

FSMC update paper

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

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

Recommendation

Members to note the update.

Action

Officers to progress as appropriate.

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FSMC update paper

Flooding

1. Over the last few weeks the UK has been experiencing a number of flooding incidents following bad weather and the coastal surge. On 29 December the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) confirmed that the Bellwin Scheme had been activated. This scheme enables fire and rescue authorities and councils to get financial assistance depending on local circumstances, and covers certain clearing up costs when local authorities spent more than 0.2% of their calculated annual revenue budget on works that have been reported to DCLG as eligible for grant.

Fire Sprinklers

2. The first Fire Sprinkler Week will be taking place in the first week of February, between 3 – 10 February. The aim of the week is to highlight the benefits of sprinklers across the built environment and to encourage the sector to further use the LGA's sprinkler toolkit to help promote the wider use of sprinklers.
3. This comes after the implementation of the Domestic Fire Safety (Wales) Measure 2011 in Wales. This measure means that from 30 April 2014 all new build or converted care homes, children's homes, halls of residence and rooms for residential purposes in Wales will be required to have sprinklers fitted and from 1 January 2016, all new homes and flats will be added.

Fire Kills

4. On 8 January the Government published its annual report on the work undertaken by the Fire Kills campaign between 2012 to 2013. The report includes information on the smoke alarm national advertising campaign and the work of the campaign both nationally and locally. The report can be downloaded from the Government's website: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/270014/35817_Fire_Kills_Annual_Report_Accessible2.pdf

Fire and rescue authorities transformation funds for 2015 to 2016: bidding process

5. In the 2013 spending round the Government announced a £30 million resource funding was available to the fire sector for 2015-16 to support transformational change and deliver savings. A further £45 million capital fire efficiency incentive fund was also announced to further assist fire and rescue authorities in achieving efficient and effective service delivery. The consultation on the bidding process ended on 14 January and the LGA submitted a response.

Government updates to the fire service emergency cover toolkit

6. The Government has recently updated the Fire Service Emergency Cover toolkit, which models the impact of the fire and rescue service's emergency response times on the rate of death of people involved in fires and a range of other incidents including road traffic collisions. Further information about the updates can be found on the Government's website.

Leadership Academies

7. The LGA will be running another two leadership Academies between 12 - 13 February and between 10 - 11 September. Members will have the opportunity to develop their skills to ensure they are better able to address challenges and take advantage of opportunities in their authorities. The Leadership Academies also provide a chance to share ideas and network with leading members from other fire and rescue authorities. More information can be found on the fire section of the LGA's website (www.local.gov.uk/fire-and-rescue-services) and you can book a place by emailing grace.collins@local.gov.uk.

LGA's Annual Fire Conference

8. The LGA's next Annual Fire Conference will be taking place at the Millennium Stadium in Cardiff between 11 – 12 March. The Conference is an excellent opportunity for fire and rescue authorities to join in national discussions on issues like fire finance, blue light integration and community budgets, as well as the chance to hear from the Fire Minister and Lyn Brown MP, the shadow fire minister. The Conference programme and booking details can be found on the LGA's website: http://www.local.gov.uk/events/-/journal_content/56/10180/5427762/EVENT

Emergency Service Mobile Communication Programme

9. The Emergency Service Mobile Communication Programme has now produced its outline business plan. In December DCLG wrote to all Chief Fire Officers to invite fire and rescue authorities to review the strategic objectives of the programme and to discuss the direction of travel for the programme. The feedback received will then feed into Departmental sign-off, which is expected in Late January 2014.
10. The purpose of the Outline Business Case is primarily to provide justification for continuation of the programme and for the Government to give authority for the programme to proceed to Invitation To Tender.
11. If you require any further information regarding the Emergency Services Mobile Communication Programme or wish to discuss the Outline Business Case, please contact: Dave Towler, Chief Fire Officers' Association, Emergency Services Mobile Communication Programme, Business Change and Assurance Manager at david.towler1@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

Incident Recording System Procurement of replacement system

12. The Incident Recording System project team has secured approval from DCLG and Cabinet Office for the procurement documentation to be finalised and released to the market, so that a supplier can be appointed through the Government Digital Services Framework.
13. Discussions on how the Incident Recording System might change can be found on the Incident Recording System Requirements website at the following link: <http://irs-hub.fepd.gov.uk/irs-hub/wiki/Welcome+to+the+new+IRS+Hub>. The Government is encouraging FRAs to join the website and see what is being discussed.

Operational Fire Statistics 2012 -13

14. Towards the end of last year the Government produced its annual statistics about fire and rescue authorities' staff, numbers of injuries to firefighters, fire safety audits of buildings and community fire safety. The full statistical report is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-and-rescue-authorities-operational-statistics-bulletin-for-england-2012-to-2013>

Government to review policy on smoke and carbon monoxide alarms

15. In November the Government announced a review on the condition of homes in the private rented sector. The Review will consider whether or not new rules are needed on the installation of carbon monoxide and smoke alarms in privately rented homes. There are already rules in place requiring landlords to make sure homes are safe and habitable, through measures including regular gas safety checks and making high quality repairs. The review will seek the views of the housing sector, and other interested stakeholders, as to whether the current regulatory system ensures adequate safety for householders, or whether it needs to be improved or simplified.

The Firefighters International Service of Remembrance & Wreath Laying Ceremony - Sunday 14th September 2014

16. All Chairs and Chief Fire Officers of Fire and Rescue Authorities are invited to attend the Firefighters International Service of Remembrance & Wreath Laying Ceremony. This will be taking place at St Sepulchre-without-Newgate, in London on Sunday 14 September 2014. Badges of Office and Decorations are to be worn. Further information will be posted on the Firefighters Memorial Trust website: <http://firefightersmemorial.org.uk>

Fire Service College Customer Advisory Board - Councillor John Edwards

17. The last meeting of the Fire Service College Customer Advisory Board (CAB) was held on 8 January. Attendees discussed a wide range of issues including training transformation to meet customer needs, the development of e-learning and opportunities for training partnerships with the wider sector. Other issues discussed were:

- 17.1. Governance issues for customers as the College moves towards an emergency services academy
 - 17.2. Developing the role of the College in blue-light interoperability training
 - 17.3. Peripatetic training developments to deliver a 'training closer to home' option.
 - 17.4. A possible College role in developing a single portal access for fire sector sites
 - 17.5. Capital investment in College accommodation improvements, Breathing Apparatus facility and catering
 - 17.6. The Firefighter development programme
 - 17.7. The Future of the heritage collection
 - 17.8. A College familiarisation programme for fire sector customers
 - 17.9. CFOA endorsement of training 'products'
18. The CAB asked for a regular overview of the College financial position to give the sector assurances on viability to come to the meeting in the future. There were also discussions on the arrangements to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the College in May of this year.