

Note of last Fire Commission meeting

Title: Fire Commission
Date: Monday 21 May 2018
Venue: Bevin Hall, Ground Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

Attendance

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

Item Decisions and actions

1 Declarations of Interest

The Chair, Cllr Ian Stephens, opened the meeting welcoming members and officers. Several apologies were given (see Appendix A) and there were two declarations of interest:

Cllr Kevin Dodds, Gateshead Council and Greg Brackenridge, Wolverhampton City Council both declared an interest in Item 6 due to both being members of the Firefighter Pension Scheme.

2 Building safety programme update

Mark Norris briefly highlighted two recent announcements before moving onto the report. Mark mentioned both the Prime Minister's announcement of £400m in funding to local authorities for cladding work improvement, and also there will be a further government investigation into fire door safety failure after a Metropolitan Police investigation in March of this year.

Mark introduced the report and provided an oral update on the recommendations from the final report from Dame Judith Hackitt's review.

Mark reported that the report recommends that there will be a new Joint Competent Authority (JCA) made up of the Health and Safety Executive, local authority building control and the fire & rescues services. The report mentions a new regulatory framework to residential properties which are 10 or more storeys high - higher risk residential buildings, which has changed from 6 storey buildings, which is a change in language, due in part to the large amount of high rise buildings this report covers.

Mark mentioned the input for fire & rescues services to the JCA on approving planning applications for building fire safety issues. Mark stated that the Hackitt report is unclear on how the JCA will work in practice but it will be financed on a cost recovery basis.

Mark reported on government response, which broadly welcomes the report and there

will consultations on the recommendations of the report over the summer, including the usage of combustible materials. Mark mentioned that FSMC will feed into these consultations and the LGA work on the recommendations.

These comments were made following the presentation:

A paper from officers on how the JCA actually works would be helpful in understanding the JCA's role in the recommendations.

The Fire Authority should be leading the way shaping how the JCA operates.

More information is needed on how the cost recovery process will fund the JCA.

6 storey buildings are more common outside of London and should still be included in the scope of the recommendations.

Members wanted to thank the LGA policy staff for the work during this busy time.

3 **Fire Minister**

The Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service reported on the Minister's priorities for the fire reform programme going forward.

The Minister highlighted 3 areas that were priorities.

1. **Right level of resources for our Fire Service.** The Minister felt the general public needs to understand the finances of their local fire service and be told how the money is being spent. A fire service cannot state they are low in funding but also have high reserves, as accountability is important on finance.

The Minister discussed the issue of fire fighter pay, noting that fire fighters have worked hard and made sacrifice, like all emergency service staff. A review of pay needs to analysis what fair pay is in relation to affordability. Central government can be part of the pay conversation but this can be simply be done between local authorities and fire services. The Minister noted the growing concern about addressing pay, as is the concern about drifting away from correcting fair pay.

2. **What good looks like.** The Minister highlighted how important the Independent inspection regime is in finding out what good looks like on the fire service. Three pilot fire authorities have agreed to take part in the process. There is greater transparency around inspections and important work is being done on raising standards.
3. **Addressing failure around fire Safety.** The Minister felt that The Hackitt review will be important for safety but the government will go further than the recommendations to address failure around fire safety. A proper conversation needs to happen between the fire service, local authorities and national government.

The Minister agreed that we all want a first class fire service and felt there is agreement of the Fire Commission on that.

These comments were made following the Minister's presentation:

Sharing best practice around the fire service will be meaningful in reaching what good looks like.

What relationship the fire service with have with the JCA.

Buildings with vulnerable service users need to be taken into scope for the Hackitt Review.

How can we engage with Police and Crime Commissioners on taking responsibility for fire and rescue services. Has any pressure been put on the minister to allow takeovers.

Modernising of the process of Rural Area funding needs scrutiny.

Transparency in the Fire Services already exists and no areas is operating on large reserves.

What are the time timescales of the pay review and how can we ensure fair pay.

The minister resounded

Collaboration is the smart approach, between Fire and Police, as it's the best service for the public.

Local leadership is important on this. It needs to be further ingrained in the services. PPC take overs is a process via legislation and it is up to the local bodies. There will be an independent assessment of each case. There has been no pressure to do this from national government.

The Hackitt review is just a vision, but all stakeholders need to be part of the delivery as the public need to see delivery of change soon.

There needs to be transparency around reverses. It should be accessible to the public see why reserves exists.

The process for fixing pay will need to see a formalising of the role of the fire fighter.

National Government will be part of the conversation. There should be an independent assessment of the Pay.

4 NFCC Central Programme Office overview

Roy Wilsher introduced the report that sets out how the NFCC is now managing and delivering projects and programmes through a new organisation called the Central Programme Office.

Roy reported on the Central Programme Office and the new projects and programs its will run.

- The Reform Agenda
- NFCC Strategic Commitments
- NFCC Hubs
- Core Programs
- Professional standards
- The Fire Standards Board Membership
- Governance

Members made the following comments

With a new office and standards, how will staff be able to access this and what will the follow through be?

Roy responded with

The following up will be two fold, there will be staff engagement and monitoring.

5 Diversity and Inclusion

Charles Loft introduced the report that outlines the work that the LGA has been doing

since the publication of the memorandum of understanding on Equality, diversity, behaviours and organisational culture in the fire and rescue service (MoU)

Charles reported on the findings from the LGA's recent Diversity Summit. The key issues from the submit were:

- No real buy in from Fire service leadership on diversity
- Lack of facilities for women
- Lack of debate over the appropriateness of fitness
- A division between support staff and operation staff
- Use of outdated language
- The Home Office not collecting staff leaving statistics
- The need for active talent management to increase support from women, BME and LGBT staff.
- Evaluation of strategies currently in place for Diversity.

Charles detailed the next steps for diversity and highlighted the upcoming regional leadership events and asked for Fire Authorities to host the events.

Members made the following comments:

#HEforSHE campaign can give Fire Authorities tools to make a difference.

Accepting guidance is an ok step but actually working on delivering on goals is critical for improving the service.

What are the numbers of diversity of Fire Authorities

What will the workshops contain?

Language is important

Charles answered some queries:

The workshops will be a continuation of previous work, including diversity.

A survey has not been done, but Fire Authorities are democratic and they elect who they elect. But this will be returned to.

Decision

Members **agreed** the next steps from the report

Actions

Officers will:

- Undertake a series of regional leadership events for members of FRAs to provide training, case studies and networking with other councillors on issues around equality and diversity. These would be held in the political year 2018-19.
- Continue to promote the MoU and the behaviours within it.
- Lobby the Home Office on collecting and publishing data from those leaving the service to help identify any patterns in behaviour from those with protected characteristics.
- Continue to support the IFSG, including inviting Linda Dickens, the Independent chair of the IFSG to FSMC to see how else the LGA could help to drive forwards change.
- Identify a member champion on the FSMC for diversity.
- Invite London Fire Brigade to an FSMC meeting to hear from them about their recruitment journey and any lessons learned from their last round of recruitment.

7 Workforce

Gill reported on the workplace report, highlighting that pay negotiations were on going.

Members made these comments

Reverses are part of the conversation but additionally funding is also needed for local fire services.

What type of independent analysis is needed.

Pay awards should be sent to Fire Authorities for agreement

Gil responded

Negotiations are ongoing and it's a 3 way conversation on pay between staff, employer and local services.

Independent analysis is a new part of the conversation and will be developed along with negotiations.

8 Fire Commission update report

Lucy Ellender gave an update on other policy areas not covered in the agenda. Lucy highlighted the National Fire Framework, the HMICFRS inspection Consultation and the Fire Suppression Systems Working Group.

Decision

Members noted the report.

9 Notes from the previous meeting

Members agreed the minutes of the previous meeting

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Ian Stephens	Isle of Wight Council
Members	Cllr Colleen Atkins MBE	Bedfordshire Combined Fire Authority
	Cllr Iain McCracken	Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
	Cllr Kevin Reynolds	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority
	Cllr Bob Rudd	Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service
	Cllr Janice Brunton-Dobson	Cleveland Fire Authority
	Cllr Kevin Buttery	Amber Valley Borough Council
	Cllr Sara Randall Johnson	Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority
	Cllr Spencer Flower	Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service
	Cllr Rebecca Knox	Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service
Cllr John Robinson JP	County Durham and Darlington Fire &	

Cllr Ann Holland	Rescue Authority
Roger Hirst	Essex Fire Authority
Cllr Nigel Moor	Essex County Council
Cllr Thomas Judge	Gloucestershire County Council
	Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Mike Whetton	Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Christopher Carter	Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Roger Price	Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Roger Phillips	Herefordshire Council
Cllr Terry Hone	Hertfordshire County Council
Cllr John Briggs	Humberside Fire Authority
Cllr Gary Peace	Isle of Wight Council
Cllr Les Byrom CBE	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Nick Chard	Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Stuart Tranter	Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Frank De Molfetta	Lancashire Combined Fire Authority
Cllr Meirick Davies	North Wales Fire Authority
Cllr Andrew Backhouse	North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service
Cllr Miles Parkinson	Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service
Cllr Nick Worth	Lincolnshire County Council
Cllr John Riddle OBE	Northumberland Council
Cllr Brian Grocock	Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Susan Hall	London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA)
Ms Fiona Twycross AM	London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA)
Cllr Tudor Davies	South Wales Fire Authority
Cllr Linda Burgess	Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Jack Hopkins	London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA)
Cllr Alan Atkin	South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Mehboob Khan	London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA)
Cllr Stephen Sweeney	Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire Authority
Cllr Fiona Colley	London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA)
Mr Andrew Dismore	Greater London Authority
Cllr Denise Turner-Stewart	Surrey County Council
Mr Unmesh Desai	Greater London Authority
Cllr Dave Hanratty	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Howard Roberts	Warwickshire County Council
Cllr Mohammed Idrees	West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Judith Hughes	West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Peter Harrand	West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Colin Spence	Suffolk County Council
Cllr David O'Toole	Lancashire Combined Fire Authority
Cllr Carol Theobald	East Sussex Fire Authority
Cllr Jason Ablewhite	Huntingdonshire District Council
Cllr Mark Healey MBE	Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Chris Pillai JP	Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Kevin Dodds	Gateshead Council

Cllr Caroline Penn	Brighton & Hove City Council
Cllr Leigh Redman	Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Greg Brackenridge	City of Wolverhampton Council
Cllr Ron Clarke	Staffordshire County Council
Cllr Ken Critchley	Newport City Council
Cllr Nikki Hennessy	Lancashire County Council
Cllr Christopher Jackson	Bristol City Council
Cllr Shaun O'Neill	Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Steve Marshall-Clarke	Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr James Roberts	Liverpool City Council
Cllr Mick Stoker	Cleveland Fire Authority
Cllr Brian Greenslade	Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr David Wood	Suffolk County Council
Cllr Fran Oborski MBE	Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Keith Aspden	North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service
Cllr Ruth Skelton	Derby City Council
Cllr Val Smith	South Wales Fire Authority
Cllr Lizzie Deane	East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service
Cllr John Raine	Worcestershire County Council
Apologies	
Cllr Donald Davies	North Somerset Council
Cllr Roger Reed	Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority
Cllr Sue James	Cornwall Council
Cllr Janet Willis	Cumbria County Council
Cllr Vic Ellery	Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr David Acton	Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Rowland Rees-Evans	Ceredigion County Council
Cllr Mark Kiddle Morris	Norfolk County Council
Cllr Andre Gonzalez de Savage	Northamptonshire Fire Authority
Cllr Nicholas Rushton	Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Combined Fire Authority
Cllr Judith Heathcoat	Oxfordshire County Council
Mr Gareth Bacon	London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA)
Cllr Eric Carter	Telford and Wrekin Council
Cllr Matthew Hicks	Suffolk County Council
Cllr John Edwards	West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Stuart Davis	West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Debbie Kennard	West Sussex County Council
Cllr Simon Spencer	Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Alistair Auty	Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
Cllr John Bell	Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Tony Hunter	North Hertfordshire District Council
Cllr Danny Myers	City of York Council