

## **Fire Services Management Committee 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. The latest Fire Bulletin is included for information as **Appendix A**.

### **Recommendation**

Members to note the update. Outside Bodies appointees are invited to provide any relevant updates in relation to their outside bodies as listed in **paragraph 20**.

### **Action**

Officers to progress as appropriate.

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### **Fire Leadership Academy**

1. The LGA will be holding a leadership academy specifically aimed at fire and rescue authority members on the 11 and 12 September at Warwick University. The programme for the academy is currently being finalised and will be made available to members shortly. The Leadership Academy forms part of the LGA's 'offer' to fire and rescue authorities and is available free of charge. Demand for the leadership academies has meant that we have had to programme in an additional day in November 2013.

### **LGA respond to Sir Ken Knight's *Facing the future* report**

2. The Fire Services Commission and FSMC Chairman responded to the publication of Sir Ken Knight's report with the following statement:

"Sir Ken's review rightly recognises the sharp decline in call-outs and fire incidents which continue to reduce vastly because of the excellent preventative work, such as community safety schemes, which fire and rescue services have in place.

"Fire authorities are always looking to increase efficiencies with many already operating differently in order to manage an unprecedented decline in funding and will continue to find savings through measures such as shared service arrangements, reducing the number of fire stations and new flexible employment practices.

"But it is clear that without major reforms to the service this will not be enough to sustain it in the future. Therefore we will study Sir Ken's findings with great interest and are pleased that the Government intends to consult fully with the sector before it makes its own response."

3. The full press release can be found here: [http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/media-releases/-/journal\\_content/56/10171/3998255/NEWS-TEMPLATE](http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/media-releases/-/journal_content/56/10171/3998255/NEWS-TEMPLATE)
4. The Chairman also participated in a teleconference with Brandon Lewis MP and Sir Ken on his report, noting that on the OpA peer challenge consideration of assurance statements would negate any need to return to an inspectorate for the fire sector.

### **National Operational Guidance Programme**

5. The National Operational Guidance Programme is currently in transition between a 10-month definition phase and into the guidance development projects. The 10-month phase has produced positive outputs for the fire and rescue service, including:

- 5.1 The creation of two programme boards with cross-sector representation, including the LGA, CFOA, the FBU and CLG.
  - 5.2 A definitive library of national operational guidance is emerging from the legacy guidance project, with the final catalogue being made available as a free, online resource.
  - 5.3 A structure and national framework for operational doctrine (policy, procedure and risk assessments) is emerging from consultations with the service. The framework provides the foundations for the development of doctrine at national, regional and local levels by reducing duplication.
  - 5.4 The establishment of four guidance development projects, managing the transition between the old and new National Operational Guidance Programmes.
6. Many of these outputs are assets that will provide benefits for the Service by themselves; nevertheless, it is important that the next phases of the programme—Guidance development projects—are swiftly developed and effectively communicated.

#### **CLG Transformation Challenge Award**

7. The Transformation Challenge Award is available to local authorities, including fire and rescue authorities, that demonstrate that they are at the cutting edge of service transformation and delivering efficiency savings. Bids are invited in three categories:
- 7.1 Major multi-authority awards: to support radical innovations involving two or more authorities who have combined their operations across all or a major part of their service delivery and back office, whilst maintaining their separate identity and political representation.
  - 7.2 Authority awards: to support authorities, either individually or jointly, which are pursuing particularly innovative measures for delivering increased efficiencies, resilience and better value for money, whilst not involving a major combination of services.
  - 7.3 Efficiency support awards: to support authorities who are already in receipt of the Efficiency Support Grant.
8. Bids are invited from fire and rescue authorities for the major multi-authority awards and authority awards which should be submitted to the Department by **14 July 2013**. The overall Transformation Challenge Award pot is £9.2 million, including £2.3 million for the efficiency support award. Further information is available from: [julie.stephenson@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:julie.stephenson@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

### **LGA Annual Conference 2013**

9. A fringe session looking at the findings of Sir Ken Knight's efficiencies review took place at the LGA's annual conference on Thursday 4 July. The session provided a first opportunity for delegates to come together to consider the findings and their implications for individual fire authorities.
10. The session, which was chaired by Cllr Kay Hammond, looked at some key areas, such as the issue of commercialisation, drawing on the experiences in the sector and heard from elected members from County, Combined and Metropolitan FRAs.

### **LGA Annual Fire Conference 2014**

11. The LGA's annual fire conference will be held in Cardiff next year, on 11 and 12 March. The FSMC agreed to set up a Member Task and Finish Group to design the agenda and other aspects of the event which will meet in September. Please let your political group at the LGA know if you are interested in taking part.

### **CFOA Services Ltd Blue Watch initiative**

12. CFOA Services Ltd has been working on a new prevention product under a Concession Agreement with Capita Business Services Ltd. The offering which had a working title of FireSafe Register is now known as Blue Watch and the new website is due to go live very shortly at [www.bluewatch.co.uk](http://www.bluewatch.co.uk). In essence the Blue Watch product will raise awareness of fire and carbon monoxide safety by providing information to landlords and tenants in the first instance. Discussions with landlords have already been taking place and CFOA are very pleased with the initial reception that the new product has been getting.

### **Public Money Management – Performance management in fire and rescue services**

13. The Journal for Public Money Management has published a short report that examines the previous performance management regimes (best value to CAA) and makes a number of proposals for a new, more effective and efficient, regime. The report can be found here: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09540962.2013.785711>

### **Publication on guidance for Statements of Assurance and revised Intervention Protocol**

14. On 14 May 2013 the Minister for Fire and Rescue, Brandon Lewis MP wrote to all Chairs of fire and rescue authorities and Chief Fire Officers to highlight the publication of the following documents:
  - 14.1 The guidance on statements of assurance for fire and rescue authorities in England sets out the processes that fire and rescue authorities should have in

place across a range of key areas: financial, governance and operational. The format of these statements is a matter for fire and rescue authorities to decide on. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statements-of-assurance-for-fire-and-rescue-authorities-in-england>

- 14.2 The revision of protocol on government intervention action on fire and rescue authorities in England sets out the arrangements should formal intervention be considered necessary, for example if a fire and rescue authority is considered to be failing. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protocol-on-government-intervention-action-on-fire-and-rescue-authorities-in-england>
15. The summary of responses for both consultations set out a brief overview of the comments received during the consultations on the documents above, and the government's response. <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/protocol-on-government-intervention-action-on-fire-and-rescue-authorities-in-england>

#### **CFOA – focus on enforcement**

16. CFOA have published their response to the 'Enforcement of the Fire Safety Order in small to medium sized enterprises' review.
17. In summary, CFOA believes that FRAs are a fundamental part of the regulatory landscape and would like to work in partnership with Government; to understand and determine the role CFOA could play in the further coordination of fire safety regulatory activities and responsibilities for FRAs.
18. To support this position, CFOA proposes that an element of the funding, which would otherwise be directed towards the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, be provided to CFOA to fund sufficient resources to enable the sector to deliver sector improvement and sector governance of its regulatory activities.
19. CFOA expect that business will benefit from this cooperative and collaborative approach to delivering change in the delivery of fire safety legislation, feeling more confident to invest based on consistent application of the law throughout the country and being involved in shaping the services it receives from FRAs.

#### **Outside bodies**

20. The following FSMC outside bodies are currently agreed for the year 2012/13:

- 20.1 Firefighters' Pensions Committee
- 20.2 Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP) Board
- 20.3 Strategic Resilience Board
- 20.4 Fire Service College: Management Board
- 20.5 Fire Service College: Advisory Board
- 20.6 Arson Prevention Forum

21. Appointees to these bodies are invited to provide oral updates for any relevant meetings not previously covered in this update or in the Chairman's report. The minutes of the last Arson Prevention Forum meeting on 29 May are attached as **Appendix B**.