

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 18 November, I led sessions in the West Midlands at the second of the LGA's latest cycle of Fire **Leadership Academies** for elected members with senior roles on fire and rescue authorities, which lead members of both West Midlands and Staffordshire FRA attended.
3. I attended a **Reform event** entitled "**Blue light collaboration- the route to emergency services efficiency**" in Westminster on 26 November. Both Earl Howe, Minister for Quality at the Department of Health and Brandon Lewis spoke at the event, which was billed as an opportunity to generate practical ideas on implementing joint capability and interoperability between blue light services from both public and private sectors while Sir Ken Knight's report is being considered by Government. Delegates also heard from John Lewis, Chief Operating Officer at Airwave.
4. Alongside Cllrs Howson and Wright, I represented the LGA at the **Fire Futures Forum** hosted by CFOA in London on 27 November. The event brought together stakeholders from a range of sectors to find a cost effective and proportionate solution to prevent fires in waste management and recycling facilities.
5. Following on from the Safer Suffolk partnership workshop in November, I undertook a **fire peer challenge** in Suffolk from 2-5 December. The event focused on core elements of the challenge such as leadership, the review will focus on a number of key service challenges that Suffolk have identified within their self-assessment.
6. On 11 December I attended a local **members' information day on Emergency Responsibilities and Terrorist threat levels** given by Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority. The day highlighted the preparation of the service for the current risks faced within this community and I heard from the Emergency Planning college on the responsibilities of elected members regarding civil resilience and emergency planning.
7. On the evening of 11 December, I attended the **LFEPA's annual Carol Service**, marking the end of a challenging but productive year for Fire and Rescue Services across England and Wales.
8. On 12 December I visited **Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Authority**, to discuss the challenges they are facing, and how we can help them. I also spoke to Lead Members of the Fire Authority.
9. I attended a **bi-lateral with Brandon Lewis MP** on 8 January. We discussed a range of issues, including the progress of the current dispute between government and the FBU over pension reforms. I pressed the Minister on the likely publication date for the Knight Review. It is clear that there are still discussions on-going between government departments on the response, particularly in relation to the future governance

arrangements for the fire service. We know from previous statements that the Minister is not in favour of top-down reform of the sector.

10. We are still waiting for details of this year's council tax referendum arrangements. In our meeting, I reiterated the call by the sector for further exemptions for fire and rescue authorities from the referendum limits.