

# Fire Services Management Committee

## Agenda

Thursday 19 September 2013  
11.00am

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

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

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This meeting is



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**Fire Services Management Committee**  
19 September 2013

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The **Fire Services Management Committee** meeting will be held on **Thursday 19 September 2013** 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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## Agenda

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### **Fire Services Management Committee**

Thursday 19 September 2013

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:** 11.00am, Friday, 15 November 2013, Local Government House



## **Fire Services Management Committee membership and appointments to outside bodies 2013–14**

### **Purpose of report**

For decision.

### **Summary**

This report outlines the membership of the Fire Services Management Committee and outside bodies to which Committee is asked to appoint for the 2013/14 meeting cycle.

### **Recommendations:**

The Committee is asked to:

1. Formally note the membership for the LGA Fire Services Management Committee (attached as **Appendix A**), the calendar of meetings (**Appendix B**) and the terms of reference (**Appendix C**).
2. Formally appoint to outside bodies in accordance with the procedure outlined in **Appendix D**, ensuring that the bodies to which they wish to appoint accurately reflect LGA priorities.
3. Note that members currently representing the Committee on outside bodies provide any appropriate feedback from the previous meeting cycle.
4. Provide the LGA Executive in October with the Committee's 2013-2014 list of outside body appointments.

### **Actions**

Officers to:

1. Inform outside bodies of any changes in, or confirm continuation of, LGA representatives.
2. Confirm appointments directly to members.

### **Contact officer:**

Stephen Service

### **Position:**

Programme Support Officer, LGA

### **Phone no:**

020 7664 3194

### **E-mail:**

[stephen.service@local.gov.uk](mailto:stephen.service@local.gov.uk)





## **Fire Services Management Committee membership and appointments to outside bodies 2013–14**

### **Fire Services Management Committee (FSMC) membership**

- Members are invited to formally note the membership and to confirm the Committee's Lead Members for 2013/14 (as detailed in **Appendix A**). The breakdown of the committee by authority type is as follows:

FA type	FSMC 2010/11		FSMC 2011/12		FSMC 2012/13		FSMC 2013/14	
	Number of Members	Percentage of Members	Number of Members	Percentage of Members	Number of Members	Percentage of Members	Number of Members	Percentage of Members
London	2	13	3	20	2	15	2	14
Mets	3	20	2	13	3	23	2	14
CFAs	7	47	6	40	6	46	8	57
Counties	3	20	4	27	2	15	2	14
Other* (Welsh/unitaries)	0	0	0	0	1	7.69	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100</b>

\*Denotes FSMC Members who sit on Welsh fire authorities or non-fire authorities.

### **FSMC outside body appointments**

- The LGA currently benefits from a wide network of member representatives on outside bodies across a range of LGA member structures. These appointments are reviewed on an annual basis across the Association to ensure that the aims and activities of the outside bodies remain pertinent to the LGA.
- A list of the organisations to which the Fire Services Management Committee currently appoints member representatives is attached as **Appendix D**. Members are asked to note and comment upon the appointments for this meeting cycle, which are to be made in proportion with political representation across the LGA.
- A database for centrally recording all the information relating to appointments is held by the Member Services team.
- In order to clarify the process for making appointments; the method of recording information on appointments; and to set out the level of support we will offer to appointed members, a procedure has been drawn up (**Appendix C**) which aims to ensure that Members are, ahead of the first meeting of the cycle, fully briefed on both the policy direction of the outside body and the logistical arrangements, such as meeting frequency, meeting location and membership.

**Financial Implications**

6. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. Reasonable travel and subsistence costs will be paid by the LGA for expenses incurred by a member appointee, whilst carrying out a representative role on an outside body on behalf of the LGA.

**Appendix A**

**Fire Services Management Committee Membership 2013/14**

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Authority</b>
<b>Conservative (6)</b>	
Kay Hammond <b>[Chairman]</b>	Surrey CC
David Topping	Cheshire FA
Maurice Heaster OBE	London FEPA
Simon Spencer*	Derbyshire FA
John Bell	Greater Manchester FRA
Mark Healey	Devon & Somerset FRS
<b>Substitutes:</b>	
James Cleverly**	London FEPA
Jean Rigby**	Lancashire FA
Rebecca Knox**	Dorset FA
<b>Labour (5)</b>	
John Joyce <b>[Vice Chair]</b>	Cheshire FA
Darrell Pulk* [sub in 12/13]	Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham FA
Navin Shah	London FEPA
Julie Young	Essex FA
John Edwards	West Midlands FRA
<b>Substitutes:</b>	
Les Byrom CBE	Merseyside FRA
Thomas Wright**	Tyne and Wear FRA
<b>Liberal Democrat (2)</b>	
Jeremy Hilton <b>[Deputy Chair]</b>	Gloucestershire CC
Roger Price* [sub in 12/13]	Hampshire FA
<b>Substitutes:</b>	
TBC	
<b>Independent (1)</b>	
Phil Howson* <b>[Deputy Chair]</b>	East Sussex FA
<b>Substitutes:</b>	
TBC	

**\*New member    \*\*New substitute**



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**Appendix B**

**LGA Fire Services Management Committee**

**Meeting Dates 2013 - 2014**

<b>DAY (2013)</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>TIME</b>	<b>ROOM / VENUE</b>
Thursday	19 September 2013	11.00am	Westminster Suite (Room 8.1), Local Government House
Friday	15 November 2013	11.00am	Westminster Suite (Room 8.1), Local Government House
<b>DAY (2014)</b>			
Friday	24 January 2014	11.00am	Westminster Suite (Room 8.1), Local Government House
Monday	10 March 2014	4.00pm	Sofia Suite, Hilton Cardiff (before Fire Conference)
Friday	16 May 2014	11.00am	Westminster Suite (Room 8.1), Local Government House
Friday	18 July 2014	11.00am	Westminster Suite (Room 8.1), Local Government House



## **Appendix C**

# **Procedure for LGA appointments to outside bodies**

## **1. List of Outside Bodies**

- 1.1 It is the responsibility of the Boards to review the need for representation on outside bodies as part of their annual appointments process. Boards should:
  - 1.1.1 Ensure that the list of outside bodies reflects LGA priorities, both by ending appointments where these are not felt to be of value and by actively seeking representation on new organisations;
  - 1.1.2 Evaluate both the value of the LGA's relationship with the organisation and the level of LGA influence on that body; and
  - 1.1.3 Have consideration of when it is necessary to appoint a member representative and when an officer appointment would be more appropriate.
- 1.2 The Boards will submit a report to the LGA Executive setting out their current list of outside bodies every year in October.

## **2. Political Proportionality**

- 2.1 As stated in the LGA Political Conventions:

*Every effort will be made to ensure that all groups recognised by the Association are fairly represented on outside bodies both numerically and in terms of the range/type of appointments made. Each Board or Panel responsible for making appointments should agree the means by which this is achieved ... Appointments to individual outside bodies should reflect political balance where possible, subject to the constraints set by the number of appointments to individual bodies.*

- 2.2. While the Boards are responsible for ensuring appointments are made in accordance with the LGA's political proportionality, the political group offices have oversight of this process through:
  - 2.2.1 Considering individual appointments in the context of all appointments to outside bodies across the organisation.
  - 2.2.2 Maintaining lists of members of Boards and other councillors willing to serve on outside bodies, together with details of their particular skills and experience.
  - 2.2.3 Discussing nominations to outside bodies with their members at the political group meetings preceding September Board meetings.
  - 2.2.4 Being kept informed of any additional appointments that arise during the course of the board cycle.
  - 2.2.5 Finding a representative if a Board is unable to secure an appointment.

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**3. Appointments**

- 3.1 Appointments will be agreed by each Board at their September meeting and will be time limited – set according to the outside body's governance arrangements.
- 3.2 The Member Services Officer will then write to each organisation notifying them of the appointment and requesting details of forthcoming meetings.
- 3.3 Certain appointments are made centrally and appointments are also made by the LGA to negotiating bodies. While the process for making these appointments will be different, this information will be recorded on the central database and the same requirements for review and for support to members apply.

**4. Recording information about appointments**

- 4.1 A database of existing outside body appointments will be maintained centrally by the member services team, to include:
  - 4.1.1 Councillor details, including political party;
  - 4.1.2 Term of Office;
  - 4.1.3 A key contact at the organisation;
  - 4.1.4 Any allowances or expenses paid by the outside body; and
  - 4.1.5 Named LGA link officer.
- 4.2 The Member Services team will add details of the appointment to the notes on the appointed councillor's database entry and on the organisation's database entry.
- 4.3 The list of Outside Bodies, broken down by Board, will be published on the LGA website and details will also be added to each member's web profile. The Member Services team has responsibility for ensuring this is kept up to date.

**5. LGA support for members appointed to Outside Bodies**

- 5.1 Members appointed to outside bodies must receive support from LGA officers in order to maximise their contributions to outside bodies, including being kept informed of key LGA lobbying messages. Support will therefore be provided in line with the following Scrutiny Panel recommendations, agreed by the LGA in 2003:
  - 5.1.1 For each Board making appointments to outside bodies, there should be a designated LG Group member of staff to oversee the appointment process for that executive, including the provision of introductory briefing for new appointees.
  - 5.1.2 A named member of staff should be appointed as the liaison person for each outside body.
  - 5.1.3 Each Board should consider the need for induction support for appointees in relation to particular outside bodies.



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- 5.1.4 Where deputies or substitute representatives are appointed, they should also be made aware of arrangements for support and report back.
- 5.1.5 Details of any financial support from either the LGA or the outside body should be provided for all appointees.
- 5.2 Member Services Officers will oversee the appointment process and in most cases will be the liaison officer for outside bodies linked to their Boards; however, in certain cases it may be more appropriate for a Policy Adviser to act as the liaison.
- 5.3 Member Services Officers will ensure that appointees receive a letter setting out the details of the appointment, term of office, future meeting dates, arrangements for expenses and the contact details of both the organisation's named contact and the LGA's link officer.
- 5.4 New appointees will receive an initial briefing on the work of the outside body and relevant LGA lobbying messages from the link officer and will also be kept informed of any arising policy issues and of other local government contact with the organisation.

**6. Mechanisms for feedback**

- 6.1 All appointees should be encouraged to provide updates to the link officer following meetings and when important issues arise.
- 6.2 Members are requested to provide an oral update to the FSMC/Commission as soon as practicable.

**7. Expenses**

- 7.1 Reasonable travel and subsistence costs will be paid by the LGA for expenses incurred by a member appointee, whilst carrying out a representative role on an outside body on behalf of the LGA.
- 7.2 Expenses will be paid to members appointed to outside bodies, in line with the LGA Members' Allowances Scheme:

***Approved Duties for payment of Travel and Subsistence Costs***

**7.2.1 Approved duties (for payment of Travel & Subsistence) under the LGA scheme are:**

- 7.2.1.1 Attendance at meetings with Ministers, Government Departments or consultations with other bodies where members have been appointed by the Association;
- 7.2.1.2 Attendance at receptions, visits, conferences, seminars or other functions where members have been appointed by the Association to attend in a representative role on behalf of the Association; and

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- 7.2.1.3 Attendance as the Association's appointed representative on any public body, charity, voluntary body or other organisation formed for a public purpose (and not for the benefit of its members).

- 7.2.2 Travel and subsistence costs for all other meetings should be met by member authorities.

**Travel and Subsistence Costs**

- 7.2.3 The Association will reimburse rail fares on the basis of the standard fare. In exceptional circumstances, the Association will reimburse the first class fare, but this will be subject to certification of the claim form as to why travel by first class was necessary. It will also reimburse reasonable levels of subsistence. Receipts should always be provided for travel and subsistence claims. Where it is necessary for a member to use his or her own vehicle when on an approved duty on behalf of the Association, mileage will only be reimbursed to a maximum of the first class rail fare.

**Carers' Allowance**

- 7.2.4 A carers' allowance of up to £6.19 per hour, (i.e. actual expenditure incurred up to a maximum of £6.19 per hour) will be paid for care of dependants whether children, elderly people or people with disabilities to those members who receive responsibility allowances for approved duties set out under paragraph 4, and to those members representing the LGA on outside bodies. The maximum period of the entitlement will be the duration of the approved duty and reasonable travelling time. The allowance will not be payable to a member of the claimant's own household. The carers' (reasonable) expenses will be paid.

**Payment of Travel & Subsistence Costs and Carers' Allowances**

- 7.2.5 Members should initially claim travel and subsistence costs and the carers' allowance, as appropriate, from their authority. Authorities should then seek reimbursement from the Association on a quarterly basis.
- 7.2.6 Claims from authorities should be submitted promptly identifying clearly and fully the meeting to which the claim refers. (Reference to a meeting as "LGA, London" for example will not be sufficient and will delay re-imbursement of the claim).

**Appendix D**

**Fire Services Management Committee: Outside Bodies and Internal Working Groups**

**Appointed Outside Bodies**

<b>Organisation / contact details</b>	<b>Background</b>	<b>Representatives 2012/13</b>
<b>CLP Sub Group for Fire</b>	Chair will meet the Minister quarterly to raise ongoing issues. CLP available for difficult and continuing issues.  Has not met in 12/13.	<b>4 places</b>  Cllr Kay Hammond (Con) Surrey CC  Cllr Sian Timoney (Lab) Bedfordshire and Luton FA  Cllr Jeremy Hilton (Lib Dem) Gloucestershire CC  Cllr Brian Copping (Ind) Shepway DC
<b>Firefighters' Pensions Committee</b>  Anthony Mooney, DCLG <a href="mailto:anthony.mooney@communities.gsi.gov.uk">anthony.mooney@communities.gsi.gov.uk</a>	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).	<b>1 place</b>  Cllr Maurice Heaster, LFEPA (Con)
<b>Strategic Resilience Board</b>  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>	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.	<b>2 places</b>  Cllr Jeremy Hilton (Lib Dem) Gloucestershire CC  Cllr Mark Healey (Con) Devon & Somerset FRA
<b>Fire Service College Management Board</b>	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	<b>1 place</b>  Cllr Kay Hammond (Con) Surrey County Council

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	College.	
<b>CFOA, RDS and Operational Training Working Group</b>  Paul Hancock, Chair: Tel: 01606 868810 Email: <a href="mailto:paul.hancock@cheshirefire.gov.uk">paul.hancock@cheshirefire.gov.uk</a>	The Group meets to discuss work practices for retained duty systems and develop recommendations.	<b>1 place</b>  Cllr Mark Healey (Con) Devon and Somerset FRS
<b>Fire Service College Stakeholder Board</b>	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.	<b>2 places</b>  Cllr John Joyce (Lab) Cheshire FA  Mr David Cartwright (Mayoral appointee) LFEPA
<b>Executive Leadership Programme Board</b>	The Board oversees the work of the Executive Leadership Programme. Run at the Fire Service College, the programme seeks to develop the future leaders of the fire service.	<b>1 place</b>  Cllr Richard Hobbs (Con) Warwickshire FA
<b>Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme Board</b>	This Board oversees the work of the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP). This was established to address the recommendations and findings from a number of major incident reports and help the emergency services improve how they work together.	<b>1 place</b>  Cllr Kay Hammond (Con) Surrey County Council
<b>Emergency Services Mobile Communication Programme (ESMCP) Steering Group</b>	The Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP) is a cross-governmental programme created to succeed Airwave and to deliver mobile voice and data communications to the emergency services. This Group was established to provide direction for the programme.	<b>1 place</b>  Yet to be nominated.
<b>Emergency Services Mobile Communication Programme (ESMCP)</b>	This Board sits underneath the Steering Group and was established by DCLG and CFOA	<b>1 place</b>  Yet to be nominated.

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<b>Customer Group</b>	leads to provide a considered Sector view, act as a sounding board for papers, ideas and requests arising from ESMCP, and be a conduit for consultation with Fire stakeholders	
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**LGA structures**

Appointed Members may wish to continue on the abovementioned bodies, but are not obliged to do so. Members are asked to ensure that appointments for 2013 / 14 are in broad proportionality with the political group makeup of the Committee, which is as follows:

**Conservative Group: 6 appointees**

**Labour Group: 5 appointees**

**Liberal Democrat Group: 2 appointees**

**Independent Group: 1 appointee**

Based on the LGA Political Proportionality Figures, the **15 seat outside body allocation** for 2013 / 14 should be broadly as follows:

6 Conservative, 6 Labour, 2 Liberal Democrat, 1 Independent

**Appointed Internal Working Groups**

<b>LGA Structure</b>	<b>Background</b>	<b>Representatives 2012/13</b>
<b>Sprinklers Campaign Working Group</b>	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.	<b>5 places</b>  Cllr John Edwards (Lab) West Midlands FRA  Cllr Rebecca Knox (Con) Dorset FA  Cllr Richard Hobbs (Con) Warwickshire FA  Cllr Dave Hanratty (Lab) Merseyside FA  Cllr David Milsted (Lib Dem) Dorset FA
<b>LGA Fire Conference 2014 working group</b>	This Group will provide direction for the LGA Fire Conference in 2014	<b>3 places</b>  Chair: Cllr Kay Hammond (Con)

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		Surrey County Council  Nominations TBC from the political group offices.
<b>Fire and PCCs working group</b>	Task and finish group set up to look at the relationship of Police and Crime Commissioners to Fire and Rescue Authorities.  <i>NB: This group is not currently active after presenting their final report to the Fire Commission in June 2013.</i>	<b>6 places</b>  Cllr Rebecca Knox (Con) Dorset FA; Joanna Spicer (Con) Suffolk CC; Julie Young (Lab) Essex FA; Michael Payne (Lab) Gedling BC; Prue Bray (Lib Dem) Wokingham BC; Anita Lower (Lib Dem) Newcastle City Council

Finance Adviser:

Kieran Timmins, Executive Director of Finance, Procurement and ICT, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service

NJC Human Resources Advisers:

James Dalglish, Head of Human Resources, London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority;

Bob Warren, Director of Human Resources, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service;

Karen Palframan, Human Resources and Development Manager, Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service

**Item 2**

## **Priorities for 2013/14**

### **Purpose of report**

For discussion and direction.

### **Summary**

This report provides a draft set of priorities and a draft programme for the work of the FSMC and the Fire Commission in the year to July 2014. The draft priorities reflect the on-going work of both bodies, informal conversations with member authorities, and the responses to the letter from Cllr Kay Hammond, Chairman of FSMC, to all Fire and Rescue Authority Chairmen and portfolio holders in county fire and rescue services.

### **Recommendation**

Members are invited to consider and comment on the draft priorities and to agree a final version.

### **Action**

Officers will develop a forward work programme to deliver the agreed priorities.

**Contact officer:** Eamon Lally  
**Position:** Senior Adviser  
**Phone no:** 020 7664 3132  
**E-mail:** [eamon.lally@local.gov.uk](mailto:eamon.lally@local.gov.uk)





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## **Priorities for 2013/14**

### **Background**

1. The LGA Leadership Board has agreed the following as the top priorities for local government in 2013/14:
  - 1.1. Economic growth, jobs and prosperity – councils are recognised as central to economic growth;
  - 1.2. Funding for local government – reform of the public sector finance system so councils raise more funds locally, have confidence their financing is sustainable and fair, and greater ability to co-ordinate local public services; and
  - 1.3. Public service reform – councils are at the centre, and seen to be at the centre, of public service reform and delivering more effective services for local people.
2. Subsequently, Rewiring Public Services was launched at the LGA Annual Conference in July, and set out 10 key demands to influence the incoming 2015 government and this will form the bulk of our campaigning work up to the next General Election. This suite of documents sets out the changes needed at both a local and national level so that public services can help communities to meet people's future needs and aspirations. It includes 10 big ideas (see **Appendix A**) and pursues its arguments through the following key areas: Independent local government; Growth; Adult social care and health; Children; Financial Sustainability and Transforming Local Government.
3. Fire and Rescue Authorities have a major contribution to make through the growth strand through their work to build safe and resilient communities, protecting people and places from harm and creating the conditions for economic prosperity. These priorities align closely to the challenges faced by Fire and Rescue Authorities, particularly around a sustainable funding system and Members of the FSMC will want to have regard to these priorities as it considers its own work programme for the coming year.
4. As with last year, Cllr Kay Hammond wrote to the Chairmen of all Fire and Rescue Authorities on 13 August inviting them to propose priorities for the work of the FSMC in the coming year.
5. To date we have received responses from:

Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes FRA  
Dorset FRA  
Durham and Darlington FRA  
Norfolk FRA  
Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire FRA  
Suffolk FRA  
Surrey FRA  
West Yorkshire FRA.

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6. In addition, during her first year as Chairman Cllr Hammond has sought the views of member FRAs through a series of visits and regional meetings, conferences and networks and a programme of informal dinners for Chairmen/Portfolio holders across the country. These responses and discussions are reflected in the proposed priorities set out below.
7. In light of the further reduction to the LGA budget and resources, it is important that the work programme is focused on a defined set of priorities where we can deliver significant impact and demonstrate value to our member councils. We currently believe that this programme can be delivered within available resources.

**Proposed priorities**

**a) Future funding**

8. Future funding of the fire service remains a key area of concern for all Fire and Rescue Authorities. The 2015/16 spending round outcome confirmed the continuing decline in government funding for fire, with a reduction of 10 per cent, mitigated to some extent by the establishment of a competitive bidding fund aimed at generating greater collaboration across fire and rescue services and more broadly across the blue-light services. Although a small number of authorities have been able to be more flexible, for the majority of FRAs restrictions around increasing council tax levels remain. As we move towards the next full comprehensive spending review which is expected to be after the next general election, the sector will need to have marshalled arguments for a positive settlement that recognises the value of the service not just in terms of fighting fires and reducing fire deaths, but also in terms of the broader preventative and community safety work it does to contribute to economic and social outcomes. Over the coming year, FSMC may want to consider developing the vision for the fire and rescue service for the next 10 years. This area of work is very closely linked to the LGA's aims as set out in Rewiring Public Services and its key business plan objectives, both of which highlight the importance of financial sustainability for local services.

**b) Reform**

9. The Knight Review challenged the fire and rescue service to embrace reform as a necessity to dealing with reductions in public sector funding. The review set out a range of possible options for reform, ranging from a single national service to one where fire and rescue would be more embedded in local government. Although there was little analysis to underpin these areas of consideration, the debate which has followed the publication of the review indicates that there isn't a single view on the structural reform of the sector. Some have argued that while reform might be necessary this does not equate to a comprehensive structural change, which they argue would be expensive and potentially a distraction. Some areas have been attracted to one or other of the options suggested, or have begun to develop their own thinking, including how county led fire and rescue services could be enabled to precept, while still remaining under the oversight of the county. However, there does seem to be a consensus on the value of a sector led approach to reform rather than one which is top down and imposed from central Government. There is also a need to consider the increasing commercialisation

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within the sector and the role that the private sector can play. These issues, which feed into the wider LGA focus on public sector reform, are ones where FSMC has a key role to play in convening the discussions on reform.

**c) Futuring**

10. As well as the challenges that FRAs face as a result of reduced funding, there are other environmental and societal changes which will impact on the delivery of local services. Examples include the effects of climate change, changing demographics and the impact of demand management in other service areas such as adult social care. FSMC has a role in drawing out good practice and sharing it more widely so that the sector can better understand and respond to these and other changes.

**d) Planning for risk: what does good look like?**

11. Sir Ken Knight expressed puzzlement at the array of cost profiles across the fire and rescue service and this was a central line of questioning at the Select Committee session last week. In fact it looks as if expenditure is very closely correlated to the number of incidents in any given area. However, the Knight review has raised a question about what good looks like and what is the definition of effective and efficient service. The fire service is recognised as being different from other services in that it plans on the basis of risk rather than demand. At the heart of the local approach, integrated risk management plans lead to different areas having quite different response times to common categories of fire and conversations about what the service is expected to provide – in its broadest sense - remain in their infancy. Fire authorities have asked for better comparative data and a better understanding of what good looks like in terms of response times and also staff safety. Many FRAs do not recognise the data underpinning the conclusions of the Review and more work needs to be done to understand this. LGinform provides some comparative data for fire and rescue services and organisations such as CIPFA lead on the correlation and analysis of financial data. In addition CFOA are doing work on the provision of comparative data. However, there is a role for FSMC in generating a debate among Fire and Rescue Authority members on the information they need to assess risk and the financial implications of an appropriate response.

**e) Blue light Interoperability**

12. There is now a good deal of national and local work underway which is seeking to achieve greater collaboration and interoperability across the blue-light services. Individual Fire and Rescue Authorities are exploring closer working with the police and ambulance services and at the national level initiatives like the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme are seeking to improve collaboration at the operational level. However, a longer term vision for interoperability and greater collaboration is still to be crafted from these individual initiatives. There is a real need for debate and a better understanding of the strategic and operational opportunities and challenges associated with this agenda. FSMC can lead this debate from a fire sector perspective working closely with CFOA and the government. It is also in a position to broaden the debate to include Police and Crime Commissioners and NHS trusts.

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**f) Sprinklers**

13. Sprinklers has been a high priority for fire authorities and this is reflected in the work that the FSMC Working Group, led by Councillor John Edwards, did last year to raise the profile of this issue. This remains a priority and FSMC has already committed to supporting fire authorities in their use of the toolkit that has been developed. This is an important issue in relation to local economies and also the wellbeing of some of the most vulnerable in our society. Although the Government remains opposed to regulation, we have seen some change of tone and nuance from Ministers on this which is encouraging. We need to keep the pressure up on this.

**g) Retained firefighter pensions**

14. This is an issue which could have a large financial impact on fire authorities and could therefore impact on the future financial sustainability of FRAs with large numbers of retained staff. FSMC has been lobbying government on the issue of the allocation of the non-employee costs associated with providing retrospective access to the pension scheme to retained firefighters. We have recently responded to the consultation on the settlement between the government and Fire Brigade Union again setting out the concerns of the sector. It is likely that this will remain an issue in the coming year.

**h) Sector response to Coroners' recommendations arising from incidents in high rise blocks of flats**

15. The tragic fires at Lakanal House in Southwark and Shirley Towers in Southampton led Coroners to make a number of recommendations in Rule 43 letters to government, Fire and Rescue Authorities and Local Authorities. FSMC has already discussed its potential role in supporting the wider sector in implementing these recommendations and will seek to:

- 15.1 ensure that the operational lessons arising from these fires are communicated;
- 15.2 work with local authorities on the responsibilities to communicate with residents on fire safety matters; and
- 15.3 work with the sector and government to consider whether changes to building regulations might be required to allow more effective management of safety of high rise flats.

**i) National negotiations**

16. Some Fire Authorities have raised pay, industrial relations and the role of national negotiations around these areas as a significant issue. These areas are the responsibility of the National Joint Committee (NJC) for Fire and Rescue Services, which includes members nominated by the LGA. The Employers' Side of the NJC,

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including LGA members, will be mindful of the views of the LGA membership more widely in addressing these complex and important issues.

**Communications**

17. There are a number of internal and external communications channels available to help the Fire Services Management Committee promote the work it is doing and ensure key messages are received in a professional manner by as many stakeholders as possible. Members will be aware that we use the full suite of these tools and techniques to ensure that the safer communities and policing contacts are aware of, and support, our work.
18. The annual fire conference, due to be held in Cardiff next March has grown in size and reach and remains a key event in the forward calendar. We also have a dedicated section on the LGA website, bulletins, outside speaking events and interviews, Knowledge Hub, blogs, features and news items in First magazine, and twitter accounts which are used to keep in close touch with our members to hear their concerns, but also to ensure they are aware of the work of the LGA. We also work with some of our key partners such as the Chief Fire Officers Association to give added strength to our messages.

**Conclusion and next steps**

19. 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 also communicate the agreed priorities to all members of fire authorities. These will feed into the wider LGA business planning exercise which begins early in 2014.



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**Appendix A**

**Our ten big ideas for rewiring public services**

1. Give people back a meaningful local vote on a wide range of tax and spending decisions, to establish a level of decision-making that allows each place to act as its own local treasury, managing local tax and spend and driving growth.
2. Drive local public service effectiveness and end waste and red tape at all levels by bringing local services and decisions together in one place, for each place, for issues ranging from economic development to health and law and order.
3. Reduce bureaucracy and remove artificial Whitehall silos by merging six government departments and creating a single England Office. Under this proposal the Department for Communities and Local Government, Department for Transport, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Department of Energy and Climate Change, Department for Culture, Media and Sport and relevant parts of the Home Office would be combined.
4. Share money fairly around the UK by scrapping the outdated Barnett formula and replacing it with needs-based funding.
5. Share money fairly around England by taking financial distribution out of the hands of Ministers and replacing it with an agreement across English local government.
6. Strengthen the say of local people by reducing Ministers' powers so that they cannot intervene in local democracy, boundaries and decisions.
7. End flawed and bureaucratic tick-box inspections and replace them with a process where genuine consumer champions focus on the service local people receive from schools, hospitals, policing or care homes.
8. Boost investment in infrastructure by re-creating the thriving market in municipal bonds which England once had and most other countries still have.
9. A multi-year funding settlement aligned to the end of the next parliament which will enable councils to invest in economic growth and prevention rather than cure.
10. Put this settlement beyond future Whitehall revision by giving formal constitutional protection to local democracy.





**Item 3**

## **FSMC Industrial Relations Report**

### **Purpose of the Report**

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

### **Summary**

This paper briefly describes any current industrial relations issues.

### **Recommendation**

Members are asked to:

1. Note the issues set out in the paper; and
2. Provide feedback on key issues emerging locally in relation to the dispute.

### **Action**

Officers to progress as appropriate.

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## **FSMC Industrial Relations Report**

### **Pension Scheme Reform**

1. The main focus of industrial relations since the FSMC last met in July has been the trade disputes in connection with pension scheme reform proposals registered separately by the Fire Officers Association (FOA) and the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) with Government Ministers.
2. While the dispute remains one between central government and the trade unions, the Employers' Side of the National Joint Council has a key interest in employee relations issues arising from it. The activity and actions mentioned below have been taken in support of this Employers' Side remit. FSMC members will individually and collectively have an interest in operational issues arising from the potential for strike action. The meeting offers an opportunity for Members to discuss any key operational issues at local level and any reaction from local communities, media or the workforce. Any common themes will be useful as part of the LGA's intelligence gathering and where appropriate will be shared with the NJC Employers' Side.

#### Fire Officers Association

3. FOA has since indicated acceptance of the Government's offer in England and decided not to ballot its members on industrial action. It has however not withdrawn its trade dispute in case there should be any further adjustments to the current proposals.
4. Providing the proposals are not negatively amended, FOA does not intend to move towards industrial action. It has also said that it cannot recommend to its members to undertake any more than normal 'contractual obligations' during any period of strike action. However, FOA is open to local discussion about contingency arrangements.

#### Fire Brigades Union

5. The FBU undertook a ballot of its members between 18 July and 29 August, seeking support for discontinuous strike action. The outcome was:

Yes: 18,277      (78%)

No: 5,166

Spoilt: 64

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Total received: 23,507

6. FBU members who are not members of (or are not eligible to be members of) the Firefighters Pension Scheme/New Firefighters Pension Scheme/ 2015 Firefighter scheme were not included in the ballot e.g. control staff. Neither did the ballot include FBU members in Northern Ireland.
7. No strike dates have been announced at present. In order to keep the mandate for strike action live the FBU must commence action within four weeks from the close of the ballot. Within this period 7 days' notice must be provided to the employing FRA before the action can begin. Therefore 7 days' notice could be given at any time now. The latest commencement of action date would be 24 September.
8. It is possible for the union and employer to agree an extension of a further 28 days and if the parties to this dispute believe they need additional time to conclude discussions that may become an option. That period could not be extended further.
9. The FBU's General Secretary attended the Commons Select Committee Inquiry into the Knight Review on 9 September. Members of the Committee took the opportunity at the end of the session to ask him about the current dispute and potential strike action. He reinforced the FBU's willingness to resolve the matter by dialogue but also to set out that firefighters believed they should have access to the benefits they signed up to when originally joining the pension scheme and that age 60 was not an appropriate Normal Pension Age.
10. The FBU is holding a national demonstration and rally against pension reform and cuts on 16 October in Westminster.

National Employers

11. Whilst this is a dispute between the FBU and Government, from an industrial relations perspective, we have taken whatever action we can to assist fire authorities in dealing with the impact of the ballot outcome.
12. For example, the FBU's General Secretary instructed the union's local officials that they could not reach local agreements in respect of any form of contingency arrangement. Consequently, we approached the FBU to explore the possibility of such arrangements at national level (albeit that the detail of any such arrangements could only be handled at local level).
13. Discussion initially focused upon the principle of permanent minimum level of cover arrangements for individual fire authorities based on local need. Whilst the

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matter was actually debated by the FBU's Executive Council, in the end the response was that such an arrangement would not be possible.

14. Discussion then focussed on potential response to major incidents and members will be aware that agreement has been reached in that regard, and circulated to fire authorities (circular NJC/9/11):

<http://www.local.gov.uk/web/workforcelibrary/fire-and-rescue-services-joint-circulars> ).

15. This is a 'strategic framework agreement to facilitate and assist detailed discussion at local level'. There is no compulsion upon a fire authority to make use of the agreement. However, where a fire authority does wish to do so, FBU officials will be 'ready to respond' and the FBU will exempt from strike action those who wish to respond in such circumstances for the duration of the incident/s. It will also support such a response.
16. There are a small number of principles in the agreement. For example, access to stations. On the surface this may appear unpalatable. However the operational advisers were comfortable that this was in the context of 'a robust means of communication', 'immediate access to personal protective equipment' and allowing 'notifications of incidents and turnout arrangements to be as effective as possible'. The agreement includes the caveat that this is 'reasonable access'. So, for example, if working staff at a station were drawn from outside the usual workforce, or are part of the usual workforce but normally work elsewhere, a CFO would be extremely unlikely to regard access for striking firefighters to be reasonable in such circumstances.
17. There are separate agreements for England, Scotland and Wales but the substantive wording is the same. As far as England is concerned there are three parties to the agreement, DCLG, the FBU and, for pragmatic reasons given the situation crosses England, Scotland, and Wales, the National Employers. The LGA's lead adviser, Ron Dobson (London Fire Brigade's Commissioner), who also chairs the National Employers' Advisory Forum, worked on the agreement as too did DCLG's Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser.

Local Government Association

18. We have worked closely with DCLG not just on the agreement above, but whenever appropriate to do so.
19. We have issued guidance to fire authorities on pay issues connected to industrial action as they relate specifically to employees covered by the National Joint

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Council's Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book). We have also produced guidance on assessing the impact and implications of an industrial dispute, and deciding upon the appropriate response within the joint context of employment legislation and good industrial relations practice.

20. We have responded directly to individual fire authority queries on a number of related matters.
21. The Workforce team has provided information to fire authorities including key messages it may wish to use in communicating with employees and for the same reason signposting factual information available on DCLG's website in connection with the fitness aspect of the trade dispute.
22. The Chair of the Fire Service Management Committee, Cllr Hammond, wrote to all fire authority Chairs and portfolio holders in similar terms.
23. The LGA's agreed media line is as follows

"The LGA is disappointed at the FBU's move toward strike action. We hope the FBU will be mindful of the potential risks to the public and businesses. We welcome the national framework agreement on responses to major incidents during any period of strike and ask that they also work with us to ensure that plans can be put in place to provide for a minimum level of day to day cover should action be taken."

**Local issues**

24. Since the last meeting of the FSMC there has been one referral from an FRS for formal Joint Secretaries conciliation assistance, which was successfully resolved.
25. In addition, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service referred a matter to the NJC's Resolution Advisory Panel. Both parties consequently confirmed that they would accept the panel's recommendation.
26. The Joint Secretariat has been working with an FRS that wishes to improve its local industrial relations relationship. A further day has also been scheduled to continue this work.

**Conclusion**

27. Given that the matter of pension scheme reform and related industrial action could change quickly, an oral report will also be provided at the meeting.

## **Chairman's report**

### **Purpose of report**

For noting.

### **Summary**

This paper summarises the meetings and events that the FSMC Chairman has attended since the Committee's last meeting.

### **Recommendation**

Members are asked to note the content of this report.

### **Action**

Officers will take action as directed by members.

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## **Chairman's report**

1. This paper provides information on the meetings and engagements that the Chairman of the Fire Services Management Committee has attended on behalf of member fire and rescue authorities.
2. On 26 July I visited the millennium stadium in Cardiff as the venue for the **2014 LGA Fire Conference** and met with the Chair and Chief Fire Officer of South Wales FA. During our meeting, we discussed the National Issues Committee, a group comprising members of all three Welsh Fire Authorities that is looking at increased joint working and interoperability. South Wales have agreed to give a presentation to the Fire Commission on this project in the next few months, with the potential for a plenary session at conference.
3. During a **visit to Merseyside Fire Authority** on 1 August, I met with the Chair, Vice Chairs and the Chief Fire Officer to discuss current issues and their priorities for the year ahead. The day included visits to 3 stations, including a new facility at Toxteth which contains a fitness hub for young people. This is part of a county-wide "fire fit" programme which aims to make a direct contribution to delivering safer, stronger and healthier neighbourhoods across the area.
4. On 9 August, I met with the Fire Minister Brandon Lewis MP and representatives from CFOA to consider the application of the **Primary Authority Scheme** to fire safety. The meeting was an opportunity to set out some of the Fire Services Management Committee's concerns, particularly around the timing of the implementation of the extension of the scheme to fire safety, which has led to the implementation being put back to April 2014.
5. On 3 September I attended the **funeral of firefighter Stephen Hunt** in Bury following his tragic death tackling the Oldham Street fire in Manchester in July. All 46 Fire and Rescue Services were represented in what was a moving tribute to a much loved member of Greater Manchester's personnel.
6. I attended the LGA's annual **Councillors' Induction Briefing** on 5 September. During the day, I met with new members of the FSMC and Safer Communities Board and was on hand to answer questions about our work and how it links into the wider LGA agenda.
7. On 8 September, I attended the Fire Memorial Trust's annual **Firefighters' Memorial Service and wreath laying ceremony** at The Priory Church of St Bartholomew the Great, in Smithfield. This is an annual event to honour all those firefighting personnel who have given their lives in the course of their duties. Following the Service I laid a wreath on behalf of the LGA at the National Firefighters' Memorial.
8. I gave evidence on behalf of the FSMC to the **DCLG Select Committee on Sir Ken Knight's Review** on 9 September, alongside Matt Wrack, General Secretary of the FBU, and Paul Fuller, the new President of CFOA. In particular, I highlighted the importance of service reform being designed and led locally.

9. On 11 and 12 September, I led on 2 sessions about the strategic context of the Fire and Rescue Service and political leadership as part of a two day **leadership academy** for elected members with leading roles on fire and rescue authorities. The free academy at Warwick Conference Centre forms part of the LGA's offer to fire and rescue authorities.
10. On 18 September I will be attending the **annual Presidential Awards Ceremony** at the CFOA Autumn Conference. The event reviews the past year and recognises achievements across the sector.

## **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.

### **Recommendation**

Members to note the update.

### **Action**

Officers to progress as appropriate.

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## **Fire Services Management Committee update paper**

### **Government Response to *Facing the Future: findings from the review of efficiency and operations in fire and rescue authorities in England***

1. Brandon Lewis wrote to Fire and Rescue Authority Chairs on 6 August encouraging FRAs to submit their responses to Sir Ken's review to CLG, with a particular focus on how FRA performance is measured and compared and where there are opportunities for greater efficiency.

### **Knight review select committee**

2. Councillor Hammond gave evidence to the Communities and Local Government Select Committee on the Knight review on 9 September alongside Paul Fuller, Vice President Chief Fire Officers Association and Matt Wrack, Fire Brigades Union (FBU). In her responses, Cllr Hammond called for greater local flexibility on precepts and delivery costs for the fire service and emphasised the importance of integrated risk management plans rather than a cost per head approach in identifying local need. She highlighted the importance of improvement coming from the sector rather than being enforced centrally, as seen in peer challenge and blue light collaboration.
3. A summary of the session can be found in **Appendix A**.

### **JESIP Joint Doctrine Consultation and Training Plans for your Service**

4. At the last JESIP strategic board it was agreed that the JESIP team would inform Chairs and Portfolio holders about the current state of the programme. This status update can be summarised as follows:
  - 4.1 A JESIP Champion has been established for each FRS to act as a single point of contact with the JESIP team.
  - 4.2 A consultation on the Joint Doctrine ran from 24 July – 19 August. All FRAs were encouraged to respond to this consultation.
  - 4.3 A Train the Trainer Programme will begin in September 2013 and a minimum of 2 trainers will be required from each FRS to attend a one day course at a location within each region. These colleagues will become licensed JESIP trainers.
  - 4.4 JESIP has identified two priority groups for interoperability training and each FRS has been asked to submit how many people this will affect in each service organisation.
  - 4.5 FRSs will need to work with local or regional partner agencies to deliver the priority JESIP Joint Training utilising Licensed JESIP trainer(s).

### **Retained Firefighters' Pensions**

5. DCLG launched a six week consultation on 23 July seeking views on the proposed terms of the Retained Firefighters' Pension Settlement to provide eligible retained firefighters with access to a modified pension scheme. In her response, Cllr Hammond reiterated the FSMC's view that the government should bear the non-employee scheme deficit costs and highlighted the significant challenges and additional costs for Fire Authorities associated with the implementation of the proposed regulations.
6. The original consultation document can be found [here](#) and the LGA response is included as **Appendix B**.

### **Outcome of Primary Authority meeting between Brandon Lewis MP and Michael Fallon MP**

7. The Minister and Michael Fallon MP met on 4 August to discuss Primary Authority and how it will progress. This was a very useful meeting resulting in ministerial agreement on taking forward the statutory scheme option and implementing it in April. The next steps will include a steering group in September where we expect BRDO to outline their plans for taking forward the legislative process including the timing of implementation.
8. The Minister also wrote in July expressing his desire to seek the views of CFOA and the LGA on implementing the pilots for both Primary Authority and the Fire Authority Partnership Scheme following the publication of the [independent evaluation report](#) in August. A copy of this letter is included as **Appendix C**.

### **Fire Control**

9. The Department for Communities and Local Government will publish an updated summary high-level national summary of the improvements being delivered by each project, timescales, projected savings and any additional benefits the project partnerships have subsequently identified on the 27 September. As well as providing a national summary, this document will also provide information on the individual Fire Control projects that are being developed by Fire and Rescue Authorities. This document will be circulated to FRAs in due course.

## **Appendix A**

### **Summary note - Communities and Local Government Select Committee evidence on the Knight Review**

**09 September 2013**

**Witnesses: Cllr Kay Hammond, Fires Service Management Committee, Local Government Association; Paul Fuller, Vice President Chief Fire Officers Association and Matt Wrack, Fire Brigades Union (FBU).**

On Monday 9 September the Communities and Local Government Select Committee took evidence from a panel of experts on the Knight Review of Fire and Rescue Services, during which the future of fire funding, the scale of efficiencies, the impact of staff reductions, the opportunities for further efficiency savings, collaboration of services, a fire inspectorate and the impact on national resilience were all discussed.

Committee chairman Clive Betts (Labour) opened the session by asking for the panel's thoughts on Sir Ken's argument that the different costs per head of population for delivering the fire service was 'inexplicable'. Paul Fuller noted that the use of cost per head was a "blunt measure" as a number of issues including density can explain the significant differences. Cllr Hammond also explained that local flexibility was needed and the Integrated Risk Management Plans were vital to the future, not measures of cost per head of population. These were points supported by Matt Wrack who noted the variations in the operational nature of each fire service and highlighted the strong coalition between cost and the number of call outs, a point the LGA had answered adequately in its research.

Panellists were asked for their thoughts on what should be included in grant distribution. Cllr Hammond pointed the Committee towards the LGA's modelling of the future funding of fire services and called for authorities to be given greater flexibility to raise the tax precept above two per cent thereby allowing local government to have a "conversation with the public" about the funding of the fire service. Paul Fuller suggested that we need to identify costs for the added value of societal outcomes which the fire and rescue service deliver (such as work with young people, community safety, flooding, road traffic accidents); whilst Matt Wrack felt a better question would be to ask what we want from our fire and rescue service. "We cannot keep cutting and expect us (the fire service) to deliver" he argued.

In response to questioning from Simon Danzuck (Labour), the panel gave examples of how further efficiencies could be made. This included standardisation throughout the fire brigade, further leadership training and integrated management and risk planning. Following this line of questioning, Bob Blackman (Conservative) asked whether it was possible for fire services to be delivered from within local authorities. Cllr Hammond called for "collaboration, not merger", highlighted the important role of community budgets in enabling public service transformation and noted how many local authorities were already working with volunteers to integrate services like community safety and health. Paul Fuller also noted that some people were delivering services, fire-fighting and community safety.

Andy Sawford (Labour Co-Operative) followed this by asking about whether there would be greater collaboration between blue-light services in the future. Paul Fuller agreed that there would be, a point supported by Cllr Hammond who highlighted the work of the Surrey Public Service Transformation Network in bringing together different emergency services and sharing equipment like defibrillators.

National resilience was raised by James Morris (Conservative), who noted that Sir Ken felt that his recommendations would have little impact on it. Paul Fuller disagreed as did Matt Wrack, who felt that with less resource you must impact on resilience. Cllr Hammond noted that the LGA was “surprised” that Sir Ken said so little on the subject in his report.

Mary Glendon (Labour) then queried whether it was time for a central inspectorate. Cllr Hammond strongly rejected the need for a regime of central inspection as the LGA and CFOA had led on a Peer Challenge Regime that had to date reviewed 23 Fire Authorities and complete the process by the end of 2014. She also said that scrutiny, through local politicians, was an important part of the process. Sector Led Improvement was “a good thing”.

John Stevenson (Conservative) closed the session by asking whether reform should come from central or local government. Paul Fuller argued that it should be “issues based”, so that some parts of the service were reformed from the centre and others by local discretion. Matt Wrack noted the lack of joined up thinking and fragmentation; whilst any change to the 999 service should be a matter of “national debate”. Closing this part of the session, Cllr Hammond said it was vital that any process had local involvement, to identify community need. That is why the Integrated Risk Management Plans are so important. The process, she finished should be led by the LGA on behalf of local authorities and central government.



## **Appendix B**

### **Retained Firefighters' Pension Settlement Consultation response**

**Sent 3 September 2013**

Dear Brandon

The LGA Fire Services Management Committee welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Retained Firefighters' Pension Settlement Consultation. However we are concerned that the consultation period has been confined to just 6 weeks and that the consultation document was published during the traditional summer holiday period. This will impact on the ability of Fire and Rescue Authorities to consider and respond appropriately to the consultation and is contrary to the spirit of the government guidance on public consultations.

The granting of retrospective access for retained firefighters to the firefighters' pension scheme rightly corrects the discrimination that was the consequence of government policy and presided over by successive Secretaries of State. However, Fire and Rescue Authorities have not been party to the negotiations that have taken place between the government and union representatives. We would welcome a statement from government on the extent of the equivalence between the proposed settlement and the benefits that would have accrued to retained firefighters had they had access to the Firefighters 1992 Pension Scheme during the period 1 July 2000 and 5 April 2006. Any deviation from that equivalence and any resulting impact on the costs to the pension scheme should be explained.

#### **Financing arrangements**

The consultation document states that "any scheme deficit will be recovered from employers by adjusting contribution rates over a period of 15 years". We wrote to the then Fire Minister Bob Neill MP on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2012 setting out FSMC's position on the question of allocating the responsibility for the non-employee scheme costs associated with retained firefighters' retrospective access the firefighters' pension scheme. FSMC expressed its concern about the allocation of these potentially large costs to Fire and Rescue Authorities. In the view of FSMC the government should bear the non-employee scheme deficit costs. As you stressed in the recent teleconference on pensions, the Firefighter Pension scheme "is statutory and the government stands behind it".

In summary, our main arguments for this position are:

- The terms of the firefighter pension schemes are set by ministers. There was no discretion locally to admit retained firefighters to the scheme during the period in question. If pension costs are to be borne by those responsible for the decision relating to them, then logically they should in the present case fall on central government, as it was the Secretary of State who decided that retained firefighters should not have access to the 1992 Scheme.

- The scheme deficit costs would not have been borne by employers had retained firefighters had access to the 1992 firefighters pension scheme between 1 July 2000 and 5 April 2006, as is acknowledged in your letter to Cllr Heaster on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2012. Instead, as your letter makes clear, the costs would only have accrued to Fire and Rescue Authorities as part of pension payments, and a substantial proportion of these costs would have been paid by government through the formula grant.
- The allocation of non-employee scheme deficit costs to employers would represent a new burden for fire and rescue authorities. It would be a new burden for those authorities that employed retained firefighters, because during the period in question fire and rescue authorities did not have responsibility for scheme deficit costs.
- In the case of fire authorities that did not employ retained firefighters, a proposal that they should contribute to the non-employee costs associated with the implementation of the Employment Tribunal Judgement is a new burden because those fire authorities did not employ any firefighters covered by regulation 5 of the Part-time Workers Regulations, which only imposes obligations on employers of part-time workers.

## **Implementation**

There are significant challenges and additional costs associated with the implementation of the proposed regulations. Fire and Rescue authorities will be required, under Rule 5A paragraph 4 of the draft order, to use reasonable endeavours to notify existing and former employees who may be entitled to join the scheme as a special member. "Reasonable endeavours" is not defined in the regulations which means that Fire and Rescue Authorities will need to take legal advice on this matter and could be subject to subsequent legal challenge.

Rule 5A Paragraph 9 of the draft order, which makes provision for Fire and Rescue Authorities to estimate pensionable pay, implicitly acknowledges the challenge that Fire and Rescue Authorities and individual firefighters could have in confirming the basic facts of the relevant employment histories. In such cases the process of determining pensionable pay will be problematic. It is not clear what dispute resolution, if any, might apply in such cases, but the process of determining entitlement in such cases will add to the burden on Fire and Rescue Authorities.

The regulations will allow those eligible to join the modified scheme to choose the start date, which can be the date first employed as a retained firefighter within the mandatory special period or some other date from within the relevant period. It is not clear whether or not Fire and Rescue Authorities will be required to provide to eligible individuals costed options for a range of possible start dates. If this is the case, it will add to the administrative costs associated with implementation.

The administrative costs for Fire and Rescue Authorities in implementing access to the modified pension scheme will be high, particularly for those Fire and Rescue Authorities that have traditionally had a large proportion of retained staff. As set out, the Order seems to

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**Item 5**

allow for a high level of flexibility for eligible persons in taking up the opportunity to join the scheme; this might be appropriate and will be welcomed by eligible individuals. However, the level of proposed flexibility, taken together with the lack of clarity around certain aspects of the implementation process, as set out above, will add to the administrative and risk mitigation costs. The government should provide additional funding to Fire and Rescue authorities to support the implementation of the modified scheme.

**Conclusion**

Fire and Rescue Authorities are already facing substantial challenges in addressing funding reductions, leading to staffing reductions, fire station closures and fewer fire safety checks. Placing additional financial burdens on Fire and Rescue Authorities in the form of additional employer contributions and the costs associated with implementing the modified scheme will further exacerbate an already very difficult financial situation. In the view of the FSMC the government should bear these costs.

Yours sincerely,



Cllr Kay Hammond  
Chairman, LGA Fire Services Management Committee





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Our Ref: BL/BL/018585/13

05 JUL 2013

Dear Vij,

**CFOA MEETING REQUEST - PRIMARY AUTHORITY PARTNERSHIP PILOTS**

Thank you for your letter of 14 June updating me on CFOA's position on the Fire Authority Partnership Scheme.

I am pleased to hear from my officials that that the pilot process – both the Primary Authority Scheme and Fire Authority Partnership Scheme - has been constructive, and that many of the key concerns that were raised when the PAS concept was being developed and implemented, have been satisfactorily resolved in relation to fire safety. Although no decisions have yet been made on the future Government approach, I welcome the fact that the BRDO will be consulting the fire sector on its proposed revised statutory guidance to the PA Scheme.

I would be pleased to have an opportunity to hear about CFOA's experience of developing and implementing the FAPS. I note that you have broad support from Chief Fire Officers for the scheme, and that this is likely to be the majority preference for the future. Of course, given the strong support that the LGA offered on the development of a voluntary scheme when we met to discuss it last year, I would also be interested to hear their views.

I understand that the independent evaluation of the pilot process is due to report later in July, and that the final report will be considered by the Steering Group on 25 July. I therefore suggest that you contact my diary manager, Roberto Singcueno (0303 444 3425), to arrange a mutually convenient date which follows on from the publication of the evaluation report.

I am copying this letter for information to Cllr Hammond at the Local Government Association.

**BRANDON LEWIS MP**



## Note of decisions taken and actions required

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<b>Title:</b>	Fire Services Management Committee
<b>Date and time:</b>	Friday 19 July 2013, 11.00am
<b>Venue:</b>	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
Members	Cllr Maurice Heaster OBE	London FEPA
	Cllr John Bell	Greater Manchester FRA
	Cllr David Topping	Cheshire FA
	Cllr Kevin Foster	West Midlands FRA
	Cllr Mark Healey	Devon & Somerset FRS
	Cllr John Joyce	Cheshire FA
	Cllr Navin Shah	London FEPA
	Cllr John Edwards	West Midlands FRA
Substitutes	Cllr Les Byrom CBE	Merseyside FRA
	Cllr Roger Price	Hampshire CC
	Cllr Mehboob Khan	West Yorkshire FA
Apologies	Cllr Brian Copping (Deputy chair)	Shepway DC
	Cllr Keith Aspden	North Yorkshire FRA
	Cllr Julie Young	Essex FRA
Observers:	Mr James Cleverly AM	South Yorkshire Fire
	Cllr Phil Howson	East Sussex FRA
Officers:	Helen Murray, Eamon Lally, Gill Gittins, Clive Harris, Steve Service (all LGA)	

Item	Decisions and actions	Action by
	<p>Councillor Kay Hammond welcomed Members and Officers to the meeting. She asked that a moment of silence be observed for the firefighter who died in the Oldham Street fire in Manchester earlier that week and asked Cllr Bell to convey the Committee's condolences to the authority.</p>	
<b>1.</b>	<b>Chairman's Report</b>	
	<p>The Chairman gave an update on work she had taken part in since the last committee as documented in the report, and added that she had undertaken live radio interviews on FiReControl in 5 parts of the country.</p> <p>Cllr Hammond asked for it to be noted that contrary to what was indicated in the paper, Sir Ken Knight was unable to attend the breakfast session at the LGA conference.</p>	
	<b>Action</b>	
	Officers to note the amendment to the report regarding Sir Ken Knight's breakfast session.	<b>LGA officers</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Lakanal House Fire</b>	
	<p>Commissioner Dobson summarised the report. He said that the FSMC had a role in ensuring that the messages emerging from the coroner's findings got fed back to Fire Authorities and lobbying for any changes to building regulations which may be required. The LGA's guidance produced at the Lakanal House Fire inquest had been very well received.</p> <p>Cllr Shah said that LFEPA had recently set up a cross party working group to address the wider issues emerging from the fire and develop an action plan with good practice examples. He suggested that the concluding document be brought back to the FSMC. Members agreed that its findings should be incorporated into the LGA's work programme going forward.</p> <p>Members argued that there was still a case to be made to Government for building regulations to be altered to make sprinkler installation easier beyond new build properties, including enabling landlords to be able to access properties to retro-fit sprinklers.</p>	



**Item 6a**

Members highlighted LFEPA's committee as a potential opportunity to engage with landlords to get buy-in on this issue.

The Committee felt more could be done to disseminate information to communities and enable them to lobby their MPs.

Members highlighted the wider potential impact of sprinklers on communities beyond saving lives, including the economic benefit to jobs.

Members stressed the need to set clear timeframes for achieving their goals and identify where the opposition to sprinklers in Government lay to better focus the LGA's campaign.

Action

Officers to take forward in line with member's comments.

**LGA officers**

**3. 'Facing the Future Report by Sir Ken Knight: response to Government**

The Chairman and Eamon Lally, LGA Senior Adviser introduced this report. Cllr Hammond said that the LGA had submitted an interim report to the Communities and Local Government Select Committee which had been approved by the lead members. Eamon added that the Committee had relied heavily on this report in oral evidence to date and Cllr Hammond had been asked to go before it in September to give further evidence.

Members emphasised the importance of the sector managing its own efficiencies rather than having a top-down reorganisation imposed on it.

The Committee discussed the prospect of bringing the ambulance service into the local government family. Cllr Hilton reported that he had spoken with Neil O'Connor about this possibility and he indicated that the minister might be interested. While some members advocated looking at a pathfinder service combining fire and ambulance, others were sceptical about how easily this would work in practice, given the lack of interest by ambulance services in co-working projects to date.

Cllr Hammond said that she has raised the issue of where the ambulance service is located in terms of the other emergency services with Eric Pickles at conference and he gave assurances that he was working on it. She added that blue light interoperability is a key feature of Surrey's business plan.

**Item 6a**

Some members questioned the timing of Sir Ken's review given that he could have made many of the changes he suggested in his time as a CFO and argued that attempts should be focused on influencing Sir Ken's successor instead. However, Cllr Hammond argued that it was right Sir Ken had taken the opportunity to reflect on the service and his review demonstrated recognition that fire had moved on as a service since his time as a serving officer.

Members highlighted that Sir Ken had pegged the financial impact of his review proposals to 2011 but argued that the current period of reductions would remove any slack in fire authority budgets. Cllr Hammond agreed to feed this back to the select committee.

Action

Cllr Hammond / LGA Officers to incorporate member comments into select committee evidence and final draft of response to Government.

**Cllr Hammond /  
LGA Officers**

**4. Future of National Operational Guidance**

Helen Murray announced that CFO Roy Wilsher was leading on this collaborative project between the LGA and CFOA and 34 CFOs were already on board. She commended the NOG website [www.ukfrs.com](http://www.ukfrs.com) to members as an informative account of work on the project to date.

Cllr Khan said that he was pleased with the work and that it demonstrated the maturity of the sector. He advocated that the LGA write to CFOA to thank them for the work they had done.

Members raised the issue of matchfunding. If the level of sector contributions remained at £10,000 per authority for the programme, they agreed that it would be easier to have a single flat rate. However, the Committee cautioned that if the level of contribution increased significantly this could affect the appropriateness of a flat rate for all.

While it was felt that the sector would be happy to take on responsibility for the programme, members were also mindful that the NOG programme could mark the beginning of a wider budget transfer from DCLG to the sector. Given current financial pressures, members stressed that Government must give it the money necessary to fund such projects and not expect authority budgets to cover them alone.

Cllr Hammond said that a central pot was being made available and urged FRAs to bid for it. However, she also stressed that there was also an expectation that the fire service will contribute to it.

Decision

Members **agreed** to endorse the Strategy Board's bidding proposal as outlined in paragraph 15 of the report.

Action

Committee to write thankyou letter to CFOA for work done on the NOG programme.

**Helen Murray /  
Steve Service**

**5. Fire Control**

CFO Dave Webb, Leicestershire Fire presented this report. He announced that a new national mobile communication service for all three emergency services, the Emergency Services Network (ESN) will replace the Airwave service currently in use. However, Mr Webb cautioned that while an invitation to tender was likely to go out in 2014 and the current intention was for the new network to be operational by 2016, actual timescales were still very uncertain. At present, he advocated that the changes be highlighted to FRAs to ensure that the transition period was on their risk registers.

Cllr Hammond asked that the point regarding risk registers go in the next fire bulletin.

Some members felt that there was a lack of detail in the report on what Fire Control projects were taking place. However, others argued that the paper was intended as an overview rather than an in-depth report. Officers agreed to send a briefing note to members who would like further information.

Action

Officers to ensure FAs are alerted to importance of ESN being on risk registers via next fire bulletin.

**Clive Harris**

Officers to send a more detailed note on Fire Control projects taking place to members who requested further information.

**Eamon Lally**

**6. Fire and Rescue Service Pilots considering the application of  
Primary Authority to Fire Safety**

Eamon Lally, LGA Senior Adviser introduced this report. He said that findings from the two Government pilots considering the application of Primary Authority to Fire Safety suggested that there is capacity to apply a primary authority scheme to the sector. However there was still some uncertainty over which scheme was most appropriate. He added that Cllr Hammond is due to give evidence at a ministerial meeting on this issue on 8 August.

Eamon stressed that when the scheme should be implemented is also a key factor, with the initial proposal of October leaving FAs very little time to get it up and running.

While some members concurred with CFOA's initial view that a non-statutory scheme would be better than a statutory one, the committee agreed that the process of evidence-gathering was not yet advanced enough to make a decision and it would be better to wait until April 2014 to implement any scheme properly. Cllr Hammond agreed to communicate this view to ministers as part of her evidence.

Action

Officers to bring the Primary authority scheme issue back to the committee in the Autumn.

**Eamon Lally /  
Steve Service**

**7. End of year report**

Cllr Hammond announced that Cllr Sian Timoney would be stepping down as Vice Chair of the FSMC at the end of August. She thanked Cllr Timoney on behalf of the Committee for her work on the committee over the previous 3 years.

Cllr Hammond also expressed gratitude to Commissioner Dobson and LGA officers for their support and advice to the FSMC in the last year. She asked members to consider the committee's priorities for 2013/14.

Members agreed that the onus was on fire authorities to show leadership and go to Government with solutions rather than They outlined the following issues for consideration:

**Retained firefighters** - in light of the Government's stance on

**Item 6a**

retained firefighters, it was felt that employers may now have to reconsider how they prioritise daytime / part-time cover.

The **Grey book** and any changes necessary since its last update in 2009.

**National resilience** and how to ensure that the Government continues funding it.

The continued review of the **Fire Service College** and its operations under private ownership.

Members noted attempts to establish a **collaborative pathway between fire and local authorities** in some areas of deprivation, as these are often the places where most incidents occur. It was argued that a focus by the committee on lobbying to overcome data protection barriers could help progress this process.

Members argued that a further causal factor in deprived areas was an absence of wired smoke alarms in many properties. They suggested that the Committee could look at the areas where fire deaths were most prevalent and what pressure could be applied to Government to legislate against **negligent landlords** in these areas.

On **sprinklers**, Cllr Edwards said that more could be done to develop the toolkit, working with CFOA to develop the campaign further. He advocated harnessing a wide body of evidence to get the public's attention. Clive Harris, LGA Adviser added that a week of action in conjunction with CFOA was planned for the spring, with Cllr Edwards attending CFOA's next meeting.

However, some members expressed doubt over whether the LGA's Communication channels alone would be robust enough to handle such a widescale and complex campaign.

Cllr Hammond reported on **peer challenge** that Cardiff University was currently doing a study to measure the effectiveness of the process.

Members discussed how fire might contribute towards a **dementia strategy** by strengthening links with health and social care services in this area.

Decision

Members **agreed** that an overview of the Committee's achievements be communicated more widely to FRAs along with inviting priorities for the 2013/14 cycle.

Action

Officers to incorporate members' suggestions into a draft 2013/14 FSMC priorities paper for consideration at the September committee.

**LGA Officers**

Officers to circulate report to FRAs and canvas their views on priorities going forward.

**LGA Officers**

**8. Fire Services Management Committee update paper**

Members **noted** the report.

**9. Industrial relations**

Gill Gittins, LGA Principal Negotiating Officer updated the Committee on the latest developments in industrial relations.

Gill confirmed that the Government announced that they had no intention to pursue a national fitness standard for the fire service. Some members felt that the LGA should urge the Government to renegotiate on this to enable firefighters of 50+ to be redeployed if they were no longer physically capable of active duty.

However, Cllrs Hammond and Heaster stressed that the LGA's responsibility was to ensure employers were prepared in a strike scenario rather than to establish a position on fitness or get involved in lobbying on the detail of any pensions dispute between Government and the FBU.

Decision

Members **approved** the nomination of Sean Ruth to replace Roy Wilsher as adviser to the National Employers.

**10. Outside bodies update**

Cllr Hilton gave a verbal update on the **Strategic Resilience Board** which met in the last month. He reported that the minister had stated at the meeting that no top slice would be awarded for resilience.

**Item 6a**

Cllr Hilton said that the National Resilience Board is in negotiation with the Fire Service College over their intention to charge VAT on courses, given that the Board is not VAT registered.

The Board also discussed the renewal of protective equipment.

Cllr Price summarised the discussion from the previous meeting of the **Arson Prevention Forum**. A representative from the insurance industry present stated that fire contributes 40 per cent of total losses claimed for. Cllr Price argued that this could be a useful statistic to quote as part of the LGA's sprinklers campaign.

Cllr Bell noted the inclusion of the **LGA Fire bulletin** as an appendix to the paper and said he would like to see it issued to all Fire authority members and Chiefs. Officers said that the bulletin was circulated through LGA members "opting in" to ensure recipients were happy to receive it. However, they agreed to look at ways to widen the circulation of the bulletin through LGA publicity channels.

Members **noted** the update.

Action

Officers to publicise the Fire bulletin as part of new Board cycle communications with fire authority members.

**11. Note of the last meeting - 17 May 2013**

Members **noted** the minutes of the previous meeting.

**LGA Officers**

**Date of Next Meeting:**

Thursday, 19 September 2013 at 11.00am in Local Government House.





## Note of decisions taken and actions required

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<b>Title:</b>	Fire Commission
<b>Date and time:</b>	Friday 14 June 2013, 11.00
<b>Venue:</b>	Westminster Suite Room 8.1, Local Government House

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Item	Decisions and actions	Action by
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Cllr Hammond welcomed members to the meeting, including recently appointed Fire Chairs following the May elections and hoped they would find the Fire Commission informative. She said that copies of the newly produced Fire bulletin were available and urged members to give their feedback on the content.

### 1. Attendance by the Fire Minister

Cllr Hammond welcomed Brandon Lewis MP to the Commission.

Mr Lewis thanked the Commission for the invitation and reported that DCLG are now in the consultation stage regarding Sir Ken Knight's efficiency review. It is intended that the Government's final response will be made in the autumn, so he invited members to submit their views either collectively or individually on behalf of their authorities.

Cllr Hammond proposed that questions from members fall under one of two themes: general questions and Sir Ken's review.

#### General questions

Members asked what the Minister was doing to defend the Fire Services' share of **the budget**.

Mr Lewis responded that while he was unable to reveal details of the forthcoming spending round. However, as part of the local government family it was expected that fire must take its share of the cuts. However, he said that he would rule out a debate on privatisation or the idea of a single national service, emphasising that it was recognised that differences existed between authorities.

Members expressed concern that the impact of current spending cuts would remove any slack from the Fire Service, with no option left but

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to seek a **council tax rise** from the electorate via a referendum. They argued that the cost of a referendum meant any tax gains were marginal and said that there was a need to extend budgetary flexibility across sectors.

Mr Lewis contended that while authorities would need to seek the approval of the electorate, they have freedom to act on council tax and this was not currently capped by government. He said that he had received evidence that any referendum costs could be paid off within a year but emphasised that this meant that authorities need to be confident of their argument for a rise.

On **potential mergers between authorities**, Councillors from smaller, lower funded authorities pointed out that the much higher precepts charged by their larger neighbours precluded them from merging as this would mean a large increase in council tax.

Mr Lewis said that while the council tax complications of a full merger could be a challenge, this did not prevent two authorities from working together and receiving the mutual benefits of pooled resources without a full merger.

Members reported local work to try and get **sprinklers** incorporated into building regulations for all new houses and asked the minister if he would support this nationally. Mr Lewis responded that there were no plans to do this as the Government were reluctant to add any extra obligations which might increase the cost of house-building and dissuade investment.

On **flooding prevention**, members sought confirmation on whether there were plans to make it a statutory duty for fire. Mr Lewis responded that there were no plans to make this statutory at the moment but if it were considered in the future, fire authorities would want the funding currently held by Defra to go with it. Mr Lewis said he had no fixed opinion on the idea at the moment but was open to debate if FAs wanted to submit their views.

#### Questions on Sir Ken Knight's efficiency review

Members asked if the minister was prepared to take on communities regarding fire cuts and emphasised that consideration needed to be about the **effect on fire safety** rather than merely the bottom line.

Mr Lewis denied that the changes proposed were all about cuts,

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arguing that they also looked at outcomes. He said that several aspects of Sir Ken Knight's review were intended to provide a better service, as well as a financial benefit to the authority. He said that prevention work carried out by the sector was fantastic and more could be done to harness this public trust in positive ways.

Members said that there was nothing in the report regarding a **review of national resilience**, but the substantial change in the cost of training and the types of risks and threats posed to the emergency services over the last 6 years merited a revaluation of whether resilience procedures in place were still fit for purpose.

On the **review data**, members said that this was based on 2011/12 data but much of the £196m savings identified by Sir Ken had already been made since then. Some Councillors felt that savings needed to target those authorities that cost the most.

Mr Lewis reminded the Commission that Sir Ken's report was independent from DCLG and was interested in what can make the fire service better rather than its processes per se. He cited the control centre model in the report as a potential means of providing better outcomes.

On **community budgets**, members highlighted the need to recognise that there were longer term financial benefits from investing in prevention and there were opportunities to work with local partners on this agenda.

On **scrutiny**, some members felt that Sir Ken's review had been misled in the suggestion that FAs do not have a scrutiny committee, saying that in some FAs the sub committees perform this function. One member said that his authority had recruited 8 non-elected members of the community to take on the scrutiny role to counter the perception that the FA was too inward looking in its governance structures.

On **peer challenge**, several members argued that there was no need to fundamentally review the current peer challenge.. While recognising that some officers had expressed a desire for inspection, they asserted that the inspection model was too bureaucratic and should not be forced upon authorities. Cllr Hammond said that there was a need to strengthen the corporate leadership review question by examining the statement of assurance.

The Chairman thanked Brandon Lewis for taking the time to come and talk to the Commission. Mr Lewis said if members wished to engage further on any issues, they were welcome to invite him to their authorities, feed into his quarterly meetings with Cllr Hammond or submit their views in writing.

Members requested roving mikes for future Fire Commission meetings.

**Action**

Officers to arrange roving mikes for future Fire Commissions subject to availability.

**Steve Service**

**2. Community Budgets**

Paul Raynes, Director of Programmes, LGA and Neil Sartorio, Director of Local Public Services, Ernst & Young gave a presentation to the Commission on Community Budgets.

Paul Raynes said that the rising cost of providing services for an increasingly ageing population meant that authorities needed to consider what changes could be made to the way services were provided, focusing on the factors driving cost increases. For fire, this would involve moving money from firefighting to investing in prevention. Paul said that the experience and reputation that the Fire Service already had in prevention work represented a huge opportunity for the sector to make savings.

Neil Sartorio gave an overview of the outcomes and learning from the Community Budget pilots. He emphasised that the exercise was not just about budgets but demand and distribution.

Members from some of the pilot authorities questioned the extent to which cross party involvement had been sought and argued that the focus was more on what the Chancellor would save than authorities. They asked what the rewards for FAs would be.

Neil Sartorio responded that for the model to work in practice, cross party agreement was needed. A sharing agreement could not be assumed from the outset.

Members said that while a shift in targets for FAs from the number of Fire deaths to the number of calls had reduced deaths, these figures were likely to rise again with the cuts being made. They argued that safety must be the priority.

**Item 6b**

Some members sought further information about how community budgets worked. Paul Raynes said that more information and examples of how they were used could be found at [www.communitybudgets.org.uk](http://www.communitybudgets.org.uk), including details of investment agreements in Greater Manchester and West Cheshire.

Cllr Hammond thanked Neil and Paul for attending and urged members to check with their CFOs if they were involved in Community Budgets going forward.

**3. Emergency Services Mobile Communication Programme**

CFO Dave Webb introduced this item. He said that the current airwave contract covering FAs was due to finish at the end of 2016 and a replacement system was therefore being sought. However, the network was currently only used by the emergency services and unlike mobile phones, coverage needed to be consistent everywhere, hence it was very expensive.

Dave Webb asked members to consider nominations to the ESMCP customer group. He said it was anticipated that the group would meet monthly, but members would not necessarily be required to attend every meeting.

Members expressed concern of the potential cost of a new system in the light of current funding cuts if the bill came back to FAs.

Councillors advocated a collective approach to the issue between FAs. They argued that the role of technology needed to be examined more widely and lay members should be involved in the process, with regular progress reports.

Dave Webb said that the UK was not alone in facing this problem and discussion was currently taking place internationally on how to move forward. He agreed to report back to the Commission as the issue developed.

Cllr Hammond asked members to contact LGA Political Group Officers if they were interested in sitting on the group.

**Action**

Commission members to contact Political Groups if interested in sitting on ESMCP customer group.

**All / Clive Harris**

**4. Sir Ken Knight's efficiency review**

Cllr Hammond invited members' initial views on the findings of the Efficiency review.

Members made the following comments:

A "one size fits all" approach to reform was not acceptable.

FAs needed to be seen to show leadership, take action and drive efficiencies collectively as a sector, otherwise changes were likely to be forced upon them.

Members were opposed to the idea of Fire Commissioners replacing Fire Authorities, emphasising that the Fire Service was not the same as the police and that it was still unclear whether the introduction of PCCs had made a positive impact.

On collaboration, the idea of foregoing customisation to achieve interoperability was seen by some members as a false economy. They argued that if this was to be considered, the Government needs to ask if FAs are providing what is statutory rather than undergoing change for change's sake. However, others argued that greater standardization could provide economic benefits. Members felt that in many areas, collaboration work is already taking place.

Members argued that a 40% cut in deaths had been achieved by preventative work undertaken by the sector and that further improvement should be in the hands of the Fire Service.

**Action**

Officers to incorporate members' comments into LGA response.

**Eamon Lally**

**5. FRA/PCC working group final report**

Cllr Young gave a summary of the issues coming out of the working group's survey of Chief Fire Officers. She said that while some preliminary points had been raised, the general consensus was that the relationship between Fire Authorities and PCCs is still at a relatively early stage in development. The Group would consider doing further information gathering in 6 to 12 months time.

Cllr Hammond thanked the Working Group for the report, stressing that while this is a complex landscape, it was important that the Fire Service is seen to be proactive in implementing change and identifying partnership opportunities.

**6. Industrial Relations**

Members received an update from Gill Gittins, LGA Principal Negotiating Officer on industrial relations.

Members *noted* the update.

**7. Fire Commission update paper**

Members *noted* the update.

**8. FSMC and Fire Commission notes of the last meeting**

***Decision***

The notes of the last Fire Commission meeting were agreed as a correct record.

**Date of next meeting:** 11.00am, Friday 11 October 2013, Local Government House

# LGA location map

## Local Government Association

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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.

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**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

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