

11 March 2013

**Item 6**

**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**

### **Council Tax levels in 2013-14**

1. The Government is making up to £450m available to English local authorities, including single purpose fire and rescue authorities that freeze or reduce their basic amount of council tax in 2013-14. DCLG will be strongly encouraging FRAs to sign up to this offer. Of the eight authorities offered increased flexibilities around the 2% referendum level, to date, only one, Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Authority, has chosen not to raise its precept in line with the freedoms.

### **Update on the SSCB/FSMC Working Group on PCCs**

2. The task and finish group met for the first time on 1 February to agree it's work programme and next steps. Members and officers are now seeking to identify how FRAs are engaging with Police and Crime Commissioners and are keen to get as much feedback as possible. To facilitate this, Cllr Rebecca Knox has written to FRA Chairs on behalf of the task and finish group, asking for submissions to form a broad blue-print for PCC and fire authority collaboration as well as collaboration across the scrutiny functions that can be used by Fire and Rescue Authority members. Examples of emerging good practice can be sent to [clive.harris@local.gov.uk](mailto:clive.harris@local.gov.uk).

### **Fire safety pages on www.gov.uk**

3. All fire safety information and guidance documents can now be found at [www.gov.uk/dclg](http://www.gov.uk/dclg) following closure of the CLG website. Many fire and rescue authority websites previously linked through to the fire safety pages on the Department for Communities and Local Government website. Therefore, any fire and rescue authorities who had previously linked to any pages on the old website will need to update their websites accordingly.
4. An overview of Government's policy to support fire and rescue authorities to reduce the number and impact of fires can be found here via the link below. This includes information on fire prevention activity (including a link to the Fire Kills literature range) and an overview of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/supporting-fire-and-rescue-authorities-to-reduce-the-number-and-impact-of-fires>.

### **Fire Safety in the workplace**

5. The 'Fire safety in the workplace' guide includes more detailed information about the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and signposts users to the range of Fire Safety Risk Assessment guidance documents. <https://www.gov.uk/workplace-fire-safety-your-responsibilities>
6. These documents are all published on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) and can also be found via the publication series, 'Fire safety law and guidance documents for business' (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/series/fire-safety-law-and-guidance-documents-for-business>). This series

also includes links to the Local Authority Coordinators of Regulatory Services guidance on Fire Safety in Housing, the Local Government Improvement Division guidance for fire safety in purpose built flats and the Health and Safety Executive Fire Safety in Construction guide.

**National Resilience capability assurance**

7. The Department for Communities and Local Government has reached a three year agreement (April 2013 – March 2016) with CFOA National Resilience Limited to provide a range of assurance functions to ensure the continuing effectiveness of national resilience assets and capabilities.