

Fire Services Management Committee

Agenda

Friday, 11 December 2015
11.00 am

Smith Square 1&2, Ground Floor, Local
Government House, Smith Square, London,
SW1P 3HZ

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

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This meeting is



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Fire Services Management Committee
11 December 2015

There will be a meeting of the Fire Services Management Committee at **11.00 am on Friday, 11 December 2015** Smith Square 1&2, Ground Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ.

A sandwich lunch will be available after the meeting.

Attendance Sheet:

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Political Group meetings:

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Apologies:

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

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

Location:

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

LGA Contact:

Ciaran Whitehead
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Fire Services Management Committee – Membership 2015/2016

Councillor	Authority
Conservative (6)	
Cllr Kay Hammond (Deputy Chairman)	Surrey County Council
Cllr Maurice Heaster OBE	London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA)
Cllr Rebecca Knox	Dorset Fire Authority
Cllr Simon Spencer	Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Nick Chard	Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Peter Jackson	Northumberland Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Mark Healey	Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr John Horner	Warwickshire County Council
Cllr Colin Spence	Suffolk Fire 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
Independent (1)	
Cllr Philip Howson (Vice-Chair)	East Sussex Fire Authority
Substitutes	
Liberal Democrat (1)	
Cllr Jeremy Hilton (Chair)	Gloucestershire County Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Roger Price	Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority

LGA Fire Service Management Committee Attendance 2015-2016

Councillors	25/09/15			
Conservative Group				
Kay Hammond	Yes			
Maurice Heaster OBE	Yes			
Simon Spencer	No			
Rebecca Knox	Yes			
Labour Group				
David Acton	Yes			
Michele Hodgson	Yes			
John Joyce	Yes			
Fiona Twycross	Yes			
Darrell Pulk	Yes			
John Edwards	Yes			
Independent				
Phil Howson	Yes			
Lib Dem Group				
Jeremy Hilton	Yes			
Substitutes				
Les Byrom	Yes			
Tom Wright	Yes			

Agenda

Fire Services Management Committee

Friday 11 December 2015

11.00 am

Smith Square 1&2, Ground Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

Item	Page	Time
1. Declarations of Interest		
2. Discussion with the Chief Fire Officers Association - CFOA President Paul Hancock		
3. Fire Service College governance update - Sir Ken Knight		
4. The Spending Review and the implications for the Fire Service	1 - 4	
5. National Audit Office reports on the Fire Service	5 - 10	
6. Workforce Update	11 - 16	
7. Update paper	17 - 20	
8. Outside bodies - oral updates from members (a maximum of 2 minutes each)		
9. Minutes of the previous meeting	21 - 27	

Date of Next Meeting: Monday, 7 March 2016, 4.00 pm, Fire Conference, Bristol



The Spending Review

Purpose

For discussion and direction.

Summary

This paper summarises the key points of the Spending Review announcement made by the Chancellor for Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs), and seeks members' view on how FRAs can deliver further savings.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- a) Note the Spending Review announcement; and
- b) Discuss the areas identified by DCLG for potential savings going forward and set out in paragraph 7, and identify any other areas that could assist FRAs achieve reductions in spending.

Action

Officers to action as appropriate.

Contact officer: Mark Norris
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The Spending Review

Background

1. On 25 November the Chancellor set out the Spending Review and Autumn Statement to Parliament. The Spending Review determines how the government will spend public money over the course of this parliament, while the Autumn Statement updated the government's plans for the economy.
2. In July, in order to inform the decisions to be announced in the Spending Review, the Government invited representative bodies, interest groups and individuals to submit written representations to HM Treasury by 4 September 2015.
3. In response the LGA delivered 5 submissions to the Treasury, one of which was a joint submission with the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) covering the Fire and Rescue Service. This submission set out what the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) has achieved over the last five years, emphasising the success of its prevention agenda and its programme of collaboration with the other blue light services, children's and adults services, public health and the wider NHS.

The Spending Review and FRAs

4. Unlike the 2010 Spending Review, where specific mention was made of the reductions being made to funding available to Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) – 25 per cent over that spending review period – the 2015 Spending Review documentation made no specific reference to central government funding of FRAs. There were however three specific announcements related to the FRS in the Spending Review papers. These were:
 - 4.1. The government's intention to introduce a new statutory duty for the emergency services to collaborate by early 2017, subject to parliamentary approval, on areas such as procurement, new stations and vehicle maintenance.
 - 4.2. The government's intention to bring forward legislation to enable PCCs to take on responsibility for fire and rescue services, subject to a clear business case and local support, with local fire services providing the necessary information for PCCs to develop the business case.
 - 4.3. The provisions of at least £74 million of funding for the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme, to ensure fire and rescue services can benefit from the latest mobile digital technology.
5. It therefore has to be assumed that FRA funding will reduce in broadly the same way that it is for local authorities over this spending review period. The LGA's assessment on the day of the Spending Review concluded that core central government spending to local government will reduce by 24 per cent or £4.1 billion over the Spending Review period. Once the Office of Budget responsibility forecast of other income raised by councils is taken into account the overall position is a 6.7 per cent real terms reduction. This compares with the National Audit Office's (NAO) calculation that funding to stand-alone FRAs reduced by 28 per cent between 2010/11 and 2015/16 or 17 per cent in real terms.

The LGA's current estimate is that there will be a just under a 10 per cent reduction in local government funding in 2016/17. An initial assessment by Kieran Timmins on behalf of CFOA suggests these changes could mean a £150 million reduction in funding for stand-alone FRAs over the Spending Review.

6. Within this broad picture it is difficult at this stage to work out what this means for the FRS as a whole and individual FRAs as there are a number details that have yet to be confirmed by the government. It is reasonable to assume, based on the figures in the Spending Review documentation that the referendum cap on council tax will remain at 2 per cent a year over the Spending Review period, but it not clear at this stage if this will apply to FRAs. Unless there exemptions from the apprenticeship levy in the Spending Review this will also have an impact on FRA budgets. In addition the government announced that local authorities will be able to use capital receipts to fund the revenue costs of reform/transformation projects, and there will also be a consultation on changes to the local government finance system to rebalance support to those authorities with social care responsibilities. Again it is unclear what the implications of this might be for FRAs, or what the impact of the government's decision to implement 100 per cent business rate retention by the end of the Spending Review will be. However the scale of the funding reductions means there will inevitably be implications for the delivery of frontline fire services.

Delivering the savings

7. It is not clear at this stage where the government see FRAs making the further savings they need to over the Spending Review period. However a paper published as part of the Spending Review on the responses to the public sector efficiency challenge issued by the government in the summer stated greater collaboration between blue light services was one area being taken forward. The evidence given to the Public Accounts Select Committee the day after the Spending Review by Melanie Dawes, the Permanent Secretary at the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG), along with Neil O'Connor and Peter Holland also indicated a range of areas which they thought offered further potentials for savings within the Fire and Rescue Service. These included:
 - 7.1. Collaboration projects – between FRAs and also between the blue-light services and others;
 - 7.2. Transformation projects – using the learning from the transformation projects to drive changes for example around collaboration with other blue-light services;
 - 7.3. Mergers – between FRAs;
 - 7.4. Procurement – more joint procurement between FRAs and also with other services;
 - 7.5. Delivery of services – continuing with changes in how incidents are responded to with for example the use of different types of vehicles and changes in the numbers of crew with each vehicle;
 - 7.6. Changes in terms and conditions; and
 - 7.7. Greater use of retained firefighters.

8. Many of these suggestions will be familiar to members from 'Facing the Future', Sir Ken Knight's review of the FRS. From comments made by the Permanent Secretary in the evidence suggestion it seems that DCLG's modelling of what individual FRAs receive in the local government settlement due later this month will be based on their assessment to further deliver on the efficiencies identified in the Knight Review.
9. Members are asked to comment on the scope for delivering savings through the areas identified by above, and whether there are other areas where FRAs could look to achieve reductions in funding.

Next steps

10. As members will recall the priorities considered by FSMC in September included a small number of strategic priorities including around FRA funding and FRS service transformation. We will therefore continue to focus on assisting FRAs with further and wider blue light collaboration, continuing to promote collaboration with health partners, and examine how better value can be gleaned from procurement. The LGA's workforce team and the work programme of the National Joint Council for FRAs also contribute to the agenda and FSMC and Fire Commission have already responded to the discussion paper put to them at their last meetings on the role of the FRS and firefighters in the future. Any other areas identified by members where the LGA can assist FRAs in delivering savings will be incorporated into the FSMC work programme.
11. Members are asked to
 - 11.1. Note the Spending Review announcement; and
 - 11.2. Discuss the areas identified by DCLG for potential savings going forward and set out in paragraph 7, and identify any other areas that could assist FRAs achieve reductions in spending.

Financial Implications

12. Financial implications for the FSMC work programme will need to be determined if additional areas of key work are identified.



National Audit Office review of FRAs

Purpose

For discussion and direction.

Summary

At the beginning of November the National Audit Office published two reports into the impact of funding reductions on Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) since 2010/11. These reports have also been considered by the Public Accounts Select Committee. This paper outlines the findings of the two reports and the key lines of enquiry that the Select Committee has followed.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- a) Note the NAO reports and the key points of inquiry raised at the Public Accounts Select Committee, as well as the joint LGA and CFOA response to some of these point; and
- b) Discuss and direct any further activity.

Action

Officers to implement the recommendations, and any other work identified by the Board.

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National Audit Office review of FRAs

Background

1. On 5 November the National Audit Office (NAO) published two reports on Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) in England: [Impact of funding reductions on fire and rescue services](#) and [Financial sustainability of fire and rescue services](#). The reports were compiled under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 which allows the NAO to examine the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which local authorities, including FRAs, discharge their functions.

Impact of funding reductions on fire and rescue services

2. The aim of this report was to contribute to the ongoing financial planning by FRAs. It looked at the changes in FRA income since 2010/11, what savings FRAs have made, and the implications for FRAs financial sustainability.
3. The report found:
 - 3.1. Funding for FRAs had fallen significantly between 2010/11 and 2015/16 – on average by 28% for stand-alone FRAs. This translates into an average reduction of 17% in income (or spending power). However the sector has been successful in managing the reductions.
 - 3.2. Spending power had fallen most in areas with the highest level of fire need, and falls in funding had not been offset by increases income. Savings had predominantly come from reducing staff costs with full time equivalent posts falling by 14% between 2010/11 and 2014/15.
 - 3.3. FRAs had not switched to using retained firefighters to deliver changes or by reducing the number of fire stations. Instead in some areas the type of appliance sent to fires had changed and the number of firefighters crewing it had changed as well.
 - 3.4. Collaboration with other sectors had often added value to the other sectors rather than addressing the financial challenges faced by FRAs.
 - 3.5. FRAs had reduced their prevention and protection work, although the NAO accepted that some of the reduction in fire risk checks might be due to better targeting. The NAO pointed out it was difficult to assess the impact of this change due to the lack of research on their contribution to reducing the number of fires.
 - 3.6. Although the number of fires and casualties had continued to decline over the longer term there are emerging patterns that need further analysis such as why some areas had seen an increase in non-fatal casualties, though there was no link to spending reductions and they could reflect fluctuations in small numbers of incidents.
 - 3.7. If funding reductions continue FRAs would be faced with the challenges of implementing new cost reduction measures, while also managing increase risks as a result of the funding reductions.

Financial sustainability of fire and rescue services.

4. This report examined whether the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) understands the impact of funding reductions on the financial sustainability of

FRAs. It looked at the impact of funding reductions on FRAs, the extent to which DCLG had taken an informed approach in making the reductions, and the effectiveness of DCLG's system for providing assurance on the sector's financial health.

5. The report found:
 - 5.1. Funding for FRAs had fallen significantly between 2010/11 and 2015/16, but the sector had coped with the financial challenges to date, and as a whole had increased the level of reserves. However there are some potential signs of low level financial stress in some authorities.
 - 5.2. Savings had come predominantly from reducing staff costs, through changes to the scope of their emergency response service and the scale of prevention and protection services. Despite these changes the number of fires and casualties have continued their long-term downward trend, and health and safety statistics for firefighters have improved.
 - 5.3. FRAs are risk-based organisations with services designed to provide resilience against major events rather than meeting average demand. While average demand has continued to fall, the risk of serious incidents has not necessarily fallen, though data indicates that the number of fires attended by 5 or more vehicles fell by 31.5% between 2010/11 and 2014/15. This could mean the frequency of serious incidents is declining, but it does not mean the severity of the incidents has declined.
 - 5.4. DCLG's understanding of the underlying costs of the service is limited. Its analysis had found 'inexplicable' differences in spending between FRAs, which was attributed to differences in efficiency. The NAO's analysis found a substantial proportion of the differences could be explained for example by local risk factors. There were also gaps in DCLG's understanding of FRA activities and standards.
 - 5.5. DCLG should improve its understanding of FRAs financial sustainability, though it is seeking to increase the robustness of its oversight, and while its assurance on national resilience is robust it is stronger in some areas rather than others. Assurance at a local level has been devolved but there are gaps. There is no external inspectorate, DCLG relies on local scrutiny to safeguard standards and value for money, and is also reliant on FRAs to self-certify their compliance with their duties. The NAO also criticised the role peer challenges play in providing local assurance, and suggested DCLG consulted the sector on ways in which the peer challenge system could be strengthened as part of a range of measures to strengthen its assurance on the operational performance of the sector.

Assessment of the reports

6. Between them the two reports are a testimony to the quality of the fire and rescue service. FRAs have absorbed significant reductions in central government funding since 2010/11, yet the number of fires and casualties from fires have continued to decline, while the health and safety statistics for firefighters have improved. Outside of local government few other services have been able to achieve comparable results.
7. In drafting the reports however the NAO seems to have become confused about the nature of the assurance framework DCLG has in place and the role of the LGA's and the Chief Fire Officers Association's (CFOA) fire peer challenges. As the LGA stressed to the NAO when consulted about the draft wording of the reports the peer challenges are not part of an assurance framework, but are part of a sector-led approach to improving performance.

Public Accounts Select Committee

8. Following publication of the reports the Public Accounts Committee announced it would be holding an inquiry into the impact of funding reductions on the effectiveness of fire and rescue services, with a report due in January. An [evidence session](#) was held on 26 November. The FSMC's Chair, Cllr Hilton, along with Sir Ken Knight and Paul Hancock, President of CFOA and Chief Fire Officer for Cheshire, was invited to give evidence at a pre-panel session. Issues discussed in the session included the capacity of FRAs to deliver more efficiencies, transferring governance of the fire and rescue service to police and crime commissioners, assurance about the capacity of the service to deliver its national resilience requirements, whether there should be a national inspectorate, and the role of peer challenges in providing assurance. Cllr Hilton and Paul Hancock both made the point to the committee that peer challenges are a sector self-improvement tool, not part of the assurance framework.
9. After the pre-panel session Melanie Dawes, Permanent Secretary at DCLG, Peter Holland, Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser and Neil O'Connor, former Director of Fire Resilience and Emergencies gave evidence. Much of the first part of the session was taken up with a discussion around redundancy and re-engagement policies in FRAs, and the Committee then looked at whether DCLG could be assured FRAs were delivering the services they needed to along with value for money without a fire inspectorate, what information was available to the government to identify FRAs where there were problems, about the difference between performance measures and standards, the ability to compare performance between FRAs, the prospect for mergers between services including mandated mergers, the role of police and crime commissioners in fire governance, how the value for money of FRAs contributions to wider health and social care work could be measured and accounted for, and the impact of the Spending Review on FRAs.
10. At the end of the evidence session the Committee returned to the issue of inspection of FRAs. Melanie Dawes indicated that the proposals set out for strengthening peer challenges in the Knight report were very helpful, and although the LGA and CFOA had improved the process, DCLG would be considering over the next six months whether to make peer reviews compulsory, whether to require all reports to be published and whether or not to allow FRAs being reviewed to select their reviewers. The Permanent Secretary also said DCLG would be looking at the NAO's suggestions around data and the ability to compare this.

Next steps

11. The LGA and CFOA have already jointly feed in views to DCLG about the NAO reports. We have pointed out that over the last three years all 46 FRAs in England have voluntarily had a peer challenge and the great majority of these have been published online. We have also stressed that as an independent facilitator the LGA works to identify a suitably challenging team of member and officer peers to deliver the peer challenge taking into account the need to offer input on specific aspects of the service identified by the FRA. In addition the LGA and CFOA have been working with DCLG and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy to develop a suite of benchmarking criteria that will allow robust and valid comparison across services, with the work on this being conducted over the next six months. This will be in addition to the

200 different indicators related to the fire service on LG Inform, and which already allows users to compare performance across FRAs. We will continue to make these points in discussion with DCLG in the months ahead, and will also continue to make the point that there is already a robust assurance framework in place for FRAs and there is no need for an inspectorate for the fire service.

12. Members are asked to:

- 12.1. Note the NAO reports and the key points of inquiry raised at the Public Accounts Select Committee, as well as the joint LGA and CFOA response to some of these point; and
- 12.2. Discuss and direct any further activity.

Financial Implications

13. There are none arising from this report.

Workforce Report - Industrial relations and pensions

Purpose of the Report

To update the Fire Services Management Committee on matters in relation to Fire service industrial relations and pension matters

Summary

This paper is for information and briefly describes the main industrial relations and pension issues at present.

Recommendation:

Members are asked to note the issues set out in the paper.

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PENSIONS

GAD v Milne Commutation Factors

1. Following the successful lobbying by LGA, Fire authorities have been waiting on DCLG to confirm the mechanism for funding, following the HM Treasury confirmation that DCLG would absorb the lump sum funding.
2. DCLG have now confirmed that there is no requirement for a discharge form and released confirmation that each FRA will receive a grant payment in early January 2016 of 100% of their estimated costs as previously advised to DCLG.
3. DCLG have re-confirmed the Government expectations that the majority of calculations should be done before Christmas, and the majority of payments to be made by the end of the financial year.

Scheme Advisory Board

4. The 7 employer and 7 employee nominations have now been made to the Secretary of State in order to be formally appointed.
5. With regards to the appointment of Chair, DCLG have now interviewed the candidates and have advised that an announcement is due shortly.
6. The employer and employee nominated representatives of the board have met in interim form, and agreed the following points.
 - DCLG to express the meeting's concern to the Secretary of State over the lack of progress on the appointment of the chair and members of the Board
 - The Board should meet when all members (including the Chair) have been formally appointed by the Secretary of State. Should the appointment of a Chair be delayed beyond November, DCLG should arrange for the appointment of Board members.

NATIONAL JOINT COUNCIL FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

Pay, terms and conditions

7. Members will recall that the NJC is committed to working jointly together on changes identified by each Side to ensure that there is a pay framework alongside terms and conditions in the fire and rescue service which reflect the responsibilities of, and current and future demands on, the service and the profession.

8. Under that commitment substantial work has been undertaken under the following broad headings with a view to reaching agreement to widen the scope of work undertaken by firefighters as a core part of the job - environmental challenges; flooding; emergency medical response; multi agency emergency response; youth and other social engagement work; inspections and enforcement. Fire and rescue authorities have been kept up to date via circulars.
9. Under the current phase of discussion further consideration is being given to the outcomes of the joint workstreams and what it is appropriate to take forward at national level, local level or not at all. Consideration will also be given to the viability of any potential funding streams and whether they should be explored further. Contact has also been made with appropriate government departments in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.
10. Members will be aware that as part of this phase a number of FRAs are taking part in NJC trials relating to co-responding and/or wider work with other health partners. Importantly the matter of the firefighter rolemap has been set aside in order to facilitate the trials and agreement reached that such work will be jointly regarded as part of the core job for the duration of the trial. At the time of writing, seventeen trials have already been approved. Expressions of interest from a further three FRAs are under consideration. The trials will all conclude by the end of June 2016.
11. This work fits well with collaborative work being discussed elsewhere as part of the public health agenda in England, and expectations in other parts of the UK too that firefighters should undertake a wider community role.

Inclusive Fire Service Group

12. The NJC has a continuing commitment to equality, diversity and cultural issues in the fire service. As part of that continuing commitment NJC members decided that given the employer/employee relationship, the NJC should take the lead on a piece of work to assess the current position and to identify guidance in relation to any further strategies that could be used at local level to further encourage improvement in equality, diversity and cultural issues.
13. The Chief Fire Officers Association, the Retained Firefighters Union and the Fire Officers Association all accepted invitations to participate in the group and the first meeting of the group will take place shortly.
14. The group, which is led by Professor Linda Dickens the Independent Chair of the NJC, has met on one occasion and further dates are scheduled. At the first meeting of the group its members decided that a survey should be undertaken of FRAs seeking relevant information (that is not already available elsewhere) in order to inform assessment of the current position. We have received a good response to that survey.

Transitional pension scheme arrangements

15. Members will be aware that the FBU has entered many thousands of Employment Tribunal cases on behalf of its members in relation to the transitional pension scheme arrangements across the UK. In broad terms the claims assert:
- younger workers are losing out, which amounts to direct discrimination that cannot be objectively justified; and
 - the workforce profile of the Fire & Rescue Authorities shows that female and BME workers tend to be younger, meaning that the arrangements amount to unjustified indirect sex and race discrimination, and possibly equal pay infringements in relation to female employees; and
 - fully protected members of the NFPS have been disadvantaged in comparison to their 2015 Scheme counterparts and taper protected members of the NFPS have also been similarly disadvantaged in relation to accrual of benefits, transfer rights between schemes for those with taper protection and benefits on partial retirement.
16. Given the good sense of not replicating matters many times over, and through the auspices of the National Employers, FRAs agreed to a collective approach to this matter and provided the LGA and Bevan Brittan LLP with authority to act on their behalf. As part of this a Steering Committee was set up including a number of FRA representatives. The Steering Committee has met twice and will do so again later this month. Further dates are scheduled.
17. A cost sharing arrangement has also been entered into although the matter of costs in defending these cases has been raised with respective government departments given FRAs ultimately did not have control over the decisions taken in putting these protection arrangements in place.
18. Following all party representations to the President of Tribunals in England he has decided that a preliminary hearing will be held in January based on a lead case. All other cases have been stayed pending the outcome of that preliminary hearing. A decision in respect of Wales is awaited. Discussion continues around the potential consolidation of the cases in Scotland with those in England or, failing that, acceptance that those cases too should be stayed.

Joint Working Group (Fitness)

19. This group was formed following the agreement in principle within the NJC on a number of fitness issues. Reference to the group subsequently appeared in the addendum to the National Framework in England introduced by DCLG and related to its dispute with the FBU. CFOA, RFU, and FOA all accepted invitations to participate in the joint working group.
20. Whilst the joint working group is, by agreement, facilitated by Peter Holland (DCLG) it is nonetheless mindful of issues in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland given the joint involvement of the Employer and Employee Sides (including advisers) of the NJC which operates on a UK-wide basis.

21. Whilst a year has been identified in the terms of reference for the work of this group (from March 15), the current aspiration is that the best practice guide it is charged with developing will be issued early in 2016.

'Enabling closer working between the Emergency Services' - Consultation

22. At the last meeting of the National Employers in October members considered the consultation issued by the Government in England on a series of measures to transform the delivery of local fire and police services, and drive greater collaboration between the police, fire and rescue and NHS ambulance services. They looked in particular at matters relating particularly to employment status.
23. National Employers were unconvinced on the necessity for such legislation in order to achieve the aim of greater collaboration and shared a number of the same concerns discussed by FSMC members at its last meeting. Given the matter affected England only (the National Employers is a UK-wide body) it was agreed that lead LGA representatives should work together with lead FSMC members to enter a joint response which ensured that employment matters were covered.
24. Since then the Government's '*Spending Review and Autumn Statement 2015*' was issued on 25 November, which stated that the Government would:

'bring forward legislation to enable PCCs to take on responsibility for fire and rescue services, subject to a clear business case and local support, with local fire services providing the necessary information for PCCs to develop the business case.'

Fire Services Management Committee update paper

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

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

Recommendation

Members to note the update.

Action

Officers to progress as appropriate.

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Position: Adviser
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Fire Services Management Committee update paper

Councillor Jeremy Hilton

1. On 26 November Councillor Hilton attended the Public Accounts Committee to discuss the National Audit Office's report in to the financial sustainability of the fire and rescue service (**Item 3**). Councillor Hilton gave evidence alongside Paul Hancock, President of CFOA, and Sir Ken Knight, former Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser.
2. On 24 November Councillor Hilton met the new Chief Executive of the LGA, Mark Lloyd, to outline the work of the Fire Services Management Committee. He spoke about the priorities for fire and rescue authorities around governance, funding and the role of fire in health.
3. Councillor Hilton spoke at a Public Policy Exchange conference on 29 October titled "Building Safe and Healthy Communities: The Role of Fire and Rescue Authorities". The session looked at how the fire and rescue service could change in the future, including further developing their role in the wider prevention agenda. Councillor Kay Hammond also spoke at the event, representing Surrey County Council, and discussing the work that they have been involved in.
4. On 15 October Councillor Hilton met with the Chairman of the LGA, Lord Gary Porter, to brief him on the work of the Fire Services Management Committee and the submission to the consultation 'Enabling closer working between the Emergency Services.

Fire Minister

5. The LGA continues to seek a meeting with the Minister of State for Communities and Resilience, and to secure his attendance at a meeting of the Fire Commission and the annual Fire Conference.

National Operational Guidance

6. Councillor Kay Hammond, attended the National Operational Guidance Programme's Parliamentary Seminar. Councillor Hammond spoke about the pressures and challenges facing fire and rescue services as we look to the future. She outlined the priorities of the Fire Services Management Committee as well as discussing the importance of a sector-led approach towards improvement.

Fire and Health

7. Following the publication of the Consensus Statement between the LGA, CFOA, Public Health England, NHS England and Age UK in October the LGA has continued to engage with these organisations. The next phase of this work will involve a series of regional meetings. These will be led by the local areas and will look at how the fire and rescue service can contribute towards the needs identified in each area's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. An initial regional meeting in the West Midlands was scheduled for the 24 November but this has now been postponed. We will continue to keep members informed as this work progresses.



**Fire Services Management
Committee**

11 December 2015

Fire Bulletin

8. Following discussions at the last FSMC, that the bulletin should follow on from the FSMC dates the next three issues of the fire bulletin have been scheduled for:
 - 6.1. FSMC date 11 December: Bulletin date 18 December
 - 6.2. FSMC date 7 March: Bulletin date 21 March
 - 6.3. FSMC date 24 June: Bulletin date 8 July

Note of last Fire Services Management Committee meeting

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
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1 Membership and Appointments to Outside Bodies 2015/16

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.

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.

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:

- 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.

Decisions

- 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

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.

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
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		

LGA location map

Local Government Association

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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

For further information, visit the Transport for London website at www.tfl.gov.uk

Cycling facilities

The nearest Barclays cycle hire racks are in Smith Square. Cycle racks are also available at Local Government House. Please telephone the LGA on 020 7664 3131.

Central London Congestion Charging Zone

Local Government House is located within the congestion charging zone.

For further details, please call 0845 900 1234 or visit the website at www.cclondon.com

Car parks

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

