

Note of last Fire Services Management Committee meeting

Title:	Fire Services Management Committee
Date:	Friday 11 October 2019
Venue:	Smith Square 1&2, Ground Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

Attendance

An attendance list is attached as [Appendix A](#) to this note

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
1	Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and, as this was the first meeting of the new LGA year, asked everyone to introduce themselves. The following apologies were received: Fiona Twycross AM, Roger Hirst, Cllr Carole Burdis, Cllr John Robinson JP and Cllr Cleo Lake. Cllr Greg Brackenridge was substituting for Fiona Twycross AM There were no declarations of interest.	
2	Membership, terms of reference and outside bodies Mark Norris introduced the report and explained that as this was the first meeting of the year, the Committee were required to confirm its new membership, Terms of Reference, future meeting dates and representation on outside bodies. He also asked whether members wished to reappoint a diversity and inclusion champion, currently Fiona Twycross AM. Mark suggested that any members who were interested in being on an outside body should contact their Lead Member outside of the meeting and that Lead Members then co-ordinate filling the places. This was agreed although several members expressed concern that some of the outside bodies rarely seemed to meet. Mark said that officers had conducted a short survey of members of outside bodies to determine if it was still useful for the LGA to be represented on all of them. He said that based on this feedback, several bodies had been taken off the list.	

Decisions

Fire Services Management Committee:

1. agreed its Terms of Reference set out in [Appendix A](#);
2. formally noted the membership for 2019/20 set out in [Appendix B](#);
3. noted the future meeting dates for 2019/20 set out in [Appendix C](#);

4. agreed that Lead Members coordinate and finalise the Board's nominations to the outside bodies set out in **Appendix D**.
5. agreed that Fiona Twycross AM be reappointed diversity and inclusion champion.

Actions

Lead Members to finalise the Board's nominations to the outside bodies set out in Appendix D.

3 Community Risk Programme

The Chair asked Phil Loach, vice-chair of the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and West Midlands Chief Fire Officer, to update the Committee on progress with the NFCC's Community Risk Programme (CRP).

Phil explained the rationale behind, and the aims of, the CRP. He said that these were:

- Fulfilling the NFCC's commitment to improving community risk management;
- Providing a community risk management toolkit that is accessible, quality assured and maintained;
- Providing a standardised approach to community risk management across the UK;
- Developing tools to enable consistent identification, assessment and mitigation strategies for community risks; and
- Developing data and digital solutions.

Phil went on to talk about the NFCC commissioned research by Nottingham Trent University on the approach to risk management by Fire & Rescue Services (FRS). He said that 43 FRSs took part in the research as well as 30 international organisations. He added that the final report made 8 recommendations on what was required for UK FRSs to move towards a more consistent risk assessment, planning and evaluation process. Phil then spoke about the findings on risk assessment from the first two tranches of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspections. These found significant variation in definitions and standards of risk assessment across FRSs and that greater consistency would bring immediate benefits to the public.

Phil talked about some of the CRP projects that had been put in place to address the issues around lack of consistency, and the governance structures and organisations that had been helping to shape the programme. These included the Technical Working Group, the devolved administrations, the FRSs, the Strategic Engagement Forum, NFCC Committees, HMICFRS and the independent Fire Standards Board.

Phil then went on to explain how the NFCC would work with and engage its various stakeholders over the further development and implementation

of the CRP including through the internet and social media, briefings, publications and the Strategic Engagement Forum.

Phil then concluded his presentation by outlining the next steps in the process and said that the first projects started in September. He said that he was happy to come back to the FSMC and update members at a future meeting.

In the discussion that ensued, the following comments and questions were raised by members:

- Managing risk effectively should be central to the work of all FRSSs and so getting uniformity across the country was very important. It was suggested that a briefing and/or training on the CRP be provided at the LGA Fire Conference next March. Phil said consideration would be given to whether the timetable meant there was a session that could be delivered.
- It would be very helpful to have a tool that set out a picture of what risk looked like locally for FRAs, but given HMICFRS's questioning of how services identify risks there might be value in a technical discussion with HMICFRS so they could understand the standards being used.
- What was the timetable for programme implementation? Phil said that outputs from the final four projects should be on the shelf from April 2020.
- Were elected members involved in the international symposium in September? Phil said that they weren't as it was more of an expert technical event. Members expressed an interest in attending future symposiums and engaged in the CRP work programme.

The Chair thanked Phil for his update.

Decision

FSMC noted the report and presentation.

4 Senior Sector Group and Home Office update

The Chair asked Emma Lawrence, from the Home Office Fire Funding Policy Team, to update the Committee on the work of the Senior Sector Group and other funding issues.

Following Emma's update, Members had a discussion about future funding of Fire & Rescue Services.

At the end of the discussion, the Chair thanked Emma for her update.

Decision

FSMC noted the report and presentation.

5 Fire Services Management Committee priorities for 2019/20

The Chair asked Lucy Ellender, LGA Senior Adviser, to introduce the report on the FSMC's priorities for 2019/20.

Lucy explained the process by which the priorities in the report had been decided. She said that at the FSMC meeting in June, members had highlighted the HMICFRS State of the Nation report and the Phase one report from the Grenfell Inquiry, both expected to be published shortly, to provide the key focus of work for the FSMC moving forwards. She said that officers had decided to add another main priority – Inclusion – following discussions at September's Fire Commission meeting where members expressed the view that this was integral to delivering successful fire and rescue services in the future. Lucy said that in addition to these three main priorities, members had also identified 4 other issues for the FSMC to add to its work plan – funding and the Spending Review; transparency and standards; governance; and workforce development.

In the discussion that ensued, the following comments and questions were raised by members:

- Members supported the priorities in general. Greater clarity was sought over the role of the Fire Protection Board and where members and officers fit into this, following the Hackitt review.
- It was felt that the environment, and climate change in particular, should be included as a golden thread, running through the work of the Committee, just like inclusion. It was considered to be critical for the Community Risk Programme and the risks should be quantified financially so that proper planning could be built into budgets of FRAs.
- It was requested that a specific work programme for the coming year be produced.

Decision

FSMC agreed the draft priorities for 2019/20 subject to the comments above.

Actions

- Officers to add an item to the agenda of the next Lead Member meeting on joint working with other LGA Boards over climate change impacts on Fire & Rescue Services.
- Officers to produce a work programme for 2019/20 and take it to Lead Members for approval.

6 Fire vision

The Chair asked Lucy Ellender, LGA Senior Adviser, to introduce the report on the Fire Vision 2024.

Lucy explained that at the FSMC meeting in June, it had been agreed that the Fire Vision required refreshing in the light of the forthcoming HMICFRS State of the Nation Report and the Phase 1 report of the Grenfell Inquiry. At the Lead Member meeting in September, it was suggested that a benchmarking exercise should be undertaken by officers to provide a baseline for the refresh. In particular, Lead Members were keen to see if progress had been made by FRSs in terms of increasing both the gender and ethnic diversity of their workforces.

Lucy said that officers proposed to bring back a report to the FSMC meeting in March 2021 to allow time for the Grenfell Inquiry and State of the Nation reports to be properly analysed. This report would identify what new ambitions a refreshed Fire Vision should include.

In the discussion that ensued, the following comments and questions were raised by members:

- It was considered that there needed to be a degree of realism in relation to diversity in recruitment. Particular areas have different ethnic mixes and this should be reflected, but members also highlighted progress in increasing the diversity of recent intakes of recruits.
- The diversity targets should be non-negotiable. This issue was considered to be crucial to the effective running of FRS's.
- Members were encouraged to get involved in the work the Committee was doing around equality and inclusion.
- It was felt that the LGA should take responsibility for helping the poorer performing FRSs to achieve acceptable standards of performance. More use should be made of robust and independent peer challenge.
- It was suggested that more progress needed to be made on intelligent green procurement, particularly with the climate change agenda coming to the fore.

Decision

FSMC noted the report and agreed to review the ambitions in the Fire Vision 2024.

Action

Officers to report back to members at the FSMC meeting on 9 March 2021.

7 LGA Fire Conference 2020

The Chair asked Jess Norman, LGA Adviser, to introduce the report on the LGA Fire Conference and Exhibition 2020.

Jess explained that officers had put together a draft agenda for the conference based partly on feedback received after this year's event and partly after conducting a blank paper exercise. She said that currently 6

bids had been received from the sector for workshop sessions and that the bidding process closed on 18 October. Jess asked FSMC for comments and suggestions on the draft agenda.

Members made the following comments:

- It was suggested that a session on community risk programmes and the implications and responsibilities for members would be helpful.
- It was suggested that some kind of instant digital feedback platform should be used as people often don't get around to filling in feedback forms after the event. Jess said that she was looking into this.
- It was considered that more time was needed to be given over to Q&A sessions at the end of presentations.

Decision

FSMC noted the report and agreed the proposals for the Fire Conference agenda subject to the comments above.

8 Workforce update

There were no comments from members on the update.

Decision

Members noted the contents of the report.

9 Building safety update

The Chair asked Mark Norris, LGA Principal Policy Adviser, and Charles Loft, LGA Senior Adviser, to introduce the Building Safety update report.

Mark updated members on work to establish a new building safety regulatory framework. He outlined the potential models for a new regulatory body, the approach the LGA had been pressing for and the potential role for fire and rescue services and councils under them. He said that a shadow regulator was due to be set up in the next couple of months but that legislation formally to establish it was unlikely to be passed until 2021.

Charles updated members on current progress with remediation work on residential blocks with dangerous cladding. He said that the Government had now provided details of the £200 million funding made available for replacement of dangerous Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding on privately owned high rise blocks. He added that the Government expected enforcement action to be taken against owners who didn't apply for the funding and carry out works. He said that the MHCLG had asked

councils to identify cladding and insulation material on all residential buildings of 18 metres or over in their areas and had provided £4 million to help support this work. He added that this would be a considerable task given the number of estimated high-rise residential buildings. Charles said the LGA retained serious concerns about the safety and testing of other cladding materials and had called on the Government to provide funding for removal of these. In addition, concern remained about the focus on the 18 metre threshold as two recent fires – at Barking and Worcester Park – involved buildings just below this level.

Charles went on to brief members on the establishment of the new Fire Protection Board, chaired by Roy Wilsher, whose initial priority would be to provide assurance around the interim fire safety measures put in place in buildings with dangerous ACM cladding. He said that the Board represented a good opportunity for the sector to put forward its concerns to the Home Office.

Charles concluded by stating that the Government's priority must be to remove dangerous cladding from all residential buildings without delay and to ensure that the failings of the building safety system that had led to the current crisis were corrected at the earliest opportunity.

In the discussion that ensued, the following comments and questions were raised by members:

- Concern was expressed about the capacity and expertise in the system in terms of qualified and experienced fire safety inspectors, to carry out all the inspections and remedial works required. This was particularly the case in FRAs with small numbers of high rise blocks. Charles agreed, saying that the provision of specialist fire safety inspectors could not suddenly be significantly increased as the role required a number of years of training.
- It was queried whether the £200 million was to be match funded by FRAs? Charles said that it wasn't, but the funding was specifically for ACM cladding and there may be other underlying problems that needed funding separately.
- Where was the £10 million funding for the Fire Standards Board coming from? Charles said that it was part of the recent Government Spending Round.
- It was suggested that there should be elected member representation on the Fire Standards Board. Mark said that there might come a point when this was needed given the prevalence of high rise buildings in local authority areas, but currently it was focused on providing assurance about interim measures in blocks with ACM cladding.
- Were there any potential liabilities for local councils and councillors in this process?
- Given the serious concerns raised around the whole inspection and remediation process, it was agreed that the Chair would write

to the Fire Minister outlining the Committee's concerns.

Decision

FSMC noted the contents of the update report

Actions

- Officers to draft a letter to the Fire Minister outlining the Committee's concerns.
- Charles to circulate Home Office paper on Fire Standards Board funding to Lead Members.

10 Fire Services Management Committee update

There were no comments from members on the update.

Decision

Members noted the contents of the report.

11 National Fire Chiefs Council update

There were no comments from members on the update.

Decision

Members noted the contents of the report.

12 Minutes of the previous meeting

Decision

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2019 were agreed.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Ian Stephens	Isle of Wight Council
Vice-Chairman		
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Nick Chard Cllr Keith Aspden	Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service
Members	Cllr Eric Carter Cllr Mark Healey Cllr Rebecca Knox	Shropshire and Telford Fire & Rescue Authority Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue

		Service
	Cllr Nikki Hennessy Cllr Karen Kilgour Cllr Les Byrom CBE Cllr Carolyn Lambert Cllr Greg Brackenridge	Lancashire Fire & Rescue Authority Tyne and Wear Fire & Rescue Authority Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority East Sussex Fire Authority West Midlands Fire & Rescue Authority
Apologies	Mr Roger Hirst Ms Fiona Twycross AM Cllr Carole Burdis Cllr Cleo Lake	Essex Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner Greater London Authority Tyne and Wear Fire & Rescue Authority Avon Fire & Rescue Authority
In Attendance	Phil Loach Steven Adams	National Fire Chiefs' Council National Fire Chiefs' Council
LGA Officers	Mark Norris Lucy Ellender Jessica Norman Gill Gittins Clair Alcock Naomi Cooke Charles Loft Jonathan Bryant	