

Note of last Fire Services Management Committee meeting

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| Title: | Fire Services Management Committee |
| Date: | Friday 25 September 2015 |
| Venue: | Westminster Suite, 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 | <p>Membership and Appointments to Outside Bodies 2015/16</p> <p>The Chair drew members' attention to the terms of reference. Members then discussed whether a member of FSMC should attend the Safer and Stronger Communities Board, and the previous arrangements where the political groups had accommodated a FSMC member amongst their nominations on to SSCB.</p> <p>All agreed that it was important that FSMC was able to inform SSCB about issues related to Fire and Rescue Authorities. In the meantime, members agreed that the SSC board meetings and agendas would be sent to all members of the FSMC before each meeting and that Cllr Kay Hammond would continue to attend SSCB meetings in an observer capacity.</p> <p>Members made the following decisions when discussing the appointments to outside boards. Unless stated otherwise, members would continue in the positions shown on the agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cllr John Edwards and David Cartwright would continue to represent the Fire Service College Advisory Board until further notice, although appointments to the Board were currently under review by Sir Ken Knight.• Cllr Roger Price would be replaced as representative for the Arson Prevention Forum by Fiona Twycross, with Cllr Peter Jackson as her substitute.• Cllr Thomas Wright would be replaced by Cllr Michele Hodgson as the representative for the National Occupational Committee.• Cllr Nick Chard would replace Cllr John Bell on the Cross Emergency Services Group. <p>Decisions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members noted the terms of reference, membership and calendar of meetings of the Fire Services Management Committee for 2015/16. | |

- Appointments to outside bodies were made as outlined above, and would be confirmed by the LGA Executive in October 2015.
- Members were in agreement that FSMC should be able to advise SSCB about fire related matters and it was agreed that FSMC members would be advised of SSCB meeting dates and copied in on the agenda and papers when they are despatched.

Actions

- Political Group offices to be consulted on the possibility of having a FSMC member appointed to the SSCB, and how this would impact upon the political balance of the SSCB.

Forward SSCB meeting dates to FSMC members and send SSCB papers to FSMC when they are issued.

2 Priorities for the year ahead

The Chair presented the report and invited members' comments on the priorities for 2015/16. It was agreed that although there was nothing in the LGA's major priorities that directly dealt with the concerns of the FSMC, there were certainly issues raised which the FSCM could feed into. This would be especially pertinent in relation to health and wellbeing and the prevention role of the fire and rescue service. All members were in agreement that the FSMC should continue to work closely with the public health service and should look to expanding further into that area of work.

During the discussion members raised the following points:

- Members commented that the report must be more ambitious in its scope and include wider collaboration with local councils and health services. The Fire Service must be presented as a way of keeping people safe in their homes in a way that expands beyond fire. It was agreed that the FSMC needed to have closer links with the CWB, which needed to be aware of its work and that of the FRS.
- There were concerns that the further cuts to funding may result in the number of fire fighters and engines dropping below a critical level. All members agreed that the LGA must represent this point to ensure that FRAs can continue to meet their statutory requirement to keep people safe.
- Members debated whether to call on the government to produce the results of the Thomas report into firefighter's terms and conditions, but it was decided that this was a matter for government.
- The Chair suggested refreshing and updating 'Beyond Fighting Fires' for the Fire Conference in March

Decisions

- Members agreed the draft priorities for the FSMC for 2015/16, subject to amendments outlined above.
- Members agreed to collectively come up with a response to the fire authorities that reflected all the decisions that had been made.

Actions

- Agreed priorities will be revised and presented to the next Fire Commission meeting on 20 October 2015.
- Officers to explore how the FSMC can link into the work of the CWB.
- 'Beyond Fighting Fires' to be updated for the Fire Conference.

3 Emergency Services consultation

John Wright, Senior Policy Adviser, presented the consultation on 'Enabling closer working between the Emergency Services'. John explained the consultation and drew the committee's attention to the sixteen questions outlined in paragraph 11 and the expected LGA response.

In the discussion which followed the following points were raised:

- Members were of the view that the Fire and Rescue service has greater synergy with the health and wellbeing agenda as opposed to law enforcement and that the proposal to place FRSs under the governance of the PCC would risk the Fire and Rescue service being subsumed into the Police Force rather than continuing as equal partners.
- Some members drew attention to the fact that the report did not fully take into account the fundamental differences between the Fire and Police services.
- Members acknowledged that it was important to make the distinction between collaboration and governance, as collaboration between the Fire and Rescue service and other bodies was happening anyway and welcomed.
- Members agreed that the response to the consultation should avoid negativity. The FRS has a positive story to tell.
- There was some discussion about governance of the FRS in areas where power had/was being devolved to an elected mayor.
- There was broad agreement that some regions might want to bring the PCC into the governance framework of the FRS. In these circumstances local communities should be supported to make a decision one way or the other and a decision should not be forced on them by the Government.

Decisions

- Members agreed to include the main points of the above discussion in the report to be submitted to the LGA.
- Members agreed on how the LGA's response to the consultation should progress, and also agreed the timeline for response.

Actions

- Officers to draft a positive response for agreement by FSMC lead members, discussion at the Fire Commission on 20 October and subsequent submission no later than the deadline of 23 October 2015.

4 The benefits of LGA membership to FRAs

The Chair presented the report to the FSMC for their consideration. All Members agreed that being a member of the LGA was beneficial to FRAs.

Decisions

- Members noted the decrease in subscriptions by 44% over the previous five years and the benefits of LGA membership.
- Members noted that, despite the approximate 50% reduction in LGA staff, the services to FSMC and the Fire Commission had been maintained.

5 Workforce Report - Industrial relations and pensions

Gill Gittins, Principal Negotiating Officer, introduced the Workforce report for the consideration of the Committee.

Members were reminded that the pay, terms and conditions work currently being undertaken within the NJC sat well with the wider collaboration issues. Trials involving co-responding and/or wider health-related work in 9 FRAs had been approved with a further three currently under consideration.

During the discussion of the report, the following appointments were agreed:

- In addition to the appointments to the Scheme Advisory Board included in the report, the Labour group confirmed that their appointments would be Cllrs Darrell Pulk and Thomas Wright. All appointments would be submitted to DCLG.
- All Members agreed that Phil Loach should be the LGA nomination to fill the Chief Fire Officer strategic adviser vacancy on the National Employers' Advisory Forum.
- All members agreed that Mike Griffiths should be the LGA nomination to fill the finance adviser vacancy on the National Employers' Advisory Forum.

- Members discussed the Human Resources adviser vacancy on the National Employers' Advisory Forum and it was decided that Nick Mernock would be the LGA nomination.

Decisions

- Members agreed all nominations for the Scheme Advisory Board and also the nominations of Phil Loach, Mike Griffiths and Nick Mernock on the National Employers' Advisory Forums.

6 Developing the role of the fire and rescue service and firefighters in the future

Members noted the report and agreed to feedback on the report to Mark Norris, Senior Adviser outside of the meeting. One member raised the point that this report should be presented to the Fire Commission so that the FSMC could get a wider idea of the reaction to the report.

Decisions

- Members agreed to develop the questions into a form that could be presented before the Fire Commission.

7 Outside bodies - oral updates from members (a maximum of 2 minutes each)

Cllr Kay Hammond updated the Committee on the work of JESIP (Joint Emergency Services Inoperability Programme). It was agreed that the principles of this joint working must be understood by the leaders of councils and so these principles should be put forward to the Councillors' Forum.

The Chair updated the FSMC on the work of the Strategic Resilience Board. An exercise of a heavy transport incident would be taking place next year and all agreed that a session on this exercise could be undertaken at the 2016 Fire Conference a few weeks later provided the initial lessons learnt have been distilled by then.

8 Notes of the previous meeting

All Members agreed on the notes of the previous meeting.

Appendix A -Attendance

| Position/Role | Councillor | Authority |
|-----------------|--------------------|--|
| Chairman | Cllr Jeremy Hilton | Gloucestershire County Council |
| Vice-Chairman | Cllr Kay Hammond | Surrey County Council |
| | Cllr Philip Howson | East Sussex Fire Authority |
| Deputy-chairman | Cllr David Acton | Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority |

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| Members | Cllr Maurice Heaster OBE | London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) |
| | Cllr Rebecca Knox | Dorset Fire Authority |
| | Cllr Nick Chard | Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority |
| | Cllr Peter Jackson | Northumberland Council |
| | 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 |
| Apologies | Cllr Simon Spencer | Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Authority |
| In Attendance | | |
| LGA Officers | | |