

Item 1

National Framework Consultation response

Purpose of report

For discussion and direction.

Summary

This report sets out the draft response from FSMC to the consultation on the National Framework.

Recommendation

Members to consider and agree a response to the consultation on the National Framework.

Action

Officers to take forward decisions.

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Response to Consultation on National Framework

Background

1. The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) published its consultation on the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework for England in December 2011. The Framework sets out the Government's priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in England. The Framework is produced under section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.
2. FSMC considered the proposed new National Framework at its meeting on 23 January 2012 and subsequently the Fire Commission considered the issues at its meeting on 17 February. The issues raised by FSMC and the Fire Commission form the draft response are set out in **Appendix A**.
3. The Framework is set out under three broad headings: Safer communities; Accountable to communities; and Assurance.
4. The Government's priorities for fire authorities, as set out in the Framework, are to:
 - 4.1 Identify and assess the full range of fire and rescue related risks their areas face, make provision for prevention and protection activities and respond to incidents appropriately
 - 4.2 Work in partnership with their communities and a wide range of partners locally and nationally to deliver their service; and
 - 4.3 Be accountable to communities for the service they provide.
5. DCLG require consultation responses by 19 March 2012.
6. Separately, the Department for Communities and Local Government and the Chief Fire Officers Association have also written to all fire authorities seeking comments on proposals for strategic governance arrangements for fire and rescue national resilience. These proposals need to be considered in conjunction with the proposed National Framework. DCLG have asked for comments on the proposals for national resilience strategic governance arrangements by 16 March 2012.

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Conclusion and next steps

7. The closing date for the consultation is 19 March 2012. We have negotiated a short extension to take account of any comments arising from the FSMC meeting.

Financial Implications

8. There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report.