

# Fire Services Management Committee

## Agenda

Monday 11 March 2013  
4.00pm

Edinburgh Suite  
Hilton Brighton Metropole Hotel  
Kings Road  
East Sussex  
Brighton  
BN1 2FU

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

## **Fire Services Management Committee**

11 March 2013

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The **Fire Services Management Committee** meeting will be held on **Monday 11 March 2013** at **4.00pm**, in the **Edinburgh Suite** (Ground Floor), **Hilton Brighton Metropole Hotel**, Kings Road, Brighton, BN1 2FU.

### **Political group meetings**

A Conservative political group meeting will take place at 3pm in **Surrey room 1**.

A Labour political group meeting will take place at 3pm in **Surrey room 2**.

### **Dinner**

A restaurant has been booked for FSMC members to use for dinner from **7pm** following the FSMC. This is:

Browns Bar and Brasserie - English Restaurant and Bar

3-4 Duke Street, Brighton, BN1 1AH

Tel 01273 323501

<http://www.browns-restaurants.co.uk/locations/brighton/>

### **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.

**Labour:** Aicha Less: 020 7664 3263 email: [aicha.less@local.gov.uk](mailto:aicha.less@local.gov.uk)

**Conservative:** Luke Taylor: 020 7664 3264 email: [luke.taylor@local.gov.uk](mailto:luke.taylor@local.gov.uk)

**Liberal Democrat:** Group Office: 020 7664 3235 email: [libdem@local.gov.uk](mailto:libdem@local.gov.uk)

**Independent:** Group Office: 020 7664 3224 email: [independent.group@local.gov.uk](mailto:independent.group@local.gov.uk)

### **Attendance Sheet**

Please ensure that you sign the attendance register, which will be available in the meeting room. It is the only record of your presence at the meeting.

### **Location**

A map showing the location of the Brighton Metropole hotel is printed on the back cover.

### **Contact**

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

### **Carers' Allowance**

As part of the LGA Members' Allowances Scheme, a Carers' Allowance of up to £6.19 per hour is available to cover the cost of dependents (i.e. children, elderly people or people with disabilities) incurred as a result of attending this meeting.

## 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



**LGA Fire Service Management Committee Attendance 2012-2013**

<b>Councillors</b>	<b>14.09.12</b>	<b>16.11.12</b>	<b>25.01.13</b>			
<b>Conservative Group</b>						
Kay Hammond	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Mark Healey	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Maurice Heaster OBE	Yes	Yes	Yes			
John Bell	Yes	Yes	Yes			
David Topping	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Kevin Foster	Yes	Yes	Yes			
<b>Labour Group</b>						
Sian Timoney	Yes	Yes	Yes			
John Joyce	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Navin Shah	No	Yes	Yes			
Julie Young	Yes	Yes	No			
Nick Forbes	Yes	Yes	No			
<b>Lib Dem Group</b>						
Jeremy Hilton	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Keith Aspden	Yes	Yes	Yes			
<b>Independent</b>						
Brian Copping	No	Yes	Yes			
<b>Substitutes</b>						
Nick Harrison	Yes					
Les Byrom	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Les Christie			Yes			



## Agenda

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### Fire Services Management Committee

Monday 11 March 2013

4.00pm

Edinburgh Suite (Ground floor) Hilton Brighton Metropole Hotel, Brighton

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### For discussion

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### For information

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**Date of Next Meeting:** Friday, 17 May 2013, 11.00am, Local Government House





11 March 2013

**Item 1**

## **Sir Ken Knight's Efficiencies Review**

### **Purpose of report**

For discussion and action.

### **Summary**

Sir Ken Knight will attend this meeting of the Fire Services Management Committee to discuss the emerging findings from his efficiencies review. This paper seeks to summarise some of the key issues that have been raised by Fire and Rescue Authorities with Sir Ken and also communicated to the LGA.

### **Recommendation**

Members to discuss the emerging issues that Fire and Rescue Authorities have raised with Sir Ken Knight as part of his review of FRA efficiency.

### **Action**

Officers to progress as appropriate.

**Contact officer:** Clive Harris  
**Position:** Advisor - Programmes  
**Phone no:** 020 7664 3207  
**E-mail:** [clive.harris@local.gov.uk](mailto:clive.harris@local.gov.uk)



## **Sir Ken Knight's Efficiencies Review**

### **Background**

1. The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Brandon Lewis MP, announced on 14 December that he was commissioning Sir Ken Knight to lead a short review into the operational efficiency of the services delivered by fire and rescue authorities in England. He is due to report after the local government elections in May.
2. The review set out to examine options for savings both within and beyond the current Spending Review period including through:
  - 2.1 Firefighter training
  - 2.2 Flexible staffing and crewing arrangements
  - 2.3 The use of retained firefighters
  - 2.4 Procurement
  - 2.5 Shared services
  - 2.6 Collaboration with emergency services and other organisations on service delivery and estates
  - 2.7 Sickness management
  - 2.8 Sharing of senior staff
  - 2.9 Locally led mergers and operational collaborations
  - 2.10 New fire-fighting technology
  - 2.11 Preventative approaches
  - 2.12 Working with local businesses.
3. As part of this review Sir Ken has invited written submissions from all FRAs and visited: Cleveland, Cornwall, Cumbria, Devon and Somerset, Essex, Manchester, Hampshire, Humberside, London, Merseyside, Oxfordshire, Shropshire, Bedfordshire, Suffolk and West Yorkshire.

### **Written submissions**

4. Councillor Kay Hammond and officers at the LGA have met Sir Ken and his team three times throughout the review period. Although it has been premature to discuss emerging findings throughout the fieldwork stage, we have looked at most of the written submissions and would group the comments into five main themes:

#### *The role of elected members*

5. Fire and Rescue Authorities have noted that in order to create the right environment for effective decision making, the governance and supporting arrangements of the Fire and Rescue Authorities themselves may need to be reviewed. One FRA, for example, has created a bespoke board-type structure, coupled with robust scrutiny arrangements and these arrangements have put the FRA in a much stronger position to take decisions.

*Workforce*

6. There are a number of examples of Chief Fire Officers and other senior staff having a broader remit than just fire (trading standards and emergency planning, for example), but this is limited to county FRAs. Whilst some FRAs have held discussions on shared chief officers between fire and rescue authorities, these have not progressed to implementation. Members may wish to consider how the barriers to shared senior management teams can be identified and overcome.
7. Other examples of increasing the flexibility of the workforce highlighted by FRAs include: moving to a largely on-call service (particularly in rural areas) and changes to crewing and shift patterns.

*Shared services*

8. FRAs have been working closely with council and police colleagues to identify a range of opportunities that have the potential to deliver cost savings, greater resilience and improved service across the relevant organisations. This work has identified areas such as asset management and back office services as the main areas for savings. Pursuing this approach allows FRAs to prioritise spending on frontline services, as well as providing better career opportunities for staff.
9. In the written submissions, there are good examples of collaborative working between FRAs; such as multi-authority fire controls, whilst other partnership approaches have looked to create efficiencies in areas such as
  - 9.1 Regional/joint procurement initiatives
  - 9.2 Common Standard Operating Procedures
  - 9.3 Standard specifications
  - 9.4 Community safety messages
  - 9.5 Training provision.

*Income generation*

10. To offset the impact of on-going grant reductions on service provision, some FRAs are looking at setting up various types of business arrangement to generate income through selling services to other organisations for the benefit of the FRA and taxpayers in general.

*Communication of best practice*

11. We understand that Sir Ken has been impressed with the range of exciting and innovative projects across the sector. However, it is unclear whether there is an effective mechanism for communicating this work across the sector and as a result there is some duplication across Authorities. Although CFOA have a database of

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notable practice, and there is some cross-fertilisation of ideas through the peer review programme, Councillor Hammond is keen for the LGA to play a role here, perhaps through a new bulletin which will signpost members to new and innovative examples across the sector.

**Conclusions and next steps**

12. Although this is a DCLG-owned report, Members may wish to press for full publication of the report. We would expect some recommendations to be for Government, and some for the sector and the FSMC will want to play a full role in assisting the sector to implement these to deliver further efficiencies.



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**Item 2**

**Fire pensions update**

**Purpose of report**

For discussion and direction.

**Summary**

This paper sets out issues relating to the fire pensions valuation.

**Recommendation**

Members are asked to note the update on the valuation of the fire pension scheme and in particular the potential implications for employer contributions and the costs associated with retained firefighter pensions.

**Action**

Officers will take action as directed.

**Contact officer:** Eamon Lally  
**Position:** Senior Advisor  
**Phone no:** 0207 664 3132; 07799768570  
**E-mail:** Eamon.lally@local.gov.uk





## **Fire pensions update**

### **Background**

1. In line with the reform of public sector pensions ushered in by the Hutton Review, the 1992 and 2006 Fire Pension Schemes will be superseded by a new scheme which will come into effect in 2015.
2. Those firefighters that are within 10 years of pensionable age will be protected from the changes and will continue to accrue pension rights under the terms of the 1992 scheme.
3. Under the terms of the 2015 scheme employer contributions are expected to be 13.8 per cent. The current level of contributions are 26.5 per cent in the 1992 scheme (including 5% ill health) and 11 per cent in the 2006 scheme.
4. The actual contribution rate in the 2015 scheme will be determined by the outcome of the 2012 fire pension valuation which is currently underway based on March 2012 data.

### **The Fire Pension Valuation**

5. The government has determined that from 2012 public pension schemes will be valued every 4 years.
6. The 2012 valuation will look at a range of factors that affect the cost of the scheme. These will include changes to salary levels, changes in the inflation measure, financial assumptions, estimations of past contribution shortfalls and other items such as the impact of the retained firefighter pension issue.
7. The full list of factors will not be known until the principles of the valuation are announced by the Treasury, which is expected to be in July 2013. The sector will be working through the Fire Pensions Committee to help identify and influence the principles of the review.
8. The outcome of the review will set the employer contribution rate for the 2015 scheme and will also set the employer contribution rate for those firefighters continuing in the 1992 scheme under the transition arrangements. At present, taken together, it is not possible to say whether employers will be paying higher or lower contribution rates in the early years of the new scheme.
9. Over time and certainly by 2020 the vast majority of firefighters will be in the new scheme and we would expect employers contribution rates to fall towards the target 13.8 per cent if other factors in the valuation do not present substantial additional costs. For example, we know that salaries have not been growing at the rate forecast at the time of the last valuation. We also know that the change from Retail Price Index to Consumer Price Index will reduce the costs of the pension scheme. Other factors are likely to increase

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costs such as the Treasury's financial assumptions. If these savings and additional costs cancel each other out, and this is not certain, then we would expect employers' contribution to fall to the expected rate (13.8 per cent).

10. In the medium to long term this represents a considerable saving to employers who might currently be paying 26.5 per cent. A key question is whether these savings can be kept within the service. This is an important question which will have to be discussed with government.
11. However, one other factor that has to be taken into consideration is the "cash flow"—how much the pension scheme receives from employee and employer contributions and how much is paid out to retired firefighters on an annual basis. Every year more is paid out than is received through contributions and the government pays the balance as a top up grant. It is likely that this annual "deficit" will continue for many years.
12. To date FSMC has been pressing government to accept the financial responsibility for the costs associated with retained firefighters gaining retrospective access to the pension scheme. We can now see that this is one issue within the broader reform and valuation of the scheme. FSMC will want to continue to review its position as more information on the valuation of the fire pension scheme is known.

**Next Steps**

13. Officers will continue to work with the DCLG to prepare for the pension valuation and will continue to explore options for savings from reduced employer contributions being retained by Fire and Rescue Authorities.

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**Item 3**

**National Framework Consideration**

**Purpose of report**

For discussion and direction.

**Summary**

This paper sets out an issue to do with the scope of the National Framework that arises because of the use of the term “foreseeable risk”.

**Recommendation**

Members are asked to consider and debate the issues raised in the report.

**Action**

Officers will take action as directed.

**Contact officer:** Eamon Lally  
**Position:** Senior Advisor  
**Phone no:** 0207 664 3132; 07799768570  
**E-mail:** eamon.lally@local.gov.uk



**Item 3**

**National Framework Consideration**

1. The fire National Framework was published in July 2012. The National Framework is a document aimed at Fire and Rescue Authorities and seeks to guide the approach to risk management and the development of IRMPs which are the basis by which Fire Authorities assess priorities and assign resources.

**“Foreseeable” risk or “reasonable” risk**

2. A debate which took place in the development of the Framework related to the scope of risk management.
3. In the final version of the national Framework Fire and Rescue Authorities are required to “identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their areas face, make provision for prevention and protection activities and respond to incidents appropriately”
4. Subsequent to the publication of the National Framework, Fire and Rescue Authorities have considered its implementation and the implications of having to consider a full range of foreseeable risks.
5. There are concerns that managing for foreseeable risks potentially places heavy burdens on fire authorities which are unfunded.
6. Legal advice, obtained by CFOA indicates that failure to have regard to the National Framework could result in any affected individuals pursuing a judicial review. The legal advice also indicates that if the word “reasonable” had been used in the National Framework it would have placed a reduced burden on Fire and Rescue Authorities.
7. CFOA is pursuing this issue with DCLG.



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**Item 4**

**Conference arrangements (oral update)**

**Purpose of report**

For discussion.

**Summary**

Jane Marcroft, LGA Events Manager will present an oral update on arrangements for the 2013 conference.

**Recommendation**

Members are asked to comment on and note the update.

**Action**

Officers to progress as directed.

**Contact officer:** Jane Marcroft  
**Position:** Events Manager, LGA  
**Phone no:** 020 7664 3080  
**E-mail:** [jane.marcroft@local.gov.uk](mailto:jane.marcroft@local.gov.uk)





## **Industrial relations**

### **Purpose of the Report**

To update the Fire Services Management Committee on current industrial relations issues.

### **Summary**

This paper 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.

**Contact officer:** Gill Gittins  
**Position:** Principal Negotiating Officer  
**Phone no:** 020 7187 7335  
**E-mail:** [gill.gittins@local.gov.uk](mailto:gill.gittins@local.gov.uk)



## **Industrial Relations**

### **National Joint Council issues**

1. The information below provides a brief update on a selection of current National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services issues.
2. Pay, terms and conditions review - a second workshop for members of the Employers' Side and its advisers was held recently to continue formulation of Employers' Side aspirations as part of this joint piece of work.
3. Mileage rates review - negotiations are continuing in respect of the separate review on car mileage rates.
4. Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations - what is intended to be the final batch of offers have now been issued to all eligible retained duty system employees/ex-employees under the Employment Tribunal settlement agreements reached with the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) and Retained Firefighters' Union (RFU) on behalf of Fire and Rescue Authorities. The process to date has been hampered by delays in the provision of fire authority data but it is hoped that all authorities have now ensured that a full and correct set of data has been provided to Popularis (the independent company handling the data). Apart from this, there are a small number of associated issues to be dealt with for example the HMRC position on the tax and national insurance status of the payments and further queries in relation to application of the Regulations themselves.

### **Local issues**

5. Since the last meeting of the FSMC there has been one referral from a Fire and Rescue Service for formal Joint Secretaries conciliation assistance, which is on-going.
6. The NJC's Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) has also met once. TAP deals with referrals from local parties on the introduction of a new shift system only. Whilst agreement was not reached on the day, both parties subsequently accepted the recommendation of the Independent Chair.
7. Outside of the usual LGA support to authorities, and on request, the Employers' Secretariat can provide an industrial relations session for local management teams. This session covers negotiating skills and tactics and is useful particularly where a senior management team has changed or is relatively new to negotiations. We are in the process of arranging such a session with one FRA.

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**Pension scheme reform**

8. The Government's pension reform proposals are continuing to progress, bringing focus again on two of the most contentious issues – further increase in the employee contribution rate and publication of the Normal Pension Age Review recommendations.
9. Should the unions remain aggrieved the risk of potential industrial unrest will return. As such, authorities will want to make sure appropriate business continuity arrangements are in place and refresh their knowledge, for example, on matters such as the industrial action process and pay implications.
10. We have already, at an earlier stage in the pension reform discussions, provided authorities with guidance on pay issues as they relate specifically to employees covered by the National Joint Council Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book), given the earlier risk of industrial action:

[http://www.local.gov.uk/c/document\\_library/get\\_file?uuid=d3b1714d-f3a9-426c-8407-8faefb7fc924&groupId=10171](http://www.local.gov.uk/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=d3b1714d-f3a9-426c-8407-8faefb7fc924&groupId=10171)

11. In addition, further general advice in respect of industrial action can be found on the website:

[http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/employment-relations/-/journal\\_content/56/10171/3510449/ARTICLE-TEMPLATE](http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/employment-relations/-/journal_content/56/10171/3510449/ARTICLE-TEMPLATE)

12. This guide enables authorities to assess the impact and implications of an industrial dispute and to decide upon the appropriate response, mindful of employment law.

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**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.

**Contact officer:** Clive Harris  
**Position:** Advisor - Programmes  
**Phone no:** 020 7664 3207  
**E-mail:** [clive.harris@local.gov.uk](mailto:clive.harris@local.gov.uk)



## **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 its 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.



## Note of decisions taken and actions required

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**Title:** Fire Services Management Committee  
**Date and time:** Friday 25 January 2013, 11.00am  
**Venue:** Westminster Suite Room 8.1

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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 FRS
	Cllr Brian Copping (Deputy Chair)	Shepway DC
Members	Cllr Mark Healey	Devon & Somerset FRS
	Cllr Maurice Heaster OBE	London FEPA
	Cllr John Bell	Greater Manchester FRA
	Cllr David Topping	Cheshire FA
	Cllr Kevin Foster	West Midlands FRA
	Cllr John Joyce	Cheshire FA
	Cllr Navin Shah	London FEPA
	Cllr Keith Aspden	North Yorkshire FRA
Substitutes	Cllr Les Byrom CBE	Merseyside FRA
	Cllr Les Christie	Kent FRA
Apologies	Cllr Julie Young	Essex FRS
	Cllr John Edwards	West Midlands FRA
Officers:	Helen Murray, Eamon Lally, Gill Gittins, Clive Harris, Jane Marcroft, Steve Service (all LGA)	

Item	Decisions and actions	Action by
	<p>Councillor Kay Hammond welcomed Members and Officers to the meeting.</p>	
<b>1.</b>	<p><b>CFOA presentation</b></p> <p>Cllr Hammond welcomed Vij Randeniya and Paul Fuller President and Vice President of CFOA to the meeting.</p> <p>Members received a presentation from Vij and Paul on priorities affecting CFOA's members and the association's response.</p> <p>Members welcomed the update and said there was still a case for deliberative thinking on fire issues. Some Members praised the strength and speed of their response to the news of Sir Ken Knight's review</p> <p>However, in light of CFOA's intention to take a more robust approach with Government, Councillors also recognised the responsibility of the LGA to its FAs and their different local interests. They questioned whether conflicts in policy could be expected between the LGA and CFOA if they decide to take a more forceful position and asked what CFOA's role would be in more divisive issues such as the existence of beds in some stations and County FAs.</p> <p>Vij assured members that divisive issues such as the abolition of county FAs would not be supported by CFOA. While recognising that some areas of controversy could prove challenging, he proposed a "gloves off" approach only on carefully focused issues, while others might require a more partnership based direction.</p> <p>With regards to the LGA, he said that CFOA intended to cross-map areas of commonality with the LGA and deal with differences as they arose. He cited the Maritime Incident Response issue as an example of CFOA recognising and respecting local differences. While most members were not from coastal regions, they recognised the wider importance of this unit to fire safety.</p> <p>Some Members were concerned about CFOA proposals to reduce training for fire crews. Paul replied that this was not about cutting training but looking at delivering certain training</p>	

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differently through mediums such as e-learning rather than spending time and resources on repeating onsite training. He pointed out that fire deaths and injuries have halved in recent years, so training and on-the-job experience with these scenarios has also reduced significantly. Vij added that CFOA are working with Capita to ensure that the right areas of training are covered.

Members agreed that CFOA's priorities on decisive communications, sprinklers and flooding were central to FAs. Vij replied that on flooding, CFOA were looking to co-ordinate an approach. He highlighted that there were differences between the wider LGA and the FSMC on this issue and CFOA could help make the FSMC's case. Cllr Hammond emphasised that the Committee would want to ensure members had been canvassed to ensure this was a majority review.

Members identified sprinklers as an area where CFOA's proposed "gloves off" approach would be particularly helpful. Vij reported that he had spoken to the insurance industry in December to gain their support.

Members asked how CFOA viewed Sir Ken Knight's review. Vij responded that the biggest question was whether FAs are doing everything they can to meet the austerity agenda and what the key levers were to enable this to move forward. He argued that Sir Ken's report should emphasise the areas in which FAs have led the way and contended that its effectiveness would be dependent on what FAs put into it.

Cllr Hammond thanked Vij and Paul for attending and asked that an annual update from CFOA be arranged for future years. On Sir Ken's review, she highlighted to the Committee that he would be coming to the FSMC in March to discuss his initial findings.

Action

LGA Officers to invite CFOA to a further FSMC in 2013/14.

**Stephen Service**

**2. Pensions update**

Eamon Lally, LGA Senior Advisor introduced this item. He asked Members if they would like to submit comments on the Government's review of the normal pension age.

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Commissioner Dobson added that the recommendations on a minimum of 2.5 hours fitness training per week for firefighters was something requiring further consideration. He argued that it was still not clear what the implications of the drop-out rate rising would be for the pension scheme.

On the **2.5 hours fitness training** proposal, Members said that the issue of whether the employer or employee was liable for the cost was likely to be a key issue. While some felt 2.5 hours to be a reasonable expectation, others argued that a holistic view of firefighters' fitness was wrong. Monitoring crews to ensure they were physically fit was seen as more important than setting an arbitrary number of hours to exercise. Members were also concerned that negative headlines might result from fire authorities buying in gym equipment.

Members noted that the report identified the eligibility of any firefighters up to the age of 60 to work operationally if physically fit.

On **fire pensions' employee contributions increases**, members noted the increase in opt-outs of 150% and asked at what level of opt-out the viability of the scheme was in question. Eamon replied that the cost started to be affected with opt-outs of about 7% of employees. Members concluded that the level of contribution was likely to have a strong impact on opt-out numbers, with individuals' intended length of stay in the service also a factor.

With the dropout from the pension scheme by BME and lower paid staff, Members argued that this should encourage the Government to limit to 0.64% in 2013/14 which would represent a further 20% of the government's intended 3.2% . this would also require the government to extend the period over which it spreads the increase in employee contribution rates. Members agreed that their position had not changed on **retained firefighters pensions**.

The Committee agreed that Officers clear a more robust and focused draft of the consultation response on proposed pensions increase with lead members, incorporating Councillors' comments.

**Item 7**

Action

Officers to clear a final version of the letter on employee contribution increases with lead members before sending.

**Eamon Lally**

Officers to draft response to the NPA consultation document, particularly focusing on the responsibility for fitness levels and potential impact on FRAs.

**Eamon Lally**

**3. Equality and Diversity**

Helen Murray, LGA Head of Programme presented this item and asked members if the current equality framework was still fit for purpose.

Members recommended that a question on what the fire service is doing for the retention and progression of women and BME staff should be included in the fire peer review. They supported keeping E&D questions as part of the peer challenge.

Members asked if there was more up-to-date information available than the 2008 percentage of women and E&D staff quoted in the report.

Cllr Hammond argued that the current framework was out of date and should put a greater duty on fire authorities than simply to reflect the local community in their workforce. However, it was also acknowledged that with a reduction in recruitment, targets for paid officers will be difficult to achieve. A lighter touch approach driven at local level was seen by some Councillors as more appropriate than legislation, with the emphasis on recruitment of fire volunteers who reflect their community.

Cllr Hammond urged Councillors to consider the equality impact assessment when making decisions that could impact upon their communities, so as to avoid a judicial review.

Action

Officers to add Equality and Diversity as an item on a forthcoming Fire commission agenda

**Helen Murray /  
Steve Service**

E&D framework to be updated to reflect the most up to date

**Clive Harris**

**Item 7**

legislation and public sector.

**4. National collective bargaining**

Gill Gittins, LGA Principal Negotiating Officer presented this paper and gave a summary of the type and make-up of the national negotiating bodies.

Councillors identified an issue regarding the varying levels of expertise between Councillors on bargaining bodies. They emphasised the importance of the LGA ensuring colleagues were up to speed on how groups such as trade unions operated. Cllr Hammond asked that ongoing training be given for Members rather than just at the beginning of their involvement.

While some Members voiced frustration at the inability for individuals to engage directly with other groups at the negotiating table, others argued that this formal orchestration was necessary to ensure discipline and a clear direction could be established. While off the record conversations outside were possible, it was acknowledged that trying to accommodate 28 people's views in a single meeting was difficult.

Action

Officers to offer refresher training for Members sitting on LGA negotiating bodies.

**Gill Gittins**

**5. Fire Conference publications**

Eamon Lally introduced this item and sought Members' views on the direction of the fire future funding document proposed.

Members suggested giving examples in monetary terms to underline the impact of the Government's proposals and asked Officers to "show their workings" when it came to the figures they arrived at. Some felt that the outlook portrayed was unduly optimistic.

Some Councillors argued that if authorities were not prepared to raise their level of council tax they were not in a position to complain about a shortage of money.

**Item 7**

Cllr Hammond expressed concern about the Minister's comment in the press that some Chief Fire Officers had claimed they had plenty of money. She urged Members to check what the position was in their authorities.

Action

Officers to include numbers as well as percentages in next draft of the conference publications and refrain from presenting an unduly rosy outlook.

**LGA Officers**

**6. LGA Annual Fire Conference and Exhibition 2014**

Jane Marcroft, LGA Events Organiser introduced this item. She put forward potential venues in Birmingham, Liverpool and Cardiff. Members agreed that Wales was the best option in light of their adoption of sprinklers and the potential lessons for other authorities.

Jane said that several venues in Cardiff were considered but only the Millennium Centre and Millennium Stadium were suitable in terms of capacity and price. While the Millennium Stadium was large enough to host, it would require Members to be accommodated elsewhere.

Members agreed that a prestigious venue was needed and decided on the Millennium Stadium. They indicated that they were happy to walk 10 mins or so to nearby hotels, but emphasised that the recommended main hotel should have sprinklers.

Decision

Officers to take forward 2014 conference arrangements for Cardiff as directed.

**Jane Marcroft**

**7. Outside bodies update**

Cllr Hammond announced that she will be the FSMC's representative on the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme Board.

**Item 7**

Cllr Joyce updated the Committee on the work of the Fire College Board. This is continuing to develop leadership courses and ensure that they are accredited. The Board has also engaged with Capita to ensure that they understand the training needs of the Fire and Rescue Service.

Cllr Healey said that no meetings had yet taken place on retained firefighters pensions.

Members confirmed that they were happy with giving verbal updates for outside bodies at future meetings.

**8. Industrial Relations**

Members received an update from Gill Gittins on the latest developments in Industrial Relations. Members asked for more information on the 2 LGA nominations to the National Employers Advisory Forum.

Action

Officers to supply members with information on Anne Millington and Guy Goodman as LGA nominations to the National Employers Advisory Forum. **Gill Gittins**

**9. FSMC update paper**

Clive Harris, LGA Policy Advisor announced that the first meeting of the PCC joint working group with the Safer Communities Board would take place on Friday 1 February 2013.

**10. Note of the last meeting - 14 September 2012**

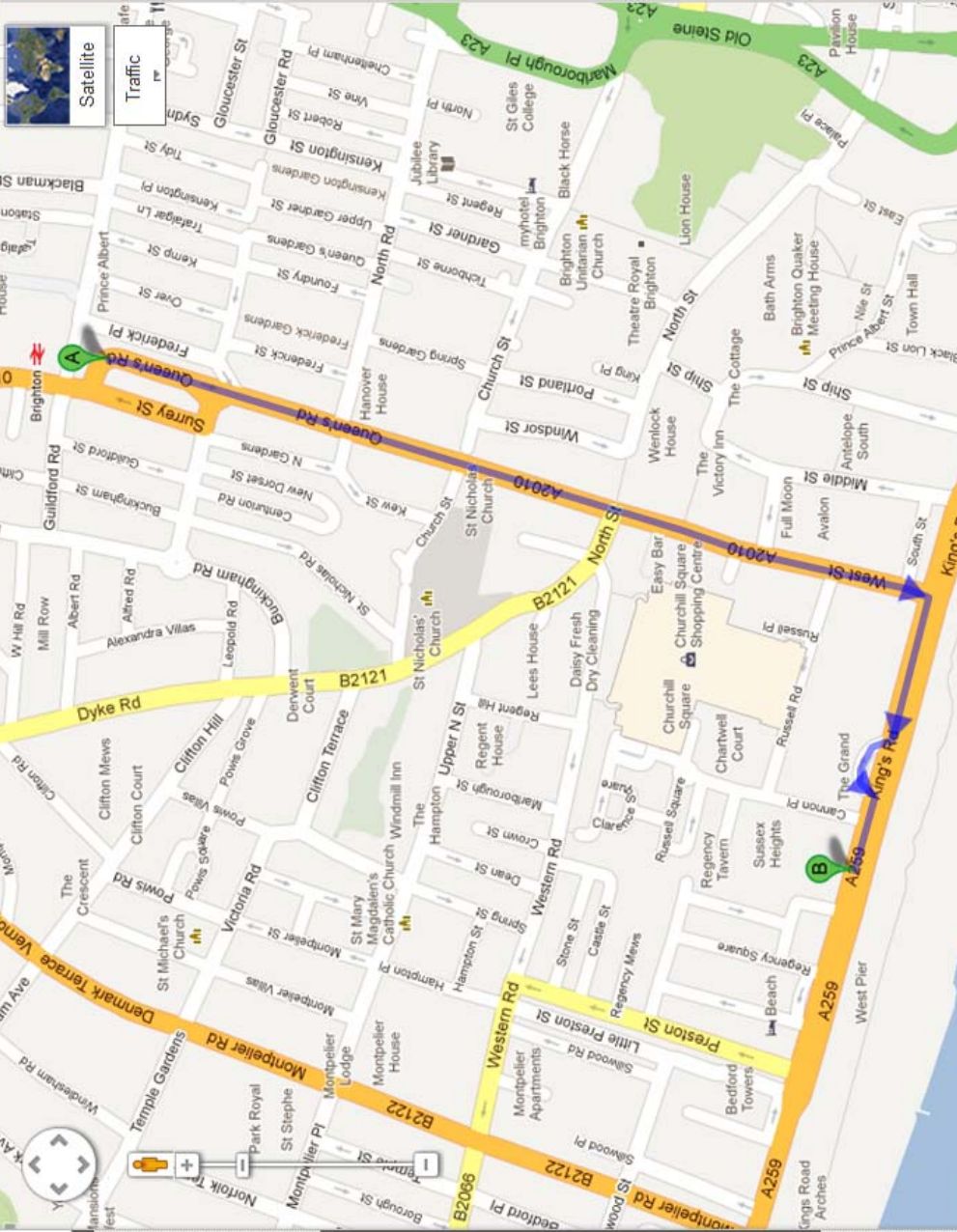
Members approved the minutes of the previous meeting.

**Date of Next Meeting:**

Monday, 11 March 2013 at 4.00pm in the Metropole Hotel, Brighton







A2010 0.7 mi, 14 mins

Queen's Rd/A2010 0.8 mi, 16 mins

St. Nicholas Rd 0.8 mi, 16 mins

Or take Public Transport (Bus) 9 mins

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Brighton BN1 3XP, United Kingdom

1. Head south on Queen's Rd/A2010 toward Upper Gloucester Rd  
Continue to follow A2010

0.6 mi

2. Turn right onto King's Rd/A259

0.1 mi

3. Turn right toward King's Rd/A259

272 ft

4. Turn right onto King's Rd/A259

Destination will be on the right

259 ft

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