

Note of last Fire Services Management Committee meeting

Title: Fire Services Management Committee
Date: Friday 5 September 2014
Venue: Millbank Room, 8th Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

Attendance

An attendance list is attached as **Appendix A** to this note

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
1	Membership and appointments to outside bodies 2014-15 The text of this minute is restricted. The Chair welcomed new Members of the Committee and noted the work of retiring Members. The Committee noted the outside bodies for the year 2014/15 and agreed the places on each body. Members requested the LGA have two places on the Cross Emergency Services Group. The Chair also introduced Ron Dobson CBE as the new Strategic Adviser to the Committee until he leaves the service. Action: Officers to write to retiring Members of the Committee thanking them for their work. Officers to ask for two places on the Cross Emergency Services Group. Officers to circulate list of outside appointments to all Members of the Committee. Decision: Members noted the report and agreed the places on the outside bodies.	
2	Priorities for 2014/15 Helen Murray, Head of Programmes, introduced the report stating that priorities that had been agreed in previous years were still ongoing. In addition to those priorities Members were asked to agree the four priorities outlined in the report, those being:	

- Work to assist resolution of the current industrial action;
- The Independent Review of Terms and Conditions;
- Political engagement; and
- Transformation: blue light interoperability.

Members welcomed the report and made a number of comments including:

- The industrial dispute was between the Government and the Fire Brigades Union (FBU). However, it was important that the Committee had an oversight of the dispute without being involved in it.
- Any meetings with Ministers, or setting of agendas should be done in consultation with other lead members of the Committee.
- A forward plan of work would assist lead members direct the travel of future agendas and reports for the Committee.
- Funding up to the next general election and beyond, particularly in the context of the next Comprehensive Spending Review should be one of the key priorities for the Committee.

In addition Cllr Hammond reminded the Committee that the Fire Bulletin was a quarterly report updating the Fire community on work and events.

Action:

To include funding as a priority going forward.

All lead members to be involved with meetings of Ministers and setting the agenda for future work.

Decision:

Members agreed the priorities as set out in the report and added funding to the programme of work.

3 Independent Review of Conditions of Service for Operational Staff in the Fire and Rescue Service

The Chair introduced the report to the Committee and informed Members that the questionnaire from DCLG had now been sent to all Fire and Rescue Authorities. The Chair requested that Adrian Thomas be invited to the next meeting of the Committee on 12 December.

Sarah Messenger, Head of Workforce, explained the Committee that the Review crossed a number of policy areas. It was important that the LGA had a joined up response on the different aspects of the Review, in particular consulting with the National Joint Committee (NJC). The Committee were asked for a steer on an LGA response.

Members welcomed the report, broadly agreeing with the suggested response and contributed a number of different views on the Independent

Review.

Some Members were concerned that the NJC had not been involved in any early discussions regarding the Independent Review. It was the role of the NJC to look at the terms and conditions, and Members noted that the NJC has already committed to reviewing the role of firefighters. In addition some Members felt that it was not the role of DCLG to review terms and conditions as they did not directly employ firefighters.

It was felt by some Members that the review undermined the role of Fire and Rescue Authorities and explored the value in sending a written response to make key points, rather than responding to every individual question.

In response Members agreed that the Committee needed to respond on behalf of the fire sector and that any response should outline the role of the NJC and the FSMC.

Helen Murray, Head of Programmes, informed the Committee that the deadline to respond had been extended from 19 September to mid-October. In addition the Committee agreed to share the response from the LGA with all Fire and Rescue Authorities.

Actions:

Officers to invite Adrian Thomas to the next meeting of the FSMC on 12 December.

Officers to compile a LGA response and clear this with Lead Members of the FSMC and NJC members. Once agreed, the review should be shared with all Fire and Rescue Authorities to inform their individual responses.

Decision:

Members agreed the recommendations within the report.

4 Review of Flooding

Clive Harris, Senior Adviser, introduced the report and outlined the summary of the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA's) response to the flooding from December 2013 to February 2014. In total the report outlined 44 recommendations, of which the most relevant to the Committee were outlined in paragraph 8 of the report.

Cllr Hammond commented that it was good to work with CFOA on flooding and it would be helpful for the Committee to speak with Cllr Mike Jones and other Councillors within the LGA to learn more on the input fire services can make to the Ministerial Recovery Group work.

Members welcomed the recommendations, but commented that they were unsure as to why CFOA were reluctant to pursue a statutory duty making the fire service the primary lead on flooding incidents. Ron Dobson

provided clarification about CFOA's position on co-ordination and rescue.

It was noted that the Prime Minister had agreed to support all the Pitt Review recommendations including making the fire service the primary body for flooding incidents. In addition Members commented that fire authorities would need to play a more strategic role in the future with regards to flooding.

Decision:

Members noted the report.

Action:

Officers to ensure that the views of fire and rescue authorities are fed into the LGA's wider work on flooding.

5 Industrial Relations Report

Sarah Messenger, Head of Workforce, updated Members on the latest Industrial Relations dispute. Members were informed that agreement had been reached on an 1.0% increase in pay for employees covered by the NJC.

Helen Murray, Head of Programmes, informed the Committee that the Minister for Fire, Penny Mordaunt had agreed to attend the Fire Commission on 17 October, however she was not available until 1.30pm, which would mean the re-arranging of the meeting to a later time.

Action:

Officers to inform Members of the re-arranged Fire Commission meeting time.

Decision:

Members noted the report.

6 Update paper

Helen Murray, Head of Programmes, advised Members that Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority had agreed to supply volunteers for the Fire Conference in Gateshead in March.

Members welcomed the update paper and asked for Chair's engagements to be detailed in future reports.

Decision:

Members noted the report.

7 Notes of the previous meeting - Fire Commission 13 June

Decision:

Members agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2014.

8 Notes of the previous meeting - FSMC 18 July

Decision:

Members agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2014.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Jeremy Hilton	Gloucestershire County Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Philip Howson	East Sussex Fire Authority
Deputy-chairman	Cllr David Acton	Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority
	Cllr Kay Hammond	Surrey County Council
Members	Ms Fiona Twycross	London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA)
	Cllr John Joyce	Cheshire Fire Authority
	Cllr Maurice Heaster	London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA)
	Cllr Roger Price	Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority
	Cllr Darrell Pulk	Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority
	Cllr Simon Spencer	Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Authority
	Cllr Rebecca Knox	Dorset Fire Authority
	Cllr Les Byrom CBE	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority
	Cllr Thomas Wright	Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority
Apologies	Cllr Mrs Michele Hodgson	County Durham and Darlington Fire & Rescue Authority
In Attendance		
LGA Officers		

