

# Fire Services Management Committee

## Agenda

Friday 16 November 2012  
11.00am

Westminster Suite Room 8.1  
Local Government House  
Smith Square  
London  
SW1P 3HZ

**To:** Members of the Fire Services Management Committee  
**cc:** Named officers for briefing purposes

[www.local.gov.uk](http://www.local.gov.uk)

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**Fire Services Management Committee**  
16 November 2012

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The **Fire Services Management Committee** meeting will be held on **Friday 16 November 2012** at **11.00am**, in Westminster suite Room 8.1 (8<sup>th</sup> Floor), Local Government House, LONDON, SW1P 3HZ. A sandwich lunch will be provided afterwards at 1pm.

**Apologies**

Please notify your political group office (see contact telephone numbers below) if you are unable to attend this meeting, so that a substitute can be arranged and catering numbers adjusted, if necessary.

<b>Labour:</b>	Aicha Less: 020 7664 3263 email: <a href="mailto:aicha.less@local.gov.uk">aicha.less@local.gov.uk</a>
<b>Conservative:</b>	Luke Taylor: 020 7664 3264 email: <a href="mailto:luke.taylor@local.gov.uk">luke.taylor@local.gov.uk</a>
<b>Liberal Democrat:</b>	Group Office: 020 7664 3235 email: <a href="mailto:libdem@local.gov.uk">libdem@local.gov.uk</a>
<b>Independent:</b>	Group Office: 020 7664 3224 email: <a href="mailto:independent.group@local.gov.uk">independent.group@local.gov.uk</a>

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**Contact**

Stephen Service (Tel: 020 7664 3194, email: [stephen.service@local.gov.uk](mailto:stephen.service@local.gov.uk) )

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## Fire Services Management Committee - Membership 2012/13

Councillor	Authority
<b>Conservative (6)</b>	
Kay Hammond <b>(Chairman)</b>	Surrey CC
Mark Healey	Devon & Somerset FRS
Maurice Heaster OBE	London FEPA
John Bell	Greater Manchester FRA
David Topping	Cheshire FA
Kevin Foster	West Midlands FRA
<b>Substitutes:</b>	
Richard Hobbs	Warwickshire FA
Ann Holland	Essex FA
David Rowlands	Bucks & Milton Keynes FA
<b>Labour (5)</b>	
Sian Timoney <b>[Vice Chair]</b>	Luton BC
John Joyce	Cheshire FA
Navin Shah	London FEPA
Julie Young	Essex CC
John Edwards	West Midlands FRA
<b>Substitutes:</b>	
Les Byrom CBE	Merseyside FRA
Leslie Christie	Kent FA
Darrell Pulk	Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
<b>Liberal Democrat (2)</b>	
Jeremy Hilton <b>[Deputy Chair]</b>	Gloucestershire CC
Keith Aspden	North Yorkshire FRA
<b>Substitutes:</b>	
Roger Price	Hampshire CC
Terry Stacy MBE JP	London FEPA
<b>Independent (1)</b>	
Brian Copping <b>[Deputy Chair]</b>	Shepway DC
<b>Substitutes:</b>	
Nick Harrison	Surrey CC

## Fire Service Management Committee Attendance 2012-2013

Councillors	14.09.12	16.11.12	25.01.13	11.03.13	17.05.13	19.07.13
<b>Conservative (6)</b>						
Kay Hammond <b>[Chairman]</b>	YES					
Mark Healey	YES					
Maurice Heaster OBE	YES					
John Bell	YES					
David Topping	YES					
Kevin Foster	YES					
<b>Substitutes:</b>						
Richard Hobbs						
Ann Holland						
David Rowlands						
<b>Labour (5)</b>						
Sian Timoney <b>[Vice Chair]</b>	YES					
John Joyce	YES					
Navin Shah	NO					
Julie Young	YES					
John Edwards	YES					
<b>Substitutes:</b>						
Les Byrom CBE	YES					
Leslie Christie						
Darrell Pulk						
<b>Liberal Democrat (2)</b>						
Jeremy Hilton <b>[Deputy Chair]</b>	YES					
Keith Aspden	YES					
<b>Substitutes:</b>						
Roger Price						
Terry Stacy MBE JP						
<b>Independent (1)</b>						
Brian Copping	NO					
<b>Substitutes:</b>						
Nick Harrison	YES					

## Agenda

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### **Fire Services Management Committee**

Friday 16 November 2012

11.00am

Westminster Suite Room 8.1, Local Government House, London

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#### **For discussion**

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**Date of Next Meeting:** Friday, 25 January 2012, 11.00am, Westminster Suite  
Room 8.1, Local Government House



## **2012/13 Priorities**

### **Purpose of report**

For discussion, final input and endorsement.

### **Summary**

At the September meeting, the Fire Services Management Committee discussed a 'long list' of priorities which had been submitted from FRAs across the country. Since then, Lead Members have had a further discussion to determine the main priorities and scheduling of agenda items for discussion and decision throughout the 12/13 meeting cycle. This paper sets out a plan for the work of FSMC and the Fire Commission in the coming year, drawing also on the discussion by the Fire Commission about the format and content of meetings.

Taking on board Members' comments about the Fire Commission, we have revisited the terms of reference for that forum to reflect the purpose and status of the Commission and have included the revised terms of reference for approval.

### **Recommendation**

Members are invited to:

1. consider and comment on the forward plan and to agree a final version; and
2. agree revised terms of reference for the Fire Commission.

### **Action**

Officers to draw up detailed workstreams in the light of this discussion; and amend the Fire Commission terms of reference.

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## **2012/13 Priorities**

### **Background**

1. The LGA's Leadership Board have now agreed the overarching priorities for the 2013/14 business plan and are asking Boards and Panels to discuss priorities in line with these. The original 6 priorities have now streamlined to three, recognising that the priorities we agreed for the current year – **economic growth, funding for local government and public sector reform** – are still relevant as we move into the next financial year. Improvement has been integrated as a theme which runs through each of these.

### **Proposed priorities**

2. The Chairman and Members have been keen to ensure that this year's programme of work accurately reflects the views of our member authorities. There were a wide variety of subjects and issues submitted by FRAs for consideration and although we cannot pursue all of these because of resource constraints, we have tried to incorporate most of them to some degree in the forward plan. A good proportion chimed with our existing work on major strategic issues such as input to the next Comprehensive Spending Review, resilience and business continuity and pensions arrangements.
3. Whilst these priorities form the key planks of the work programme, we propose that the FSMC maintains an oversight role for some significant pieces of work currently in train such as ensuring the sale of the Fire Service College proceeds satisfactorily and rolling out the new Fire Peer Challenge programme, and ensuring we support FRAs to deliver Firecontrol projects. Reports and discussions will be tabled at an appropriate time throughout the year. There will also be a regular slot for Members to feed back to the wider Committee the outcomes of discussions they have had on external bodies where they have been representing the LGA.

### **Feedback from the Fire Commission**

4. Members provided some extremely useful comments in response to the Chairman's review of arrangements for the Fire Commission, both in terms of format and content which would be most beneficial for Members. In summary, in order to make the most of these meetings, Members felt that there should be a mix of issues discussed in more depth with a clearer focus on the purpose and objective of the issue; that we should take a more proactive approach to issues with more notice provided about the forward plan and meetings scheduling; time could be allocated to showcasing good practice from FRAs and adopting a workshop style if appropriate; the ability to network with colleagues remains important, as does the valuable opportunity for Members to put questions to the Fire Minister once a year. Members were also keen to establish a clearer link between the FSMC and the Commission as well as between the FSMC and the Safer and Stronger Communities Board. There were also suggestions for a newsletter/bulletin which would provide FRAs with information and updates on actions in between meetings.

5. The proposed priorities and meetings agendas have been developed to reflect these views and are summarised in the attached table. This is an outline plan which will need to remain flexible and responsive to deal with urgent business. Some items inevitably require a longer discussion to explore fully hence some flexibility and spaces in the agendas. Officers will manage the moving of agenda items carefully in consultation with Lead Members to ensure we use the time available to maximum benefit.

### **Fire Commission Terms of Reference**

6. In the light of the renewed role of the Fire Commission, it was timely to revisit the terms of reference for the Fire Commission. To date, the description has been relatively broad as a 'forum for the needs and concerns of FRAs'. However, in order to reflect the more structured and defined role, we have developed some new terms of reference for consideration by FSMC members as follows:
7. The Fire Commission shall provide the forum within the LGA for all Fire and Rescue services across England and Wales. The Fire Commission will act in a way that complements the principles and corporate priorities of the LGA as a whole.
8. The purpose of the Commission shall be to:
  - 8.1 Provide the forum in which fire authorities can discuss matters of common concern and exchange good practice and experience.
  - 8.2 Discuss in-depth policies and issues and feed in views to the Fire Services Management Committee, so that the Fire Services Management Committee can take into account the needs, priorities and aspirations of all fire authorities in formulating and promoting its policies.
  - 8.3 Assist in promoting the role and interests of fire authorities and the ability of those authorities to meet the needs of the communities they serve.
9. The Commission will achieve these objectives by:
  - 9.1 Bringing together representatives of fire authorities four times a year and arranging other meetings, conferences and seminars as appropriate.
  - 9.2 Working closely with the LGA's Fire Services Management Committee to inform their decisions.
  - 9.3 Appointing representatives to work on sector specific campaigns, task and finish groups, and projects identified by Members.

**Conclusion and next steps**

10. Following a decision by FSMC on its priorities, officers will prepare a detailed work programme to manage the day to day work and the Chairman will write to all members of fire authorities letting them know about the agreed priorities.
11. Subject to Members' agreement, these revised terms of reference will need to be ratified by LGA's General Assembly in July 2013. In the meantime, they will be made available publicly on the website.

**Financial Implications**

12. All work can be met from existing resources.



FSMC	F Commission	FSMC	F Commission	FSMC	FSMC	F Commission	FSMC	F Commission	FSMC
16 November – <b>Minister attending</b>	7 December	25 January	15 February – <b>Minister attending</b>	12 March (at conference)	17 May	14 June	19 July		
Priorities; and FSMC/SSCB joint working group PCCs/FRAs	Initial Analysis of Autumn statement	President of CFOA: Vij Randeniya	In-depth discussion of H+S implications of Atherstone	Run through conference arrangements	CSR submission	Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme	End of year report, including finance report		
Intervention Protocol: condoc response	Good practice case study	Improvement support model or Conference publications or Skills for justice	Sprinklers update	Primary Authority	Report back on PCCs/FRA working group	In-depth discussion One Year On: how is the Localism Act working for FRAs (including Community Right to Challenge/trading and charging)	Review of Strategic Resilience Board arrangements		
Assurance statement: condoc response	Pensions	Equalities Paper	Industrial relations update	No updates required: only urgent business	Conference feedback	Industrial relations update	Industrial relations update		
Autumn statement letter	Priorities	NJC arrangements: stakeholder involvement	Minutes from 25/1 FSMC		Industrial relations update	Minutes from 12/3 and 17/5 FSMC	Update paper		
Industrial relations update	Minutes from 16/11 FSMC	2014 Conference	Update paper		Report back on outside bodies	Update paper			
Report back on outside bodies	Industrial relations update	Industrial relations update			Update paper				
Update paper	Update paper	Report back on outside bodies							
		Update paper							





## **Police and Crime Commissioners and Fire and Rescue Authorities**

### **Purpose of report**

For information.

### **Summary**

As one of the issues discussed at the September FSMC under the priorities item, Councillor Kay Hammond submitted a paper to the Safer and Stronger Communities Board on 5 November, proposing the establishment of a joint task and finish group made up of members from the Fire Services Management Committee and Safer and Stronger Communities Board, to look at the relationship of Police and Crime Commissioners to Fire and Rescue Authorities.

### **Recommendation**

Members are asked to note progress and consider the appointment of 3 FSMC/Fire Commission Members to the Task and Finish Group.

### **Action**

Officers to take action as directed.

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## **Fire and Rescue Authorities and Police and Crime Commissioners**

### **Background**

1. During the priorities discussion at the Fire Services Management Committee in September, and in response to a number of member authorities which highlighted this issue, Members were keen to explore the new policing and community safety landscape with the election of Police and Crime Commissioners on 15 November and understand the implications for the Fire and Rescue service. As Members have noted, the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme provides an important context for a discussion about how PCCs, Police and Crime Panels and FRAs (both independently and as responsible authorities on Community Safety Partnerships) work together.
2. Police and Crime Commissioners and Police and Crime Panels will need to develop a close working relationship with fire authorities, as well as ambulance services and as new governance arrangements come into effect, Members may wish to examine these interdependencies.
3. As Members are aware, Police and Crime Panels will scrutinise the actions and decisions of PCCs. This role will include ensuring that the PCC's actions and decisions have:
  - 3.1. achieved the aims set out in their police and crime plan;
  - 3.2. considered the priorities of community safety partners; and
  - 3.3. consulted appropriately with the public and victims.
4. Fire authorities are important partners in local community safety partnerships. They provide strategic input, but also deliver diversionary and education programmes for young people, and activity that is successful in reducing re-offending. A recent LGA poll of PCC candidates showed that Community Safety Partnerships were rated by 83% as being important partners to work with, although none identified Fire and Rescue Authorities independently.
5. Police and Crime Commissioners have the primary role in scrutinising police forces' performance in delivering the Strategic Policing Requirement, which includes the requirement for the police to work effectively with other blue-light emergency services in emergency planning and response to major incidents.
6. Fire services are scrutinised by scrutiny committees in county run services and by a variety of arrangements in stand alone authorities. As the legislation is currently drafted, Police and Crime Panels cannot scrutinise the performance of fire authorities as their sole role is to hold Police and Crime Commissioners to account, although Panels will of course be examining community safety activity more broadly. Fire services do, however, remain accountable as responsible authorities on community safety partnerships to councils' crime and disorder overview and scrutiny committees. Currently however there is no link between Police and Crime Panels and crime and

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disorder overview and scrutiny committees. Some councillors sitting on Police and Crime Panels though will have fire authority experience and fostering a closer sense of working collaboratively across services in the interests of delivering the JESIP work, efficiencies across services and making communities safer will, no doubt, be a priority.

7. The LGA has already done a substantial amount to identify and explore the relationship between PCCs, Police and Crime Panels and local authorities. It would however be helpful for a Member-led group to explore what this changing landscape means for Fire and Rescue Authorities going forward.

**Relationship with Fire and Rescue Authorities**

8. There is an important role the FSMC can play in raising the profile of FRAs with Police and Crime Commissioners for a number of reasons:
  - 8.1. It will be important for PCCs to be aware of and to be able to factor in the wide-ranging and successful community safety work of fire authorities.
  - 8.2. Similarly it will be important for PCCs to understand the wider emergency planning framework and their links alongside fire services and councils with local resilience forums and emergency planning in their force area.
  - 8.3. The relationship between FRAs, local resilience forums, Police and Crime Panels, and crime and disorder overview and scrutiny committees will also need to be explored and understood.
  - 8.4. It will also be important to understand the role of the police and crime panels and scrutiny functions within councils and fire authorities in assessing the effectiveness of “blue light” collaboration on emergency planning and response.

**Establishing a task and finish group**

9. It is proposed that:
  - 9.1 A task and finish group is established to consider the issues set out above.
  - 9.2 The task and finish group will have six members, three from the Fire Services Management Committee/Fire Commission and three from the Safer and Stronger Communities Board.
  - 9.3 The task and finish group will be supported by LGA staff and also advisers from the fire service, the police and councils as appropriate.
  - 9.4 The task and finish group will draw on emerging good practice and set out a broad blue-print for PCC and fire authority collaboration as well as collaboration across the scrutiny functions.
  - 9.5 The task and finish group will aim to complete its work by June 2013.

**Conclusion and next steps**

10. The Safer and Stronger Communities Board fully endorsed this proposal as an important joint piece of work and an early example of the two Boards working much more closely together. Terms of Reference will be developed following discussion of the issues set out in paragraph 8 and nominations will now be sought via the LGA's political group offices.



## **Assurance Statement: consultation response**

### **Purpose of report**

For discussion and direction.

### **Summary**

This paper sets out the key details of DCLG's consultation on Assurance Statement Guidance. It also sets out a proposed joint FSMC/CFOA response to the consultation.

### **Recommendation**

Members are asked to consider the content of the consultation and to comment on and agree a final version of the consultation response.

### **Action**

Officers will act as directed.

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## **Assurance Statement: consultation response**

### **Background**

1. The Government published a consultation on Assurance Statement guidance on 20 September 2012.
2. The new National Framework states that “to provide assurance, fire and rescue authorities must publish an annual statement of assurance” *Fire and rescue National Framework Paragraph 3.2*
3. The aim of the Assurance Statement guidance is to indicate what should be incorporated within authorities’ assurance statements.

### **The draft Assurance Statement guidance**

4. The Assurance Statement guidance sets out the content requirement under four broad headings, Financial, Governance, Operational and Framework Requirements.

#### *Finance*

5. The guidance states that “the statement of assurance should briefly set out whatever assessment procedures are in place with regard to fire and rescue authorities’ statements of account. For example, some authorities may have in place internal control mechanisms which ensure efficient and effective management of accounts. Other authorities may have specific audit arrangements, either internally or under agreement with other authorities. Therefore, for the statements of assurance, authorities should set out what arrangements they have put in place, indicating their level of satisfaction with them and any proposals for improvements. Consideration should be given to referencing savings targets, budget planning, and value-for-money on spending”

#### *Governance*

6. On governance, the Guidance states that “the statement of assurance should set out what work they have undertaken in conducting a review of the effectiveness of their governance framework, including the system of internal control”.
7. It suggests that a review might cover:
  - 7.1. the adequacy and effectiveness of any review processes put in place by the authority management
  - 7.2. any outcomes from a formal risk assessment and evaluation, e.g. a risk register
  - 7.3. any self-assessments of specific service areas

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- 7.4. any other relevant internal audit reports
  - 7.5. any outcomes from reviews by other bodies including external auditors
  - 7.6. how the implementation of any recommendations made by such bodies are being taking forward
  - 7.7. the performance of any service that has been contracted out; including any areas where performance has fallen below a satisfactory standard, and any actions taken by the fire and rescue authority to rectify this.
8. The guidance also notes that in developing the Assurance Statement “fire and rescue authorities should consider the principals of transparency set out in the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency”.

*Operational*

9. The draft guidance states that “the statement of assurance should include details of the extent of the consultation exercise undertaken [on IRMPs], and confirmation that communities were provided with relevant and appropriate information to enable active and informed participation in the decision making process”. It also states that “the statement of assurance should also indicate where fire and rescue authorities have entered into agreements and/or mutual aid arrangements with other relevant bodies. Where appropriate, it should include an acknowledgement that fire and rescue authorities have business continuity plans in place which are reviewed at set periods”.
10. Further the draft guidance states that “it may be of interest to communities, and would help encourage best practice, for fire and rescue authorities to include relevant summaries/information on: lessons learnt; training and development; any action plans arising from self assessments/ peer reviews; operational assessments.”
11. The draft guidance goes on to state that “the statement of assurance is the appropriate information point for communities and Government with regard to some considerations which have a bearing on operational competence/delivery”. These include:

*Statutory advice received under health and safety or other legislation*

- 11.1. Following an incident or activity where advice (e.g. a Coroner’s rule 43 letter, or Health and Safety Executive improvement measure) has been issued to the authority, it is appropriate for the fire and rescue authority to use the statement of assurance as a means to inform their communities how they are taking forward that advice.

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*Single-issue or thematic areas of interest*

- 11.2. Some communities may have an interest in how their fire and rescue authority would respond to single issue events, such as outbreaks of civil disturbance, or a chemical leakage. Where this is the case, the authority should consider using the statement of assurance to make clear to their community that operational procedures are in place to deal with such incidents, backed up by appropriate resources; and how any potential issues of concern are actively being addressed.

*Assurance and access to data and information*

- 11.3. Fire and rescue authorities' integrated risk management plans may include defined local standards for the delivery of certain functions such as call-handling, operational response times, or levels of fire safety activity. Fire and rescue authorities may wish to utilise the statement of assurance to provide high level assurance of their performance in these areas, including any commentary on actions to improve performance.

*Framework requirements*

12. The guidance states that "If there are any outstanding issues with regard to fulfilling any of the Framework requirements, fire and rescue authorities should indicate in the statement of assurance the measures that have been taken to address these matters and when they are expected to be resolved.

**LGA and CFOA engagement with DCLG before the publication of the draft Guidance**

13. Following concerns raised by FSMC about the nature of Assurance Statements at the time of the publication of the Fire and Rescue National Framework, officers from LGA and CFOA have tried to persuade DCLG to publish very limited and concise guidance in recognition that all of local government, including fire authorities already publish a range of information on financial, governance and operational matters. It is extremely disappointing that the proposed content of the Assurance Statements has not been revised to take account of the points we have raised.

**Draft consultation response**

14. The remainder of this report sets out a proposed consultation response.

*Draft consultation response*

15. The Fire and Rescue National Framework reflects the new mature relationship between central government and fire authorities and this is welcomed by the LGA and CFOA. Fire authorities have demonstrated through strong leadership, sound financial management, operational successes and high levels of public satisfaction that they are well placed, as

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the then Minister stated in the foreword to the National Framework, “to deliver the services for which they are respected and renowned without being hampered by Whitehall bureaucracy and red tape” .

16. Fire authorities recognise the need to be accountable and have worked hard, and will continue to work, to engage and communicate with communities and to be transparent on priorities and outcomes. It is against this backdrop that the LGA and CFOA have significant concerns about the planned introduction of Assurance Statements.
17. In July 2012 the LGA and CFOA wrote jointly to Neil O'Connor, Director of Fire, Resilience and Emergencies, to set out our concerns with the proposed Statement of Assurance within the new Fire and Rescue National Framework for England. These general concerns are set out again below. At the request of Neil O'Connor on 27 July the LGA and CFOA proposed a number of amendments to the draft guidance on statements of assurance in light of these concerns. These amendments reflected our view that statements of assurance should not introduce additional requirements beyond those in the National Framework or cause unnecessary duplication and should not cut across other existing statutory processes. It is disappointing that none of these amendments have been included in the guidance subsequently issued for consultation on 20 September by DCLG and that the concerns of the professional and political leadership of fire and rescue services have been largely ignored.
18. LGA and CFOA believe that statements of assurance place a significant and duplicative burden on fire authorities, requiring the restating of information that is already publicly available on financial, governance and operational matters all of which are the subject of existing assurance arrangements. The new National Framework includes a strong emphasis on the accountability to communities which is welcomed by fire authorities but we believe that improving openness and transparency does not require an additional layer of process or national prescription given the high standards already achieved by the vast majority of fire authorities.
19. We are concerned that fire authorities are being singled out from the rest of the local government sector if they are required to produce assurance statements. This new requirement also fails to recognise the differing governance structures for fire and rescue services across the country. For example a fire service that is a department within a County Council does not have a separate statement of accounts, annual audit letter or governance statement as these are produced for the council as a whole. Requiring these to be produced for one service area within a council is an added burden and does not fit with the overall reporting arrangements for other council services.
20. The production of Assurance Statements is likely to require significant staff time predominantly from back office or support functions at a time when these are shrinking in order to maintain frontline provision as public spending is cut. As fire authorities are increasingly challenged to demonstrate effective use of all their resources, LGA and

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CFOA would therefore question whether these Statements represent good value for money for the public who would no doubt prefer to see limited funding invested in service delivery.

21. The guidance indicates that statements of assurance should be seen as 'a proportionate requirement for an important public service with no specific inspectorate'. LGA and CFOA do not believe that the statements will provide a higher level of assurance than is currently provided through the existing financial, governance and operational audit arrangements, nor will it provide independent assurance. On the contrary, the assurance statements seem to raise the status of self-assessment to that of national assurance which has never been the purpose of self-assessment processes and indeed could be easily challenged through the courts if they were to be used to evidence such an assurance. It is not clear therefore what benefit government or communities will derive from this particular policy.
22. Section 25 of the Fire and Rescue Act 2004 requires the Secretary of State to report to Parliament every two years on the extent to which fire and rescue authorities are acting in accordance with the National Framework. LGA and CFOA seeks clarity from DCLG on whether, in the absence of a 'specific inspectorate', the Secretary of State intends to use these statements of assurance as the basis of his report to Parliament.
23. Statements of assurance go far beyond the duties and responsibilities currently set out in the various statutory instruments that govern fire and rescue services. It is clear from the many House of Commons and House of Lords committee debates during the development of the first national framework for fire and rescue services in England that there was never an intention to extend the legal duties of fire authorities through the national framework itself.
24. DCLG have frequently indicated that any guidance that would accompany the statements of assurance would be 'light touch' in line with the Government's commitment to 'unburden local government, eliminate top-down bureaucracy, reduce red tape and increase local flexibility'. We believe that 28 paragraphs of guidance does not meet a reasonable interpretation of 'light touch'. The guidance could be reduced to a single A4 page setting out the purpose of a statement of assurance, its intended audience, frequency of publication, how it links to statutory reporting requirements and the relevant signatories.
25. Notwithstanding our general position that assurance statements are unnecessary and the guidance as crafted is burdensome and duplicative, the following comments relate to the specific questions in the consultation.

Response to Consultation Questions

*Does the draft guidance set out sufficiently clearly what is expected of fire and rescue authorities to complete their statements of assurance?*

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26. Given that this document is intended to be guidance and not instruction LGA and CFOA would suggest that all references to 'should' be removed in paragraphs 15, 20, 21, 22, 27, 28 and 31(ii), 32 and 33 and replaced with 'may'.
27. There is clear overlap with documents which fire authorities and councils are already required to produce by statute, particularly financial accounts, annual audit letters, governance statements and pay policies. These and other documents such as the Integrated Risk Management Plan and annual statistical data are produced at varying times throughout the annual cycle. If the statement of assurance is to be published within three months of the publication of the statement of accounts (paragraph 8) then there will clearly be misalignment with reporting periods for other documents. This will serve to confuse the public rather than provide clarity.
28. Paragraph 10 requires the statements to be 'signed off in the usual way'. Different legal and statutory documents are signed off by fire authorities in different ways depending upon their purpose and in most instances are also signed by the S151 officer or clerk to the authority. Further clarity is required particularly for County fire authorities where other statutory documents are agreed by the whole council.
29. The requirements in paragraphs 11 through 15 are already catered for comprehensively within the various statutory instruments governing the production, publication and auditing of local authority accounts. Independent external auditors verify the accuracy or otherwise of local authority accounts and make an assessment of the adequacy of internal controls. These paragraphs are therefore unnecessary.
30. Paragraph 16 through 18 overlaps with the previous section on internal accounting frameworks. The elements of governance statements and principles of good corporate governance are already well known across fire authorities and are kept under review by the authority's primary advisers – the s151 officer, the monitoring officer and the Chief Executive/Chief Fire Officer. The annual governance statement already identifies key corporate risks and how the authority plans to mitigate these risks.
31. Paragraph 21 seems to indicate that fire authorities would be expected to publish information regarding Operational Assessment self-assessments. LGA and CFOA have consistently argued that this would be counter productive. A self-assessment process encourages authorities to be robustly honest in their analysis of internal strengths and weaknesses so that peers may provide valuable challenge to help authorities identify their own improvements. A requirement to publish a self-assessment could potentially discourage fire authorities from taking part if they are used negatively or vexatiously by others. However, LGA and CFOA actively encourage fire authorities to publish their Operational Assessment reports and improvement plans and to date all have willingly done so.

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32. Paragraph 31 (ii) goes beyond what is already required in an authority's Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). The IRMP is a clear analysis of fire and rescue related risks in an authority's area and a statement of how the authority responds to and mitigates those risks. Whilst the civil disturbance outbreaks during 2011 involved some fire and rescue services in dealing with the consequent fires, responding to civil disturbance is primarily a police and military responsibility. This paragraph sets a level of public expectation that the fire and rescue service is equipped and resourced to respond to any and every type of 'single issue event'.
33. Paragraph 33 appears to imply that fire authorities will have the necessary resources to address any outstanding issues with regard to fulfilling the National Framework requirements. This assumption needs to be removed given the significant funding pressures facing fire authorities. This paragraph should be amended to read 'fire and rescue authorities may wish to indicate within the statement of assurance any concerns with regard to fulfilling the requirements of the Framework, the reasons why, any measures taken to address them and if they are expected to be resolved'.

*If not how could it be improved?*

34. As set out in paragraph 23 above LGA and CFOA do not view this as 'light touch' guidance and much of the content could be removed given that it duplicates existing statutory reporting requirements and does little to aid transparency or provide a higher level of assurance.
35. The guidance does not recognise the differing governance structures across fire and rescue services and therefore requires substantial amendment if it is to reflect the four current governance models – County services, combined fire authorities, metropolitan fire authorities and the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority.
36. The guidance takes no account of the differing reporting periods for individual statutory documents and statements. This will mean some of the content of the statement of assurance as currently envisaged will be significantly out of date or unavailable at the point of publication.

*Specifically what would you change and what would you add?*

37. LGA and CFOA request that detailed comments relating to statements of assurance from those that responded to the National Framework consultation are published on DCLG's website to enable members of the public, fire and rescue service staff and fire authority members to better understand why the statement of assurance is necessary. This could then be used as a signpost if any member of the public questions the value for money of

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such a reporting requirement. We have set out in detail above the areas where we would like to see the guidance changed, and we are happy to work with you on this.

**Next steps**

38. Following deliberation by FSMC officers will redraft a final version and submit the consultation response to DCLG on 16 November 2012.



**Item 4**

## **Intervention Protocol Consultation Response**

### **Purpose of report**

For discussion and direction

### **Summary**

This paper provides details of DCLG's consultation on an Intervention Protocol for Fire. It also sets out a potential response to the consultation.

### **Recommendation**

Members are asked to consider the key points of the consultation on an Intervention Protocol for Fire and to comment on and agree a final version of a consultation response from FSMC.

### **Action**

Officers to take action as directed.

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**Item 4**

## **Intervention Protocol Consultation Response**

### **Background**

1. It is a requirement under section 23 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 that an intervention protocol be prepared and for the secretary of state to have regard to it.
2. Following the development and publication of the new National Framework for Fire, the government is now consulting on a revised intervention protocol (which is referred to in paragraph 4.9 of the National Framework).
3. The original intervention protocol was drafted at a time when the performance and framework for local authorities was substantially different. Following representation from the LGA, the department recognised that the original intervention protocol was outdated and is therefore now consulting on new arrangements.
4. There is no similar requirement for local authorities. DCLG and the LGA have agreed a Local Government Accountability System Statement (paragraphs 54 to 63 have a similar scope to the Intervention protocol discussed here and are attached at **Appendix A**).

### **The New Intervention Protocol**

5. The draft Intervention Protocol sets out the circumstances leading to statutory intervention, what happens on intervention and how exceptional and urgent cases will be dealt with. The draft intervention protocol also sets out a role for the LGA in supporting authorities at risk. In summary the Draft Intervention Protocol states that:
  - 5.1 There must be clear evidence that an authority is failing to act in accordance with the National Framework;
  - 5.2 the failure must be sufficiently serious to warrant intervention;
  - 5.3 evidence needs to be robust from sources such as audit, financial reports, investigations or judicial findings;
  - 5.4 the Secretary of State has the powers to commission a corporate governance investigation and or an investigation led by the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser;
  - 5.5 The extent of intervention will be determined on a case by case basis; and
  - 5.6 The relevant fire authority will be required to draw up a recovery plan.
6. The Protocol also states that the secretary of state can require an authority to:
  - 6.1 prepare or amend a recovery plan;
  - 6.2 ensure that particular functions are carried out to achieve specified objectives or

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priorities;

- 6.3 take consultancy advice;
  - 6.4 appoint interim management;
  - 6.5 enforce appropriate levels of delegation;
  - 6.6 secure a function from a specified provider or put the function out to tender;
  - 6.7 appoint a nominee to exercise certain specified functions on behalf of the authority; and
  - 6.8 any other action that will secure the necessary improvements
7. Under exceptional or urgent cases the Protocol states that the Secretary of State retains the discretion to reduce or condense the procedures.
8. The LGA has no formal role in intervention procedures. The LGA has and will continue to provide improvement support to the local government sector, where this is identified, and this is reflected in the text of the draft Intervention Protocol.

**Draft consultation response**

9. Members briefly discussed some of these issues when the National Framework was being developed. Members and senior officers are strongly of the view that a separate Intervention Protocol for fire authorities is unnecessary. The existing Local Government Accountability System Statement already covers fire and rescue authorities, and should be sufficient.
10. Therefore, our starting position is that we would like the government to take the earliest opportunity to repeal the relevant legislation (Fire and Rescue Act 2004 sections 22 and 23) to remove this requirement.
11. The Intervention Protocol as drafted makes clear that the LGA has a role in sector improvement. The LGA will work with all authorities who request its support. This support is voluntary. It is also forward looking and aimed at supporting councils address improvement challenges, rather than audit or inspection based.
12. The LGA has sought to ensure that the draft Intervention Protocol for fire is compatible with the section on assurance contained in the Local Government Accountability System Statement (paragraphs 54-63).
13. However, the LGA can only carry out its improvement function in partnership with the professional body to ensure we draw together all relevant expertise to support a service. The important role that CFOA has to play in supporting improvement in the sector is not recognised in the draft Protocol and we should urge Government to rectify this.

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14. The draft Protocol sets out the tools and the outline processes for intervention by the Secretary of State. However there is still a degree of ambiguity.
- 14.1. The draft protocol refers to a failure “so serious as to require government intervention”, but does not attempt to illustrate what constitutes “serious”.
  - 14.2. The draft protocol lists a series of potential interventions, but does not say when each of these would be deemed appropriate.
  - 14.3. The draft protocol is silent on whether the possible interventions are discrete or are be used sequentially as part of a process of escalation. The trade off here is between flexibility (for the Secretary of State and the sector) and certainty/consistency.
15. In our response, Members may wish to press for further clarity on these issues before the Protocol is finalised.

**Next steps**

16. The deadline for responses is 15 November 2012. However DCLG has agreed to accept FSMC’s response following the agreement on it’s submission at the meeting on 16 November 2012.
17. LGA improvement support for the sector is largely confined to peer challenges and to leadership academies. There are potentially a range of other measures that could be developed by the LGA as an offer to the sector which would support the improvement offer and mitigate organisational risk. These include:
- 17.1. Mentoring for incoming fire authority chairs
  - 17.2. Support for top team development
  - 17.3. Ad-hoc support for fire authorities addressing particular issues
18. Funding for this type of support is not in place and we would need to discuss with CLG and others the sources of funding that could support this work.

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**Appendix A**

**Local Government Accountability System Statement (extract)**

**How the system responds to failure**

54. Councils which do not deliver for their local communities can be voted out by citizens. However, there are a range of external systems in place should councils fail to fulfil their functions which contribute to the maintenance of regularity, propriety and value for money. These are summarised below:
- For cases affecting an individual, the Local Government Ombudsman provides an independent route of complaint and redress.
  - For service specific failure, for example in children's services, the relevant government department has in some cases put in place specific failure and improvement regimes.
  - In terms of the overall corporate performance of a council, the Local Government Association is co-ordinating the local government sector in providing peer support to councils.
  - As a last resort, government has powers to investigate and intervene.
55. Where service failure occurs in an individual case, the Local Government Ombudsman (established under the Local Government Act 1974) can investigate. All council services can be investigated including housing, planning, education, social care, council tax, housing benefit and highways. As well as producing reports on individual complaints investigated, the Ombudsman prepares an annual review that is sent to all councils about their performance in dealing with complaints made about them to the Ombudsman. These reviews are available on the Ombudsman's website. <http://www.lgo.org.uk/CouncilsPerformance/>
56. Where the safeguarding of vulnerable people may be at stake, for example in adult social care or children's services arrangements for tackling these cases are covered under additional accountability statements (see for example the Department for Education statement,). They involve improvement and monitoring from the local government sector, led by the Local Government Association, programmes of inspection to identify failure and powers to intervene by government.
57. There are also rare cases of corporate failure that affect the whole authority. These may be cases where relationships between councillors and officers have irretrievably broken down and there may be failure across a number of services.
58. To prevent a council reaching this point, the Local Government Association co-ordinates the provision of peer support to councils on corporate performance. This can be particularly effective at key moments, such as when an authority is experiencing a transition. Sector-led improvement and support is co-ordinated at political level in the Local Government Association through their Improvement Board. Through their network of principal advisers, the Local Government Association is able to arrange mentoring by peers from another authority for members and officers, and peer review teams to support councils facing challenges.

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59. The Local Government Association has a systematic approach to identifying those councils that could benefit from preventative improvement support, based on data and informal conversations with the sector. This will be set out in a forthcoming document. Information sharing arrangements are also being put in place between the Local Government Association and government departments and the Inspectorates to ensure that the Local Government Association has the best possible intelligence to focus support. In addition, the Local Government Association will meet regularly with the Department for Communities and Local Government and each party will share intelligence about performance concerns and to assess the progress of sector support.
60. If an issue could not be resolved, or if a council refused to engage with sector led improvement, the Secretary of State could commission a corporate governance investigation to ensure a robust evidence base. He has a power to do so under s10 of the Local Government Act 1999. Currently the inspection must be carried out by the Audit Commission. The Department for Communities and Local Government will ensure that an equivalent power remains after the disbanding of the Audit Commission.
61. If a council was still unwilling to engage with the Local Government Association in light of the evidence gathered after an investigation, under s15 of the Local Government Act 1999, the Secretary of State has powers to intervene. He can direct authorities to take actions, and ultimately direct another body to take over specific functions of a council.
62. The Department for Communities and Local Government has a model for handling an intervention based on recent experience of intervention at Doncaster, which involves working closely with the local government sector. This can be used for future interventions, although it will be adapted to allow for the disbanding of the Audit Commission.
63. The process in Doncaster was as follows. After a Corporate Governance Inspection report by the Audit Commission and discussion with key stakeholders in Doncaster and the local government sector, the Secretary of State issued an intervention direction. This direction appointed a non-executive Recovery Board and three Commissioners to support and challenge the council and monitor recovery. The Secretary of State also appointed a new Chief Executive. These actions placed experienced leadership at the helm in Doncaster to closely monitor events and seek to bring about cultural change.





**Item 5**

## **Autumn Statement and preparation for the next Comprehensive Spending Review**

### **Purpose of report**

For discussion and direction.

### **Summary**

This paper sets out a set of issues faced by Fire and Rescue Authorities as a result of the funding settlement and other related issues such as the cap on council tax increases and the financial implications of council tax benefit localisation. Fire Authorities already know the overall expected changes to the fire control total for years 2013-2015 and this is unlikely to change in the Autumn Statement. However, there are a number of related issues which compound the reduction in government funding. These issues which are marginal in overall public funding terms could, if addressed provide some relief for fire authorities that are facing funding gaps even after the substantial efficiency savings that are underway or planned are realised.

It is proposed that FSMC write to Brandon Lewis MP outlining these issues in advance of the Autumn Statement and a draft letter is appended to this report.

The paper also sets out a proposal for taking forward work in support of the next CSR submission.

### **Recommendation**

Members to agree the content of a letter to Brandon Lewis set in **Appendix A** and to consider the proposal to take forward work on the next CSR set out in **paragraphs 18-24**.

### **Action**

Officers to draft letter for endorsement by the Lead Members of FSMC.

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**Item 5**

## **Autumn Statement and Preparation for the Next Comprehensive Spending Review**

### **Background**

1. The Autumn Statement will be on 5 December 2012. The announcement is later than usual and gives Fire Authorities little time to prepare budgets for 2013-14.
2. The Autumn Statement will cover the period 2013-2015. However, the funding in 2013-14 will form the baseline for the new retained business rate scheme and will therefore influence fire authorities funding into the next spending review and beyond.
3. We already know the overall levels of cuts that fire authorities will face in the next two years, -9.1% in 2013/14 and -5.5% 2014/15.
4. The total cash cut for the fire and rescues service in this spending review period is £207m or 19.6%.
5. CFOA has estimated that this equates to 4,050 firefighters, 60 fire stations and 150 fire appliances.
6. The method by which the reductions are applied in the remainder of the spending review period will make a big difference to individual authorities. This has been the subject of intensive lobbying by different groups of authorities including the Association of Metropolitan Fire and Rescue Authorities. There are at least two positions held by the sector on this issue. The two most prominent views are to rerun the formula as for 2012/13, which is likely to generate the same pattern of funding in the next two years, or to implement a single percentage reduction to apply across all fire authorities. The two approaches would have very different outcomes, with authorities benefiting or losing depending on the approach taken. The LGA has called for fairness in funding.
7. As well as the implementation of funding cuts, fire authorities will be dealing with the implications of the introduction of the retained business rate scheme, the localisation of the council tax benefit scheme and strict rules covering council tax increases.
8. The remainder of this paper sets out issues that FSMC might wish to include in correspondence with Ministers in advance of the Autumn Statement.

### **Context for fire funding**

9. In its report, *Fighting Fires or Firefighting - The Impact of Austerity on English Fire and Rescue Services*, CFOA noted that the fire sector did not receive the same levels of expansionary public funding as other sections of the public sector including the police, education and national health. In the period from 2000/01 to 2009/10 its funding increased by just over 45% in contrast to increases of over 55% for the police, nearly 80% for education and almost 100% for health. Yet, in this current spending period, along

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with the rest of local government, fire has endured some of the largest reductions in grant funding.

10. It is also important to note that fire authorities depend to varying degrees on formula grant funding. In 2010/11 Cleveland Fire authority received 69% of its funding through the formula grant. In contrast Devon and Somerset fire authority received just 28% of its funding from this source. County services will have been affected by the overall reductions to local government funding and in contrast to metropolitan authorities and combined authorities, will have faced front-loaded cuts.
11. Nevertheless, the service overall has delivered substantial reductions in the number of fires directly as a result of its work. In 2000/01 total fires were 445,000. This figure had fallen to 287,000 by 2010/11. (CLG, Fire Statistics 2010/11, Table 1.1). Fire fatalities have also declined substantially. In the year to March 2012 fire fatalities stood at 304. This is 34% fewer than in 2001/02.

### **Key issues in advance of the Autumn Statement**

12. We do not expect that the Autumn Statement to have an impact on the overall spending totals for fire beyond what we already know. However, within this broad confine there are still issues that could be addressed by government that would have a beneficial impact for the fire sector.
13. The impact of the recent austerity on the capabilities of fire authorities to keep generating these successful outcomes is unknown. This in part is because the cuts for fire authorities (other than county authorities) have been back loaded. It is imperative that government engages fully with fire authorities in understanding the risk implications of proceeding with the proposed level of cuts and sets out clearly that it is comfortable with any new levels of risk arising from funding decisions. This issue is also picked up below in proposals for taking forward work in advance of the next CSR.
14. Fire authorities are potentially going to be affected by the localisation of Council Tax Benefit (CTB) schemes. Depending on how local authorities construct their schemes to account for the overall reduction of 10% for CTB, there could be less funding available for services including fire. It is not clear that fire authorities were intended to be impacted in this way and the government must consider how it can mitigate the effects of this development on fire.
15. In October 2012 the government announced the third round of its council tax freeze grant and a new cap on council tax increases. This means that proposed increases above 2% must now be ratified by referendum. There are two issues. Firstly a 2% increase in council tax represents a relatively small amount of income for fire authorities and actually a small monetary amount for individual tax payers. The second issue is that referenda are expensive. CFA has estimated that to increase council tax amongst all precepting fire authorities by just 5% would cost an estimated £41 million in referenda costs and yet would raise just £38 million in extra income. We will want to urge the government to consider how it can vary the referendum limit for fire authorities.

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16. We know that some authorities are considering merger as one way of dealing with the severity of the funding reductions. Fire authorities have faced unnecessary barriers in their attempts to merge and we would like to see these removed. These include a lack of transparency in funding for county run services and requirements to equalise council tax.
17. These issues can be flagged with the Minister in advance of the CSR and a draft letter is set out in **Appendix A**.

**Planning for the next CSR**

18. More generally, in recent years, local government funding as a proportion of total public sector expenditure has been declining. This reflects the 2010 spending review, but also that it has been very difficult for central government to curtail its spending in the face of a flat line economy.
19. On the face of it this does not bode well for the next CSR and beyond. The austerity in public funding is now expected to last at least until 2020.
20. It should be noted that at this stage there is no confirmed date for the next CSR. If it were to conform strictly to the four year cycle then the outcomes of the next CSR should be announced in October 2014. However it is not clear what impact the general election in May 2015 will have on this timeframe.
21. A strong case will need to be made for fire in the run up to the next CSR. This cannot simply be a call for more money. Over the next few months the LGA and CFA, working with others including CLG, will need to develop a narrative for fire that includes:
- 21.1. The current benefits of the fire service in terms of:
    - Life and property saved.
    - Efficiencies/savings generated.
  - 21.2. The cost of the fire service's core role as an emergency responder (across fire, RTCs and other categories of response) at different levels of service.
  - 21.3. Public expectations of the fire service and whether the public has any appetite to accept a lower level of service.
  - 21.4. The wider economic benefits of the prevention work, not just in the area of fire but also in preventing young people entering the criminal justice system and in reducing recidivism.
  - 21.5. The cost of prevention work and what can be achieved at various levels of funding.
  - 21.6. The relationship between funding and the capacity of the service to meet its statutory duties.
  - 21.7. Current overarching risk assumptions and an assessment of aggregate risk at different levels of funding.

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- 21.8. National resilience expectations and how this will need to be funded.
22. The outcome of this work would be a carefully argued and evidence based submission which would set out a view on an appropriate level of funding, but is also very clear on the implications of lower levels of funding.
23. It is important to say that this is not about scaremongering. There are public policy choices to be made in the next CSR and the intention of this work is to ensure that there is transparency about the implications of those choices.
24. Developing a CSR submission will need Member oversight either in the form of a “commission” or through a Member chairing the work. Members are invited to consider the proposal and how it might be taken forward.

**Next steps**

25. Following the discussion of the issues above and other issues that Members raise a letter will be drafted and sent to Brandon Lewis MP.
26. Officers will develop the approach to preparing a CSR submission based on the decisions taken by FSMC.

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**Appendix A**

Brandon Lewis MP  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State  
Department for Communities and Local Government  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London  
SW1E 5DU

Dear Brandon

I am writing to you in advance of the Autumn Statement to raise with you our concerns about the proposed levels of funding for the fire sector and also to highlight some issues which, although marginal in total public finance terms, if implemented could have a large positive impact on fire authorities and the communities they serve.

In the period from 2000 to 2010 fire service funding did not keep pace with many other public services. Yet, in the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review it was one of the public services that faced the severest reductions in government funding.

For fire authorities, other than counties, the 2010 CSR reductions have been backloaded and this has been welcomed. However, it also means that risk implications of the full force of the funding reductions have not yet been tested. Even with the efficiencies that have been implemented or are planned fire authorities are still projecting a funding gap of over £80 million.

Early in the new financial year we believe that it will be important to engage with you in a substantial piece of work to understand the implications of recent funding decisions in order to inform future government decisions on funding the fire service.

Other factors are compounding the funding issues that fire authorities are facing. These are: the effective cap on council tax increases, as they affect fire authorities; the implications for fire authorities of the localisation of council tax benefit; and the lack of transparency in county fire service funding.

The cap on council tax increases, where proposed increases above 2% must be ratified by referendum present particular difficulties for fire authorities. There are two issues. Firstly a 2% increase in council tax represents a relatively small amount of income for fire authorities and actually a small monetary amount for individual tax payers. The second issue is that referenda are expensive. CFA has estimated that to increase council tax amongst all precepting fire authorities by just 5% would cost an estimated £41 million in referenda costs and yet would raise just £38 million in extra income. We urge you to consider how government can vary the referendum limit for fire authorities.

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Fire authorities are potentially going to be affected by the localisation of Council Tax Benefit (CTB) schemes. Depending on how local authorities construct their schemes to account for the overall reduction of 10% for CTB, there could be less funding available for services including fire. It is not clear that fire authorities were intended to be impacted in this way and the government must consider how it can mitigate the effects of this development on the fire sector.

I know that some authorities are considering merger as one way of dealing with the severity of the funding reductions. Fire authorities have faced unnecessary barriers in their attempts to merge and we would like to see these removed. These include a lack of transparency in funding for county run services and requirements to equalise council tax.

The funding situation in combination with the impact of the effective council tax cap and the reduction in the overall level of council tax benefit present a substantial challenge to fire authorities. I hope that you are able to consider providing some relief through the implementation of the relatively small changes outlined above.

I am happy to meet with you to discuss these issues if you would find that helpful.

Yours sincerely

Cllr Kay Hammond  
Chairman, LGA Fire Services Management Committee



## **Industrial Relations**

### **Purpose**

To update the Fire Services Management Committee on the potential for industrial unrest.

### **Summary**

This paper is for information and briefly describes any current industrial relations issues.

### **Recommendation**

Members are asked to note the issues set out in the paper.

### **Action**

This report is for information.

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## **Industrial Relations**

### **Background**

1. As far as uniformed operational staff from firefighter to Chief Fire Officer level are concerned they are in the main represented by one of four unions specific to the fire service – the Fire Brigades Union (FBU), the Fire Officers Association (FOA) the Retained Firefighters Union (RFU) and the Association Principal Fire Officers (APFO).

### **Pension scheme reform**

2. The Government's pension reform proposals are now moving in to the next formal stage. The spotlight will therefore shortly return to two of the most contentious issues – further increase in the employee contribution rate and the normal pension age review.
3. Should the unions remain aggrieved the risk of potential industrial unrest could return.
4. As far as industrial relations are concerned, Members will recall that the LGA worked closely with all parties on the first stage of this work, which moved forward without recourse to industrial unrest. We shall endeavour to do so again.

### **National issues**

5. There are no national issues with short term industrial relations implications at the present time.

### **Local issues**

6. Since the last meeting of the FSMC in September, there has been one formal conciliation request for assistance in resolution of a dispute at local level. In addition, we continue to support one fire and rescue service involved in a multi-issue dispute.
7. There has however been a considerable amount of informal work with a number of fire and rescue services.

### **Conclusion**

8. Members are asked to note the content of this report.



## **FSMC update paper**

### **Purpose of report**

For information.

### **Summary**

The report outlines issues of interest to the Committee not covered under the other items on the agenda.

### **Recommendation**

Members to note the update.

### **Action**

Officers to progress as appropriate.

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## **FSMC update paper**

### **Appointment of Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser - CLG**

1. The Department for Communities and Local Government is seeking to recruit Sir Ken Knight's successor as Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser. The appointment will be made on a fixed-term two year contract, further details can be found here:  
<https://jobsstatic.civilservice.gov.uk/csjobs.html> or by contacting CLG via [recruitment@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:recruitment@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

### **Fire and Rescue Services Protective Security Strategy**

2. CFOA/CFRA published the Fire and Rescue Services Protective Security Strategy on the 30<sup>th</sup> October. The Strategy is made up of a framework and toolkit that is designed to assist FRSs with the introduction of requirements contained in HMG Security Policy Framework (<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/security-policy-framework>). Further details on the strategy can be found here:  
<http://www.cfoa.org.uk/12729>

### **DCLG secondees**

3. The Department for Communities and Local Government is currently looking for two secondees, each for a minimum of one year, one to provide technical advice, and one to work with the Department and to support the Chief Fire Officers Association in the Department for Business Innovation and Skill's piloting of a Primary Authority Scheme for fire. Further details can be obtained via [FireSecondees@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:FireSecondees@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

### **Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency**

4. CLG's Fire and Rescue Monthly Bulletin Number 15 issued on 15 October 2011 highlighted the publication of the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/fire/fsb152011>.
5. The Code asks all local authorities, including Fire and Rescue Authorities, to follow three principles of transparency when publishing data they hold; responding to public demand; releasing data in open formats available for re-use; and, releasing data in a timely way. This includes data on senior pay, the structure of their workforce, tenders, contracts, councillor expenses, voluntary sector funding, meetings, and frontline service data so that 'armchair auditors' can clearly see the decisions being made on their behalf. The code can be found at:  
[www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/transparencycode](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/transparencycode)

### **CLG Consultation on "Improving Local Government Transparency"**

6. The Government is now consulting on making regulations to require local authorities, including fire and rescue authorities, to publish data falling within certain descriptions of information specified in the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency.

7. The consultation proposes amendments and additions to the code to facilitate greater clarity as to what data must be published, when and in what format. It also adds clarity to what the requirements will be under the proposed regulations. To take account of experience and improved best practice, the Code will be revised and updated as and when needed.

#### **Council Tax freeze and referendum threshold 2013-14**

8. The Government has announced that it will set aside an extra £450 million to help freeze council tax bills in England in 2013-14.
9. The funding will be made available, through an unringfenced grant, to councils, police and fire authorities who decide to freeze or reduce their council tax next year. Those which do so will receive £225million of funding in both financial years 2013-14 and 2014-15, equivalent to raising their council tax by one per cent. The council tax freeze offer will therefore apply separately to each billing and major precepting authority in England, rather than to each council tax bill issued.
10. In addition, in 2013-14 the Government will propose to lower the council tax referendum threshold to two per cent. This would mean if an authority seeks to raise its relevant basic amount of council tax by more than two per cent, local people would have the right to approve or veto the increase in a binding referendum. The Secretary of State will set out the detail on this in December 2012.

#### **Transitional Grant for Localising Support for Council Tax**

11. The Department for Communities and Local Government has announced £100 million will be made available to assist with the localising of council tax support. The grant will be payable in March 2013 to those authorities who adopt schemes that comply with criteria set by Government to ensure that low income households do not face an extensive increase in their council tax liability in 2013-14. This funding will enable councils to explore more sustainable approaches to managing the funding reduction which minimise the impact on vulnerable taxpayers.
12. Details on the transitional grant scheme including a Frequently Asked Questions guide can be found at:  
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/localtransitionalgrant>

#### **Fire conference – 12-13 March 2012**

13. Planning continues for the LGA's Annual Fire Conference which is taking place in Brighton on the 12 and 13 March 2012. There are already 72 delegates confirmed to attend, which is extremely positive at this stage of the conference planning. The current programme and booking instructions can be found on the LGA website, whilst the current flyer can be found at **Annex A**.  
[http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/events/-/journal\\_content/56/10171/3700831/EVENT-TEMPLATE](http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/events/-/journal_content/56/10171/3700831/EVENT-TEMPLATE)



**Fire Services College**

14. Work continues to finalise the sale of the Fire Services College. The process so far has been more complex than had been envisaged and this has resulted in some delays. It is hoped that the extra work that has been undertaken will in fact expedite the sale and result in fewer delays in the longer term. In the meantime bids should be evaluated by the middle of December.



# Annual fire conference and exhibition 2013

Tuesday 12 – Wednesday 13 March 2013

Hilton Brighton Metropole, King's Road, Brighton, East Sussex BN1 2FU

The 16th annual fire conference and exhibition will explore a number of the most topical issues on the national agenda, and will debate the key challenges facing the service in the future.



Image courtesy of East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (Photographer Steve St-Claire)

# LGA annual fire conference and exhibition 2013

Over two days delegates from the sector, chairs and chief officers from fire and rescue authorities, government officials and fire industry representatives will come together to hear from the foremost experts and thinkers in the field. A variety of interactive workshops designed to share practical knowledge and look at best practice case studies will be available to delegates.

There will be sessions on localism, the financial future of the Fire and Rescue Service, sprinklers and a case study on the challenges of unifying six fire authorities in Scotland. Delegates will also hear from the Minister and the Shadow Minister. Workshops will focus on FiReControl, strategic resilience, peer review, the Fire Service College and the Joint Emergency Service Interoperability Programme.

## Who should attend:

- Members of fire and rescue authorities
- Chief fire officers
- Portfolio holders in county fire authorities
- Chief executives of county fire authorities
- Members and officers from housing, economic regeneration and emergency planning.



## Confirmed speakers include:

**Brandon Lewis MP**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

**Chris Williamson MP**, Shadow Minister for Communities and Local Government

**Vij Randeniya**, President, Chief Fire Officers Association

**Andy Dark**, Assistant General Secretary, Fire Brigades Union

**Carolyn Downs**, Chief Executive, Local Government Association

**Neil O'Connor**, Director, Fire, Resilience and Emergencies, Department for Communities and Local Government

## Accommodation

We have secured some special rates for conference delegates with certain hotels in Brighton. For those delegates wishing to stay at the conference hotel, the Hilton Brighton Metropole please visit their booking site at [www.brightonmet.hilton.com/fire\\_conf\\_2013](http://www.brightonmet.hilton.com/fire_conf_2013)

For booking accommodation at a range of other 4 and 3 star hotels in the city please visit the bespoke webpage which has been set up by VisitBrighton to handle these bookings: <https://resweb.passkey.com/go/lgafire13>

### Contact details for VisitBrighton

Conference Delegate Accommodation Bureau:  
VisitBrighton  
First Floor  
Brighton Town Hall  
Brighton, BN1 1JA  
Tel: 01273 292626

Please note that the LGA does not take responsibility for accommodation bookings.

## Day 1 – Tuesday 12 March 2013

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09.30	Registration, refreshments and exhibition viewing
10.30	Conference opening and Chairman's welcome <b>Councillor Kay Hammond</b> , Chairman, Local Government Association Fire Services Management Committee and Cabinet Member Community Safety, Surrey County Council The Worshipful the Mayor of Brighton & Hove City Council, <b>Councillor Bill Randall</b>
10.45	<b>Plenary 1: Is localism real?</b>
11.35	Refreshments, networking and exhibition viewing
12.15	<b>Plenary 2: The financial future of the fire and rescue service</b>
13.00	Lunch, networking and exhibition viewing
13.15	<b>Fringe events</b>
14.10	<b>Shadow Ministerial Address</b> <b>Chris Williamson MP</b> , Shadow Minister for Communities and Local Government
14.55	<b>Workshop session 1</b> These workshops will be repeated. Places are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis according to room capacity W1 FiReControl W2 Strategic resilience W3 Peer review W4 Fire Service College W5 Joint Emergency Service Interoperability Programme
15.40	Refreshments, networking and exhibition viewing
16.20	<b>Workshop session 2 – a repeat of the above workshops</b>
17.10	<b>Political group meetings</b>
18.05	<b>Fire authorities meetings</b>
19.30	Drinks reception, hosted by PBI Products
20.00	Conference dinner sponsored by CAPITA (dress code: lounge suit)

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## Day 2 – Wednesday 13 March 2013

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09.00	Registration, refreshments and exhibition viewing
09.40	Welcome back from conference Chairman
09.45	<b>Ministerial address</b> <b>Brandon Lewis MP</b> , Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government
10.20	<b>Plenary 3: Sprinklers</b>
11.10	Refreshments and exhibition viewing
11.40	<b>Plenary 4: Challenges of unifying six fire authorities: Scotland's story</b>
12.30	Close of conference Lunch and exhibition viewing

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# Annual fire conference and exhibition 2013

12–13 March 2013

## How to register:

- Sign up for the LGA conference and events monthly e-bulletin at: [www.local.gov.uk/my-account](http://www.local.gov.uk/my-account)
- Complete booking form and return signed copy by post: LGA Events Team, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

**E** [events@local.gov.uk](mailto:events@local.gov.uk)

**F** 020 7863 9158

**T** 020 7664 3000

Please copy this form if you are sending more than two delegates. **Unfortunately we are unable to accept telephone bookings.**

## Organisation name:

Invoice address:

Postcode:

## Delegate one

Title (Cllr/Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss):

Full name:

Designation:

Tel:

Email:

Facilities/dietary requirements (please tick as applicable)

- ☐ Vegetarian    ☐ Vegan    ☐ Wheelchair access  
☐ Induction loop    ☐ Large print    ☐ Other

## Delegate two

Title (Cllr/Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss):

Full name:

Designation:

Tel:

Email:

Facilities/dietary requirements (please tick as applicable)

- ☐ Vegetarian    ☐ Vegan    ☐ Wheelchair access  
☐ Induction loop    ☐ Large print    ☐ Other

## Data Protection Act 1998

The LGA handles personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Sometimes we may pass on your details to third parties for marketing purposes or for mailing information about goods and services that we believe may be of interest to you.

If you **do not** wish this information to be used by **third parties** for these purposes please indicate this by placing a cross in the box ☐

If you **do not** wish to be notified about future **LGA conferences and events** please indicate by placing a cross in the box ☐

**Rates:** per delegate (*please tick as appropriate*)

- ☐ Member £360.00 plus VAT  
☐ Non Member £460.00 plus VAT

## Community/Voluntary Sector Rate

A limited number of places are available to representatives from small community and voluntary organisations at a reduced rate. Please contact the conference administrator on 020 7664 3131 for further details.

Your purchase order number \_\_\_\_\_

## Payment options

Please tick as appropriate. Please also ensure remittance advice contains full event details.

- ☐ I enclose a cheque for £\_\_\_\_\_ made payable to the Local Government Association  
☐ Please invoice us for £\_\_\_\_\_ quoting ref: **C9601**  
☐ By BACS: to Nat West, sort code 56-00-20 a/c number 24575607  
☐ Please forward a VAT receipt (this will be sent to you in due course – LGA VAT No. 676078107)

## Terms and conditions

By completing this booking form you are indicating you wish to attend an LGA conference. If there are places available you will receive booking confirmation and/or joining instructions in due course. If there is limited or no availability you will be advised within two working days that you have been placed on a waiting list

**Substitute** delegates are welcome. If possible, please advise name changes in advance, in writing via email or fax. Invoicing will generally reflect the delegate who attended the conference unless a name change is received after invoicing. The LGA expects invoices to be paid as per the original delegate booking.

**Purchase order numbers** must be provided with booking forms. Bookings will not be processed until a valid purchase order number has been supplied.

Cancellations must be advised in writing via email or fax by **12 February 2013** after which it will not be possible to refund fees. Bookings received and subsequently cancelled after these dates or bookings for delegates who do not attend on the day will still be payable in full, whatever the circumstances eg changes to delegate's personal circumstances, inclement weather, transport delays or any other reasons outside the LGA's control.

**Note** It may be necessary for reasons beyond the control of the LGA to change the content, timing, speakers or the venue for this conference. Please be advised that the LGA cannot be held responsible for any travel or accommodation costs incurred should a conference be postponed or cancelled.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please note: by signing this booking form you are agreeing to the terms and conditions detailed above.**

## Note of decisions taken and actions required

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**Title:** Fire Services Management Committee  
**Date and time:** Friday 14 September 2012, 11.00am  
**Venue:** Smith Square Rooms 3 and 4

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### Attendance

Position	Councillor	Council
Chairman	Cllr Kay Hammond	Surrey CC
Vice chair	Cllr Sian Timoney	Luton BC
Deputy chair	Cllr Jeremy Hilton	Gloucestershire FRA
Members	Cllr Mark Healey	Devon & Somerset FRA
	Cllr Maurice Heaster OBE	London FEPA
	Cllr John Bell	Greater Manchester FRA
	Cllr David Topping	Cheshire FRA
	Cllr Kevin Foster	West Midlands FRA
	Cllr John Joyce	Cheshire FRA
	Cllr Julie Young	Essex FRA
	Cllr John Edwards	West Midlands FRA
	Cllr Keith Aspden	North Yorkshire FRA
Substitutes	Cllr Nick Harrison	Surrey CC
	Cllr Les Byrom CBE	Merseyside FRA
Apologies	Cllr Brian Copping (Deputy Chair)	Shepway DC
	Cllr Navin Shah	London FEPA/ Harrow LB
Officers:	Helen Murray, Gary Hughes, Eamon Lally, Gill Gittins, Steve Service (LGA)	

Councillor Kay Hammond welcomed Members and Officers to the meeting, and introduced herself as the new LGA Chairman for Fire. She announced that she had met with the new Minister for Fire, Brandon Lewis earlier that week and had a productive conversation. The Minister had readily agreed to attend a forthcoming FSMC meeting and a Commission meeting in the new year. She asked Officers to arrange this for November and invite Chairs and CFOs to attend as observers.

**Stephen  
Service**

**1. Fire Services Management Committee Membership and appointments to outside bodies 2012-13**

Helen Murray, Head of Programme introduced this item. Helen drew Members' attention to Appendix C for this item, which outlines the outside bodies for last year. She asked Members to consider whether they wish to continue appointing to the current bodies and if so, to nominate Members for 2012/13.

Members agreed the following Members as representatives:

**CLP Sub-Group for Fire -** Cllr Kay Hammond  
Cllr Sian Timoney  
Cllr Jeremy Hilton  
Cllr Brian Copping

The Committee agreed that Kay will meet the Minister quarterly to raise ongoing issues, with the rest of the sub group available for difficult and continuing issues.

**Firefighters' Pensions Committee -** Cllr Maurice Heaster

**Strategic Resilience Board –** Cllr Mark Healey  
Cllr Jeremy Hilton

**Fire Service College Strategic Stakeholder Board –** Cllr John Joyce

**CFOA, RDS and Operational Training Working Group –** Cllr Mark Healey

Members agreed that the Fire Service College and Fire Peer Challenge working groups have fulfilled their initial remit, and could therefore be removed from the list. Outstanding issues regarding the College would be picked up by Cllr Joyce in his role on the strategic stakeholder board, while matters regarding



training, managing and supporting peers could be addressed by the Board as they arose.

Cllr Hammond announced that Commissioner Dobson had agreed to continue as strategic advisor to the FSMC for another year. Cllr Hammond said that she was keen to meet the other executive officers who provide advice to the FSMC and the NJC.

#### Decision

Members formally noted the membership for the LGA Fire Services Management Committee and appointed to the outside bodies as outlined.

#### Action

LGA Officers to arrange meeting between Cllr Hammond and FSMC executive officers.

**Gill Gittins**

Officers to inform outside bodies of any changes in, or confirm continuation of, LGA representatives.

**Stephen Service**

Officers to confirm any new appointments directly to members and also via a paper for information at the next appropriate full Committee meeting. (The list is attached at **Appendix A**).

**Stephen Service**

## **2. Future priorities**

Eamon Lally, LGA Senior Advisor presented a summary of priorities suggested by FAs across England in response to Cllr Hammond's letter to Chairs and CFOs.

On the **work time directive**, the Chairman reported that during her meeting with the Minister, he assured Cllr Hammond that he will continue to represent Fire Authorities' case in Europe, opposing any restrictions that would prevent authorities from doing their job.

Some Members felt that the LGA should encourage consideration of work patterns as a whole rather than just those of retained firefighters.

Members raised the issue of **new ways of working** and the potential opportunities for pooling resources in partnership with

the other emergency services. Engaging with young people was offered as an example where partnership working could provide direct benefits.

With the introduction of **PCCs**, Members were keen to foster a strong working relationship as early as possible between the Fire service and these individuals who would have their own mandate upon being elected. However, some Members expressed anxiety that PCCs would have a primary remit to save money above all else. While the reputation of Fire was second to none in the mind of the public, they warned of the dangers of not getting the relationship right.

Cllr Hammond responded that she was looking to develop a stronger relationship with the Safer and Stronger Communities Board and suggested that issues such as PCCs/FRAs working could provide the remit for a joint working group.

Some Members felt that **equality and diversity** needed to be reevaluated in the wake of the recent successful recruitment of new female Fire Officers. There was a perceived risk that following this positive step, the agenda had lost focus. Others argued that the impact of E&D was limited at a time when many FRAs were not recruiting. Members agreed that sharing good practice between FRAs and addressing some key E&D issues informally was a potential means of addressing the situation.

Commissioner Dobson noted that some unions had adopted ambiguous positions on equality and diversity, with the fire brigades union recently removing guaranteed voting rights from minority representatives (in practice this removes guaranteed seats for LGBT, women and ethnic minority representatives on its national committee). He emphasised that the FSMC would need to monitor this and consider the approach which employers should take.

Members were concerned about whether the FSMC would be able to do justice to all priorities expressed by FRAs. Cllr Hammond responded that one of the main reasons for seeking the views of FRAs was to identify the synergies between them rather than try to address every authority's individual needs. Members agreed that the issues which were most urgent and had the biggest impact should be given precedence by the LGA.

Cllr Hammond thanked Members for their input and proposed to

meet with the other lead members to develop the work programme further. As part of the planning process she intended to discuss ways to harness the knowledge and expertise of the Fire Commission on these issues.

Action

Officers to progress as directed by Members.

**Eamon Lally**

**3. Fire and Rescue Peer Challenges**

Gary Hughes, Programme Manager for Peer Support presented an outline programme and dates for proposed training sessions for Member peers. He added that the political groups now feel that there is an adequate number of Member peers for the Peer challenges planned.

Two Sounding Boards have also been proposed to review the current list of peers; a Chief Officer Sounding Board, with Member involvement and a separate Member Sounding Board. Members said that CFO Paul Fuller would like to be involved in the Officer sounding Board.

Members argued that current lists of trained Members rely on anecdotal information on issues such as whether they still sit on a Fire Authority and whether they are still interested in peer work. Helen confirmed that all the lists had been updated but there was more to be done to ensure lists were kept up to date. Cllr Timoney agreed to discuss the Labour list with Cllr Bryony Rudkin as the lead peer for her group.

Councillors noted that both of the training dates offered took place during half term and urged officers to be mindful of peers with children. They asked for a schedule of peer challenges to be circulated. On the dates clash, Gary responded that these had been provisional and he agreed to reconsider timing based on this feedback.

Some Members argued for the FSMC to scrutinise the allocation of peers to requests and the quality of peers. However Cllr Hammond said that it was the responsibility of lead peers to check on peers' involvement and vetting the membership of other groups as a committee would be inappropriate. The emphasis should be on persuading lead members to ensure a pool of quality peers who were suitably trained.

Decision

Members **endorsed** the work programme as outlined.

Action

Officers to seek alternative dates for Member Peer training.	<b>Gary Hughes</b>
Paul Fuller to be included in the Officer Sounding Board.	<b>Gary Hughes</b>
Cllr Timoney to discuss Labour list with Cllr Rudkin.	<b>Cllr Sian Timoney</b>
Schedule of peers reviews to be circulated to members of the committee.	<b>Gary Hughes / Steve Service</b>
Officers to action in accordance with the Committee's decisions.	<b>Eamon Lally</b>

**4. Retained Business Rate Scheme Technical Consultation**

Eamon Lally summarised the Government's proposed changes to the retained business rate scheme. He stressed that the detail of the proposal was complex and that the full impact of changes was difficult to ascertain, however it was anticipated that the effect on FRA funding would be tough.

The LGA's consultation response emphasised that the Government's postponed release (December 2012) of details of FRA funding for the next 2 years made it difficult for FRAs to assess their situation. Furthermore, there was currently no evidence that the Government were aware of the risks presented by the changes.

Eamon added that he would invite Kieran Timmons to come to the Fire Commission to talk about the proposals in more detail if Members wished. The Commission agreed that this would be helpful and asked if the plain English guide to business rates issued by DCLG could be circulated to the Committee.

Cllr Hammond welcomed views from Members on the LGA's consultation response.

Members commented that the proposal was an important document. They emphasised that a more robust formal response to the consultation was needed in the circumstances,

and asked Officers to stress that FAs were “not as confident as the Government” when considering the risks of the proposals.

Members made several detailed comments on the content of the consultation response which were noted by Officers. Officers agreed to share the final draft of the response with lead members before sending it to ensure the content was suitably robust.

Members agreed that despite the consultation closing before October, it was appropriate that a report on this item should be presented at the next Fire Commission. Cllr Hammond said that more work on understanding the impact of the proposals needed to be done in the meantime.

Action

Kieran Timmons to be invited to do Business Rate scheme presentation to October Fire Commission, and produce simple illustrative examples to show impact on different types of FRAs.

**Eamon Lally**

CLG’s plain English guide to be circulated to Members.

**Steve Service**

LGA Officers to share final version of consultation response with lead Members.

**Eamon Lally**

Report on the Retained Business Rate Scheme to go to Fire Commission in October.

**Eamon Lally**

**5. Primary Authority Scheme and the Fire and Rescue Service**

Helen Murray introduced this item. She stressed that this was a preliminary look at the issues involved as many different views existed in different FAs on the Primary Authority approach. The Government propose to run pilots of the scheme through the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

Some Councillors argued that the need for the scheme was unclear and that it seemed to create unnecessary bureaucracy. Members agreed that it would be sensible to gather more information regarding the potential impact of the scheme before making a decision on the LGA’s position.

With a preponderance of headquarters in London, Members were concerned that London could end up being responsible for

much of the regulating. Commissioner Dobson agreed that this was a genuine concern, but emphasised that achieving consistency was the ultimately aim of the proposal.

Cllr Hammond concluded that some advantages and opportunities could be seen in taking up the scheme, but FAs needed to see the outcome from the pilots before developing a firm view. She proposed that this item return to the FSMC agenda once more work has been done.

Decisions

*The Fire Services Management Committee **noted** the update.*

Action

Officers to report back to the FSMC on this issue once the scheme has been piloted.

**LGA Officers**

**6. Industrial Relations**

The Committee received an update from Gill Gittins, LGA Principal Negotiating Officer on the latest developments in industrial relations.

Decisions

*The Fire Services Management Committee **noted** the update.*

Action

Officers to progress as appropriate.

**Gill Gittins**

**7. FSMC update paper**

On the **DCLG secondment programme for firefighters**, Commissioner Ron Dobson said that where this had previously been fully paid by DCLG, there would now be a financial cost for FRAs beyond a capped limit. Members commented that with budgets already tight, the additional cost could dissuade FRAs from releasing officers in future. Cllr Hammond agreed to write to the Minister on this issue.

Cllr Hammond asked Members to encourage officers to attend the Rescue Conference at the London Fire Brigade **World**

**Rescue Challenge event** on 19 October.

Members asked for the calendar of Board dates for 2012/13 to be re-circulated in light of the FSMC being held the day before the **Fire conference** on Monday 11 March. LGA Officers agreed to book accommodation for all FSMC Lead members, and let them know once this was confirmed.

Cllr Hammond said that in her conversation with the Minister on **sprinklers**, Brandon Lewis signalled that he was reluctant to regulate on the issue and suggested that cultural change could be achieved through institutions such as care homes leading by example.

The Chairman reported that she had emphasised to the Minister that FRAs are taking legal advice over the issue of **retained firefighters' pensions**.

Action

Letter to be sent from Cllr Hammond to Brandon Lewis MP about the secondment scheme and the capped costs, asking for all costs to be reimbursed.

**Eamon Lally**

Calendar of Board dates for 2012/13 to be re-circulated.

**Steve Service**

LGA to book accommodation for all FSMC Lead members, and let them know once confirmed.

**Clive Harris**

**8. Note of the last meeting - 16 July 2012**

Members approved the minutes of the previous meeting.

**Date of Next Meeting:**

**Friday, 16 November 2012 at 11.00am in Local Government House**





## Appendix A

### Fire Services Management Committee – Outside Bodies and structures

#### Outside Bodies

Organisation / contact details	Background	Representatives
<b>CLP Sub Group for Fire</b>	Chair will meet the Minister quarterly to raise ongoing issues. CLP available for difficult and continuing issues.	<p><b>4 places</b></p> <p>Cllr Kay Hammond (Con) Surrey CC</p> <p>Cllr Sian Timoney (Lab) Bedfordshire and Luton FA</p> <p>Cllr Jeremy Hilton (Lib Dem) Gloucestershire CC</p> <p>Cllr Brian Copping (Indep) Shepway DC</p>
<p><b>Firefighters' Pensions Committee</b></p> <p>Anthony Mooney, DCLG <a href="mailto:anthony.mooney@communities.gsi.gov.uk">anthony.mooney@communities.gsi.gov.uk</a></p>	The Firefighters' Pensions Committee is a consultative body, representative of key stakeholders in the Fire and Rescue Service, on issues related to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme(s).	<p><b>1 place</b></p> <p>Cllr Maurice Heaster, LFEPA (Con)</p>

<p><b>Strategic Resilience Board</b></p> <p>Helen Davies / Karen Smith, DCLG Email: <a href="mailto:Helen.Davies@communities.gsi.gov.uk">Helen.Davies@communities.gsi.gov.uk</a> <a href="mailto:Karen.Smith@communities.gsi.gov.uk">Karen.Smith@communities.gsi.gov.uk</a></p>	<p>The Board aims to deliver a sector-led approach to sustaining New Dimension capabilities into the future through establishment of an assurance framework and body managed by CFOA through the FRS National Resilience Board.</p>	<p><b>2 places</b></p> <p>Cllr Jeremy Hilton (Lib Dem) Gloucestershire CC</p> <p>Cllr Mark Healey (Con) Devon &amp; Somerset FRA</p>
<p><b>Fire Service College Strategic Stakeholder Board</b></p> <p>Kim Robinson Tel: 01608 650831 Email: <a href="mailto:krobinson@fireservicecollege.ac.uk">krobinson@fireservicecollege.ac.uk</a></p>	<p>The Fire Service College is responsible for providing leadership, management and advanced operational training courses for senior fire officers from the UK and foreign fire authorities. The Board ensures stakeholder involvement in the activities of the College.</p>	<p><b>1 place</b></p> <p>Cllr John Joyce (Lab) Cheshire FRA</p>
<p><b>CFOA, RDS and Operational Training Working Group</b></p> <p>Paul Hancock, Chair: Tel: 01606 868810 Email: <a href="mailto:paul.hancock@cheshirefire.gov.uk">paul.hancock@cheshirefire.gov.uk</a></p>	<p>The Group meets to discuss work practices for retained duty systems and develop recommendations.</p>	<p><b>1 place</b></p> <p>Cllr Mark Healey (Con) Devon and Somerset FRS</p>

## LGA structures

LGA Structure	Background	Representatives
<b>Sprinklers Campaign Working Group</b>	<p>The Sprinklers Campaign Working Group was set up to develop a campaign to highlight the importance of fitted Sprinkler systems and increase public awareness of the issue.</p>	<p><b>5 places</b></p> <p>Cllr John Edwards (Lab) West Midlands FRA</p> <p>Cllr Rebecca Knox (Con) Dorset FA</p> <p>Cllr Richard Hobbs (Con) Warwickshire FA</p> <p>Cllr Dave Hanratty (Lab) Merseyside FA</p> <p>Cllr David Milsted (Lib Dem) Dorset FA</p>

# LGA location map

## Local Government Association

Local Government House  
Smith Square  
London SW1P 3HZ

Tel: 020 7664 3131  
Fax: 020 7664 3030  
Email: [info@local.gov.uk](mailto:info@local.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.local.gov.uk](http://www.local.gov.uk)

## Public transport

Local Government House is well served by public transport. The nearest mainline stations are:

Victoria and Waterloo: the local underground stations are

**St James's Park** (Circle and District Lines), **Westminster** (Circle, District and Jubilee Lines), and **Pimlico** (Victoria Line) - all about 10 minutes walk away.

Buses 3 and 87 travel along Millbank, and the 507 between Victoria and Waterloo stops in Horseferry Road close to Dean Bradley Street.

## Bus routes – Horseferry Road

**507** Waterloo - Victoria

**C10** Canada Water - Pimlico - Victoria

**88** Camden Town - Whitehall - Westminster - Pimlico - Clapham Common

## Bus routes – Millbank

**87** Wandsworth - Aldwych

**3** Crystal Palace - Brixton - Oxford Circus

For further information, visit the Transport for London website at [www.tfl.gov.uk](http://www.tfl.gov.uk)

## Cycling facilities

The nearest Barclays cycle hire racks are in Smith Square. Cycle racks are also available at Local Government House. Please telephone the LGA on 020 7664 3131.

## Central London Congestion Charging Zone

Local Government House is located within the congestion charging zone.

For further details, please call 0845 900 1234 or visit the website at [www.cclondon.com](http://www.cclondon.com)

## Car parks

Abingdon Street Car Park (off Great College Street)

Horseferry Road Car Park  
Horseferry Road/Arneway Street. Visit the website at [www.westminster.gov.uk/parking](http://www.westminster.gov.uk/parking)

