

Fire Services Management Committee

Agenda

Friday, 26 June 2015
2.00 pm

Bevin Hall, Ground Floor, Local Government
House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

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

www.local.gov.uk

This meeting is



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Fire Services Management Committee
26 June 2015

There will be a meeting of the Fire Services Management Committee at **2.00 pm on Friday, 26 June 2015** in Bevin Hall, Ground Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ.

Attendance Sheet:

Please ensure that you sign the attendance register, which will be available in the meeting room. It is the only record of your presence at the meeting.

Apologies:

Please notify your political group office (see contact telephone numbers below) if you are unable to attend this meeting.

Labour:	Group Office: 020 7664 3334	email: Labour.GroupLGA@local.gov.uk
Conservative:	Group Office: 020 7664 3223	email: lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk
Liberal Democrat:	Group Office: 020 7664 3235	email: libdem@local.gov.uk
Independent:	Group Office: 020 7664 3224	email: independent.group@local.gov.uk

Location:

A map showing the location of Local Government House is printed on the back cover.

LGA Contact:

Paul Goodchild
0207 664 3005 / paul.goodchild@local.gov.uk

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The twitter hashtag for this meeting is #lgafire

Fire Services Management Committee – Membership 2014/2015

Councillor	Authority
Labour (6)	
Cllr David Acton (Deputy Chair)	Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Michele Hodgson	County Durham and Darlington Fire & Rescue Authority
Cllr John Joyce	Cheshire Fire Authority
Ms Fiona Twycross	London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA)
Cllr Darrell Pulk	Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr John Edwards	West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority
Substitutes	
Cllr Les Byrom CBE	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Thomas Wright	Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority
Conservative (5)	
Cllr John Bell	
Cllr Kay Hammond (Deputy Chair)	Surrey County Council
Cllr Maurice Heaster	London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA)
Cllr Simon Spencer	Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Rebecca Knox	Dorset Fire Authority
Substitutes	
Cllr Mark Healey	Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Jean Rigby	Lancashire Combined Fire Authority
Mr Gareth Bacon	Greater London Authority
Liberal Democrat (2)	
Cllr Jeremy Hilton (Chair)	Gloucestershire County Council
Cllr Roger Price	Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority
Substitutes	
Independent (1)	
Cllr Philip Howson (Vice-Chair)	East Sussex Fire Authority
Substitutes	

LGA Fire Service Management Committee Attendance 2014-2015

Councillors	05.09.14	12.12.14	09.03.15			
Labour Group						
David Acton	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Michele Hodgson	No	Yes	Yes			
John Joyce	Yes	Yes	Yes			
John Edwards	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Fiona Twycross	Yes	Yes	No			
Darrell Pulk	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Conservative Group						
Kay Hammond	Yes	No	Yes			
Maurice Heaster OBE	Yes	No	Yes			
Simon Spencer	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Rebecca Knox	Yes	Yes	Yes			
John Bell	Yes	Yes	No			
Lib Dem Group						
Jeremy Hilton	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Roger Price	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Independent						
Phil Howson	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Substitutes						
Thomas Wright	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Les Byrom	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Mark Healey		Yes				
James Cleverly		Yes				

Agenda

Fire Services Management Committee

Friday 26 June 2015

2.00 pm

Bevin Hall, Ground Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

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Date of Next Meeting: Friday, 25 September 2015, 1.00 pm, Westminster Suite, 8th Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ



The Future of the Fire and Rescue Service: Report from the New Local Government Network

Purpose of report

For discussion.

Summary

The New Local Government Network (NLGN) is publishing a report looking at the future of the fire and rescue service. Claire Mansfield, Head of Research at NLGN, will attend the meeting to discuss the research before it is published on 16 July.

Recommendation

Members are invited to discuss the research and consider how this discussion could feed into the wider discussion on priorities for 2015/16.

Action

Officers to progress as appropriate.

Contact officer: Lucy Ellender
Position: Adviser
Phone no: 020 7664 3321
E-mail: lucy.ellender@local.gov.uk

The Future of the Fire and Rescue Service: Report from the New Local Government Network

Introduction

1. The New Local Government Network (NLGN) is an independent think tank that seeks to transform public services, revitalise local political leadership and empower local communities. The NLGN works with councils, private businesses and third sector organisations.
2. The NLGN has been working with the Chief Fire Officers Association on a new report looking at the future of the fire and rescue service. The research included interviews and workshops with a number of officers and councillors from the fire and rescue service, local authorities, other blue-light services and social workers to examine how the Fire and Rescue Service can reform to ensure future success and sustainability.
3. The research was focussed on three key themes:
 - 3.1. Widening the prevention agenda
 - 3.2. Collaboration with other emergency services
 - 3.3. Achieving greater efficiency
4. The report outlines the key issues facing the fire and rescue sector in the coming years, including the difficulties presented by a continued reduction in revenue support grant and council tax, and the potential effect that this could have on the sector's capacity to provide services. The research explores the viability of the fire and rescue service in its current form into the future and will make a series of recommendations for the future shape of the sector and its role in making communities safer. It poses the question what should the future of the fire and rescue service be, should it keep to its current remit or explore how it could shape a new role for itself.
5. A lot of these issues have been touched on in the papers discussed at the Fire Commission, particularly around the role of the fire and rescue service in improving the public's health and the potential for the sector to expand this role.

Claire Mansfield

6. Claire is Head of Research at the NLGN. Previously, she worked as a Support Officer for a Local Involvement Network (LINK) in London. Prior to that Claire studied for her PhD in Social Geography in University College Cork, carrying out extensive qualitative and quantitative research in two diverse communities. During this time, she wrote reports for the Social Inclusion Unit of Cork City Council. Her speciality areas are:
 - 5.1. Fire and rescue service
 - 5.2. Arts and culture
 - 5.3. Public health
 - 5.4. Budgeting



**Fire Services Management
Committee**

26 June 2015

- 5.5. Two tier local government
- 5.6. Young people

Next Steps

- 6. Members may wish to take into consideration the debate on this item, and the wider discussion on expanding the role prevention from of the sector at the Fire Commission, when discussing their priorities for 2015/16.



LGA Fire Perceptions Survey

Purpose of report

For discussion and decision about any future activity.

Summary

This paper sets out the results of the fire perceptions survey as well as discussing possible actions in response to the findings.

Recommendation

Members are invited to consider further activity regarding the LGA's offer to fire and rescue services to address the issues raised in the survey.

Action

Officers to progress actions.

Contact officer: Lucy Ellender
Position: Adviser
Phone no: 020 7664 3321
E-mail: lucy.ellender@local.gov.uk

LGA Fire Perceptions Survey

Background

1. At the last meeting of the FSMC members discussed the initial findings of the perceptions survey the LGA carried out for our fire and rescue members. The full report is now available on the LGA's website: http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/fire-and-rescue-services/-/journal_content/56/10180/7342178/ARTICLE
2. The survey was conducted with 67 respondents from a range of county, metropolitan and combined fire and rescue authorities (FRAs), and included both officers and members. The LGA provided BMG Research with contact details for Chief Fire Officers, Deputy Chief Fire Officers, Chairs of FRAs and Vice Chairs, this included members of the Fire Commission but did not include FSMC members. The full list of questions is available in **Appendix A**. The survey had a response rate of 44%, and only 8 out of the 46 FRAs did not respond to the survey.
3. The survey makes clear that the LGA has been successful in delivering a comprehensive offer to our member authorities and there are good number of positive aspects which we can build on to enhance our reputation and represent our member FRAs. However, there are a number of areas which the survey has highlighted where we need to consider further work to ensure that we continue to provide a good service to our members.

General observations

4. Overall the results are very positive for the LGA. Most of the respondents had a good knowledge of the organisation with 88% of respondents stating that they know either a great deal or a fair amount about the LGA. Only 1% said that they had heard of it but knew nothing about it. This compares favourably to the main LGA survey where 73% said that they know either a fair or great deal about the LGA. There was also a good understanding of the LGA's purpose and the work that it does for FRAs with 94% of respondents saying they agree with the statement "I understand the LGA's purpose and how it works for FRAs".
5. The report shows that the LGA's fire members are likely to speak positively about the LGA, in a similar proportion to the wider membership. Nearly two thirds were either fairly or very satisfied with the work of the LGA on behalf of the sector. Members also agreed that we stand up for and defend the reputation of FRAs (70% agree or strongly agree). 66% also agreed that the LGA addresses the issues that are important to FRAs. It was felt that the LGA was transparent and accountable to its members (70% agreeing or strongly agreeing), this was supported by the importance attached to the role of the Fire Commission in bringing together the LGA's FRA members, (81% agreed it was very or fairly important).
6. The majority of respondents agreed that the LGA is performing its key functions for its fire members, most respondents also believed that all the services provided by the LGA were either "fairly useful" or "very useful" (78%). The key activities were listed as:
 - 6.1 Providing support and challenge for FRAs/FRSs to improve – 88%

- 6.2 Supporting and promoting FRAs/FRSs who are trying to transform services to better support their communities – 88%
 - 6.3 Bringing together of FRAs for the Fire Commission – 81%
 - 6.4 Providing a single voice for FRAs/FRSs – 78%
7. The messages coming out of the survey are overwhelmingly positive, however there were a number of areas where further work will be necessary to ensure that members are aware of all that we offer and the work that we undertake on their behalf.

Policy

8. The policy work on fire and rescue was well regarded in the responses to the survey. The policy team is responsible for supporting the Fire Services Management Committee and Fire Commission and in order to deliver Members' priorities, lobbies Government on behalf of FRAs to influence and shape Government's thinking. This may mean lobbying for legislative change to overcome barriers to progress, budget provision, structural proposals, consultation exercises and wider profile as part of the local government family. Working with a wide range of partners, it showcases the best of the sector ensuring that Government proposals are grounded in a practical understanding of the fire world.
9. The policy work of the organisation was well understood within the sector, 82% of respondents said that our lobbying activities were either very or fairly useful for them as members, and 19% indicated that of all the services the LGA provides it was the most useful. 71% agreed that the LGA had been an effective advocate for the interests of the fire sector and 65% also agreed that the LGA addresses the issues that are important to the fire and rescue sector. Around half (52%) of respondents agreed that the LGA is influential in shaping the wider agenda for FRAs. Although this is positive, there is clearly more to do here. There were also concerns about the LGA demonstrating value for money for the funding it receives. These issues have also been identified in the wider LGA survey with 53% of respondents to the 2013 survey agreeing that the LGA demonstrated good value for money.
10. When officers have costed the various elements of our offer, it does in fact exceed the annual subscriptions (which have decreased since 2009 and are now between £5,706 to £14,096, excluding LFEPA) and therefore provides excellent value for money. However we clearly need to make this information more accessible and encourage all FRAs to take full advantage of the support available.

Improvement

11. The improvement work at the LGA consists of a number of different strands. The most well-known is the fire peer challenge and operational assessment. The other parts of the LGA's improvement offer includes member development, through our dedicated Fire Leadership Essentials programme and online resources, including LG Inform for data and the Knowledge Hub for sharing good practice.
12. Overall 91% of respondents said that the LGA's provision of support for sector led improvement was useful to them, with 11% of respondents stating it was the most

important service we provide. The online tools for improvement work were less well known than the peer challenge and operational assessment process. 42% of respondents said that they had heard a lot or a moderate amount about LG Inform and 39% said that they had heard nothing about the service. 49% of respondents said that they had heard a lot or a moderate amount about the Knowledge Hub and 28% had heard nothing.

13. However, the vast majority of respondents (87%) agreed that the approach to sector led improvement was the right one in the current context, and the majority of respondents were confident that they had the necessary skills and capacity to monitor their own performance and continuously improve.
14. Members were keen to see the LGA be more challenging about FRAs performance (72%). Respondents were also clear that they supported the expectation of a peer challenge every four years (94% agreed). There was also a feeling that LGA should place a stronger emphasis on supporting and fostering innovation across the sector (93%). We therefore need to ensure that members are more aware of the broad range of improvement tools available to them through the LGA. Members should also be aware of opportunities within the LGA to promote and share good practice with the Fire Commission, at the Innovation Zone at the LGA's Fire Conference, through publications the bulletin and the Knowledge Hub.

Communications

15. Members felt informed about the work of the LGA. 63% believe that the LGA keeps them well informed about its work, compared to 79% of council members. 27% of members felt that the LGA only gave them a limited amount of information and 10% said that the organisation does not tell them much at all about the work that we carry out.
16. The vast majority of respondents (78%) received information through the quarterly fire bulletin. Other sources of communications included:
 - 16.1 Events and conference – 76%
 - 16.2 first magazine – 69%
 - 16.3 Publications – 67%
 - 16.4 Media work/press releases – 66%
 - 16.5 LGA Website – 58%
 - 16.6 Direct contact e.g. with their principal adviser and/or fire policy team – 57%
 - 16.7 Regular HR circulars – 52%
 - 16.8 Parliamentary bulletin – 42%
 - 16.9 Political group offices e-bulletin – 36%
 - 16.10 LGA Chairman's weekly email – 31%
 - 16.11 Access to Knowledge Hub – 25%
 - 16.12 LGA Chief Executives email – 25%
 - 16.13 first online – 21%
 - 16.14 Social media (for example twitter) 19%

17. Respondents also stated that they would prefer to hear more information through the Chairman's weekly bulletin (24%) and through further information on the LGA's website (15%). They also stated that they preferred to engage with the LGA through contacting officers by email or telephone (48%) and through attending LGA events and conferences (27%).
18. 72% of respondents could think of a time in the last two years when they believed the LGA had engaged or involved them in a way they really liked. Respondents had particularly liked engaging with the LGA through conferences and events (38%), operational assessments and the peer challenge process (27%) as well as through face-to-face meetings (23%). It is clear that the bulletin, the Annual Fire Conference and Exhibition and our publications all play an important role in keeping members informed about, and engaged in, the work of the LGA.

Workforce

19. The workforce functions within the LGA include providing employment advice to members, negotiating national pay terms and conditions through the National Joint Council for the fire and rescue service as well as providing legal advice and the coordination of legal action. 81% stated that the LGA's role in negotiating national pay, terms and conditions was very or fairly useful to them as members, with 36% identifying these activities as the most useful services that the LGA provides. Providing employment advice was useful for 76% of respondents and providing legal advice and coordinating legal action was useful for 79%.

Future working

20. We asked members what further activities they would like to see the LGA to undertake if our corporate fire offer was expanded. Respondents wanted to see the LGA providing *more opportunities to lobby Ministers (85%)*, *more active press work to raise issues at the national level (75%)*, and *greater access to bespoke support (70%)*. Over half (52%) of respondents also wanted to see *more regional events and seminars*. Only 3% of respondents did not want to receive any additional services.
21. Of those selected, respondents most wanted to see *more opportunities to lobby Ministers (47%)*, followed by *more regional events and seminars (27%)*, *greater access to bespoke support (15%)*, and *more active press work to raise issues at the national level (8%)*.

Action plan

22. As a politically-led organisation, our focus is clearly around supporting elected Members in FRAs and this emphasis is borne out by the fact that councillors tended to have a higher level of satisfaction with the work of the LGA than the officers who responded. However we remain keen to engage productively with senior officers in the service so that the political and professional leadership of the service is joined up as far as possible.

23. We have recently held induction days for senior officers from FRAs (particularly newly promoted officers) to share how we work and to discuss their challenges: this has been very warmly welcomed. We might consider offering this more routinely as part of our offer. We might also wish to strengthen our ties with CFOA and engage in more joint working such as the joint CFOA/LGA document "The fire and rescue service: making our nation safer" or the cross-promotion of events or communications. We now have closer links with CFOA, attend CFOA's FRS council in July. Securing a LGA slot on the ELP programme would provide even more visibility and knowledge about the value of working with the LGA.
24. This year one of our key priorities was to ensure that we had continuing and useful political engagement with Ministers, with the Shadow Minister as well as with other influential politicians. The Fire Commission regularly hosts a Ministerial slot, and there are further opportunities to meet Ministers at the annual Fire Conference, which are both important to members. Members may also consider if there are other Ministers across Whitehall that the FSMC should be engaging with for example Mike Penning MP, Minister for Policing, Crime and Criminal Justice and Victims, who is responsible for Police and Crime Commissioners, and Lord Prior of Brampton, Minister for NHS Productivity, who is responsible for the ambulance service. We might consider whether the various political group offices have a greater role in discussions with Ministers and Opposition spokespeople, perhaps organising informal briefings.
25. We have been working this year on increasing our communications with members, with articles in *first* magazine and a number of press releases tied to the document "The fire and rescue service: making our nation safer". This is alongside the quarterly bulletin, which is clearly already an important source of information for members. The Fire Commission, reviewed and improved in format two years ago, has also continued to provide an excellent opportunity for networking and discussions for councillors. We may want to see how we can build on this role to facilitate members' discussions with home authorities.
26. Our improvement work is already well-received although respondents were keen for us to be more influential in shaping the improvement agenda and offer more bespoke support. We already offer special leadership programmes tailored to individual fire and rescue authority's challenges for a small fee and we can seek to do more. The information available through LG Inform and the Knowledge Hub as a key improvement tool also needs to be more accessible to members. In common with peer review more generally, a more systematic approach to follow up, and early engagement when authorities are due a second review will ensure the programme maintains momentum.
27. It is clear that we are generally delivering the services that our members want, however there is a need for further communication on what that offer is to ensure that all councillors and officers are able to take full advantage of membership of the LGA.

Conclusions

28. This was the first year of the LGA's perceptions survey for fire and rescue services and provides a depth of helpful information in ensuring our offer remains strong and relevant.

LGA Fire and Rescue Authority Perceptions Survey 2015

DB1: TEXT SUBSTITUTIONS TO USE THROUGHOUT WHERE SCRIPT REFERS TO Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services OR authority/service BASED ON FRA TYPE AND RESPONDENT ROLE

	County	Combined, Metropolitan, London
Officer	Fire and Rescue Service/service	Fire and Rescue Service/service
Councillor	Fire and Rescue Service/service	Fire and Rescue Authority/authority

Introduction

Good morning, afternoon, evening. My name is from BMG Research, an independent research organisation.

We are conducting a survey on behalf of the Local Government Association to understand the views of their member Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services.

As you are a member of the LGA, we are keen to hear from you. The survey should take no longer than 20 minutes to complete and we would really appreciate it if you could take part.

Are you able to take part now, or would you like to arrange a suitable time for me to call you back?

IF WANT TO RE-ARRANGE – CONFIRM TIME AND PHONE NUMBER, THANK AND CLOSE.

IF COMMENCING INTERVIEW, CONTINUE AS FOLLOWS:

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this survey.

This survey is to help the Local Government Association – or LGA – find out from members their:

- **understanding of the LGA and what it offers**
- **views about how this offer could be improved in the future**
- **views about possible options and priorities for future services and lobbying offered by the LGA.**

The results will be used to help the LGA plan for the future.

The interview will take around 20 minutes of your time.

I would like to assure you that all the information provided will be treated confidentially. Only aggregated information will be used for publication, and no identifiable information about any individual authority/service or respondent will be published without prior permission.

ARE YOU INTERVIEWING THE ORIGINAL CONTACT? IF NOT, PLEASE CONFIRM JOB TITLE WITH REFERRAL AND CODE ACCORDINGLY:

Officer - Chief Fire Officer (or equivalent) [<i>county, combined and met only</i>]
Officer - Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive (or equivalent) [<i>combined, met, London</i>]
Officer – Fire Commissioner (or equivalent) [<i>London only</i>]
Officer – Deputy/Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Councillor – Cabinet member of the council - Portfolio Holder [<i>county only</i>]
Councillor – Chair of Fire and Rescue Authority
Councillor – Vice chair of Fire and Rescue Authority
Other: Write in

IF REFUSE TO TAKE PART, WHY?

No time/too busy	THANK & CLOSE
Don't do surveys	THANK & CLOSE
No interest in helping LGA	THANK & CLOSE
Never heard of the LGA	THANK & CLOSE
Have heard of the LGA but know nothing about it	THANK & CLOSE
Other, PLEASE WRITE IN:	THANK & CLOSE

GENERAL / BROAD QUESTIONS

To begin with, I would like to ask you a few questions about your understanding of the LGA and its services.

ASK ALL

Q1. How well would you say you know the Local Government Association? Would you say that you...

REVERSE READ OUT OF SCALE. SINGLE CODE ONLY

Know a great deal about it	1	CONTINUE
Know a fair amount about it	2	CONTINUE
Know just a little about it	3	CONTINUE
Heard of but know nothing about it	4	CONTINUE
Never heard of it	5	THANK & CLOSE
Don't know/ No opinion	6	THANK & CLOSE

ASK ALL

Q2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement about the Local Government Association?

REVERSE READ OUT OF SCALE. SINGLE CODE ONLY

I understand the Local Government Association's purpose and how it works for Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services

A great deal	1	CONTINUE
To some extent	2	CONTINUE
Not very much	3	CONTINUE
Not at all	4	CONTINUE
Don't know	5	CONTINUE

I would now like to ask you about what you think of the Local Government Association.

ASK ALL

Q3. Which of these phrases best describes the way you would speak of the Local Government Association to other people?

REVERSE READ OUT OF SCALE. SINGLE CODE ONLY

I speak positively about the Local Government Association without being asked	1	CONTINUE
I speak positively about the Local Government Association if I am asked about it	2	CONTINUE
I have no views one way or another	3	CONTINUE
I speak negatively about the Local Government Association if I am asked about it	4	CONTINUE
I speak negatively about the Local Government Association without being asked	5	CONTINUE
Don't know	6	CONTINUE

CONTACT WITH/ THE LGA / OFFER QUESTIONS

ASK ALL

Q4. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the work of the Local Government Association on behalf of Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services?
 REVERSE READ OUT OF SCALE. SINGLE CODE ONLY

Very satisfied	1	CONTINUE
Fairly satisfied	2	CONTINUE
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3	CONTINUE
Fairly dissatisfied	4	CONTINUE
Very dissatisfied	5	CONTINUE
Don't know/No opinion	6	CONTINUE

ASK ALL

Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the LGA? The LGA...
 RANDOMISE READOUT OF STATEMENTS. REVERSE READ OUT OF SCALE.
 SINGLE CODE ONLY FOR EACH A-H.

Q5 A ... addresses the issues that are important to Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services

Q5 B ... understands what Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services need to help them improve their services and organisational capacity

Q5 C ... demonstrates value for money for the funding it receives

Q5 D ... is influential in shaping the agenda for Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services

Q5 E ...stands up for and defends the reputation of Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services

Q5 F ... effectively represents the views of its members to central government

Q5 G ... helps to set and drive improvement in the Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services

Q5 H ... is transparent and accountable to its members

Strongly agree	1	CONTINUE
Tend to agree	2	CONTINUE
Neither agree nor disagree	3	CONTINUE
Tend to disagree	4	CONTINUE
Strongly disagree	5	CONTINUE
Don't know	6	CONTINUE

ASK ALL

Q6. To what extent, if at all, has the LGA been an effective advocate for the interests of Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services?
 REVERSE READ OUT OF SCALE. SINGLE CODE ONLY

A great deal	1	CONTINUE
A fair amount	2	CONTINUE
Not very much	3	CONTINUE
Not at all	4	CONTINUE
Don't know	5	CONTINUE

ASK ALL

Q7. To what extent would you say your authority/service benefits from its relationship with the LGA?

REVERSE READ OUT OF SCALE. SINGLE CODE ONLY

A great deal	1	CONTINUE
A fair amount	2	CONTINUE
Not very much	3	CONTINUE
Not at all	4	CONTINUE
Doesn't really have a relationship	5	CONTINUE
Don't know	6	CONTINUE

ASK IF Q7=3/4

Q8. You said your authority/service benefits 'not very much' or 'not at all' from its relationship with the LGA. Why do you say that?

OPEN RESPONSE

ASK ALL

Q9. I am going to read out a list of activities conducted by the LGA. For each, I would like you to tell me whether they are important or not to your Fire and Rescue Authority/Service.

RANDOMISE READOUT OF STATEMENTS. REVERSE READ OUT OF SCALE. SINGLE CODE ONLY FOR EACH A-E.

Q9A Providing a single voice for Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services

Q9B Providing support and challenge for Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services to improve

Q9C Supporting and promoting Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services who are trying to transform services to better support their communities

Q9D Bringing together of Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services for the Fire Commission

Very important	1	CONTINUE
Fairly important	2	CONTINUE
Not very important	3	CONTINUE
Not at all important	4	CONTINUE
Don't know	5	CONTINUE

ASK THOSE WHO MENTION TWO OR MORE STATEMENTS AT Q9 A-E AS VERY IMPORTANT

Q10. Of the activities you mentioned as very important, which one would you say is the *most important* of these?

READ OUT STATEMENTS RESPONDENT MENTIONED AS VERY IMPORTANT ONLY AT Q9. RANDOMISE READOUT OF STATEMENTS. SINGLE CODE ONLY.

Providing a single voice for Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services	1	CONTINUE
Providing support and challenge for Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services to improve	2	CONTINUE
Supporting and promoting Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services who are trying to transform services to better support their communities	3	CONTINUE
Bringing together of Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services for the Fire Commission	4	CONTINUE

ASK ALL

Q11. Now I am going to read a list of services provided by the LGA. For each, please could you tell me whether they are useful or not to your authority/service?

Q11 A Lobbying on behalf of Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services

Q11 B Providing support for sector led improvement (for example, peer challenges and mentoring, support for leadership, workforce management and productivity)

Q11 C Providing a range of online tools to help sector led improvement (like LG Inform and access to the Knowledge Hub

Q11 D Providing advice and information through the political group offices

Q11 E Providing legal advice and co-ordination of legal action for Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services (for example, on retained firefighters pensions)

Q11 F Providing up-to-date information about local government and Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services (for example, 'first' magazine, e-bulletins and website)

Q11 G Providing conferences and events

Q11 H Negotiating national pay, terms and conditions

Q11 I Providing employment advice

RANDOMISE READOUT OF STATEMENTS. REVERSE READ OUT OF SCALE. SINGLE CODE ONLY FOR EACH A-E.

Very useful	1	CONTINUE
Fairly useful	2	CONTINUE
Not very useful	3	CONTINUE
Not at all useful	4	CONTINUE
Don't know	5	CONTINUE

ASK THOSE WHO MENTION TWO OR MORE STATEMENTS AT Q11 A-I AS VERY USEFUL

Q12. Of the services you mentioned as very useful, which one would you say is the *most useful* of these?

READ OUT STATEMENTS RESPONDENT MENTIONED AS VERY USEFUL ONLY AT Q11. RANDOMISE READOUT OF STATEMENTS. SINGLE CODE ONLY.

Lobbying on behalf of Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services	1	CONTINUE
Providing support for sector led improvement (for example, peer challenges and mentoring, support for leadership, workforce management and productivity)	2	CONTINUE
Providing a range of online tools to help sector led improvement (like LG Inform and access to Knowledge Hub)	3	CONTINUE
Providing advice and information through the political group offices	4	CONTINUE
Providing legal advice and co-ordination of legal action for Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services (for example, on retained firefighters pensions)	5	CONTINUE
Providing up-to-date information about local government and Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services (for example, 'first' magazine, e-bulletins and website)	6	CONTINUE
Providing conferences and events	7	CONTINUE
Negotiating national pay, terms and conditions	8	CONTINUE
Providing employment advice	9	CONTINUE

COMMUNICATION / ENGAGEMENT QUESTIONS

ASK ALL

Q13. How well informed, if at all, do you think the LGA keeps you about the services it provides for Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services?

READ OUT. REVERSE READ OUT OF SCALE. SINGLE CODE ONLY.

Very well informed	1	CONTINUE
Fairly well informed	2	CONTINUE
Gives me only a limited amount of information	3	CONTINUE
Doesn't tell me much at all about what it does	4	CONTINUE
Don't know/No opinion	5	CONTINUE

ASK ALL

Q14. How do you generally find out about the services of the LGA?

READ OUT. MULTI CODE

LGA Chairman's weekly email	1	CONTINUE
LGA Chief Executive's email	2	CONTINUE
Quarterly fire bulletin	3	CONTINUE
Parliamentary bulletin	4	CONTINUE
Political group offices e-bulletin	5	CONTINUE
Regular HR circulars	6	CONTINUE
'first' magazine	7	CONTINUE
'first online'	8	CONTINUE
LGA website	9	CONTINUE
Access to Knowledge Hub	10	CONTINUE
Media work/press releases	11	CONTINUE
Social media (for example, Twitter)	12	CONTINUE
Publications (for example, 'AnyFire' booklets)	13	CONTINUE
Events and conferences	14	CONTINUE
Direct contact, for example, with your principal advisor, account manager, and or the LGA fire policy team	15	CONTINUE
Comms Net	16	CONTINUE
Other	17	CONTINUE

ASK ALL

Q15. How would you prefer to find out about the services of the LGA?

UNPROMPTED. SINGLE CODE ONLY

LGA Chairman's weekly email	1	CONTINUE
LGA Chief Executive's email	2	CONTINUE
Quarterly fire bulletin	3	CONTINUE
Parliamentary bulletin	4	CONTINUE
Political group offices e-bulletin	5	CONTINUE
Regular HR circulars	6	CONTINUE
'first' magazine	7	CONTINUE
'first online'	8	CONTINUE
LGA website	9	CONTINUE
Access to Knowledge Hub	10	CONTINUE
Media work/press releases	11	CONTINUE
Social media (for example, Twitter)	12	CONTINUE
Publications (for example, 'AnyFire' booklets)	13	CONTINUE
Events and conferences	14	CONTINUE
Direct contact, for example, with your principal advisor, account manager, and/or the LGA fire policy team	15	CONTINUE
Comms Net	16	CONTINUE
Other	17	CONTINUE

THERE IS NO QUESTION 16

THERE IS NO QUESTION 17

ASK ALL

Q18. How engaged do you feel you are with the LGA?

READ OUT. REVERSE READ OUT OF SCALE. SINGLE CODE ONLY.

Very engaged	1	CONTINUE
Fairly engaged	2	CONTINUE
Not very engaged	3	CONTINUE
Not at all engaged	4	CONTINUE
Don't know	5	CONTINUE

ASK ALL

Q18a. By what means do you engage with the LGA?

READ OUT. MULTI CODE

Contacting LGA officers by email or phone	1	CONTINUE
Contacting councillors/boards by email or phone	2	CONTINUE
When contacted by LGA officers or in your role as an advisor	3	CONTINUE
Through the political group offices	4	
Contributing via Knowledge Hub	5	CONTINUE
Contributing in LGA meetings/seminars	6	CONTINUE
Responding to LGA consultations	7	CONTINUE
Direct contact, for example, with your principal advisor, account manager, and/or the LGA fire policy team	8	CONTINUE

Acting as an LGA peer or supporting LGA development programmes	9	CONTINUE
Attending LGA events and conferences	10	CONTINUE
Visits from LGA councillors and staff to your Fire and Rescue service	11	CONTINUE
Other (please specify)	12	CONTINUE

ASK ALL

Q18b. By what means would you prefer to engage with the LGA?

UNPROMPTED. MULTI CODE

Contacting LGA officers by email or phone	1	CONTINUE
Contacting councillors/boards by email or phone	2	CONTINUE
When contacted, by LGA officers or in your role as an advisor	3	CONTINUE
Through the political group offices	4	
Contributing via Knowledge Hub	5	CONTINUE
Contributing in LGA meetings/seminars	6	CONTINUE
Responding to LGA consultations	7	CONTINUE
Direct contact, for example, with your principal advisor, account manager, and/or the LGA fire policy team	8	CONTINUE
Acting as an LGA peer or supporting LGA development programmes	9	CONTINUE
Attending LGA events and conferences	10	CONTINUE
Visits from LGA councillors and staff to your Fire and Rescue Service	11	CONTINUE
Other (please specify)	12	CONTINUE

ASK ALL

Q19i. In the last two years are there any examples you can think of when the LGA engaged with, or involved you, in a way that you really liked?

Yes	1	CONTINUE
No	2	CONTINUE

ASK IF Q19I=1

Q19ii. If yes, how?

OPEN RESPONSE

SECTOR LED IMPROVEMENT QUESTIONS

as you may be aware, after the removal of much of the old ‘top down’ performance framework, the LGA together with councils and fire and rescue authorities/services , developed an approach known as ‘sector-led improvement’, in which local government itself challenges and supports authorities to improve and strengthen accountability to local people.

ASK ALL

Q20. How much, if anything, have you heard about this sector-led improvement approach?

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE ONLY.

Heard a lot	1	CONTINUE
Heard a moderate amount	2	CONTINUE
Heard a little	3	CONTINUE
Heard nothing	4	CONTINUE
Don't know	5	CONTINUE

ASK ALL

Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

A The approach to sector-led improvement is the right approach in the current context

B My authority/service is making advances in driving improvement

Strongly agree	1	CONTINUE
Agree	2	CONTINUE
Neither agree nor disagree	3	CONTINUE
Disagree	4	CONTINUE
Strongly disagree	5	CONTINUE
Don't know/No opinion	6	CONTINUE

ASK ALL

Q22. To what extent would you say you are confident that:

A Your own authority/service currently has the necessary skills and capacity to monitor its own performance and continuously improve?

B All Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services currently have the necessary skills and capacity to monitor its own performance and continuously improve?

To a great extent	1	CONTINUE
To a moderate extent	2	CONTINUE
To a small extent	3	CONTINUE
Not at all	4	CONTINUE
Don't know	5	CONTINUE

ASK ALL

Q23. The LGA has offered a number of resources, to support the sector in taking the lead in its own improvement. Which, if any, of the following elements of the LGA’s offer have you heard about?

Q23 A Provision of an “Operational Assessment” and fire peer challenge, at no cost

Q23 B Access to the Knowledge Hub, a resource to enable people from all parts of the public sector to work together and share experiences

Q23 C Access to the LG Inform data service, to provide access to key data about the fire and rescue service area, and allow benchmarking and comparisons with others

Q23 D Member training and development (for example, provision of subsidised places on the fire leadership essentials programme)

RANDOMISE READOUT OF STATEMENTS. REVERSE READ OUT OF SCALE. SINGLE CODE ONLY FOR EACH A-G.

Heard a lot	1	CONTINUE
Heard a moderate amount	2	CONTINUE
Heard a little	3	CONTINUE
Heard nothing	4	CONTINUE
Don’t know	5	CONTINUE

ASK ALL

Q24. Some commentators in central and local government have suggested that sector led improvement should have more ‘bite’, and that a more robust approach might help prevent the re-emergence of external inspection. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

24 A The LGA should be more challenging with Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services about their performance

24 B All Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services should be expected to have an operational assessment and fire peer challenge, at least every four years?

24 C The LGA should place a stronger emphasis on supporting and fostering innovation across the sector

Strongly agree	1	CONTINUE
Agree	2	CONTINUE
Neither agree nor disagree	3	CONTINUE
Disagree	4	CONTINUE
Strongly disagree	5	CONTINUE
Don’t know/No opinion	6	CONTINUE

ASK ALL

Q25. Are there any other needs or challenges that your authority/service is facing, where you think the LGA could provide support?

OPEN RESPONSE

ADDITIONAL OFFER QUESTIONS

ASK ALL

Q26. The LGA would like to know whether it should be offering anything additional for Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services. If the corporate offer was extended, which if any of the following additional resources would you like to see?

- A. More regional events and seminars**
- B. More opportunities to lobby Ministers**
- C. Greater access to bespoke support**
- D. More active press work to raise issues at the national level**
- E. Are there any others you would like to add? Write in.**

ASK THOSE WHO MENTION TWO OR MORE STATEMENTS AT Q26 A-E

Q27. Of those selected, which would you most like to see?

- A. More regional events and seminars**
- B. More opportunities to lobby Ministers**
- C. Greater access to bespoke support**
- D. Press notices**
- E. Others listed**

ASK ALL

Q35. Finally, do you have any other comments about the LGA generally or how you would like the LGA to support you further?

OPEN RESPONSE

ASK ALL

The LGA would like to use the information collected in this survey to provide targeted support and further information to Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services. Do you consent to us sharing your responses linked to your contact details with the LGA for this purpose (your responses will remain anonymous in any wider publications, and the LGA will keep your response confidential)?

SINGLE RESPONSE

Yes	1
No	2

Thank you very much for taking the time to answer these questions.

LGA Annual Fire Conference and Exhibition Venues and Locations for 2017 and Beyond

Purpose of report

For discussion and agreement.

Summary

Members attended the Fire Conference in Gateshead in March this year; and have agreed that the Hilton Bristol should be the venue for 2016. This paper sets out the benefits and drawbacks of a number of potential conference venues as well as a proposal to find a semi-permanent home for the Fire Conference and Exhibition in Gateshead for a 2 or 3 year period from 2017-19.

Recommendation

Members are invited to consider the venues for the Fire Conference from 2017 onwards.

Action

Officers to act upon Members' steer for future conference planning.

Contact officer: Amanda Spicer
Position: Events Organiser, LGA
Phone no: 020 7664 3158
E-mail: amanda.spicer@local.gov.uk

LGA Annual Fire Conference and Exhibition Venues and Locations for 2017 and Beyond

Background

1. The LGA Annual Fire Conference and Exhibition is considered to be a key event within the fire industry calendar, regularly attracting an overall average of 230 paying conference delegates and a range of exhibitors and sponsors over the past eight years. It is an important event for the LGA also. It is one of the largest prestige events we organise, and it is important that we continue to attract delegates and exhibitors to ensure the events remains valuable.
2. However, we and FRAs will continue to face financial challenges as we move forward and we are keen to secure the best possible venue, and financial deal, to ensure that the event continues to generate income and attract delegates, exhibitors and sponsors. As discussed at the last FSMC meeting, officers have researched the benefits associated with moving to a three year model for conference venues. This would help to provide continuity for delegates as well as generate savings.

Update on 2016 Conference venue

3. Marketing and promotion is at the very early stages for the 2016 conference to be held at the Bristol Marriott City Centre Hotel. Outline conference details (booking and accommodation details) are currently available on its dedicated website page on the LGA events page (<https://lgaevents.local.gov.uk/lga/frontend/reg/thome.csp?pageID=20497&eventID=72&eventID=72>). Following members' concerns at the last meeting we have now secured an additional three exhibition stand spaces taking the total to 19 to bring it in line with this year's conference.

Considerations for future venues

4. The FSMC has agreed that the following criteria must be taken into consideration when sourcing a venue for the Fire Conference and Exhibition:-
 - 4.1 to **only** consider venues of a high standard that have in place a fire sprinkler system throughout; and
 - 4.2 continue to hold the conference over two days (finishing with lunch on the second day).
5. As indicated in the March board paper, there are other criteria that have emerged as a result of previous conferences which need to be taken on board when organising future conferences, including:
 - 5.1 a strong preference for the conference and room accommodation to be in a single hotel (rather than a split site);

- 5.2 the need to negotiate a larger number of bedrooms at the chosen conference hotel;
- 5.3 to have a larger exhibition area to accommodate increased demand from commercial exhibitors; and
- 5.4 ensure that all the workshop rooms are of a sufficient size to accommodate delegate numbers.

Venues equipped with a sprinkler system

6. In order to fulfil the criteria set out above officers have carried out research to find suitable venues. Unfortunately, the number of suitable venues equipped with fire sprinkler systems remains extremely limited. Venue research was carried out using our own knowledge of residential conference venues and Venuefinder.com – a leading source of up-to-date venue information. Availability has been checked based on the following dates:
 - 6.1. Tuesday 7 March-Wednesday 8 March 2017
 - 6.2. Tuesday 13 March-Wednesday 14 March 2018
 - 6.3. Tuesday 12 March-Wednesday 13 March 2019
7. The six venues we found which meet our basic criteria, ie they have sprinklers and are available over two days, are as follows:
 - 7.1. The Hilton in Gateshead
 - 7.2. Marriott in Bristol
 - 7.3. Hilton in Manchester
 - 7.4. Renaissance in Manchester
 - 7.5. Hilton Metropole Brighton
 - 7.6. Hilton in Liverpool

Venue options

8. Each venue we looked at would allow us to move the conference between the North and South in line with members' feedback at the March meeting. All the venues would allow the conference to proceed on a single site. However, beyond the basic criteria there are some issues with the number of bedrooms available as well as the space available to grow the exhibition space at each of the venues.
9. Of the hotels in Manchester, the Hilton is unsuitable because of a lack of exhibition space, with only 15 spaces available for exhibitors. The venue also has a number of small workshop rooms, which was identified as an issue when the Fire Conference was last held at the venue. The Renaissance in Manchester unfortunately cannot offer us a reasonable number of bedrooms on site for the size of the conference, meaning that

the majority of delegates may have to find accommodation in separate hotels from the conference itself. The venue does however, have space for the exhibition to grow.

10. We have used the Brighton Metropole before but had significant issues around management of the heating issues raised and we are only able to secure a second option for our preferred dates. It does however have space for 20 exhibition stands, which would allow us to grow the exhibition space further. However, Members will wish to be aware of the inflexible approach as the hotel is not prepared to negotiate on either number of rooms or on cost. The daily delegate rates are subject to increases each year of 5% which the LGA would need to pass on to attendees. Therefore there is no real benefit in entering into a longer term arrangement with the hotel.
11. As previously discussed the Marriot in Bristol has space for 19 exhibition stands, however this does not give us the room to grow the exhibition any further and would keep the number of stands available at the current level. However they are willing to reserve a larger number of delegate bedrooms on site than are available at the Brighton Metropole.
12. The Hilton Liverpool is not currently suitable, however planning permission has now been granted for an extension, we will therefore keep this venue under review given their plans.
13. Members may wish to consider whether they would wish to follow a North/South pattern or if the Hilton in Gateshead would be a suitable venue for the Conference for two or three years from 2017-2019. Applying further assessment criteria such as central location/transport links; capacity of main auditorium; minimum of 4 large workshop rooms, exhibition space; bedrooms on site and facilities available, the Hilton in Gateshead would be able to accommodate our needs for a number of years.
14. Feedback from this year's event at the Hilton in Gateshead shows that people were very positive about the venue, 94% were satisfied with the location and 96% were satisfied with the facilities and the catering. We are very grateful for the superb support provided by Tyne and Wear FRA to help the event run smoothly. It is clear that this remains a very popular venue, however it would mean a long journey for some of our Members. A semi-permanent home for the fire conference would provide stability for attendees. However, this is not without risk. A multi-year contract will need to be signed and would incur serious penalty charges if we were unable to proceed for any reason.

Recommendation

15. Members will wish to discuss the benefits and drawbacks of each of the venues and the proposal to find a semi-permanent home for the conference.

Workforce Report - Scheme Advisory Board

Purpose of the Report

For the Fire Services Management Committee to consider the appropriate employer representation on the Scheme Advisory Board.

Summary

This paper provides the background to the Scheme Advisory Board requests the FSMC consider the appropriate selection method for employer representation.

Recommendation

FSMC to advise on appropriate selection method for employer representation of the Scheme Advisory Board.

Actions

As directed by members.

Contact officer:	Gill Gittins (industrial relations)	Clair Alcock (pensions)
Position:	Principal Negotiating Officer	Fire Pensions Adviser
Phone no:	020 7187 7335	020 7664 3189
E-mail:	gill.gittins@local.gov.uk	clair.alcock@local.gov.uk

Workforce Report - Scheme Advisory Board

Background

1. The Firefighters' Pension Scheme (Amendment) (Governance) Regulations 2015¹ were laid before Parliament on 5 March and set out the new governance arrangements for the Firefighters' Pension Scheme ("Scheme"). The regulations came into force on 1 April 2015 and amend the main Firefighters' Pension Scheme (England) Regulations 2014 ("the Regulations") by inserting the new governance provisions.
2. The governance regulations create two boards a Local Pension Board and Scheme Advisory Board; the Local Pension Board must be established by the Scheme Manager, whereas the Scheme Advisory Board is established by the regulations.
3. The function of the Scheme Advisory Board is to provide advice as requested by the Secretary of State on the desirability of making changes to the Scheme and also to provide advice to the Scheme Managers and Local Pension Boards in relation to the effective and efficient administration and management of the Scheme.
4. Regulation 4F requires the Secretary of State to appoint a minimum of two and a maximum of 14 members to the Scheme Advisory Board with equal representation of persons representing the interests of scheme employers and persons representing the interests of members.
5. In her letter dated 13 January 2015, the Fire minister wrote to the four trade unions, confirming that in the absence of an agreed position of member representation the Secretary of State would proceed to appoint a board of 7 scheme member representatives.
6. In order to achieve equal representation, the Secretary of State will appoint 7 employer representatives.
7. The new Fire Minister Mark Francois will now be asked to start the recruitment process for a Scheme Chair and begin the appointment process, it is advised the FSMC consider the appropriate employer representation.

Function of the Scheme Advisory Board

8. The Scheme Advisory Board is responsible for providing advice:
 - 8.1 In response to a request from the Secretary of State on the desirability of making changes to the Scheme and any connected scheme
 - 8.2 To the Scheme Managers and Local Pension Boards in relation to the effective and efficient administration and management of the Scheme and any connected schemes.

¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/465/regulation/4/made>

8.3 In both cases, the Secretary of State and Scheme Managers or Local Pension Boards (as appropriate) must have regard to advice issued by the Scheme Advisory Board in accordance with section 7(3) of the 2013 Act.

Funding and allowances

9. Regulation 4E(4) of the Firefighters' 2014 Regulations provides that payment of remuneration and expenses is a matter for the Scheme Advisory Board to determine.
10. Regulation 4H(1) provides that the Scheme Advisory Board must prepare an annual budget for approval by the Secretary of State.
11. Regulation 4H(2) provides that the expenses of the Scheme Advisory Board as determined by the board in the approved budget are to be defrayed by scheme managers.
12. Therefore any expenses and allowances are to be determined by the board itself once in place, and agree the budget with the Secretary of State.

Who can be a member?

13. Regulation 4G(1) determines that before appointing any person to be a member of the advisory board, the secretary of state must be satisfied that the person does not have a conflict of interest.
14. For the purposes of a member of the Scheme Advisory Board a 'conflict of interest' is defined in section 7(5) of the 2013 Act² as a financial or other interest which is likely to prejudice a person's exercise of functions as a member of the board.
15. Further guidance on 'Conflict of Interest' can be found on paragraphs 5.15 to 5.18 of the attached guidance
16. The regulations do not place any requirement on a scheme advisory board member to 'have the capacity to represent the employer' in the same way that members of the local pension board do, but it is reasonable to follow the guidance on appointing Local Pension Board members.
17. Paragraphs 2.16 to 2.19 of the Guidance on the creation and operation of Local Pension Boards in England determine:

"2.16 It will be important to appoint members who have the relevant experience as well as time to commit to attending meetings and effectively representing employers and members (as appropriate).

2.17 Relevant experience may include (without limitation) being a member of the Scheme or having experience of representing scheme members in a similar situation for example being a member or trustee of a private sector defined benefit pension scheme.

2.18 The Regulations specify that the Scheme Manager must be satisfied that any person it wishes to appoint as a member of a Local Pension Board does not have a conflict of interest and that once appointed continues not have a conflict of interest.

2.19 An individual's ability to properly represent the interests of employers or members (as appropriate) and channel information back to those persons effectively should also be a key factor in selecting members of the Local Pension Board. This needs to take account of the wide range of membership to ensure all employers and all members are represented."

Frequency of meetings

18. In accordance with the regulations the Scheme Advisory Board may determine its own procedures and have the power to do anything which is calculated to facilitate the discharge of any of its functions.
19. There is no legislative requirement on the number of meetings, however in order to meet its responsibilities it is advised the board consider at least quarterly meetings.

Knowledge and Understanding

20. The legislative requirements about knowledge and understanding only apply to pension board members. However, Scheme Advisory Board members should take account of this guidance as it will support them in understanding the legal framework and enable them to help pension board members to meet their legal obligations.
21. Paragraphs 34 to 60 of the Pension Regulator Code of Practice 14³ cover in detail the knowledge and understanding requirements.
22. In order to meet the functions of the Scheme Advisory Board, the board members can agree a training plan.

Appropriate Selection Method

23. The Fire Services Management Committee should now consider an appropriate selection method for the 7 employer representatives.
24. The FSMC should consider who would be best placed to provide nominations of people with experience of Fire responsibilities, and who meet the criteria to take account of the wide range of membership to ensure all employers and all members are represented, i.e. ensuring that all the different types of Fire Authority are sufficiently represented
25. Suggested groups that might be approached are;
 - 25.1 LGA Political Groups
 - 25.2 Fire Authority political groups
 - 25.3 Fire Services Management Committee

³ <http://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/docs/code-14-public-service.pdf>

Other guidance

26. The Pensions Regulator's Code of Practice note 14 Governance and Administration of public service pension schemes.
<http://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/docs/code-14-publicservice.pdf>

The Pensions Regulator's website:

<http://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/public-serviceschemes/introduction-to-public-service-pensionschemes.aspx>

The Pensions Regulator's Pension Board member toolkit:

<https://trusteetoolkit.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/>

Note of last Fire Services Management Committee meeting

Title:	Fire Services Management Committee
Date:	Monday 9 March 2015
Venue:	Hilton Hotel Gateshead, Bottle Bank, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE8 2AR

Attendance

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

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
1	<p>Welcome and Conference Programme</p> <p>The Chair welcomed members to the Hilton Hotel, Gateshead, which was the venue for the LGA Annual Fire Conference and Exhibition 2015. He highlighted a number of the speakers who would address the conference and the workshops which would be held over the following two days. These would include keynote speeches by Penny Mordaunt MP, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, and Lyn Brown MP, the Shadow Fire and Communities Minister. There will also be a video from Cathy Bakewell, the new Liberal Democrat spokesperson on fire.</p>	
2	<p>LGA Annual Fire Conference and Exhibition venue and location for 2016 and beyond</p> <p>Amanda Spicer, Events Organiser, introduced the report and explained that the Bristol Marriott City Centre Hotel had been recommended for the LGA Annual Fire Conference and Exhibition for 2016. As the Committee had previously taken a view to only consider venues of a high standard which had a fire sprinkler system in place throughout there was a limitation on the number of venues which would be appropriate. The Bristol Marriott met the criteria for sprinklers but had a smaller exhibition space and therefore would reduce by three stands.</p> <p>Members discussed the arrangements for future conferences and the following points were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bristol Marriott City Centre Hotel was agreed as the venue for the 2016 conference. • Members expressed the view that they would not wish to consider venues without sprinkler systems as this would send the wrong message. However, members appreciated the trade off as this might limit the potential to expand the conference in future years. • It was suggested that a four year cycle of conference venues be agreed, with two venues in the south and two in the north in order to negotiate the best possible rates. • It was important that everything possible was done to expand the 	

conference to broaden its reach in order to increase income from the event..

The Committee requested that a further paper on venues from 2017 onwards be brought back for consideration at the next meeting of FSMC in June 2015.

Decisions:

- That the Bristol Marriott City Centre Hotel be agreed as the venue for the 2016 LGA Annual Fire Conference and Exhibition.
- That a further paper on venues for 2017 onwards be brought back to the next meeting of the Committee.

3 LGA Fire and Rescue Authority Perceptions Survey

Juliet Whitworth, Research and Information Manager, introduced the report and presented the initial findings of the LGA Fire and Rescue Authority Perceptions Survey to the Committee. It was highlighted that detailed analysis would be undertaken in due course and reported back to the Committee in June 2015.

The Committee noted that Chief Fire Officers and Chairs of Fire and Rescue Authorities had been surveyed in January and February 2015. It was designed to gather views on the LGA and help shape the LGA's future offer to the sector. The response rate to the survey was just under half of those who were sent the survey (which did not include elected members who were on the FSMC).

Headline figures from the survey included:

- 79% of Fire and Rescue Authorities would speak positively about the LGA
- 52% agreed that the LGA provided a value for money service
- 81% agreed that the LGA was a good advocate for the sector
- 56% said that the LGA helped with sector-led improvement
- Regarding useful elements of the offer, 29% said lobbying, 25% said pay negotiations, 12% said support from political group offices

In the discussion which followed the Committee made the following points:

- Once the full report was available for members, it was suggested that a working group to consider the results of the Perceptions Survey could be formed. Following full consideration of the findings of the survey at the next meeting it could make recommendations on the refresh of the offer..
- The detailed report should highlight the differences between perceptions of member councils and perceptions of Fire and Rescue member authorities / services. There should also be detailed breakdown of results based on geographical spread, type of fire service, etc if possible.
- The questionnaire which was sent out should be circulated to members of the Committee for information.
- Following consideration of the full report and recommendations

from the working group, firm proposals for shaping the future offer should be considered by the Committee in September 2015.

Decisions:

- A report containing detailed analysis of the LGA Fire and Rescue Authority Perceptions Survey to be considered at the next meeting in June 2015.
- Following full discussion of the findings at the next FSMC, members will agree whether a working group is needed to look at the future offer to Fire and Rescue Authorities, with proposals to be considered in September 2015.

Action:

- Perceptions Survey questions to be circulated to members of FSMC for information.

4 Industrial Relations Report

Gill Gittins, Principal Negotiating Officer, presented the report and highlighted current key issues regarding Fire and Rescue Service industrial relations. This included updates on the pension reform dispute between DCLG and the FBU, the NJC / DCLG Joint Working Group on Fitness and the Thomas Review.

In the discussion which followed the following points were raised:

- The pension reform dispute between the FBU and the Government was ongoing, and would more than likely remain a matter for the next Government following the General Election in May 2015.
- FSMC should seek further clarification on Fire and Rescue Authorities' need to form Pension Committees, in particular when Authorities were sharing services or formally merging.
- Adrian Thomas' review of Firefighter's terms and conditions was not being carried out in isolation. The service had faced unprecedented cuts but continued to manage well. A wide-ranging strategic review of the role of the firefighter in the future was already in hand through the National Joint Council. It was currently not known when Adrian Thomas would be publishing his review.
- It was currently unclear how the increased costs for Retained Duty firefighters' pensions would be funded. Further details on this were expected as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review following the General Election.

Decision:

- Members noted the report.

Action:

- Further update on pension issues to be considered by FSMC at the next meeting.

5 Response to Lyn Brown Consultation

Eamon Lally, Senior Adviser, circulated a draft letter to Lyn Brown MP, Shadow Fire and Communities Minister, in response to her recent consultation on the future structural organisation of the Fire and Rescue Service in England. He commented that it had been drafted in conjunction with Lead Members of FSMC, and that all members now had the opportunity to comment before the response was sent to the Shadow Minister.

The Chair suggested that reference to the working relationship between the Fire and Rescue Service and the Ambulance Service be added as there were good examples of collaboration.

In the following discussion members agreed that the letter should be from all Lead Members, thereby representing a cross-party response to the consultation, and that it should be more robust in setting the agenda for what the Fire and Rescue Service could deliver. Members took the view that a single Fire and Rescue Service in England, or large scale mergers between multiple authorities, was not the most effective or accountable way to deliver the service and that a localist approach led by local politicians was the best way to approach reform.

The Committee noted that the letter would be redrafted and reviewed again by Lead Members before the response was sent to the Shadow Minister.

Decision:

- That the letter in response to Lyn Brown MP's consultation on the 'Future of the Fire and Rescue Service in England' be redrafted to put forward a more robust response which reflected the views of FSMC and Fire and Rescue Services across the country.

Actions:

- Letter to Lyn Brown MP to be redrafted and circulated to Lead Members before submission to the Shadow Minister.
- Finalised letter to be circulated to all members of FSMC.

6 FSMC Update Paper

The report updated the Committee on activities undertaken by the Chair, Lead Members and the LGA since the previous meeting.

One member highlighted that he had attended the Fire and Rescue Leadership Essentials course hosted by the Chair on 3rd and 4th February in Coventry, and commented that it had been an excellent and informative course.

Decision:

- Members noted the report.

7 Notes of the previous meeting

Members agreed the notes of the meeting held on 12 December 2014 as correct.

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	Cllr Michele Hodgson	County Durham and Darlington Fire & Rescue Authority
	Cllr John Joyce	Cheshire Fire Authority
	Cllr Darrell Pulk	Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority
	Cllr John Edwards	West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority
	Cllr John Bell	
	Cllr Maurice Heaster	London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA)
	Cllr Simon Spencer	Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Authority
Apologies	Cllr Rebecca Knox	Dorset Fire Authority
	Cllr Roger Price	Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority
	Ms Fiona Twycross	London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA)

In Attendance

LGA Officers

Helen Murray
Eamon Lally
Lucy Ellender
Gill Gittins
Amanda Spicer
Juliet Whitworth
Clair Alcock
Paul Goodchild

LGA location map

Local Government Association

Local Government House
 Smith Square
 London SW1P 3HZ

Tel: 020 7664 3131
 Fax: 020 7664 3030
 Email: info@local.gov.uk
 Website: www.local.gov.uk

Public transport

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.

Bus routes – Horseferry Road

- 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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Abingdon Street Car Park (off Great College Street)

Horseferry Road Car Park
 Horseferry Road/Arneway Street. Visit the website at www.westminster.gov.uk/parking

