this was out of date and CFOA was working with the LG Group and FRAs to address the problem. He said that a meeting on national functions was scheduled for 26 July to discuss a new way of producing more timely and comprehensive operational guidance.

Members expressed concern that the report had taken so long to come to the Committee, saying that these were serious issues that needed to be dealt with as a matter of urgency. Members requested more information on the timescale for when work would take place on training and standards.

On training, members asked if funding was still available to ensure retained staff are able to carry out their duties.

Members requested an update from Officers on progress at a later date.

Action

Officers to take account of comments and update Members on progress of this item.

**Commissioner
Dobson, Helen
Murray**

3 Local Government Resource Review

Eamon Lally summarised the work of the LGA on this item to date.

The Chairman responded by recommending that the FSMC do a separate submission to the rest of the LG Group on this issue as there is a need to ensure that the particular circumstances and governance arrangements for FRAs are taken into account.

On localisation of business rates, Members commented that risk assessment was crucial to the services FRSs provided locally and that national resilience needs did not always follow expectations. Members therefore felt that the allocation of resources was better determined by a risk rather than needs assessment.

Members noted in Paragraph 2 of the report that Nick Clegg MP had mentioned “precepting authorities” at the LG Group conference and said it was unclear whether this included FRAs.

Members suggested that the FRS Finance group should be consulted in drawing up the submission.

Officers thanked Members for their input on this item and emphasised that they were trying to make the focus of the LG Group response practical to test out government proposals. They welcomed an independent response from the committee.

Action

Officers to develop LGRR submission, working with key officers, to discuss at the September meeting.

**LG Group
officers (Item 4
on this
agenda)**

4 End of Year Report

Chairman Coleman noted that this was the last meeting of the committee in its current membership and recorded his gratitude to its members for their work over the last year.

Cllr Hobbs and Cllr Walker responded by thanking the Chair on behalf of the committee for his leadership.

Cllr Walker reflected that financial reporting on fire funding issues was an area of the Committee's work that could be enhanced next year as this often provided valuable supporting evidence for their work.

Members noted the contents of the paper.

5 National Resilience Board

Cllr Jeremy Hilton gave a summary of the recent work of the National Resilience Board.

In response to a question on the CNR contract in 2016, Commissioner Dobson responded that it was too early to say at this stage but the decision would not lie with central government.

On the issue of updating equipment handed over and still in use, Commissioner Dobson said that the National Resilience Board are aware and working on this.

6 FSMC update paper

On Fire Control, the Chairman said that letters had already gone out to FRAs about resilience improvement money. Chairman Coleman emphasised that the amount of money each FA received would be subject to the business case they submitted.

Cllr Kay Hammond reported that the July Ministerial roundtable on Retained Duty System was productive and that Bob Neil MP has asked for the group to report back in 6 months time.

7 Notes of the last meeting

Members agreed the notes of the last meeting as a correct record.

Date of next meeting: Friday 16 September 2011, Local Government House