Fire Services Management Committee

Agenda

Friday, 16 October 2020
11.00 am

Via Zoom

Fire Services Management Committee
16 October 2020

There will be a meeting of the Fire Services Management Committee at **11.00 am on Friday, 16 October 2020** via Zoom.

Political Group meetings:
The group meetings will take place in advance of the meeting. Please contact your political group as outlined below for further details.

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 3263	email:	martha.lauchlan@local.gov.uk
Liberal Democrat:	Group Office: 020 7664 3235	email:	libdem@local.gov.uk
Independent:	Group Office: 020 7664 3224	email:	independent.grouplga@local.gov.uk

LGA Contact:
Jonathan Bryant
Jonathan.Bryant@local.gov.uk - 07464652746

Carers' Allowance
As part of the LGA Members' Allowances Scheme a Carer's Allowance of £9.00 per hour or £10.55 if receiving London living wage is available to cover the cost of dependants (i.e. children, elderly people or people with disabilities) incurred as a result of attending this meeting.

Social Media
The LGA is committed to using social media in a co-ordinated and sensible way, as part of a strategic approach to communications, to help enhance the reputation of local government, improvement engagement with different elements of the community and drive efficiency. Please feel free to use social media during this meeting. **However, you are requested not to use social media during any confidential items.**

The twitter hashtag for this meeting is #lgassc

Fire Services Management Committee – Membership 2020/2021

Councillor	Authority
Conservative (5)	
Cllr Nick Chard (Deputy Chair)	Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Eric Carter	Shropshire & Telford Fire & Rescue Authority
Cllr Mark Healey MBE	Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority
Mr Roger Hirst	Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex
Cllr Rebecca Knox	Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service
Substitutes	
Cllr David Norman MBE	Gloucestershire County Council
Cllr Colin Spence	Suffolk County Council
Cllr David Canon	Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Authority
Labour (5)	
Ms Fiona Twycross AM (Vice-Chair)	Greater London Authority
Cllr Nikki Hennessy	Lancashire Fire & Rescue Authority
Cllr Karen Kilgour	Tyne & Wear Fire & Rescue Authority
Cllr Les Byrom CBE	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Greg Brackenridge	West Midlands Fire & Rescue Authority
Substitutes	
Cllr John Robinson JP	County Durham and Darlington Fire & Rescue Authority
Cllr Sian Timoney	Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Authority
Cllr Jane Hugo	Lancashire Fire & Rescue Authority
Liberal Democrat (2)	
Cllr Keith Aspden (Deputy Chair)	North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service
Cllr Carolyn Lambert	East Sussex Fire Authority
Substitutes	
Cllr Roger Price	Hampshire Fire & Rescue Authority
Independent (2)	
Cllr Ian Stephens (Chair)	Isle of Wight Council
Cllr Cleo Lake	Avon Fire & Rescue Authority
Substitutes	
Cllr Frank Biederman	Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority

Agenda

Fire Services Management Committee

Friday 16 October 2020

11.00 am

Via Zoom

Date of Next Meeting: Friday, 11 December 2020, 11.00 am, venue tbc

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Document is Restricted

Fire Services Management Committee

16 October 2020

Fire Services Management Committee 2020/21: Terms of Reference, Membership and Appointments to Outside Bodies

Purpose of report

For information and approval.

Summary

This report sets out how the Fire Services Management Committee (FSMC) operates and how the LGA works to support the objectives and work of its member authorities.

Members are asked to note the Board's membership and agree their Terms of Reference and nominations to Outside Bodies for the 2020/21 year.

Recommendations

That the Fire Services Management Committee:

1. agrees its Terms of Reference (**Appendix A**);

2. formally notes the membership for 2020/21 (**Appendix B**);

3. notes the future meeting dates for 2020/21 (**Appendix C**);

4. agrees the Board's nominations to outside bodies (**Appendix D**);

5. considers whether to reappoint a diversity and inclusion champion.

Action

As directed by Members.

Contact officer:	Jonathan Bryant
Position:	Member Services Officer
Phone no:	07464 652746
E-mail:	jonathan.bryant@local.gov.uk

Fire Services Management Committee 2020/21: Terms of Reference, Membership and Appointments to Outside Bodies

Background

1. The LGA's Boards seek to lead the agenda for local government on the key challenges and issues within their remit and support the overall objectives of the organisation as set out in the LGA's [Business Plan].

2. They take an active role in helping to shape the Association's business plan through extensive engagement with member authorities and oversight of the programmes of work that deliver these strategic priorities.

2020/21 Terms of reference, membership and future meeting dates

3. The FSMC's Terms of reference, membership and future meeting dates are set out at **Appendices A, B and C** for agreement and noting respectively.

FSMC Lead Members

4. The LGA seeks where possible to work on the basis of consensus across all four groups. The FSMC is politically balanced and led by the Chair and three Vice/Deputy Chairs, drawn from each of the four political groups. This grouping of members – known as Lead Members – meet in between Committee meetings, shape future meeting agendas, provide clearance on time sensitive matters, represent the Committee at external events, meetings and in the media, as well as engaging with the wider Committee to ensure your views are represented.

5. The Lead Members for 2020/21 are:

   5.1   Cllr Ian Stephens, Chair
   5.2   Ms Fiona Twycross AM, Vice-Chair
   5.3   Cllr Nick Chard, Deputy Chair
   5.4   Cllr Keith Aspden, Deputy Chair

The FSMC team

6. The Committee is supported by a cross cutting team of LGA officers, with Policy colleagues and designated Member Services Officer, being those which you are likely to have regular contact with.

7. The FSMC team supports the LGA's work on the Committee's priorities relating to fire services, and also a number of other discrete issues which are within the Committee's remit. The team works with Committee Members, the LGA press office and political groups to maintain local government's reputation on these issues in the media, directs our lobbying work (according to Members' steer) in conjunction with the Parliamentary

affairs team, and works collaboratively with other Boards across relevant cross cutting policy and improvement issues.

8. The team supports Members in person or by briefing when they represent the LGA on external speaking platforms or at Ministerial or Whitehall events. We will provide briefing notes and/or suggested speaking notes as required in advance of each engagement.

9. The team also participate in a number of officer working groups and programme boards, representing the sector's interests and putting forward the LGA's agreed policy positions.

Communications and Events

10. There are a number of internal and external communications channels available to help the FSMC promote the work it is doing and to seek views from our member authorities.

11. We also have a dedicated section on the LGA website, regular e-bulletins with a personal introduction from the Chair of the Committee, outside speaking engagements and interviews, advisory networks, features and news items in First magazine as well as twitter accounts which are used to keep in touch with our members.

Upcoming events:

- March 2021 – Virtual Annual Fire Conference – details tbc

FSMC outside body appointments

12. The LGA benefits from a wide network of member representatives on outside bodies across all boards. These appointments are reviewed on an annual basis across the Association to ensure that the aims and objectives of the outside bodies remain pertinent to the LGA and accurately reflect its priorities.

13. A list of the organisations to which the Committee is asked to appoint member representatives is attached at **Appendix D**. The Committee is asked to nominate the appointments for this meeting cycle which, as far as possible, are to be made in proportion with political representation across the LGA. As an LGA representative, Members appointed to these roles should speak for the Association, and not one particular political Group.

14. To maximise the value of attending regular or ad-hoc outside engagements, Members appointed to represent the LGA on an outside body are asked to provide regular feedback, either through the Committee meetings, or alternative mechanisms.

Diversity and Inclusion Champion

15. In January 2018 FSMC agreed to nominate a member champion for Diversity, and the appointment was considered by the Committee in September 2018. Fiona Twycross was nominated as the Committee's Diversity Champion for 2018/19, and that appointment was renewed in 2019/20.

16. As members are aware, HMICFRS have highlighted the need for further work around culture, equality, diversity and inclusion in fire and rescue services in the outcomes of their inspections and in their State of Fire & Rescue report published in January 2020.

17. The LGA has established a Fire Diversity and Inclusion Champion Network which met formally for the second time at LGA Fire Conference in March to agree the terms of reference and confirm the future ways of working for the Network. A new webpage to support the work of the Network has now been published on the LGA website. The Network has subsequently met on two further occasions.

18. Members are therefore asked to support the reappointment of Fiona Twycross as Diversity and Inclusion Champion for 2020/21.

Financial Implications

19. There are no substantial financial implications arising directly from this report. Reasonable travel and subsistence costs will be paid by the LGA for expenses incurred by a member appointee, whilst carrying out a representative role on an outside body on behalf of the LGA.

Appendix A: Terms of Reference: Fire Services Management Committee

The **Fire Services Management Committee** will report to the Safer & Stronger Communities Board.

Membership

1.   There shall be representation of each type of fire authority in LGA membership in England (including Combined Fire Authorities, County Councils, Metropolitan, Police Fire and Crime Commissioners and Mayoral authorities) on the body together with the Chair of the Employers' Side of the NJC for LAFRS (appointed by the LGA as the majority group).

2.   The LGA's political group offices will each appoint a fire spokesperson from the Members appointed to the **Fire Services Management Committee.**

3.   The Chair of **Fire Services Management Committee** will also Chair the LGA Fire Commission.

4.   The office holders of the Safer & Stronger Communities Board (or a named substitute) may attend meetings of the **Fire Services Management Committee**.

Role

5.   At the beginning of each corporate year, in consultation with and approval from the Safer & Stronger Communities Board, the **Fire Services Management Committee** will agree a work programme for the coming year that is consistent with the objectives and priorities of the Board.

6.   The role of the **Fire Services Management Committee** is to represent as an LGA body the views and concerns of the fire community, ensuring that local circumstances have a voice in the national context.

7.   The **Fire Services Management Committee** will take the lead on behalf of the LGA on the future direction of the fire and rescue service and improvement within the sector.

8.   The **Fire Services Management Committee** will take the lead on all other day-to-day issues (e.g. technical or operational matters) affecting fire authorities.

9.   The **Fire Services Management Committee** will, as required, work with partners and stakeholders on fire issues.

10.   Where issues have a clear impact on the broader agenda of the Safer & Stronger Communities Board or necessitate the setting of a new LGA policy the **Fire Services Management Committee** will make appropriate recommendations to the Board.

11.   The **Fire Services Management Committee** will, from time to time, undertake work requested by the Safer & Stronger Communities Board.

Fire Services Management Committee

16 October 2020

Quorum

One third of the members, provided that representatives of at least 2 political groups represented on the body are present.

Political Composition

Conservative group:	5 members
Labour group:	5 members
Liberal Democrat group:	2 members
Independent group:	2 members

Substitute members from each political group may also be appointed.

Frequency per year

Meetings to be held five times per annum.

Reporting Accountabilities

The Fire Services Management Committee will report to the Safer & Stronger Communities Board.

Appendix B: Fire Services Management Committee Membership 2020/21

Councillor	Authority
Conservative (5)	
Cllr Nick Chard (Deputy Chairman)	Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Eric Carter	Shropshire and Telford Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Mark Healey MBE	Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority
Roger Hirst	Essex Police Fire and Crime Commissioner
Cllr Rebecca Knox	Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority
Substitutes	
Cllr David Cannon	Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr David Norman MBE	Gloucestershire County Council
Cllr Colin Spence	Suffolk County Council
Labour (5)	
Ms Fiona Twycross AM (Vice Chair)	Greater London Authority
Cllr Les Byrom CBE	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Karen Kilgour	Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Nikki Hennessy	Lancashire Fire and Rescue Authority
Cllr Greg Brackenridge*	West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority
Substitutes	
Cllr John Robinson JP	County Durham and Darlington Fire & Rescue Authority
Cllr Sian Timoney**	Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Authority
Cllr Jane Hugo**	Lancashire Fire & Rescue Authority
Independent (2)	
Cllr Ian Stephens (Chair)	Isle of Wight Council
Cllr Cleo Lake	Avon Fire and Rescue Authority
Substitutes	
Cllr Frank Biederman	Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority
Liberal Democrat (2)	
Cllr Keith Aspden (Deputy Chair)	North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service
Cllr Carolyn Lambert	East Sussex Fire Authority

Substitutes	
Cllr Roger Price	Hampshire Fire & Rescue Authority

** - new substitute Committee member * - new full Committee member

Appendix C: Meeting dates 2020/21

DATE	TIME	Location
16 October 2020	11.00 – 13.00	Via Zoom
11 December 2020	11.00 – 13.00	Via Zoom
5 March 2021	11.00 – 13.00	tbc
21 May 2021	11.00 – 13.00	tbc
9 July 2021	11.00 – 13.00	tbc

Appendix D: Outside Body Appointments 2020-21

Outside Body	Background	Meetings this year?	Proposed Rep. for 2020/21
Outside bodies active during 2019-20			
Central Programme Office Strategic Engagement Forum Sadie Bryant - sbryant@ukfrs.com	The NFCC's CPO provides project and programme management to the NFCC to deliver national standards, doctrine and guidance. The Engagement Forum enables stakeholders to shape the CPO's work.	Yes	- Cllr Cleo Lake (Ind)
Central Programme Office: Community Risk Programme sub forum Sadie Bryant - sbryant@ukfrs.com	The programme aims to produce a set of standardised tools for the FRS to enable consistent identification, assessment and mitigation strategies for community risks. This will include new guidance on creating an IRMP.	Yes	- Cllr Nikki Hennessy
Central Programme Office Engagement Forum: People Aidan Bartley abartley@ukfrs.com	The CPO's people programme covers leadership.	Yes	- Cllr Roger Price (Lib Dem) - Sub. Cllr Carolyn Lambert (Lib Dem)
HMICFRS FRS Inspections - External Reference Group Danny Hayes – danny.hayes@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk stephen.polly@hmicfrs.gov.uk Matthew.Walsh3@hmicfrs.gov.uk	HMICFRS established the External Reference Group to develop their proposals for an inspection regime for the fire and rescue service.	Yes	- Cllr Rebecca Knox (Con) - Cllr Keith Aspden (Lib Dem – sub Cllr Carolyn Lambert) - Fiona Twycross AM (Lab) - Cllr Ian Stephens

			(Ind)
Interoperability Board (JESIP) contact@jesip.org.uk	The Board oversees the work of the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP). This was established to address the recommendations and findings from a number of major incident reports and help the emergency services improve how they work together.	Yes, regularly	- Roger Hirst/Cllr Nick Chard (Con)
National Fire Chiefs Council Executive Leadership Programme Board Katrena Dent - KDent@humbersidefire.gov.uk	Oversees the Executive Leadership Programme	Yes	- Cllr Rebecca Knox (Con)
Fire Standards Board Sadie Bryant - sbryant@ukfrs.com	The Board provides national coordination of professional standards across the fire and rescue service, overseeing the identification, development, approval and maintenance of professional standards.	Yes, regularly	- Cllr Nick Chard (Con)
Senior Sector Group Warren Hallett - Warren.Hallett@homeoffice.gov.uk	The Group is chaired by the Home Office and includes LGA and NFCC representation. It was established to support Home Office preparations for the Spending Review. The Home Office proposes it continues to meet.	Yes, for Spending Review	- Cllr Ian Stephens (Ind) - Cllr Nick Chard (Con) - Cllr Keith Aspden (Lib Dem – sub Cllr Carolyn Lambert) - Roger Hirst (Con) - Fiona Twycross AM (Lab)
Strategic Resilience Board	The Board aims to deliver a sector-led approach to	Yes	- Cllr Cleo Lake

Local Government Association

Hazel Pearce – hazel.pearce@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk	sustaining New Dimension capabilities into the future through establishment of an assurance framework and body managed by NFCC through the FRS National Resilience Board.		(Ind) - Cllr Les Byrom CBE (Lab)
Fire Service College Engagement Forum Jane Thomas – jthomas@fireservicecollege.ac.uk	The Fire Service College is responsible for providing leadership, management and advanced operational training courses for senior fire officers from the UK and foreign fire authorities. The Forum ensures stakeholder involvement in the activities of the College.	It hasn't met in 2019/20 but meetings are currently being arranged for 2020/21.	- Roger Hirst (Con) - Cllr Greg Brackenridge (Lab)
Outside bodies that did not meet in 2019/20			
			Rep in 2019-20
Arson Prevention Forum ACC Andy Prophet - staff officer is Hayley.langmead@essex.pnn.police.uk	The Arson Prevention Forum is a partnership of stakeholders with a shared objective of achieving a sustained reduction in the number of deliberate fires and related deaths, injuries and property damage.	**Forum now disbanded**	Cllr Greg Brackenridge (Lab)
Central Programme Office Engagement Forum: Digital Sadie Bryant - sbryant@ukfrs.com	This looks at readying services for the digital future optimizing the developments from smart buildings, driverless vehicles and robotics for example.	*Has not met yet.* **NFCC currently refreshing how it engages with stakeholders on this subject.**	Eric Carter (Con)
On-call Steering Group nfccadminsupport@nationalfirechiefs.org.uk	The Group meets to discuss work practices for retained duty systems and develop recommendations.	*Disbanded.* NFCC has launched a project looking at wider issues for duty systems which includes on-call.	- Cllr Mark Healey MBE (Con) - Cllr Karen Kilgour (Lab)

		Contacted Ann Millington and requested LGA involvement in replacement which she agreed.	
Emergency Service Collaboration Working Group Samantha Burton Sam.Burton@wmfs.net	Chaired by PCC Philip Seccombe, a regular forum encouraging greater collaboration between the emergency services; and overseeing an overall programme of work in order to establish a network of users and commission research.	***Didn't meet in 2019/20. Awaiting confirmation of future of group.***	- Cllr Eric Carter (Con) - Cllr John Robinson (Lab)

The Person-Centred approach to the Home Fire Safety Visit

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

The purpose of this paper is to update Fire Services Management Committee (FSMC) on the ongoing development of the Person-Centred approach for the Home Fire Safety Visit (HFSV). The Person Centred Framework (PCF) was approved by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) on 30 September 2020, this work builds upon the paper approved by the NFCC on 29 April 2019 which introduced the prevention pathway for the HFSV, and sought permission to develop this work through a series of consultative regional workshops engaging all English Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) and the devolved nations. This work has now been completed.

The document attached as **appendix 1** of this report provides a draft of the Person-Centred Framework (PCF). The PCF has been drafted based upon the views and experience of prevention, protection and analyst leads across FRS. The framework sets out guidance to support all UKFRS to strengthen and further develop an evidence-based approach to fire prevention in the home.

The PCF sets out guidance on:

- A working definition of the person-centred approach
- A risk stratification methodology to support the person-centred approach
- The core components of the HFSV
- Data collection to support the evaluation of the HFSV
- Evaluation of the HFSV

Fire Services Management Committee

16 October 2020

Recommendations

1. That the members of the FSMC are asked to note the progress that has been made with the development of the PCF to support the HFSV.

2. Members are asked to support work and progress of the 20 next steps found at page 20 of the attached document, **Appendix 1** of this report. Approval of these steps will enable the further development and consultation of the PCF with FRS, external bodies including the Local Government Association.

3. Members of the FSMC are asked to provide comments on the PCF which will assist the NFCC in the implementation of the PCF

Actions

4. FSMC Members are asked to endorse the PCF and provide further comments where appropriate.

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Position:	Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Essex County FRS
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Email:	rick.hylton@essex-fire.gov.uk

Draft September 2020

Introduction

The cornerstone of all Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) prevention work has been how services can prevent fire, fire fatalities and serious injuries in the home setting. This is where the majority of fire fatalities occur and remains the primary focus for the sector's prevention efforts.

This document sets out the background of the sector's prevention work in the home and introduces the Person-Centred Framework (PCF) for the Home Fire Safety Visit (HFSV).

This supports all FRS to deliver a standardised and evidence-based approach to a person-centred HFSV. The PCF has been developed by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) in consultation with UKFRS and with the support of the Home Office. Further collaboration with NFCC work streams, the devolved nations and external partners is required to develop the PCF further.

NFCC believes that at the core of FRS prevention work is the explicit aim to reduce fire risk; to do this the individual or community must be at the centre of all that we do.

NFCC has endorsed a person-centred approach to prevention (2018)[i] which encourages FRS to work in partnership with others to address the underlying causes of fire fatalities and injuries.

1. The Prevention Journey of Fire and Rescue Services.

In the first State of Fire Report released in December 2019, Sir Thomas Windsor outlined the following:

The long-term decrease in the number of fire incidents is due to many factors, including prevention work by services for which they deserve great credit. As a result of responding to fewer incidents, services have used their capacity in a range of different ways to support their local communities. This includes expanding the breadth of their prevention work.[ii]

The role of the firefighter. Services have expanded the role into broader areas, in particular, health and wellbeing[iii]

This reflects the changing nature of FRS which has seen an ever-increasing realisation that prevention work should include risk reduction measures developed around the wider needs of the individual; not solely the type of premises in which they reside.

The collaborative approach adopted by FRS through Safe and Well Visits (SWV) and echoed in the Working Together Document came ahead of the Government intention to strengthen collaboration through The Policing and Crime Act (2017)[iv] which placed a statutory duty on FRS, with other blue light services, that required these services to keep collaboration opportunities under review.

In 2019, the Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service, with the support of the Minister of State for Care endorsed the person-centred approach that NFCC was promoting, and which the sector was striving to deliver, with the important caveat that whilst he recognised the additional benefits these visits may have, the focus must remain on fire safety[v].

By 2020, up to 85% of FRS in England had developed a safe and well approach to fire risk visits in the home with similar developments in the devolved nations.

2. The Challenge Facing the Sector

NFCC recognises that there has been a varied approach to the development of fire prevention in the home across the sector.

This view from the State of Fire Report echoes the view from Government and strategic partners that a level of consistency in the approach to prevention would be beneficial.

A Home Fire Risk Check (HFRC) and SWV are fully compatible and are parts of the same pathway approach to fire prevention. Both approaches should take a person-centred approach and should be seen as part of a single approach to the Home Fire Safety Visit.

In essence, the opportunity for FRS and strategic health and social care partners to work more effectively together is based on one important factor. The evidence that we can derive from fire fatalities across the UK indicates that there are common risk factors. Research shows that health issues, when coupled with fires in the home, result in worse outcomes including a much higher likelihood of fatalities.

These factors include mental health, multi-morbidity and frailty, cognitive impairment, smoking, drugs, alcohol, physical inactivity, obesity, loneliness, and cold homes. Some of these factors such as smoking increase the likelihood of having a fire and others such as frailty increase the likelihood of sustaining more serious injuries or fatalities. However, this does not have to be at the expense of services' core functions concerning fire prevention, protection, response, and resilience.

The balance needs to be right. And it is to achieve this balance that NFCC has produced the PCF for the HFSV.

3. Developing the Person-Centred Framework

NFCC has consulted with the sector about its approach to fire prevention in the home, which has informed the development of the PCF.

Between October 2019 and February 2020, NFCC engaged with a range of FRS stakeholders to develop a standardised and evidence-based approach to the HFSV. In the course of this work, NFCC spoke to 180 colleagues from across 46 FRS, including conversations with colleagues from the devolved nations. Further consultation is planned once the initial framework is approved for development by NFCC.

This work has sought to align the best practice of the HFRC and the SWV as a single tool for the sector. This work starts to provide the sector with an evidence-based framework for the HFSV.

The Person-Centred Approach

All FRS that participated in the regional workshops accepted the rationale for the person-centred approach. There was broad consensus that we need to strengthen the fire service prevention pathway to put it on an equal footing with protection and response in terms of a consistent and evidence-based approach.

The HFSV should utilise a person-centred approach. The aim of the visit should be about reducing risk and changing behaviour, not simply a checklist of questions to be asked.

All services agreed that we need a consistent approach to prevention training for FRS staff if we are to meet agreed professional standards when delivering advice and brief interventions to reduce fire risk in the home setting.

"The primary purpose of the Home Fire Safety Visit should be to mitigate and reduce fire risk whilst trying to change some of the riskier behaviours that may affect or increase exposure to increased fire risk".

Risk Stratification

FRS need to look at local risk but also need a standardised approach. We should be adopting an all-age approach to prevention that recognises local risk but that draws upon a national methodology.

With regards to risk stratification, there is a recognition of the weakness of IT systems. It was accepted that IRS and other systems are primarily premises-based and can fall short of more sophisticated approaches to risk stratification if a person-centred approach is not applied. More work is required to arrive at a national approach to risk stratification, and this will be done through the NFCC Community Risk Programme.

All services recognised that effective risk stratification can only be achieved if we look at risk across, prevention, protection, and response.

Data sharing is a significant limitation on the sectors ability to accurately map risk in a local community. A major barrier to offering a person-centred approach is the inability to share and receive data with partners. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) has seen a risk-averse culture that sometimes hampers collaboration.

The Core Components of the Fire Risk Check

The work drawn from the regional workshops has recommended that the following core components of a HFSV should be standardised across all English FRS (and UKFRS subject to further engagement); and that these should be developed based upon a person-centred approach taking into account personal factors including physical and mental health and behavioural factors, including smoking, medication use and substance use.

- Home Fire Detection (smoke and heat)
- Fire Safety in the Home (kitchen, candles, and escape planning)
- Assistive Technology
- Fires and Heaters (safer heating)
- Hoarding and Clutter
- Arson/Deliberate Fires
- Smoking-Related Fires
- Medicines and Medical Devices
- Electrical Safety

Data Collection

Data sharing was still seen as a major barrier to developing more effective referral pathways between FRS and strategic partners. Each FRS has different relationships with partners; this was seen as a localised issue that would benefit from some national definitions of data sharing practice and an indication of the data that the sector should be collecting and reporting to strengthen the evidence base for prevention.

The case for national standardisation in England but with some local deviation was a very loud and consistent message from English FRS. At the same time while the devolved nations accept the principles of standardised data this must be developed at a devolved level in the first instance.

Part 2. The Person-Centred Framework for the Home Fire Safety Visit

1. Introduction

The framework provides guidance for all FRS to further develop a consistent and evidence-based approach to conducting person-centred HFSV. The framework provides:

- A working definition of the person-centred approach
- Guidance on risk stratification
- The core components of the HFSV
- Guidance on data collection
- Guidance on evaluation

The PCF is still in development and this work links to ongoing work with NFCC Protection Committee, NFCC Community Risk Programme and NFCC Data and Digital Programme.

NFCC supports the following working definition of the person-centred approach to reduce fire risk in the home setting:

'The Person-Centred Home Fire Safety Visit should include risk reduction measures developed around the health, behaviour and wider needs of the individual; not solely the type of premises in which they reside. As it is these underlying causes that can increase an individual's exposure to fire and can also reduce the chances of them surviving a fire in the home.'

2. The Person-Centred Approach to the Home Fire Safety Visit

NFCC supports the development of a consistent and professional prevention function for all FRS staff. NFCC believes that the adoption of an evidence-based person-centred approach which reflects the needs of our most vulnerable individuals and communities is the way to reduce incidents of fire and fire-related deaths in the home setting. This approach will ensure that the sector is targeting its prevention capability to benefit those individuals and communities that are most at risk of having a fire in their home.

This work is often undertaken in partnership with other agencies and has sometimes been confused as FRS is doing work on behalf of other agencies. However, at the core of all FRS prevention work is the explicit aim to reduce fire risk as a statutory function of all FRS. Achieving a balance between fire prevention, protection, response and resilience is at the

centre of the work that NFCC has undertaken to develop a national approach to fire prevention in the home setting.

If services are to provide a person-centred HFSV then the following characteristics should be evident:

✓ **Being person-centred means affording people dignity, respect, and compassion.**
Whenever someone interacts with services, they should always be treated with dignity, respect, and compassion. These 'experience standards' are basic human rights

✓ **Being person-centred means offering coordinated support.**
It's not just individual encounters that matter – services should offer or be part of coordinated support across multiple episodes and over time if needed. Coordination is particularly crucial when an individual's circumstances are changing and are being seen by a range of local partners

✓ **Being person-centred means offering personalised support.**
Because we are all different, person-centred support is tailored to the needs and aspirations of each individual, not standardised to their condition or circumstances. It means that the things that are important to the person receiving support and their family are discussed and form the basis of the advice we provide, and the support that we give

✓ **Being person-centred means being enabling.**
The starting point for being enabling is seeing people as assets, not burdens and seeking to support them to recognise, engage with, and develop their sense of resourcefulness, and to build on their unique range of capabilities. Being 'enabling' means that systems and services orientate themselves towards supporting people to recognise and build upon their strengths, and/or to recover from setbacks or negative episodes so that they can live an independent and fulfilling life.

The person-centred approach to HFSV should recognise these characteristics, and that individuals may have varying and increasing fire risk based upon numerous and changing factors which can be categorised under three headings as follows:

Person Factors- are integral to the person or people living in a property; things that are temporarily or permanently a part of them and cannot be changed such as their level of mobility or mental health and wellbeing.

Behaviour Factors- are actions, activities, or behaviours - things that people do (or don't do) such as smoking a cigarette or taking medication.

Home factors- are those factors which are integral to the home itself, or its contents (physical environment). Or how the person interacts with others (social environment) such as the layout of the property and other people that occupy the property.

Figure 1. Illustrates how this approach may result in services understanding which individuals represent a higher risk of having a fire in the home.
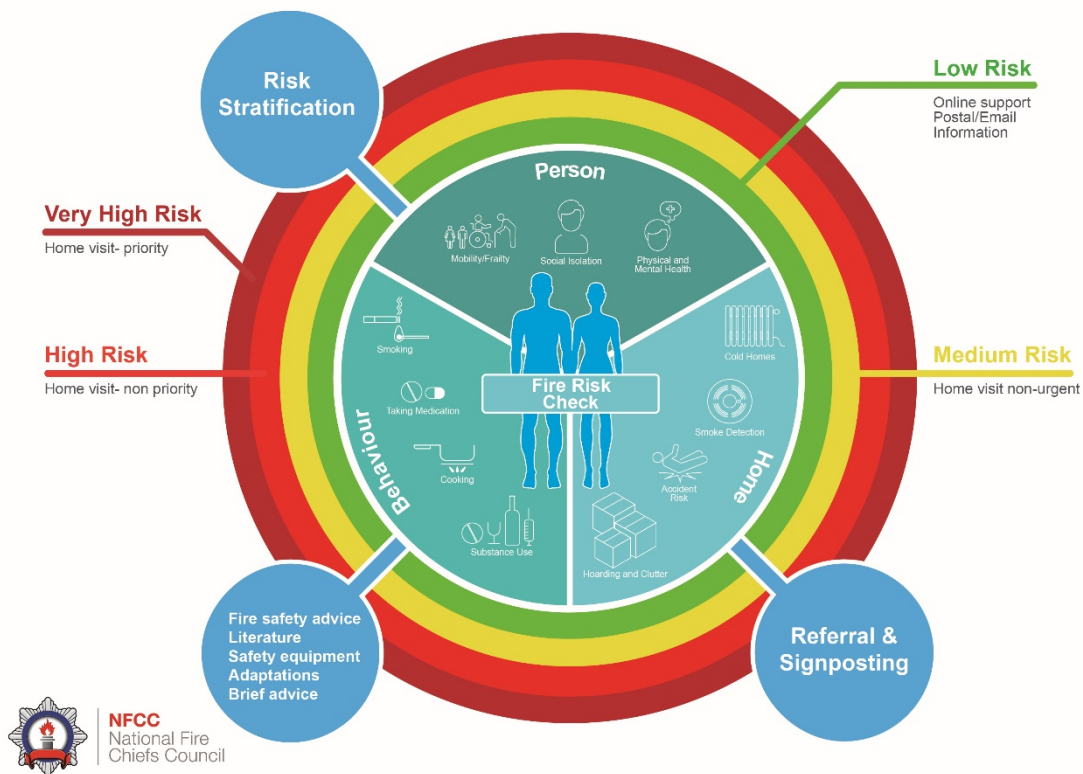

Figure 1. The Person-Centred Fire Risk Check

This definition of 'person-centred' outlined in this framework builds upon NFCC endorsement of the Safe and Well Standard Evaluation Framework[vi].

3. Risk Stratification

The information services gave us about risk stratification fits into three broad themes – Data, Process, and Systems and has informed the risk stratification baseline suggested as part of the PCF.

Incident Recording System (IRS) and Prevention/Protection Activity Data

Since 2009, FRS has been recording incident data in the IRS but there are many problems with this national data that need addressing. The sector still only has access to a much-reduced data set that is not published in a timely fashion, usually being around a year out of date.

The Home Office produces statistics in the form of numbers of incidents attended. The Local Government Association (LGA) provides a benchmarking tool via Local Government Inform. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service (HMICFRS) provides a Power BI dashboard using the numerical data it collects as part of its inspection process. None of these data sets provides NFCC or FRS with sufficient insight or disaggregated data,

or in other words, what makes people, place and building high risk and how to stratify that risk locally. Nor does it give any context behind rising trends.

FRS are using a wide range of data like the indices of deprivation, fingertips health indicators, fly-tipping trends, and Mosaic to understand why incidents sometimes increase. Many services are developing local dashboards, but the Home Office Fire Statistics team have not developed any FRS data that could be utilised locally.

The IRS does what the Home Office needs it to do to a degree, but it is of limited use for FRS, which need to be able to access national data to fulfil their risk stratification potential with regards prevention and protection.

Process of Risk Stratification

Whether stratification is based on the risk of fire or the risk of death or injury is not consistent across the sector.

Some risk stratification methods use weighting and again these are very different. There is not one that is the same as another. There seems to be no concrete basis for how attributes should be weighted. The lack of a structure and permanent research function within the sector is a major limitation in understanding and validating the sectors approach to fire risk.

Fire analysts need a competency framework and support in the form of training and development if we are to utilise this resource for the benefit of the wider sector.

Risk Stratification to Support the Person-Centred Home Fire Safety Visit

The FRS sector is a standout beacon for prevention and protection activity and the importance of being able to evidence that everything we do is person or business centred, and intelligence-led, cannot be underestimated.

Despite risk stratification being done differently across the sector there are some factors that all FRSs have in common.

The output from the Greenstreet Berman work was that 73% of the people lived alone and that the risk of becoming a fire fatality increased exponentially from the age of 50. This analysis used data from 2009 to 2011 and during this time things will almost certainly have changed, smoking prevalence is reducing each year, for example. There has been no analysis at a national level since this report. While every service uses different methods to weight the factors, most are using the same ones.

This research suggests that the risks associated with home fire safety fall into three categories:

- Risk of having an accidental dwelling fire (ADF)
- Risk of being a casualty in an accidental dwelling fire
- Risk of being killed in an accidental dwelling fire

This research[vii], including the 2014 DCLG report by Greenstreet Berman, identifies that the characteristics that put people at greater risk of dying in a fire are different to those that put people at risk of having a fire or being injured.

HFSVs aim to reduce the likelihood of fires occurring as well as increasing the likelihood of safe escape if a fire occurs. It is important therefore to ensure that risk stratification models include both likelihood of fire and severity.

It is recommended that through the Community Risk Programme NFCC commission a full systematic review and analysis of national statistics to develop a more detailed risk profile.

Research which has been identified usually focuses on either fire fatalities or accidental dwelling fires and casualties. The most significant characteristics consistently identified and those which can be used with some confidence by FRSs are:

Fire fatalities

- Over 70 years old, particularly in combination with any pre-existing mental or physical impairment including frailty
- Children under 11 years old, but especially under 5 years who are less likely to be able to self-rescue
- Being male (particularly when combined with other risk factors)
- Smokers – especially if combined with poor mobility or other health condition
- Low Socioeconomic Status (SES) i.e. deprivation
- Disability or long-term health condition (including dementia)
- Mental and/or physical impairment caused by alcohol and/or drugs
- Non-owned property or mobile home – this may be a proxy indicator for low SES
- Single-parent families, and households with more children

Fire casualties / ADFs

- Living alone
- Having had a fire before, and lack of basic fire safety knowledge
- More prevalent among people in the 40-49 age group

There are several interactions between these elements. In particular, age and other characteristics, where the primary factor relates to fatality and ability to escape. Many studies have pointed to the fact that although older age groups are more likely to become fire fatalities, they are less likely to have a fire in the first place. As Gilbert et al (2017) point out, the groups who are fire fatalities are separate and distinct from the groups who have fires or experience injury relating to fire.

It is also important to note the prevalence of alcohol as a factor in fire fatalities, especially the interaction with smoking which appears to be a leading combination for inability to escape a fire. Another interesting point raised (although so far, only in one study) was that of people who had survived an ADF, 81% had experienced a fire before, so this must be taken into consideration as a key targeting factor.

It is not possible to recommend a standard for the weighting of the factors at this time until more research gives us the evidence to do this with confidence. It should be noted that more work is required to develop this aspect of the PCF.

Risk stratification is an important use of our data and vital in finding hard to reach people, but FRS also need to consider how people access their FRS. The sector needs to ensure that referral pathways allow any member of the community to recognise their risks and to reach out to their local service for advice and practical assistance where applicable. The development of a risk stratification methodology for the sector should take into account equal access and the existing position of NFCC as detailed in NFCC's Inclusion, Equality and Diversity Strategy[viii].

As part of NFCC's Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Statement[ix] FRS should ensure that the commitments of this position statement are met as services develop risk stratification approaches. More specifically FRS should take account of the following NFCC commitments:

- Encouraging Fire Authorities to undertake and strive to improve their assessment levels within the Equality Standard for Local Government

- Ensuring all new and existing policies and practices are impact assessed. The prioritisation of this is especially important at Authority and Government Department level at a time when difficult financial decisions are being made

- Encouraging learning and development at all levels to promote continuous improvement and understanding of inclusion and diversity which impact our workforce and service delivery

4. Advice and interventions – The Core Components of the Home Fire Safety Visit

Throughout its consultation with the sector NFCC has sought to understand what FRS is delivering as part of their respective HFSV. This element of the PCF sets out the core components of a HFSV based upon the practice of the FRS that were consulted and the expert opinion of topic leads through NFCC's Home Safety Committee.

It is important to stress that the following nine core components of the HFSV are seen by NFCC as an offer that all FRS can, and should, be offering as part of their prevention offer. However, this does not limit FRS in providing additional areas of advice and brief interventions where local circumstances such as capacity and capability allow it, and local risk stratification warrants additional measures. This should not be seen as a basic core level of provision, rather a sound basis to build further prevention work on, and that addresses fire risk in the home and wider home safety risks where applicable.

NFCC believes that if an FRS is offering a person-centred HFSV then it should be confident in demonstrating how it delivers these nine core components in a person-centred manner, that takes account of the person factors and behaviour factors outlined in this document.

Each of the nine core components of the HFSV is made up of a description of what the challenge is regarding the topic, the advice and intervention guidance endorsed by NFCC, details of NFCC position and what NFCC will do to support FRS in delivering these core components including work with Government and other strategic partners.

The core components in the person-centred framework adopt the Hierarchy of Risk Control (HRC) measure as recognised by NFCC National Operational Guidance (NOG). This control measure is based on information provided by the Health and Safety Executive about the hierarchy of control.

Risk control involves introducing changes to reduce the likelihood of a hazardous event from happening AND/OR reduce the consequences of the hazardous event. The HRC promotes a series of risk control measures to facilitate this approach. Risk control measures at the top of the hierarchy are preferred because they are less reliant on people doing something. Also, they protect larger numbers of people. So, where possible, the control measures should be employed from top to bottom. (It may sometimes be appropriate to utilise combinations of control measures from the hierarchy so that more than one control measure is at play.)

There are variations of the hierarchy employed in different sectors. The one suggested below, for fire risk reduction in the home, is based on ERICPD (minus the D which stands for discipline and does not necessarily resonate with the spirit of the Home Fire Safety Visit).

Eliminate	The most effective method of risk control is to eliminate the hazard.
Reduce/Replace	If it is not possible to eliminate the hazard completely, the next option is to reduce it by replacing it with something safer.
Isolate	If it is not possible to eliminate or reduce/replace the hazard, the next option is to isolate the hazard (preventing people from coming into contact with it by enclosing it/shutting it off or putting distance between it and people)
Control	If it is not possible to eliminate, reduce/replace or isolate the hazard, the next option is to control it. Control is about employing safe systems, or rules about how activities should be carried out to minimise risk. This is where most traditional fire safety *advice* comes into play, such as 'don't leave cooking unattended', 'use a heavy-bottomed ashtray', 'extinguish candles properly')
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	If the measures above are not viable, the next option is the use of PPE to prevent harm if people are exposed to a hazardous event. PPE shouldn't be considered as a first-choice control but could be used in combination with other measures in the hierarchy.

Applying the framework to the HSFV

1. Identify the fire hazard that needs controlling (Cooking, smoking, candles, clutter, alcohol use, electrics, heaters, emollient use etc.)

2. For each measure within ERICP, identify what (if anything) the fire risk control measure is for the householder. So, what is/are the action/s they would need to take? (In some cases, there could be no identified action for a particular element of ERICP and so the householder would defer to the next level down)

3. Importantly, for each control measure identified, what is the proposed/agreed FRS Intervention to encourage or enable the householder to take the action. So, what is it that is expected of the FRS to trigger the householder to employ the control measure?

An example: Reducing Smoking-Related Fires in the Home

ERICP	Householder Fire Risk Control Measure	FRS Intervention
Eliminate (the smoking materials/behaviour)	Quit smoking	Delivery of Very Brief Advice (VBA) to encourage people to make a quit attempt
Reduce/Replace (the smoking materials/behaviour)	Switch from smoking to vaping	Provision of information about the health and fire safety benefits of switching from smoking tobacco products to vaping.
Isolate (the smoking materials/behaviour)	Have a smoke free home	Provision of information about the health and fire safety benefits of having a smoke free home.
Control (the smoking behaviour)	Practice safe smoking habits	Provision of traditional verbal smoking-related fire safety advice and smoking-related fire safety literature.
PPE (to protect against smoking-related fire)	Use PPE	Provision of fire risk reduction equipment in accordance with risk, local funding, and arrangements. E.g. fire-retardant bedding, smoking apron, self-extinguishing ashtray.

Based on this approach the following core components that recognise person and behaviour factors make up the person-centred framework and can be found at appendix 1a of this document.

Core Components of the Home Fire Safety Visit

1. Home Fire Detection
2. General Fire Safety (candles, cooking, and escape planning)
3. Electrical Safety
4. Fire and Heaters (safer heating)
5. Assistive Technology
6. Hoarding and Clutter
7. Deliberate Fires
8. Smoking-related fires
9. Medicines and Medical Devices

5. Data Collection – The Development of a Standard Data Collection Dashboard

The data collection requirements of the PCF are based upon the work undertaken between 2016 and 2018 to develop the Standard Evaluation Framework (SEF) which was approved by NFCC in 2018. The principles of the SEF have been applied to the collection of data relating to the nine core components of the framework and, as such, should be seen as an approach to standardising data collection for the HFSV across all FRS.

The SEF focused on providing the best practice guide for FRS to evaluate SWV aimed at over 65s. However, this approach can be applied to a wider range of vulnerable adults. The SEF was a first step towards enabling FRS to generate and collect consistent data on the delivery of HFSV. The learning from the SEF guidance will enable the development of the Standard Data Collection Dashboard (SDCD) as detailed in this section of the document.

The Standard Data Collection Dashboard

The SDCD is still to be developed and would provide a list of data collection criteria to ensure that FRS can collect high-quality information and capture data from the HFSV. Using a standardised approach around a core set of indicators which will enable comparisons to be made between different FRS approaches, will also allow the aggregation of this data at a national level.

The list of measures and indicators is split into the following data sets:

- Demographic Data
- Baseline Data
- Follow up Data
- Qualitative Data

These data sets are made up of essential criteria which are considered to be part of the minimum recommended dataset required to capture a HSFV against the nine core components of the PCF.

To generate good quality data, to maximise local and collective learning, and to enable continuous improvement over time each FRS should assess its HFSV, ideally in a way that is consistent with other FRS. This enables evidence to be pooled across FRS, and also enables individual approaches to be directly compared to identify best practice.

The SDCD provides a pragmatic approach to data collection. It allows for complexity, variation in local delivery whilst still enabling a level of consistency. It is not designed to be overly prescriptive or to stifle innovation. It can be adapted to suit local circumstances.

It is recognised that introducing a SDCD is a new approach for FRS and as such, represents a challenge. Many FRS across the country are currently implementing HFSV in varying ways and using different methods to collate data. This framework is intended as best practice guidance and gives FRS something to work towards. The more closely this approach can be followed, the higher the quality of data that can be generated across England and the devolved nations as appropriate.

The Core Data Set

The SDCD has identified a set of core measures for every FRS to use when collecting data for HFSV interventions.

They have been selected because either they provide key background information to enable comparison or they are the indicators that are most likely to see a change/impact as a direct result of the HFSV.

The suggested source of the data is listed alongside each indicator.

	Part One: Demographics of individual beneficiaries	Essential	Source
1.1	Date of Birth		FRS/RP
1.2	Gender		FRS/RP
1.3	Ethnicity		FRS/RP
1.4	Disability Status		FRS/RP
1.5	Smoking Status		FRS/RP
1.6	Living Alone		FRS/RP

	Part Two: Follow up Data	Essential	Source
Process Evaluation			
2.1	Target numbers identified		FRS
2.2	Numbers visited		FRS
2.2a	*Numbers of re-visit attempts*		FRS
2.2b	*Number of refusals*		FRS
2.2c	*Number of visits completed*		FRS
2.3	**Numbers of beneficiaries identified at risk from:**		
2.3a	Lack of Home Fire Detection		FRS
2.3b	General Fire hazards		FRS
2.3c	Electrical Hazards		FRS
2.3d	Unsafe Heating		FRS
2.3e	Assistive Technology		FRS
2.3f	Hoarding and Clutter		FRS
2.3g	Deliberate Fires		FRS
2.3h	Smoking-Related Fires		FRS
2.3i	Medicines and Medical Devices		FRS
2.4	**Number of interventions delivered, or referrals made for:**		
2.4a	Home Detection		FRS
2.4b	General Fire Hazards		FRS
2.4c	Electrical Hazards		FRS
2.4d	Unsafe Heating		FRS
2.4e	Assistive Technology		FRS
2.4f	Hoarding and Clutter		FRS
2.4g	Deliberate Fires		FRS
2.4h	Smoking-Related Fires		FRS
2.4i	Medicines and Medical Devices		FRS

	Part Three: Qualitative Data	Essential	Source
3.1	Beneficiary Satisfaction Measure		FRS
3.2	Case Studies of beneficiaries		FRS
3.3	Interviews with Stakeholders		FRS
3.4	Interviews with FRS delivery staff		FRS

(FRS – Fire and Rescue Service, RP – Referral Partner, PH)

Supporting Guidance for the Standard Data Collection Dashboard

There is a recognition within the PCF that there is further work required to develop the SDCD and the systems to support this approach. This work should be carried out through NFCC's Digital and Data Programme. As part of this work, NFCC will work with the wider sector to refine the data requirements of the PCF in line with sector practice; with a recognition that the supporting guidance will need to be developed to explain the rationale for each indicator and provide technical guidance on how to collect the data, or where it can be sourced from. Data collection across the devolved nations will be further explored whilst recognising local governance structures and requirements.

6. Protection

As part of the work to develop and consult upon the PCF, NFCC colleagues have worked with NFCC Protection Committee to ensure that the definition and the implementation of a person-centred approach to the HFSV is compatible with the existing definition of person-centred as first outlined in NFCC's Specialist Housing Guide (May 2017).

The Specialised Housing Guidance recognises that the scope of the fire risk assessment required by the Fire Safety Order (FSO) does not extend to the risk to residents from a fire within their accommodation, though in that risk assessment there is a need to consider, generically, the characteristics of residents for whom the premises are intended.

An assessment needs to be made of the physical ability of residents to evacuate in case of fire. The most critical stage of escape is evacuation from the resident's accommodation.

All residents' accommodation should be protected by, at least, the minimum recommendations of the specialised Housing Guidance.

However, the person-centred fire risk assessment may identify the need for additional measures, particularly within a person's accommodation. A simple template for documenting the significant findings of the person-centred fire risk assessment is available to all FRS through the Specialist Housing Guide. Assessments should, wherever possible, be completed with the person, or with others who can speak on their behalf.

Further work to ensure the person-centred approach is a shared component of the protection and prevention functions of FRS will be carried out through the respective NFCC Committees. This work will focus on the following factors that were raised by colleagues through the Regional Workshops:

- Competency for fire safety of the person carrying out the home visit
- How protection issues are captured
- Engaging with the 'responsible person'
- Evaluating the fire risk assessment against the HFSV
- Awareness/understanding of the role/importance of social alarms/telecare
- Understanding evacuation strategies

7. Evaluation

Introduction

The evaluation model described here focuses on the core fire safety element of the HFSV as described in part 2 of this document.

Measuring other potential benefits, such as health outcomes, is likely to be more problematic and it is recommended this should be undertaken in partnership with local strategic partners where possible. NFCC does not consider it necessary for FRS to take responsibility for measuring outcomes which fall outside of the core functions, but individual services are free to decide locally how many resources they can allocate to supporting partners' objectives.

It is important to use, and contribute to, high-quality evidence to inform decisions so that practitioners can be confident in the effectiveness of their interventions. Furthermore, using evidence to underpin decisions means taking a step back to assess the possible outcomes of intervention activity, looking at what has worked in the past, and ensuring that planned intervention activity meets an agreed objective. All of which helps to ensure cost-effectiveness in the approach to design and evaluation of intervention activity. In other words, to adopt the evidence-based practice.

Evaluating the effectiveness of prevention interventions, such as delivering the HFSV, adds to the available evidence and allows us to continuously improve. It's important to be prepared to change or even stop what we are doing if an evaluation or other evidence shows that our interventions are not effective or in any way harmful.

HFSV, in common with most of our prevention programmes, are designed to encourage safer behaviours. Therefore, it is useful to adopt behaviour change practices (including evaluation techniques) that are effective in other disciplines such as public health. For example, each intervention should be aimed at a defined audience and should use behaviour change theory to predict how people will react and change their behaviours.

It is essential to understand the behaviours that put people at risk before we can design the intervention, and the evaluation method to measure the predicted changes. Unfortunately, very little empirical research has been undertaken into home fire safety, so this evidence base will need to be built over time by the sector.

The methodology described in this section of the PCF has been designed for adoption by FRS regarding the core components of the HFSV. It follows that if all services adopt the guidance in this document then HFSV will be more standardised across the country.

Theory of Change

To be able to undertake an evaluation of a behaviour change programme it is useful to develop a Theory of Change with an underpinning behaviour theory. The model is based on work developed by the National Social Marketing Centre for Kent Fire & Rescue Service, drawing on the Protection Motivation Theory and identifies the following factors for the HFSV.

- **Problem** = A low perception of fire risk and fire safety behaviours not consistently maintained
- **Solution** = Educate people on the severity of the threat and recommend safer behaviours. Support and motivate change by encouraging safer behaviours and increasing self-efficacy

- **Activities** = Home visits to inform, educate and support, including one-off and repeat visits and referrals. Environmental changes including fitting smoke alarms & other equipment
- **Impacts** = Positive changes in knowledge and perception of risk. Self-reported changes in behaviour. Physical changes to the environment. Reduction in fires, fatalities, and casualties

A Theory of Change model is included at Appendix 1b of this document

Logic Model

With the theory of change in place, it is possible to develop a logic model for evaluation. The model identifies a logical link between inputs, outputs, and desired outcomes. The intention here is to show whether the HFSV is likely to have a positive impact and to ensure that the data being collected directly relates to this outcome. For example, if an outcome of the HFSV is weekly testing of smoke alarms, then the logic model prompts thinking about how and when this could be measured. If it cannot be measured directly then a proxy would need to be thought about, and if it cannot be measured at all it should be considered whether this is a viable objective. Any data that does not contribute towards the evaluation should be discounted.

The link between outputs (e.g. completed HFSV) and long-term outcomes (sustained behaviour change and fewer fire fatalities) may not be proven statistically but should where possible be supported by other evidence, such as follow-up assessments of behaviour and observable risks in the home. As detailed above, using a well thought out logic model can help practitioners to think about these steps early in the process to ensure that evaluation meets the objectives of the intervention activity.

A simple logic model for HFSV is included at Appendix 1b of this document and is based on the following factors.

- **Inputs** = This is simply the resources used to complete the HFSV over the period being evaluated. These items can also be costed if necessary
- **Outputs** = Put simply this is the measure of activities completed. This includes the number of visits, where they were completed, and the nature of the people visited
- **Outcomes** = This section shows the incremental changes that occur as a result of the outputs. Broken down into short, medium, and long term. Short term outcomes include an immediate increase in knowledge and awareness, physical changes to the home at the time of the visit. Medium-term outcomes include changes in attitude and an intention to adopt safer behaviours. Long term outcomes are sustained behaviour changes leading to fewer fires, casualties, and fatalities

Whilst it is relatively easy to collect data for inputs, outputs, and short-term outcomes it becomes increasingly difficult to collect meaningful data for medium or long-term outcomes. Using a logic framework, with supporting behavioural change theories and other evidence, allows us to be more confident about contributing reductions in fires/casualties/fatalities through the HFSV.

The Planning Cycle

All interventions should go through a planning cycle (illustration1). It is important to note that it is essential to include evaluation methods within the planning stage, BEFORE starting an intervention. Trying to undertake evaluation on a completed or existing intervention is not impossible, but, likely, data collected in the past will not be entirely suited to evaluation if it exists!

By taking the Logic Model approach it is possible to collect data over a relatively short period to undertake meaningful evaluation.

- **Plan** = Identify the problem or question e.g. the behaviour which needs to change. Background research. Design the intervention
- **Do** = Deliver the intervention e.g. undertake the fire safety visits
- **Study** = Evaluate the intervention
- **Act** = Review the intervention. i.e. do more, do less, improve, stop

Illustration 1
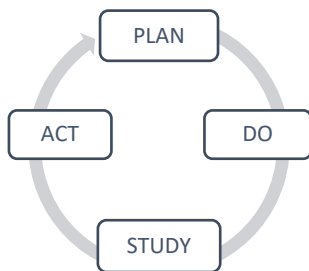
An Evaluation Method for HFSV

The evaluation aims to understand the impact of the HFSV including the perception of risk, changes in behaviour (or intention to change), and referrals.

For HFSV a cross-sectional post-intervention survey is recommended. The method used for data collection depends on the budget available, but any evaluation should be proportionate to spend, and the quality of evidence required.

Although the evaluation outlined here is post-intervention (Illustration 2), some data should be collected for evaluation routinely when undertaking visits. For example, the demographics of the individuals visited, the risks identified in the home and solutions put in place, as well as the behaviours and attitudes observed during the visit. This data can then be used to compare behaviours and risks at the time of the visit (e.g. advised to test their smoke alarms) with those found post-visit (e.g. testing smoke alarms weekly).

Illustration 2
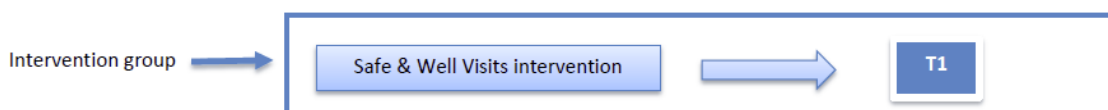
Research is important to establish evidence to support the theory of change and logic model. What evidence supports a link between the outputs achieved and the desired outcomes?

As stated earlier there is not much weight of evidence in this area and individual fire services must share findings and collaborate to improve the evidence base. Case studies and other qualitative evidence can be collected as part of the SDCD and shared through NFCC research portal. As the weight of evidence grows, it will not be necessary to repeatedly complete evaluation unless something changes e.g. the nature of the visits, the advice given or there is reason to believe the risks have changed.

The chosen method of collecting post-intervention data from customers/service users will largely depend upon the resources available. A large sample size is not essential, and it is far more important to gain good quality, often qualitative, data. For an in-depth qualitative study, a sample size of around 30-50 participants would be expected. For quantitative survey-type studies, a minimum sample size of 100-150 is expected. If statistical analyses are to be conducted it would be worth consulting with a quantitative researcher to establish a specific sample size for the study.

Taking a qualitative approach allows for a more detailed discussion with the customer about their behaviours and motivations and may help find out 'why' they adopt a certain behaviour.

Quantitative research allows a bigger reach and allows more generalisations but is more rigid and less detailed in the type and amount of information that can be gathered. For example, only allowing certain answers which might not capture specific nuances in the customers' experience. A sample should be selected from people that have received a visit recently (the period to be selected). The sample should be selected to ensure it is representative of those people visited – depending on the criteria for visits the following could be used to select the sample: postcode to ensure a good geographical spread, type of referral, the date the visit was completed and age of the participants.

Structured or semi-structured interviews (in person or via the telephone) and/or focus groups are likely to be more suited to this type of evaluation than questionnaires. In part, this is to find out specific details about the customers' experience and also to allow a robust evaluation accounting for small numbers of people willing and able to take part, as well as drop-out rates where it is not possible to follow-up with an individual. Furthermore, using interviews or focus groups encourages further discussion and the ability to probe deeper into any interesting responses, or prompt for more information if needed. This part of the research intends to gather the short term (and potentially some medium-term) outcomes only.

The key areas to explore therefore are:

- Recall of advice and equipment provided
- Intention to change behaviour
- Adoption of safer behaviours
- Changes in perception of risk

It is useful to have the same measures collected at the time of the visit, or before the visit, if possible (i.e. advice is given, commitment to change behaviour, perception of risk), to be able to identify change.

It's also important to understand the views of staff that undertake the fire safety visits as they will have the insights into what works and what doesn't work.

The outcomes being measured can be summarised as follows:

- Reaction – did the customer find the visit useful and would recommend?
- Learning – did they acquire knowledge, skills and have they changed attitude to fire risk?
- Behaviour – have they applied/intend to apply what they learnt?

Ethical consideration

As with any research involving people, some precautions need to be taken to ensure evaluation is undertaken ethically. Care must be taken not to cause any harm, for example raising anxiety for vulnerable people. It is recommended to exclude some of the most vulnerable people from the sample for the interview, including people with dementia, mental health issues or at risk from domestic violence.

Precautions need to be taken to protect personal data and ensure legal compliance. Each FRS will need to consider its data governance issues to ensure it remains compliant with the Data Protection Act 2018. Informed consent from individuals to take part in the research should be obtained.

Example questions

Questions are designed to measure the outcomes contained in the logic model. For example:

- Can you tell me about any advice you were given during the visit?
- Was this advice useful?
- Based on that advice, can you tell me about any changes you agreed to make after your Fire Safety Visit?
- Did you make those changes after the visit?
- Do you feel that making these changes [this change] has made your home safer?
- In your view, how likely is it that people in Kent who are similar to you will experience a house fire?

The inclusion of some open questions provides qualitative data and allows for further clarification and prompting where necessary– providing richer data.

Data analysis and results

Results from the interviews/surveys will need to be analysed and presented using proportions. For example, the percentage of individuals who made changes or intend to adopt safer behaviours. Open-ended questions should be analysed by reviewing the answers and looking for common themes that arise, which will need to be coded – this is probably the hardest part of the analysis and it is recommended this is done by someone who is qualified and experienced in undertaking qualitative research.

Recommendations and Next Steps

1. Recommendations

1. NFCC will continue to consult upon the Person-Centred Framework with all UKFRS to develop this thinking as a practical approach to an evidence-based approach to the Home Fire Safety Visit and will work through the recognised governance structures and complementary workstreams of NFCC in this work.

2. That FRSs support the work and progress of the Person-Centred approach to the next stage based on the 20 next steps outlined below.

2. Next steps

The Person-Centred Approach

1. That all FRS will work towards adopting NFCC working definition of the Person-Centred Approach to the Home Fire Safety Visit.

2. That the Home Fire Risk Check and the Safe and Well Visit will be seen as components of a single approach to fire prevention in the home which will be referred to as the Home Fire Safety Visit.

3. NFCC will work with strategic partners including the Fire Standards Board to develop a consistent approach to the prevention training of all FRS staff to ensure a consistent and professional approach to prevention delivery in the home is adopted and strengthened.

4. NFCC will work with the Fire Standards Board to develop the occupational standards required to carry out a person-centred Home Fire Safety Visit.

5. NFCC will undertake further consultation with FRS on a shift away from a property focus towards a person-centred approach and increased multi-agency working to tackle fire risk in the home.

6. NFCC, Home Office and FRS will consider if, in the medium to longer-term, new person-centred IT systems will be needed to meet future service requirements.

Risk Stratification

7. That FRS work towards adopting the baseline risk stratification guidance outlined in this document.

8. The development of further risk stratification work to support the person-centred approach will be progressed through NFCC Community Risk Programme.

9. NFCC will consider the implementation of the use of predictive analytics at the national level, using data science and national data to create insight for the sector. This work should draw in local analysts, to work alongside Data Scientists, providing context and to facilitate problem-solving using data, with the added benefit of knowledge transfer to analysts.

The Core Components of the Home Fire Safety Visit

10. NFCC Home Safety Committee will further develop the core components of the Home Fire Safety Visit in partnership with FRS.

11. All FRS will work towards adopting the core components of the Home Fire Safety Visit as part of their delivery of fire prevention in the home and the Hierarchy of Risk methodology they are based upon.

Data Collection

12. NFCC through its Digital and Data Programme will work with FRS and the Home Office to develop the Standard Data Collection Dashboard to support the person-centred approach to Home Fire Safety Visits.

13. NFCC should act as a repository of FRS data, defining a core set of data that should be recorded nationally, for prevention activity.

14. Consideration should be given to unique identifiers such as NHS and NI number to complement the UPRN, and robust solutions for data collection systems should be found that resolves the differences in the local recording.

15. NFCC should develop standards, training, and development for the Role of an Analyst.

Protection

16. NFCC Prevention Committee will continue to work with NFCC Protection Committee to align the person-centred approach across the disciplines of prevention and protection and will develop the themes raised in Part 2. point 6 of this document.

Evaluation

17. FRS will consider how they will adopt the principles outlined in this document to introduce a Theory of Change and Logic Model to the evaluation of the Home Fire Safety Visit.

18. In partnership with NFCC, the Home Office should look at how research and development are funded for the Fire and Rescue Service, using the College of Policing as a comparison model.

19. NFCC should develop research programmes and work streams that support risk stratification, creating an evidence-based culture.

20. NFCC and FRS should consider ways to build evaluation skills and capacity in FRS in the UK through the identification of appropriate training and developing skills and relationships with academic partners.

Appendices

Appendix 1a. The Core Components of the Home Fire Safety Visit

Appendix 1b. The Theory of Change and Logic Model to Support the Home Fire Safety Visit

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[i] NFFC Correspondence to all Chief Fire Officers, January 2019

ii State of Fire and Rescue. The Annual Assessment of Fire and Rescue Services in England (pg. 15) 2019
iii State of Fire and Rescue. The Annual Assessment of Fire and Rescue Services in England (pg. 24) 2019
iv Policing and Crime Act, HMSO, January 2017
v Correspondence to NFCC Prevention Committee Chair, January 2019
vi NFCC Standard Evaluation Framework, March 2018
vii Risk Stratification Research Sources

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Position Statement

Person Centred Approach to the Home Fire Safety Visit

Assistive Technology

Introduction

The NFCC is committed to making people safer in their homes by identifying and championing new and effective technological solutions to improve people's fire and health outcomes. Assistive technology (AT) is an umbrella term for any device or solution which assists someone in living a safe and healthy life, while maximising personal independence.

New innovative solutions that link to detection technology or provides people with protection through other risk reduction products and tools, is the focus of this group. The use of AT has been identified as a key factor in preventing fatalities and injuries for people with chronic health conditions and age related frailty. As the NHS and local authorities move towards delivering most of their care provision for people within their own homes (as opposed to in sheltered accommodation), AT is becoming increasingly popular, with many Clinical Commissioning Groups and Local Authority Health and Wellbeing Boards commissioning AT solutions.

It should be noted that AT is not an alternative to person centred risk assessments or providing appropriate standards of fire safety. A holistic approach that considers the person, their specific needs/risks and their living environment is essential. Provision of AT is of course not confined only to those with age related conditions, AT can be essential for a broad range of individuals who wish to live safe and healthy lives, as independently as possible, for as long as possible.

Sector Challenge

While ideally every Fire & Rescue Service (FRS) should seek to promote and where possible, provide' AT, the reality is that FRSs have different amounts of resources and capacity. The challenge is therefore to first raise awareness about what AT solutions are available, their efficacy and then to identify adequate levels of provision (if any).

Using a person centred approach, coupled with the Hierarchy of Risk model, FRSs should be able to determine what specific AT is relevant for their prevention and protection strategy locally.

Preventing Fires

The three means of fire prevention most commonly used by AT solutions are:
- Fire prediction
- Fire detection
- Fire suppression

A range of solutions and devices exist. Prediction solutions monitor individuals and raise the alarm when a person's behaviour crosses a set threshold of risk making them likely to experience a fire. These high risk individuals can then receive highly targeted and person-centric interventions. Fire

detection linked to monitoring services can summon a fire response automatically, even if the individual is unable to do so. Automatic fire suppression systems (other than sprinklers) can detect fires in their early stages, suppress them and even summon a fire response. There are also devices that aim to address specific vulnerabilities, such as hard of hearing alarms

1. **Eliminate the hazard**
   - Substituting risk items such as tea light candles for low risk battery powered LED alternatives.

2. **Reduce the hazard**
   - Working with partner agencies to ensure individuals most at risk have adequate fire detection, in line with the NFCC detection position statement.

   - Work with the individual to seek to reduce any behaviours which increase their risk.

3. **Isolate the hazard**
   - Working with partner agencies to identify individuals most at risk of experiencing a fire resulting in injury.

   - Use of solutions that identify which individuals are at the highest risk of experiencing a fire, then implementing interventions.

4. **Control the hazard**
   - Use other approaches alongside AT, such as Person Centred Fire Risk Assessments (PCFRA) or safe and well visits.

   - Address the underlying human behaviour issues contributing to fire risk.

5. **Personal Protective Equipment**
   - Provision of solutions such as flame retardant bedding, which reduce fuel load.

   - Use of automatic fire suppression systems, to protect the person and possibly extinguish the fire when it occurs; while summoning a fire response.

NFCC Position

The overarching aim of the assistive technology working group (ATWG) is to support UK Fire and Rescue Services to understand best practice in terms of AT, and to maximise the knowledge of reliable risk reduction equipment and standards locally. This is with the view to reduce preventable fire deaths and injuries, which fall within the Fire and Rescue Service remit.

We will:

- Consider it a matter for each FRS to determine the extent to which it may provide technology for risk reduction or make recommendations to other agencies and/or householders themselves through their work with vulnerable people and other agencies specialising in the provision of care and support to those that may be at particularly heightened risk.

- Assist, wherever practicable, with the development of AT solutions for fire prevention, fire detection, fire mitigation and risk reduction as a priority but, at all times, seek to integrate this with existing and future technologies for general well-being and quality of life.

- Drive the mainstreaming of AT solutions whilst challenging the status quo and encouraging innovation as a means to reduce fire risk, fire deaths and injuries as well as maintaining independence, improving quality of life and reducing risk more generally.

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Position Statement

Person Centred Approach to the Home Fire Safety Visit
General Fire Safety

Sector Challenge

More fires and fire injuries are caused by carelessness in the kitchen than anywhere else in the home and two fires a day are started by candles (around 1000 a year).

A fire can start in any room and the effects can be devastating. Taking some simple precautions can prevent fires from happening and make you and anyone else in your home a lot safer.

General fire safety advice is covering kitchens, candles and escape planning is available via the NFCC safety messaging and the Home Office Fire Kills campaign.

NFCC Recommendations

1. You are more at risk from a fire when asleep. So, it's a good idea to check your home before you go to bed.

2. Do not use candles in the home, especially where young children or older frail householders are present, as they may be at higher risk of an accident, injury or fire.

3. Heat alarms fitted in kitchens can detect the increase in temperature caused by a fire but will not be set off by cooking fumes. Around 50% of fires in the home start in the kitchen so we recommend heat alarms are fitted.

4. Be prepared and ensure your household is prepared by making a plan of escape in the event of a fire. This should take account of all member so the household including children, older people and those with mobility or cognitive impairments.

Home Fire Safety Visit

As a minimum, the NFCC advises the following:

1. **Eliminate the hazard:**
   Avoid cooking when under the influence of alcohol or medications which may make you drowsy
   Keep tea towels and clothes away from the cooker and hob and keep cooking appliances them free from grease build up
   Double check your cooker is off when you've finished cooking

Use a thermostat controlled electric deep fat fryer rather than a chip pan
Consider using safer ways of scenting rooms that do not involve the use of candles
Consider using dimmer switches or low wattage table lamps instead of lit candles to reduce level of luminance in the home
Replace wax candles with safer battery operated candles

2. **Reduce the hazard:**

   Spark devices are safer than matches or lights to light gas cookers, because they don't have a naked flame

   Don't leave the white goods running when you are asleep or away from the home, unless they are designed to stay on, such as in the case of a fridge or freezer

   Avoid charging electrical devices when you are asleep or away from the home
   Avoid getting distracted or leaving cooking unattended. If you have to leave the kitchen whilst cooking, it's safer to take pans off the heat and turn off the hob, oven and/or grill.
   Make sure candles are fully extinguished
   Do not leave children or persons with reduced mobility alone with candles

3. **Isolate the hazard:**

   Close doors at night to help stop the fire and smoke from spreading if an incident should occur
   Make sure candles are secured in a proper holder and away from materials that may catch fire – like curtains.
   Tea lights get very hot and without proper holders can melt through plastic surface like a TV or bath.

4. **Control the hazard:**

   Make sure saucepan handles don't stick out – so they don't get knocked off the stove
   If the oil starts to smoke - it's too hot. Turn off the heat and leave it to cool
   Take care if you're wearing loose clothing – they can easily catch fire if they come in contact with heat or naked flame
   Keep the oven, hob and grill clean as a build-up of fat and grease can ignite a fire
   If a pan catches fire, don't take risks – Don't tackle the fire yourself and don't attempt to move the pan. Turn off the heat if it is safe to do so. Never throw water over a fire as it could create a fireball. Leave the room, close the door, shout a warning to others and call the fire service by dialling 999 - Get Out, Stay Out, and Call 999
   Make a home escape plan. Plan an escape route and make sure everyone knows what to do and how to escape. The plan may include waking and helping children or vulnerable persons. The best route is the normal way in and out of your home. Make sure exit routes and exits are kept clear and clutter free. Plan a second route in case the first one is blocked. Practice your escape plan and keep door and window keys where everyone can find them.

5. **Fire safety equipment:**

   The easiest way to protect your home and family from fire is with working smoke alarms. For maximum protection a smoke alarms should be fitted in every room of your house except the bathroom, kitchen and garage. And a heat detector should be fitted in the kitchen.

Please select the correct symbol to represent whether this position applies to the countries below			
England ✔	Wales ✔	Scotland ✔	Northern Ireland ✔

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Position Statement

Person Centred Approach to the Home Fire Safety Visit

Deliberate Fires - Arson Reduction Guidance

Sector Challenge

The National Framework documents for FRSs set out the strategic expectations to identify, assess and target risks which could affect their communities with arson and deliberate fire-setting being specifically referenced; England in section 2.4, and Wales in sections 1.11, 1.19 and 1.25. Scotland's strategic priority No.2 covers the need to identify and target inequalities. Northern Irelands' Corporate Plan takes cognisance of the three National Framework Documents capturing the reduction of deliberate fires in strategic objective No.1.

Deliberate Fires account for the largest percentage of all the fires attended by UK FRSs.

Deliberate Fires including Deliberate Dwelling Fires are increasing.

The level of risk posed when dwellings are subject to a deliberate fire or arson attack, is HIGH; with consequences ranging from loss of life, personal injury, property damage, financial loss and environmental damage.

NFCC Position

[NFCC has published its agreed Position Statement on Arson](#)

[NFCC has agreed and published its National Arson Reduction Strategy](#)

NFCC will work towards an integrated and coordinated approach, in collaboration, in partnership, and where necessary take action as a standalone agency, to reduce the incidence of arson and the consequential effects that arson has on victims and communities.

Working with partners

The NFCC will work with strategic partners including the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) and the Home Office National Anti-Social Behaviour Steering Board to promote collaboration and partnership opportunities; develop closer working relationships and promote the consideration of arson in wider Government agendas.

FRSs are encouraged to work with Crime & Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs), Local Strategic Partnership Boards and Local Safer Partnerships; to embed an integrated and coordinated approach to addressing local needs and reducing the impacts of arson on local communities.

Advice and guidance

NFCC has produced, agreed and published standardised advice and guidance relative to arson reduction in a domestic, business and rural setting;
Domestic guidance
Business guidance
Rural guidance

1. The NFCC will provide standardised advice for all FRSs to adopt or adapt, and make available to domestic residents

2. The NFCC will provide a framework of areas for advice and education that can be assessed during a Home Fire Safety Visit

3. The NFCC will provide a 'toolkit' of potential options for interventions that could reduce the occupants assessed level of risk from arson

NFCC Recommendations

NFCC Support:

1. All FRSs to embed the assessment of 'risk from arson' within their Home Fire Safety Visit

2. All FRSs to fully provide arson reduction advice, education and interventions within their Home Fire Safety Visit

3. All FRSs to develop and share through the national toolkit, solutions to arson and use of community empowerment tools.

Home Fire Safety Visit

As a minimum, the NFCC advises the following:

1. **Eliminate the hazard**
   Remove and secure property items and outbuildings which may not be secured that present risk of theft and use of arson as a method of crime concealment, introduce boundary security to reduce opportunist arson. Consider improvements to external deterrents (CCTV, lighting, letterbox lock, bin security)

2. **Reduce the hazard**
   Change behaviours to avoid the hazard of opportunist Arson. (household waste management, waste collection day routine, neighbourhood pride)

3. **Isolate the hazard**
   Examine options in terms of fire fuel availability within premise curtilage (hoarding, waste storage, abandoned or end of life vehicles / caravans / furniture etc.)

4. **Control the hazard**
   Promote public empowerment tools for public to refer local community issues. Remind and prompt business owners about the fire safety issues. Provide information and follow-up advice via further visits, phone calls, information on websites, partner agency newsletters, campaigns etc. Refer to local Police Force for security check.

5. **Fire safety equipment**
   Provide, recommend or refer for interventions appropriate to risks identified, including; devices, education and behavioural change programmes e.g. fire-setter intervention services.

Please select the correct symbol to represent whether this position applies to the countries below			
England ✔	Wales ✔	Scotland ✔	Northern Ireland ✔

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Position Statement

Person Centred Approach to the Home Fire Safety Visit

Electrical Safety

Introduction

The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) is committed to creating safer, healthier and more resilient communities. In support of this objective it is considered that continued work to prevent electrical fires will contribute to reducing casualties, fatalities and material losses arising from fires.

The intent of this statement is to outline the challenge, the strategic and tactical approaches to preventing electrical fires and the NFCC's position. In the statement figures referenced are fire incidents in the UK where electrical ignition source was defined as faulty appliances and leads, faulty fuel supply and misuse and articles placed too close to heat.

Sector Challenge

Fires relating to electrical equipment and supplies are the second highest cause of accidental dwelling fires in the home and of accidental dwelling fire related injuries and deaths. Faulty electrics (appliances, wiring and overloaded sockets) cause around 6000
[1] fires in the home across the country every year.

Electrical safety in the home covers both the electrical items we use and how we use them. Areas covered include fixed mains wiring and associated equipment, portable appliances such as white goods, plug in devices and chargers, and battery powered devices (e.g. vaping devices, tablets and phones).
NFCC will continue to review emerging and future technologies, such as home energy storage systems or the 'Internet of Things' (IoT), in order to identify potential new fire risks to the public and fire service.

With changing consumer behaviours including more goods being purchased online and via online auction sites, there appears to be a significant concern regarding 'fake' goods, notably smaller electrical appliances such as hair straighteners, phone chargers and battery powered devices. While some larger companies are proactively seeking out these potentially dangerous counterfeit goods, Trading Standards may struggle to effectively conduct market surveillance activities due to other pressures and limited resources. The issue is not solely an online one, various dangerous goods ranging from Christmas lights to electric heaters have been sold at local markets. One challenge for the fire service is that is can be exceptionally hard to identify products that have been involved in a fire. Also, there is evidence of unmodified and unregistered goods being sold online or via second hand retail outlets that were subject to a safety recall due to a fire risk.

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[1] 2018/19 https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fire-statistics-incident-level-datasets, https://www.firescotland.gov.uk/about-us/fire-and-rescue-statistics.aspx, https://gov.wales/fire-and-rescue-incident-statistics

Re-chargeable batteries when used safely power millions of devices every day such as mobile phones, laptops, tablets and mobility scooters. However, batteries can present a fire risk when over-charged, short-circuited, submerged in water or if their cases are damaged.

Working with Partners

As fire trends and potential risks are identified, the NFCC will continue to provide evidence to stakeholder groups while campaigning for appropriate safety standards (and where appropriate regulation) to be implemented.

Sometimes electrical products (as with other types of products) become subject to a safety recall notice after a potentially dangerous fault is discovered and therefore need to be registered, so that consumers can be informed. A recent recall of potentially unsafe washing machines affected as many as one in sixty homes across the UK – the numbers for a previous recall involving tumble dryers were even higher, highlighting the potential scale of the problem when something goes wrong. The NFCC have undertaken significant work in recent years to ensure that recalls are undertaken in a timely and effective way and contributed to an industry guide on recall 'best practice' (PAS 7100).

NFCC Recommendations

1. Products should be registered to ensure that consumers can be alerted in the event of a safety issue being discovered

2. The public are encouraged to report fires to the relevant body, be it the FRS (fire or fire all out), Trading Standards and or the manufacturer (small events, such as localised burning to an appliance with no fire development or spread)

3. Encouraging anyone who has purchased potentially unsafe goods, either new or second hand (via a retail or online outlet) to inform their local Trading Standards

4. All electrical products in homes should be used safely and in accordance with manufacturers' instructions to reduce or remove the risk of fire

Home Fire Safety Visit

As a minimum, the NFCC advises the following:

1. **Eliminate the hazard:**
    Work with the homeowner or local landlord to ensure that the homeowner registers electrical products. The main channel for registering white goods is currently via AMDEA's 'Register My Appliance' site.
    Promote and communicate product recalls.
    Encouraging anyone who has purchased potentially unsafe goods, either new or second hand (via a retail or online outlet) to inform their local Trading Standards

2. **Reduce the hazard:**
    Change behaviours to avoid the incorrect inappropriate use of electrical products. Products in homes should be used safely and in accordance with manufactures' instructions.
    Remove overloaded extension leads and adapter plugs. Don't overload plug sockets – An extension lead or adaptor will have a limit to how many amps it can take so, to help reduce the risk of fire, be careful not to overload them.

Unplug appliances when not in use - This helps to reduce the risk of fire. Unplug appliances when you go to bed or when you go out unless they are designed to be left on, like fridges and freezers.

3. **Isolate the hazard:**
Ensure electrical equipment is used and located in appropriate locations – for example not to charge phones, tablets or laptops whilst they are on bedding.

4. **Control the hazard:**
Remind and prompt landlords and homeowners of all of the above.

5. **Fire safety equipment:**
Provide interventions, or recommend that interventions be provided, which are appropriate to the risk. These may include additional smoke and heat detection in areas where more risk is evident.

We will:

- Regularly review our position statement in line with emerging risks, trends and evidence.

- Provide a platform for sharing information and learning, to prevent electrical fires in the home.

- Understand the fire risks associated electrical safety and provide advice for the sector, our partner organisations and the public.
- Work with stakeholders and partner organisations to push for appropriate safety standards (and where appropriate regulation) to be implemented.
- Encourage FRSs to provide appropriate advice and guidance relating to electrical safety and fire risk as part of a Home Fire Safety Visit.
- Support relevant safety campaigns.

Please select the correct symbol to represent whether this position applies to the countries below			
England ✅	Wales ✅	Scotland ✅	Northern Ireland ✅

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Position Statement

Person Centred Approach to the Home Fire Safety Visit

Safer Heating

Introduction

The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) is committed to creating safer, healthier and more resilient communities. In support of this objective it is considered that continued work to prevent heating related fires as part of the Home Fire safety Visit will contribute to reducing casualties, fatalities and material losses arising from fires.

Fires involving heaters have a particularly high mortality rate. This may be due to the circumstances they start in such as where bedding or blankets are too close to a heat source and people are more likely to trip over them, especially those with mobility issues, this can mean that the injuries sustained are far more likely to be fatal.

There are different ways of heating homes, not just electrical heaters, but also different types of portable heaters like gas fires, as well as open fires. Some kinds of heaters may also present a carbon monoxide (CO) risk.

Sector Challenge

Preventing injuries and fires by reducing the use of unsafe heating methods and encouraging safe behaviours around all heating methods.

The Gas Safety Regulations 1998 place a statutory duty on all landlords of residential property to ensure that all gas appliances, pipe work and flues are maintained in a safe condition.

An inspection of all gas appliances that is provided within the property by the landlord must be inspected annually by a Gas Safe Registered Engineer. After inspection a warranted Gas Safety Certificate will be issued for proof of inspection; both tenant and landlord should keep a copy

Section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 states that a landlord has responsibility to keep good repair and order of installations in a property, including heating.

Issues can arise and risk can increase when this legislation is not adhered to. Enforcement of these duties and penalties for a lack of compliance may help to improve standards.

Preventing heating related fires

1. **Eliminate the hazard:**
   Not advised as heating is required to reduce health risks associated with cold homes. Can advise hot water bottles/thicker clothing at night.

2. **Reduce the hazard:**
   Advice about the use of unsafe heaters and potential referral to organisations that can offer support and potentially funding for central heating, oil filled radiators etc.

3. **Isolate the hazard:**
   Suggest that heaters are only used during the daytime and not kept on when asleep.

4. **Control the hazard:**
   Advise controls are put in place to reduce fire risk involving unsafe heaters, for example moving heaters away from furniture, bedding etc. Give advice about risks associated with emollients.

5. **Fire safety equipment:**
   Suggest provision of fire safety equipment such as detection, fire retardant throws and bedding.

We will ask FRSs to share the following safety messaging at Home Fire Safety Visits:

All Heating Methods

- Make sure heaters are well maintained and in good working order
- Ask people to check that your heater isn't on a recall list
- Never install, repair or service appliances yourself. Make sure anyone who does is registered with the Gas Safe Register (for gas appliances), the Heating Equipment Testing and Approval Scheme (HETAS) (for solid fuel appliances), or the Oil Firing Technical Association (OFTEC) (for oil appliances)
- Don't take risks with old heaters – if it's electrical and getting older, get it tested by a qualified electrician or buy a new one
- Where appropriate, secure heaters against a wall to stop them falling over, or fit wall-mounted heaters
- Keep heaters well away from clothes, curtains and furniture and never use them for drying clothes
- Always sit at least one metre away from a heater as it could set light to your clothes or chair
- Before attempting to move your heater, turn it off and allow it to cool first

Gas Fires and Biofuel Fires

- Gas heater cylinders should be changed in the in the open air, if you have to change them indoors make sure all rooms are ventilated, open the windows and doors
- Store spare propane cylinders upright and outside whenever possible. Never store them in basements, under stairs or in cupboards containing electric meters or equipment
- Ensure empty cylinders are collected regularly. Fireboxes and containers should always be placed on a stable surface. When using biofuel always follow the manufacturer's guidelines and instructions
- Don't overstock fuels of any type including paraffin or biofuel and store them safely
- Never add fuel to a burning fire or refill a firebox fuel container that is still hot.
- Encourage FRSs to collect, store and analyse robust data collection from incidents involving methods of heating
- Encourage FRSs to produce literature which can be left at the home giving prevention advice
- Ask FRS to update websites to have current information around safe heating
- Support national safer heating campaigns using a variety of communications methods
- Ask FRSs to engage with carers and care homes to ensure that safer heating messages

are reached by the most vulnerable and those who look after them
- Work with the NHS and ask FRS to also do so locally to ensure those using medical equipment are aware of the dangers of being near naked flames.

Fuel poverty

Fuel poverty occurs when a household's income fails to meet the cost of heating and powering the home adequately. There is significant overlap between fuel poverty and the risk of fire, resulting from some of the actions people take to keep warm while keeping energy bills down.

We will:
- Lobby Central Government to shape policy around utility provision to vulnerable people;
- Encourage FRSs to refer people who meet the criteria to the UK Power Network (UKPN) Priority Risk Register. This ensures that they are given support if there is a power cut
- Advise people to contact their energy supplier or Citizens Advice Bureau if they need information about grants or benefits;
- Work with partners such as fuel poverty charities to support those experiencing fuel poverty;
- Seek to support national campaigns to raise awareness of fuel poverty and initiatives that may help reduce it.

Carbon monoxide

Carbon Monoxide (CO) is a potentially lethal and highly poisonous gas. It is formed when there is not enough oxygen present to completely burn fossil fuels such as coal, gas, oil and wood. If appliances are faulty, not serviced regularly, incorrectly fitted or used, CO emission can occur. This can also happen when flues and chimneys are blocked or poorly maintained.

We will:
- Encourage FRSs to provide literature to inform people of the dangers of CO

- Be represented at the All Party Parliamentary Carbon Monoxide Group
- Work with the National Association of Chimney Sweeps to understand the risks from solid fuel. Ask FRSs to ensure chimney sweeps are aware of any referral forms for their local area which can be issued to those who may qualify for a visit
- Support government recommendations on the 2015 regulations which require all landlords to supply CO alarms and continue to lobby for further change
- Recommend CO alarms in rooms where there is a fuel burning appliance
- Support seasonal campaigns around portable heaters and BBQs
- Ask FRS to provide information and advice on external websites and provide information and advice on the NFCC website
- Be represented on the COMed group – a group of medical professionals whose aim is to reduce CO incidents and improve diagnosis and patient pathways

Please select the correct symbol to represent whether this position applies to the countries below			
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Position Statement

Person Centred Approach to the Home Fire Safety Visit

Hoarding and Clutter

Introduction

Hoarding increases the risk of fire occurring and makes it more difficult for people living in the property to evacuate safely. Fire can spread to neighbouring properties if the level of hoarding is severe or if flammable items such as gas containers are being stored.
It can also pose a high risk to fire fighters when attending the scene, hampering fire-fighting and rescuing operations.

Hoarding disorder has been recognised as a distinct mental health problem[1] which may present in isolation or as part of another mental health problem.

Sector Challenge

Fire and Rescue Services do not routinely collect data on hoarding. So, it is very hard to see the numbers of incidents occurring. Some collect data on their own database, but in different ways, e.g. housekeeping, clutter, hoarding, rubbish.

Rule 43 (now Reg.28) Long Eaton, Derbys Mrs Parkes, 2011 and Durham and Darlington, Mrs Bradshaw 2013 with regard to hoarding have resulted in multi-agency working and making others aware of hoarding in properties. The CFOA group was set up following the latter Rule 43 and guidance, framework and tips were produced for all FRS'. Since this other Reg. 28 Liverpool, Cain 2016 was issued requesting a review in law as the Regulatory Reform Order does not cover homes, only businesses. The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (s.45) allow powers of entry relating to road traffic accidents and emergencies (read terrorism etc.)

The only legislation that is used for hoarding is by Environmental Health using the Public Health Act 1936 (Sections 79, 83 and 84 being the most used), Environmental Protection Act 1990 Section 80.

In a situation where the person has care and support needs, the Care Act 2015 can be used under self- neglect, however, this is dependent upon which council is accepting or not accepting the referral.

Multi-Agency Hoarding Panels across the country are seeing some positive outcomes.

Working with partners

FRSs are encouraged to work with local Safeguarding boards, local multi-agency groups, Local Strategic Partnership Boards and Local Safer Partnerships to explore, develop and embed an integrated and coordinated approach to addressing local needs and reducing the impacts of hoarding on those living in local communities.

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[1] https://hoardingdisordersuk.org/research-and-resources/definitions/#:~:text=In%20June%202018%20the%20World,classified%20as%20a%20medical%20condition.

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NFCC Recommendations

NFCC Support:

1. All FRSs to embed the assessment of 'risk from hoarding' within their Home Fire Safety Visit

2. All FRSs to fully provide hoarding advice, education and interventions within their Home Fire Safety Visit

3. All FRSs to develop and share through local strategic boards, safeguarding and health partnerships, any future developed national toolkits

Home Fire Safety Visit

As a minimum, the NFCC advises the following:

1. **Eliminate the hazard:**
   Work with the homeowner or local landlord to ensure that the homeowner is keeping exits and entrances clear, being able to shut doors and has a good night time routine. Give advice regarding the benefits of clearing items. Help can be provided through local health care referral pathways.

2. **Reduce the hazard:**
   Change behaviours to avoid the hazard of hoarding and storage of clutter (household waste management, waste collection routine, individual pride).

3. **Isolate the hazard:**
   Examine options in terms of removal of items of clutter. This must be done with carer/health professional input to ensure there is no detriment to the mental health of the homeowner.

4. **Control the hazard:**
   Remind and prompt landlords and health partners about the fire safety issues. Provide information and follow-up advice via further visits, phone calls, information on websites, partner agency newsletters, campaigns etc. Work with local safeguarding boards to address issues through multi-agency involvement.

5. **Fire safety equipment:**
   Provide interventions, or recommend that interventions be provided, which are appropriate to the risk. These may include additional smoke and heat detection in areas where more risk is evident.
   Consideration should also be given to the working with local authority partners to secure a care line link in the event of an emergency. Request that the homeowner shares details with the Fire Service with regard to where they are sleeping in the property and consider the clutter rating level.

Please select the correct symbol to represent whether this position applies to the countries below			
England ✓	Wales ✓	Scotland ✓	Northern Ireland ✓

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Position Statement

Person Centred Approach the Home Fire Safety Visit

Home Fire Detection

Introduction

The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) is committed to creating safer, healthier and more resilient communities.

In support of this strategic objective it is considered that improving the standard of fire detection within dwellings would contribute significantly to reducing fire casualties and fatalities and also materially reduce fire losses arising from accidental fires.

In addition, it is important that public fire safety information and advice keeps pace with changing technical standards, advances in technology and also reflects the range of products being manufactured, supplied and retailed in the UK.

The primary intent of this position statement is to revise the version issued in May 2015, to harmonise and update the information and advice being provided to the public and others in respect of domestic fire detection.

Background

In 1987, only 9% of households in the UK had a working smoke alarm. Current figures show that approximately 90% of households now have a working smoke alarm. This improvement has largely resulted from a significant programme of home safety visits undertaken by Fire and Rescue Services, and from regular publicity campaigns around the simple messages of fitting smoke alarms and testing them regularly.

Current Position

The NFCC believe every home should have smoke alarms and no home should be unprotected. Despite the significant increase in ownership of working smoke alarms, dwelling fire fatalities still occur, even in properties where smoke alarms are fitted and working. In some instances, smoke alarms are not fitted in the right place or are not suitable for the occupiers needs.
Advances in technology also mean that we have a greater understanding that different types of smoke alarms respond in different ways to some types of fires.
To prevent fire injury and minimise fire damage it is crucial that any outbreak of fire in the home is quickly detected and the alarm raised at the earliest possible stage of smoke production and fire growth.

Home Fire Safety Visit

As a minimum, the NFCC advises the following:

1. **Eliminate the hazard:**

   Fit a smoke alarm on every floor of the home as a minimum standard (in a circulation space such as a hall or landing) additionally, smoke alarms should be fitted in every room in the house which is regularly inhabited (i.e. bedrooms, living rooms, dining rooms) based upon the fire risk to the occupants.

2. **Reduce the hazard:**

   Change behaviours to ensure that everyone in the home understands the importance of working smoke alarms and the role that they will play during a fire. Fire safety messages and prevention activities such as Home Fire Safety Visits should be aimed at protecting all occupants of dwellings.

   Encourage those who can (or have a legislative responsibility to do so) to provide suitable and sufficient fire detection and warning and support those who can't, due to age, ill health and/or social circumstance to get the help and assistance needed to adequately protect themselves from fire.

3. **Isolate the hazard:**

   Remove any immediate fire threats. Advise owners against smoking and using candles and any other use of naked flame.

4. **Control the hazard:**

   Remind and prompt home owners about fire safety issues. Provide information and follow-up advice via further visits, phone calls, information on websites, partner agency newsletters, campaigns etc. involve other agencies as appropriate such as local health or social care providers. Work with Registered Landlords as appropriate.

5. **Fire safety equipment:**

   Provide interventions and advice or recommend that further interventions be provided from other agencies which are appropriate to the risk. These may include additional smoke and heat detection or specialist equipment for those who are more vulnerable. It is additionally recommended that a heat alarm should be fitted in the kitchen. Where possible, these alarms should be inter-linked so that all will actuate within the property irrespective of the fire location.

   - NFCC recommend that the smoke alarm has a sealed battery compartment to prevent tampering or removal of the battery.
   - NFCC recommend an optical multi sensor smoke alarm with a ten-year life span.
   - All smoke alarms (including hard wired) should be replaced after ten years, or by the 'replace by' date indicated on the base or earlier if found to be defective.

Public safety information

Specialist domestic fire alarms are readily available for persons with impaired hearing to increase audibility and consideration should be given to the provision of an interlinked smoke alarm within the bedroom.

NFCC aims to ensure that all homes within the UK are provided with a standard of fire detection and warning that is appropriate to the layout, fire risks and hazards within the home and best suited to the health and circumstances of the occupants.

Scotland

In 2018 changes were made to the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 in relation to fire and smoke alarms which will apply to **all homes in Scotland**.

The main requirements are:

- at least one smoke alarm installed in the room most frequently used for general daytime living purposes,

- at least one smoke alarm in every circulation space on each storey, such as hallways and landings,

- at least one heat alarm installed in every kitchen,

- all alarms should be ceiling mounted, and

- all alarms should be interlinked.

There will be a two- year period for compliance once the regulations are in force, meaning homeowners would have until early 2021 to comply.

Position Statement – Hoarding and clutter (person centred risk)

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Position Statement

Person Centred Approach to the Home Fire Safety Visit

Medicines and Medical Devices

Introduction

UK Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) have a statutory duty to deliver services which support the prevention of fire within domestic dwellings. As we have developed an evidence-based approach to prevention FRS have been increasingly recognised for their contribution towards developing safer communities; in particular, how FRS can affect wider health and well-being determinants.

Sector Challenge

Older people and those who are in receipt of care and support have an increased chance of being seriously or fatally injured in a fire. This is because they may be less likely to escape safely in the event of a fire incident.

Twice as many people aged 50 and over die in dwelling fires compared to those aged under 50[1]. The over 65s are the fastest growing age group in the UK and will represent 23% of the population by 2033[2]. With increasing age many people experience poorer health which places increasing pressures on the NHS.

Preventing Medical and Medical Devices Related Fires

In 2015, the NFCC signed a consensus statement with the National Health Service, Public Health England, Local Government Association and Age UK in which we outlined our intent to work together, use our collective capabilities and resources more effectively to enhance the lives of the people we work with and encourage our local networks to do the same in their communities

The Care Act 2014 also gave local authorities a duty of care to work effectively and in partnership with the emergency services and third sector organisations to ensure that individuals can continue living independently and safely in their own homes for as long as possible.

NFCC is committed to making everyone safer within their homes. Our guidance will direct FRS to identify and support those who are older, have a disability, long term health condition or reduced manual dexterity.

FRS target their prevention work by taking an intelligence-led approach to identifying people who may share health and wellbeing vulnerabilities and therefore may be at higher risk of fire. FRS should utilise data such as that provided by local authority joint strategic needs assessments, GP patient data (England and Wales), fire incident mapping tools and localised partner information.

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[1] Fire Statistics, United Kingdom 2008. Published 26 November 2010. Ageing Safely (CFOA; March 2013)

[2] Ageing Safely (CFOA; March 2013)

We will:

- Recommend that all FRS work with their NHS partners, local authority, other emergency services and third sector partners to identify those at risk of fire at the earliest opportunity; carry out home visits; identify their health and well-being needs and try to mitigate those risks by delivering interventions which may include smoke detection, advice, early signposting or referrals to partner agencies.

- Recommend FRS should work collaboratively with partners to develop referral pathways, information sharing agreements and training programme which will enable them to deliver appropriate services to those with combined vulnerabilities.

- Encourage care providers and health professionals to integrate fire safety into any person- centred risk assessments they carry out and to refer people to their local FRS if they have any concerns about their fire safety. Fire prevention teams will provide advice and support as determined by their local arrangements to reduce the risk of fire to the identified individual.

- Ask FRS to aim to fit smoke detection in accordance with NFCC's position statement [3] which recommends that, in addition to fitting at least one smoke detector on every floor of a home, detectors should also be installed in every room which is regularly lived in, where a risk has been identified. Where necessary, a linked detection system should be fitted or a referral made to the telecare provider.

Medication that may cause drowsiness or dizziness

Some medication is designed to relax or induce calmness or sleep whilst others commonly cause drowsiness as a side effect. These medicines include those used to treat pain, anxiety, depression, high blood pressure and allergies. The effect of these medications can inhibit someone's ability to hear and respond to a smoke detector actuation. Drinking alcohol, in addition to taking medication, can also enhance levels of drowsiness or affect someone's alertness.

NFCC advises:

1. **Eliminate the hazard:**
   Not to cook, smoke or sit too close to open fires or heat sources if a person is under the influence of medication that may cause drowsiness. Issue verbal and written advice about these activities and the associated fire safety issues i.e. the person at risk should not cook, smoke, sit to close to open fires or other heat sources if there is any chance they are under the influence of a medication that causes drowsiness or dizziness – especially if they live alone.

2. **Reduce the hazard:**
   Change behaviours to avoid the hazard. Where possible, advise people to cook before

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[3] NFCC: Domestic Fire Detection; June 2019

they take the medication; use alternative devices to cook with such as microwaves; or eat food that is already cooked or does not need cooking. NFCC also advise people should not drive while under the influence of such medication.

Advise people to quit smoking or only smoke outside the property and when they are fully alert. Offer signposting information or a referral to a smoking cessation service.

3. **Isolate the hazard:**
   Switch to alternative non-drowsy medications, where possible. Advise people who smoke or are concerned to approach their health professional to see if any alternative non-drowsy medications can be prescribed.

4. **Control the hazard:**
   Remind and prompt people about the fire safety issues. Provision of information and follow-up advice via follow-up visits, phone calls, information on websites, partner agency newsletters, campaigns etc. as appropriate.

5. **Fire safety equipment:**
   Provide interventions, or recommend to others that interventions be provided, which are appropriate to the risk. These may include additional smoke and heat detection, fire retardant throws, safety ash trays, smoking aprons, cooking timers and fire guards

Oxygen

Home oxygen therapy helps prevent damage to the heart and brain which can be caused by low levels of oxygen in the blood and is commonly prescribed for people with conditions such as COPD, heart failure and smoking-related lung disease. Poor storage and maintenance of oxygen equipment and unsafe behaviour by the patient and/or their visitors can lead to an increased risk of fire within the property due to increased levels of oxygen saturation in the atmosphere, soft furnishings and personal clothing. FRS will continue to work closely with health professionals and oxygen suppliers to identify and minimise fire safety risks within the homes of oxygen users.

NFCC advises:

1. **Eliminate the hazard:**
   Not to smoke, cook or use open flames or static heat sources if oxygen is in use or has been in use within the previous 30 minutes. Issue verbal and written advice about these activities and the associated fire safety issues. Encourage the person to share this advice with their household and any visitors. They should also ensure rooms where oxygen is in use or stored are well ventilated. Oxygen equipment should be placed at least 3 metres away from open fires and 1.5 metres away from other heat sources including portable heaters, ovens and static electric sources such as televisions, hairdryers and cooling fans. Firebreak valves should be checked to ensure they are present and positioned correctly.

2. **Reduce the hazard:**
   Change behaviours to avoid the hazard. If people cannot wait to eat following oxygen therapy, advise them to eat food which is already cooked or does not need cooking.

Advise people to quit smoking; offer signposting information or a referral to a smoking cessation service. If applicable, advise about safe emollient use.

3. **Isolate the hazard:**
    Stopping oxygen therapy. NFCC recognises that oxygen therapy is vital for the treatment and comfort of many people. In extreme circumstances, where a person persists in unsafe behaviour, placing themselves or others at risk FRS may liaise with the prescribing health professional, asking them to consider withdrawal of therapy.

4. **Control the hazard:**
    Remind and prompt people about the fire safety issues. Provision of information and follow-up advice via follow-up visits, phone calls, information on websites, partner agency newsletters, campaigns etc. as appropriate.

5. **Fire safety equipment:**
    Provide interventions, or recommend to others that interventions be provided, which are appropriate to the risk. These may include additional smoke and heat detection, linked detection systems, fire retardant throws or bedding and smoking aprons.

    Additionally, NFCC recommends that trailing tubes should be checked to ensure they are not causing a trip hazard.

Emollients

There have been more than 50 fire fatalities in the UK since 2010, where emollients are believed to have contributed to the development of the fire. In the majority of these cases the ignition source was found to be smoking materials such as cigarettes, lighters and matches.

Emollients are creams, lotions and ointments which are prescribed, or bought over the counter, and used to treat long term skin conditions such as eczema and psoriasis. They are also used on open ulcers and sores which may arise when someone is less mobile or bedbound. They may contain paraffin, or they may be paraffin-free.

Recent academic research[4] has confirmed, where emollients have dried onto fabrics such as clothing, bedding and bandages and an ignition source is introduced, a fire will ignite quicker, develop more rapidly and burn hotter than fabric which is uncontaminated.
Emollients are used widely by people of all ages but the main risk of serious injury or death by fire involves those smokers who are aged 60 years and over and may have restricted or slower mobility[5].

NFCC will:

- Continue to work with academic experts and stakeholders to develop our understanding of the risks, potential risks and advice relating to emollient products

- Work nationally to highlight the risk, and any new advice, as our knowledge develops, to ensure

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[4] The flammability of textiles when contaminated with paraffin base products; Fire Safety Journal, Volume 104 March 2019, Page 109-116. S. Hall, L Franklin, J Bull, A.Beard, G.Phillips, J. Morrisey
[5] Data collected by West Yorkshire FRS from other services as part of the NFCC Emollient Working Group for fire fatalities between 2010 and 2019

FRSs and their communities have the most up to date guidance

- Work closely with health and care partners to develop and help deliver targeted advice to those most at risk and reassure those at low risk.

NFCC advises:

1. **Eliminate the hazard:**
   People should be advised not to smoke, cook, sit close to or go near to any heat source if there is any chance that their clothing, towelling, bedding or bandages are contaminated with emollients. Issue verbal and written advice about these activities and the associated fire safety issues. It should be noted that regular washing of clothing, towelling etc may reduce the risk but will not remove it completely. Encourage the person to share this advice with their family and carers. FRS will try to ensure that all those using emollients, professionals concerned in the prescribing, dispensing, application of emollients and those caring for people are aware of the fire risks associated with unsafe emollient use. Advise professionals that the fire safety risks from emollient use should be considered in any person-centred risk assessments.

2. **Reduce the hazard:**
   Change behaviours to avoid the hazard. The majority of fire fatalities, where emollients have been involved in the fire's development have involved smokers. Therefore, advise people to quit smoking; offer signposting information or a referral to a smoking cessation service is preferable. If this is not possible, they should be warned not smoke in bed or wearing contaminated clothes or bandages.

3. **Isolate the hazard:**
   Stopping emollient use. NFCC recognises that emollients are essential treatment for many skin conditions. In extreme circumstances, where a person persists in unsafe behaviour, placing themselves or others at risk FRS may liaise with the prescribing health professional, asking them to consider withdrawing treatment.

4. **Control the hazard:**
   Remind and prompt people about the fire safety issues. Provision of information and follow-up advice via follow-up visits, phone calls, information on websites, partner agency newsletters, campaigns etc. as appropriate.

5. **Fire safety equipment:**
   Provide interventions, or recommend to others that interventions be provided, which are appropriate to the risk. These may include additional smoke and heat detection, linked detection systems, fire retardant throws or bedding and smoking aprons.

Dynamic airflow pressure-relieving mattresses and cushions

Dynamic airflow pressure-relieving mattresses and cushions are usually provided for the prevention and treatment of pressure sores and are used by people who have restricted mobility or are confined to bed. If a fire starts or a detector actuates, the person will be less likely to respond or escape without assistance. Additionally, the flow of air can contribute to the rapid development of a fire if the mattresses is pierced or burnt by a heat source or flame. The most common cause of fires involving these mattresses is smoking in bed.

NFCC advises:

1. **Eliminate the hazard:**
   People should be advised not to smoke in bed. Issue verbal and written advice about smoking in bed and the associated fire safety issues. Advise people not to use or place any electrical items such as electric blankets, hairdryers or styling appliances on or near to a mattress or cushion. If applicable, also advise about the safe use of emollients. Encourage the person to share this advice with their family and carers.

2. **Reduce the hazard:**
   Change behaviours to avoid the hazard. Advise people to quit smoking; offer signposting information or a referral to a smoking cessation service.

3. **Isolate the hazard:**
   Switch to alternative mattress. NFCC recognises that airflow mattresses are extremely useful and appropriate for those people who have no mobility or very limited mobility. In extreme circumstances, where a person persists in unsafe behaviour, placing themselves or others at risk FRS may liaise with the prescribing health professional, asking them to consider safer alternatives such as gel mattresses.

4. **Control the hazard:**
   Remind and prompt people about the fire safety issues. Provision of information and follow-up advice via follow-up visits, phone calls, information on websites, partner agency newsletters, campaigns etc. as appropriate.

5. **Fire safety equipment:**
   Provide interventions, or recommend to others that interventions be provided, which are appropriate to the risk. These may include additional smoke and heat detection, linked detection systems to telecare monitoring services, fire retardant throws or bedding and smoking aprons.

Incontinence pads

Incontinence pads are often issued to people who are immobile or less mobile; they are made of highly combustible material. NFCC recommend they are stored away from any heat and ignition sources.

Incident reporting

NFCC encourage FRS to report any fire incidents, where a medicine or medical device has been involved (or is suspected of being involved) in the ignition or development of the fire, to the Yellow Card reporting system which is managed by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency; https://yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/ .

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Position Statement

Person Centred Approach to the Home Fire Safety Visit

Smoking-Related Fires and Tobacco Control

Introduction

The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) is committed to creating safer, healthier and more resilient communities. In support of this objective it is considered that continued work to prevent smoking-related fires will contribute to reducing casualties, fatalities and material losses arising from fires.

The intent of this statement is to outline the challenge, the strategic and tactical approaches to preventing smoking-related fires and the NFCC's position. In the statement, fire incident statistics where the ignition source was 'smokers' materials' (cigarettes, cigars, pipes or tobacco) have been used to outline the challenge. However, it is acknowledged that a wide approach to fire risk reduction for smokers must also be cognisant of smoking paraphernalia such as matches and lighters.

Sector Challenge

Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) have a moral, financial and legal[i] obligation to prevent fires and this is recognised and prioritised in UK FRS frameworks[ii]. Fire prevention work carried out by the sector and its partners, alongside regulatory and cultural change, has resulted in a reduction in smoking-related fire incidents. Despite this, the challenge to further reduce smoking-related incidents and harm remains.

Smoking is still one of the top causes of primary fire incidents. Furthermore, smoking-related primary fires are not falling at the same rate as primary fires as a whole. Between 2010/2011 and 2018/2019, the total number of primary fire incidents in the UK fell by 21%, whilst primary fire incidents caused by smokers' materials fell by only 11%[iii] (latter figure excluding Northern Ireland).

In addition, fires caused by smokers' materials result in more fatalities than fires caused by any other single ignition source. In the UK, in 2018/2019, 23%[iv] of fire fatalities were caused by smokers' materials.
In the UK, smoking prevalence has declined in recent years but 14.7% of people aged 18 years and above still smoked cigarettes in 2018[v]. This equates to around 7.2 million people. Furthermore, smoking remains one of the biggest causes of death and disease in the UK[vi].

Preventing Smoking Related Fires

Efficient and effective prevention of smoking-related fires requires the delivery of activity at *universal*, *community* and *individual*[vii] level, in order to reach all smokers, whilst targeting those most at risk.
Universal approaches, such as universal campaigns or online advice are crucial in reaching all smokers. Community level approaches, such as targeted partnerships or events protect specific at-risk groups.

Approaches delivered at individual level provide more intensive interventions to those who are most at risk and will not necessarily benefit from other approaches. Within the sector, Home Fire Safety Visits[viii] provide an opportunity to deliver at this level by working with individual smokers, in their homes.

Across all levels, continued effort is required to tackle risk resulting from smoking in combination with other factors, notably oxygen therapy, emollient products, air flow pressure relieving mattresses, substance misuse, impaired mobility or dexterity, memory impairment and hoarding.

Home Fire Safety Visits

It is important to establish and record the smoking status of occupants in all Home Fire Safety Visits. Where a smoker *is* resident, this is a key consideration within the person-centred fire risk assessment which should recognise the individual's needs, capabilities, unique smoking behaviours and living environment, as well as their right to smoke and the addictive nature of smoking.

Within the sector, methods to prevent smoking-related fires in the home vary. To encourage a consistent and person-centred approach, methods can be aligned to the 'hierarchy of risk control'[ix]. It promotes risk control measures in order of effectiveness (and therefore preference), starting at the top with 'eliminate the hazard'. Interventions for smokers, to support each method, are identified below and the NFCC is committed to working with the sector, and with partners such as Public Health England and Action on Smoking and Health, to support FRS to develop and deliver these interventions.

1. **Eliminate the hazard:**
   Quit smoking - Delivery of 'Very Brief Advice' (VBA)[x] to encourage people to make a quit attempt.

2. **Reduce the hazard:**
   Switch from smoking to vaping[xi] - Provision of information about the health and fire safety benefits of switching from smoking tobacco products to vaping.

3. **Isolate the hazard:**
   Have a 'smoke- free' home - Provision of information about the health and fire safety benefits of having a 'smokefree'[xii] home.

4. **Control the hazard:**
   Practice safer smoking habits - Remind and prompt landlords and health partners about the fire safety issues. Provide information and follow-up advice via further visits, phone calls, information on websites, partner agency newsletters, campaigns etc. Work with local safeguarding boards to address issues through multi-agency involvement.

5. **Fire safety equipment:**
   Use fire safety equipment - Provision of fire safety equipment in accordance with risk, local funding and arrangements. Examples include fire retardant bedding, smoking aprons and self-extinguishing ashtrays.

NFCC Position

NFCC is committed to supporting the sector and its partner organisations to deliver the strategic and tactical fire safety approaches described previously in this statement.

In addition, it is important that strategies to prevent smoking-related fires are integrated into national and local tobacco control plans. The tobacco control plan for England[xiii] aims to reduce smoking prevalence amongst adults to 12% by 2022. Plans in Wales[xiv] and Northern Ireland[xv] aim to reduce adult smoking prevalence to 16% and 15% respectively by 2020. And in Scotland[xvi] the plan aims to reduce smoking rates to 5% by 2034. Reducing smoking prevalence is crucial to fire risk reduction; fewer smokers is likely to equate to fewer smoking-related fires.

Other tobacco control measures which happen to underpin fire risk reduction include smoke free legislation, fire safer standards for cigarettes, tackling the illicit tobacco trade and supporting the safe operation of Shisha establishments. Furthermore, pro-active involvement in tobacco control provides FRS with opportunities to work with Stop Smoking Services, the NHS and others to help identify and reach people who smoke and deliver fire safety interventions to them.

NFCC does not enter in to activity with, or affiliated with, tobacco companies; a position which is underpinned by the requirements of Article 5.3 of the World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC).

We will:

- Regularly review our position statement in line with emerging risks, trends and evidence.

- Work to improve the level of detail recorded by the sector about smoking-related fire incidents.

- Work to improve the level of detail recorded by the sector about vaping-related fire incidents.

- Provide a platform for sharing information and learning, to prevent smoking-related fires.

- Understand the fire risks associated with smoking and provide clear smoking-related fire safety advice for the sector, our partner organisations and the public.

- Work with the Home Office, Welsh FRSs and Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to develop and support campaigns that aim to prevent smoking-related fires.

- Participate in tobacco control approaches to improve and uphold legislation, reduce smoking prevalence and prevent smoking-related harms (including smoking related fires and fire deaths).

- Provide guidance and share examples of good practice (such as training materials, effective partnership arrangements, Safe and Well content) to support FRS to deliver smoking-related fire prevention advice and interventions at universal, community and individual level.

- Encourage and support FRS to deliver Very Brief Advice (VBA) to smokers, as a means of fire risk reduction. Support the sector to build this intervention into Safe and Well visits.

- Encourage and support FRS to promote vaping to smokers, as a means of fire risk reduction. Support the sector to build this intervention into Safe and Well visits.

- Encourage and support FRS to promote smoke free homes to smokers, as a means of fire risk reduction. Support the sector to build this intervention into Safe and Well visits.

- Share information, evidence and learning about fire risk reduction equipment (such as fire retardant bedding or smoking aprons) that can be used to prevent smoking-related fires.

Please select the correct symbol to represent whether this position applies to the countries below			
England ✔	Wales ✔	Scotland ✔	Northern Ireland ✔

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[i] Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 / Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 / Fire and Rescue Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006

[ii] Fire and Rescue National Framework for England May 2018 / Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 206 / Fire and Rescue National Framework (Wales) 2016

[iii] Fire statistics data tables, FIRE0602a fire-statistics-data-tables-fire0602-120919.xlsx [iv] Fire statistics data tables FIRE0602b fire-statistics-data-tables-fire0602-120919.xlsx [v] Adult smoking habits in the UK 2018, Office of NationalStatistics

[vi] www.nhs.uk/common-health-questions/lifestyle/what-are-the-health-risks-of-smoking

[vii] Adapted from Public Health prevention pyramid modelling

[viii] Terminology varies across FRS (incl. Safe and Well visit, Home Safety Check, Home Fire Risk assessment)

[ix] Hierarchy of Risk Control modelling (incl. information provided athttps://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/faq.htm#hierarchy)

[x] Stop Smoking Interventions and Services, NICE guideline NG92, March 2018 / www.gov.uk/government/publications/health- matters-stopping-smoking-what-works/health-matters-stopping-smoking-what-works

[xi] Vaping in England: evidence update summary Feb 2019, Public Health England

[xii] www.nhs.uk/smokefree

[xiii] Towards a Smokefree Generation, A Tobacco Control Plan for England, 2017, Department of Health

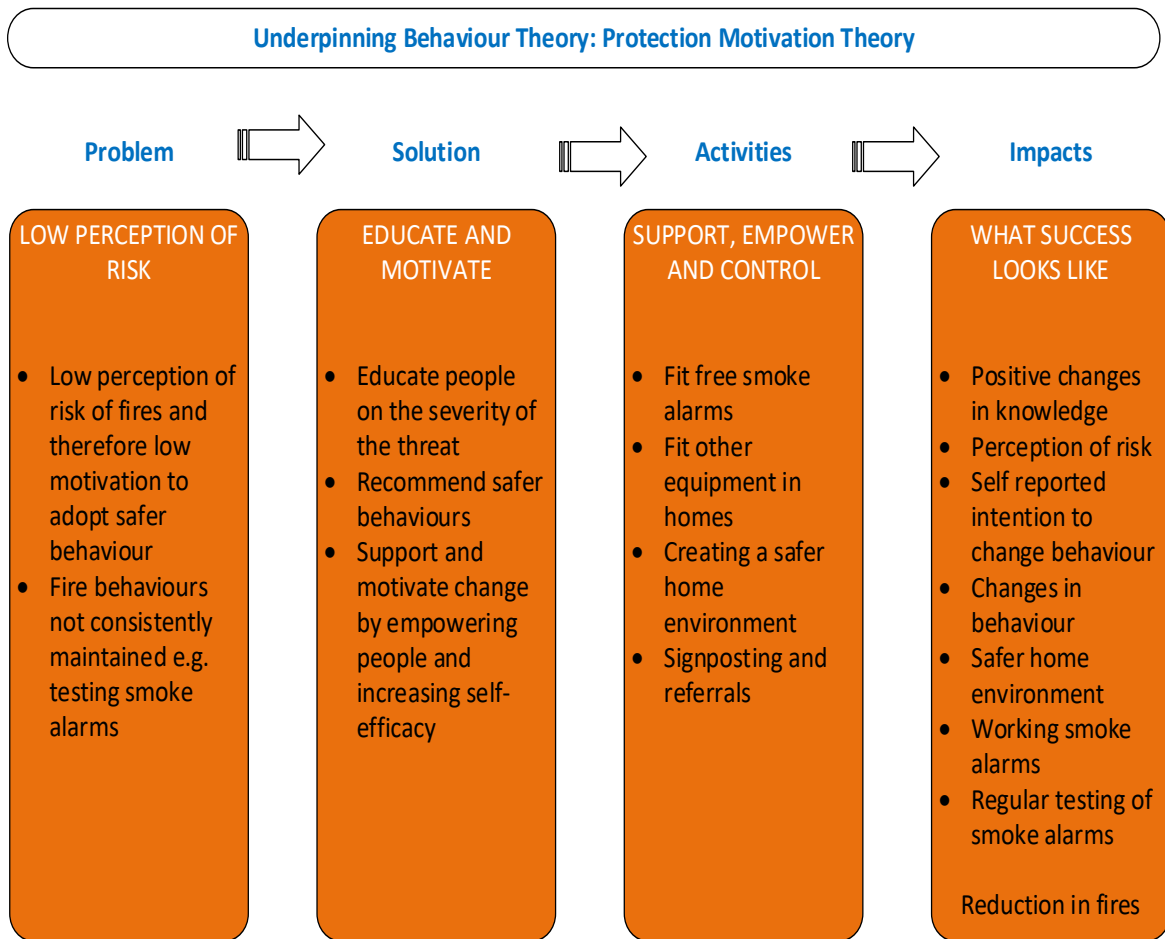[xiv] Tobacco Control Delivery Plan for Wales 2017-2020, Llywodraeth Cymru, Welsh Government

[xv] Ten Year Tobacco control Strategy for Northern Ireland, 2012, Department of health, Social Services and Public Safety

[xvi] Raising Scotland's Tobacco-free Generation, Our Tobacco Control Action Plan 2018, Scottish Government, Riaghaltas na h- Alba
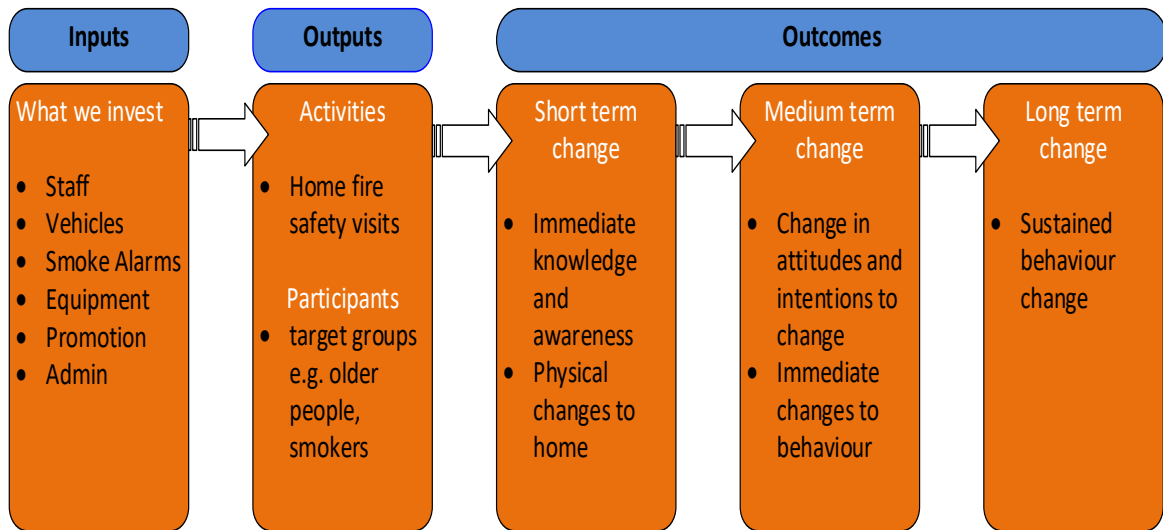
Item 4 - Appendix 1b

Theory of change Model for HFSV

Theory of Change – Home Fire Safety Visits

Underpinning Behaviour Theory: Protection Motivation Theory

Problem → **Solution** → **Activities** → **Impacts**

LOW PERCEPTION OF RISK	EDUCATE AND MOTIVATE	SUPPORT, EMPOWER AND CONTROL	WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE
• Low perception of risk of fires and therefore low motivation to adopt safer behaviour • Fire behaviours not consistently maintained e.g. testing smoke alarms	• Educate people on the severity of the threat • Recommend safer behaviours • Support and motivate change by empowering people and increasing self-efficacy	• Fit free smoke alarms • Fit other equipment in homes • Creating a safer home environment • Signposting and referrals	• Positive changes in knowledge • Perception of risk • Self reported intention to change behaviour • Changes in behaviour • Safer home environment • Working smoke alarms • Regular testing of smoke alarms Reduction in fires

Based on four factors: the perceived severity of a threatening fire; the perceived probability of the fire occurring, the efficacy of the recommended prevention behaviour and the perceived self efficacy. The model focuses on education and motivation.

Logic Frame for HFSV

Logic Frame – Home Fire Safety Visits

Inputs

Outputs

Outcomes

What we invest

- Staff
- Vehicles
- Smoke Alarms
- Equipment
- Promotion
- Admin

Activities

- Home fire safety visits

Participants

- target groups e.g. older people, smokers

Short term change

- Immediate knowledge and awareness
- Physical changes to home

Medium term change

- Change in attitudes and intentions to change
- Immediate changes to behaviour

Long term change

- Sustained behaviour change

Assumptions and how to mitigate potential issues

E.g. assuming our target audience will want a visit

External factors

E.g. changes to policy, regulation

Fire Services Management Committee

16 October 2020

FSMC Priorities 2020/21

Purpose of report

For discussion.

Summary

Following the discussion at the September Fire Commission meeting, the draft priorities for Fire Services Management Committee for 2020/21 are outlined for discussion in this paper.

Recommendations

Members are asked to comment on the draft FSMC priorities for 2020/21.

Actions

Officers to use the FSMC's comments on the draft priorities to inform the creation of a work programme for the coming year.

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FSMC Priorities 2020/21

Background

1. The Fire Services Management Committee is asked to discuss the potential priorities set out in this paper. These are based on discussions at the FSMC in June 2020, with Lead Members in August and a paper that went to the Fire Commission in September.

2. The draft priorities set out in this paper show the breadth of work that the fire service is engaged in and the extensive transformation that is expected to happen, and already is happening, within the sector. Transformation is being driven not only as a result of the Government's reform agenda, but also due to the impact of Coronavirus, the Bills on fire and building safety, the impact of climate change on services and our communities, as well as the spotlight that has been shone on racial inequality by the Black Lives Matter movement. The outcomes of the Spending Review and the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Review are also likely to play into the wider transformation agenda as well.

LGA Business plan

3. The LGA's business plan for 2019-2022 sets out a range of cross-cutting LGA priorities which Boards are asked to incorporate within their work programmes:

   3.1. Funding for local government
   3.2. Adult social care, health and wellbeing
   3.3. Children, education and schools
   3.4. Places to live and work
   3.5. Strong local democracy
   3.6. Sustainability and climate action

4. The FSMC's priorities will contribute in the main to the LGA's work around places to live and work, but will also link in with other areas such as those around health and wellbeing, funding and climate action.

5. Additionally, this year LGA boards and committees have also been asked to incorporate equalities issues into their work through the designation of an Equalities Advocate. This role has been established on the Fire Services Management Committee for a number of years, and is held by Fiona Twycross.

Proposed priorities

6. Subject to Members' views it is proposed FSMC's work in 2020/21 is themed around the Minister's priorities of people, professionalism and governance to ensure that FSMC's work links to the Government's reform agenda and the transformation of the sector. However, there are a number of cross cutting themes that will have an impact across each of these areas.

7. However, it is clear that there are still uncertainties for the future. The outcome of the Spending Review will have an impact on the work that the sector is able to undertake. Coronavirus is still affecting our communities and services, and the possibility of a second wave would also have consequences for the sector. The findings of the PCC review may also have implications for the sector.

8. Overarching themes of climate change, equalities and the learning from Covid-19 are likely to impact on other aspects of our work and members will wish to consider how these issues can be mainstreamed into the rest of work. The transformation of the sector provides a golden thread throughout each of the themes and cross cutting issues. A refresh of the Fire Vision 2024 over the coming year would provide the FSMC with an opportunity to not only take stock of what has already happened but also to set out how we see the sector changing going forwards.

9. During the Fire Commission meeting members asked if the priorities could be ranked. The first bullet point under each of the headings is therefore the key issue that we see under each heading. We welcome members comments.

    9.1. People

    9.1.1. **Inclusion**: developing the Inclusion and Diversity Member Champions network will be key. We currently have meetings set for October, November and January, with resources available for the wider membership after these meetings have taken place. The wider LGA work around equalities and racial inequality will also need to be considered within this area and we will look at how we can link with other parts of the LGA to take this forward.

    9.1.2. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service's (HNICFRS's) State of Fire reports recommended the LGA develop a code of ethics with the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) to address issues around culture. The Code is now out for consultation. After the code is finalised, the next stage will be ensuring that it is embedded within services.

    9.1.3. Fit for the Future work will continue alongside continuing the work of the employers' side of the National Joint Council around workforce development.

    9.2. Professionalism

    9.2.1. **Fire and building safety:** delivering an effective fire and building safety regime will continue to be a priority for the coming year. The Fire Safety Bill is currently making its progress through Parliament, and the draft Building Safety Bill has been published. Both pieces of legislation will have consequences for Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs).

9.2.2. **Responding to inspection and other learning reports**: HMICFRS's State of Fire report highlighted a number of areas for further work including around the role of the fire services, the pay negotiation machinery, operational independence and culture. They will expect to see movement on the recommendations made on these issues, and others highlighted in the first round of inspections before publishing the next State of Fire report in January 2021. The inspectorate are also undertaking the Covd-19 inspection over the next few months looking at the sector's response to the pandemic. The LGA will look to respond to the recommendations in State of Fire, and contribute to the further development of the inspection regime.

9.2.3. **Outcomes from the Spending Review:** having jointly submitted evidence with the NFCC to the Home Office to assist in developing their submission to Her Majesty's Treasury there may be further work needed before the Spending Review announcement is made later in the year.

9.2.4. **Transparency and standards**: over the coming year the LGA will continue to support FRAs on the improvement journey through the provision of peer challenges and sector support which complements the inspection regime, as well as continuing to work with HMICFRS on the inspection regime and the Fire Standards Board.

9.3. Governance

9.3.1. Part 1 of the **Government's PCC review** is currently underway, the Government will use this to outline their ambitions for fire governance going forwards. The LGA has already responded to the first part of the review and will continue to engage with the Home Office as they announce their plans and look at part 2 of the review.

9.3.2. We will work with the NFCC on the principles of good governance.

9.3.3. We are producing a suite of online resources for members on governance including videos on:
   9.3.3.1. The role of members
   9.3.3.2. Oversight of performance and improvement
   9.3.3.3. Governance during a crisis
   9.3.3.4. The officer/member relationship

10. There are three other key issues that members will wish to consider as themes running throughout each of the strands of people, professionalism and governance. These are:

10.1. **Learning from Covid-19**. It will be important to link into the work being undertaken by the NFCC on learning from the operational side of the response, as well as engaging with the HMICFRS inspection on Covid-19 and the second State

of Fire report. The feedback from the Fire Commission so far has highlighted a number is learning points from the pandemic including:

10.1.1.   Several areas highlighted the pandemic has strengthened relationships across their local areas and they are looking to build on this going forwards.

10.1.2.   Collaboration happened across a wide number of partners, with examples cited of joint work with ambulance services, police services, councils and others.

10.1.3.   On-call availability had improved during the pandemic, though there was an acknowledgment that this could have been a short-term increase.

10.1.4.   The positive improvement in the use of technology and agile ways of working.

10.1.5.   There was a sense that the move to online meetings had been positive and ensured ongoing and, in some cases, wider participation. The potential for impacting service's carbon emissions was also mentioned.

10.2.   **Climate change**: last year the FSMC agreed to look further at climate change and the impact on the fire and rescue service. The LGA produced a document entitled: Climate Emergency: fire and rescue services. Further work on this issue during the last political cycle was impacted by coronavirus. Therefore, members will wish to consider how we address this within our work further, for example through the use of more online meetings.

10.3.   **Equality**: Members will also wish to consider how we ensure that equality issues are bought into each of our workstreams going forwards. FRAs have a key role to play as employers, community leaders and as providers of services to promote equality within their own areas.

Implications for Wales

11. Fire and rescue related policy is a devolved matter and much of the Committee's work will focus on changes for FRAs in England, with the Welsh Local Government Association leading on lobbying for Welsh Fire and Rescue Authorities in Cardiff.

Financial Implications

12. The programme of work to deliver FSMC's priorities will be delivered within existing budgets. Additional supporting projects maybe commissioned subject to funds being available from a small team budget.

Next steps

13. Officers will draft a work programme based on members discussion.

Police and Crime Commissioner Review

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

The report outlines the Government's work on reviewing the Police and Crime Commissioner role.

Recommendation

That members note the report.

Action

Officers to continue to provide updates as the Review progresses.

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Police and Crime Commissioner Review

Background

1. The Home Office started an internal review on the role of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) in July 2020. The review is in response to the Government's manifesto commitment to strengthen the accountability of PCCs and expand their role. The review will be in two parts, with the first part concluding this month, and the second part taking place after the May PCC elections. The Home Office were also using the first part of their review to examine their long-term ambitions on fire governance.

2. The LGA submitted a response to the consultation, looking at both Police and Crime Panel issues as well as fire governance. The response is attached at **Appendix A**.

Issues

3. The LGA submitted evidence to the review on behalf of both the Fire Services Management Committee and the Safer and Stronger Communities Board. The LGA represents Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs), PFCCs and Police and Crime Panels (PCPs).

4. The review is examining how to reinforce and sharpen the accountability of PCCs, ensuring that the role is resilient, improving the current scrutiny model for PCCs, the effectiveness of the PCC and Chief Constable relationship, learning from the existing transfers of governance and outlining their long term ambitions on fire governance.

Engagement with the Review

5. The LGA's submission took in the views of Police and Crime Panels and Fire and Rescue Authorities. The LGA wrote to PCPs and FRAs to ask them to share their contributions into the review with the LGA.

6. The Lead Members held a meeting with the Fire Minister to discuss the review and feed in the key points from our submission. We also suggested that the Home Office interview a number of FRA Chairs directly, as they had done with Chief Fire Officers and PFCCs, to ensure that a broad cross section of views were feed into the review alongside written submissions.

Submission

7. The submission outlined the need for the Government to undertake further work ahead of the 2021 PCC elections, to ensure that there was widespread awareness of the role of the PCC. Beyond the core policing core, we outlined that the role should be flexible reflecting local concerns and what is right for the area.

8. Police and Crime Panel's role was also examined within the submission as the key scrutiny and accountability mechanism for the PCC. There was sometimes a lack of

understanding of the breadth of the role of PCPs. The Home Office could do more to acknowledge the role of panels and strengthen them.

9. The LGA believes that local areas are best placed to determine how they should be governed, and we do not believe that there should be mandatory transfers of fire governance, either to PCCs or to Mayors. By ensuring that there is local agreement to the transfer it will ensure that issues such as coterminosity and existing partnerships can be considered at the outset of any transfer to ensure that communities are receiving the service that is right for them.

10. Where there is no local agreement to the transfer of governance, the contested business case should be looked at by a panel with a range of expertise in fire, policing, local government and finance. This will help to ensure that the decision on the business case is robust and less open to challenge.

11. To improve the accountability and transparency of the current governance arrangements we would recommend extending inspection to the governance of the fire service, to provide a baseline for future work on governance.

Next Steps

12. The first part of the internal review is expected to initially report to the Home Secretary in October, with a view to ensuring that any changes to strengthen the model can be put in place, where possible, prior to the May 2021 PCC elections. At the time of writing no details of the recommendations of the review have been released. We will respond to the review once the recommendations have been published.

Implications for Wales

13. Fire and rescue related policy is a devolved matter and much of the Committee's work will focus on changes for FRAs in England, with the Welsh Local Government Association leading on lobbying for Welsh Fire and Rescue Authorities in Cardiff.

Financial Implications

14. There are no financial implications.

Next steps

15. Officers will provide further updates to the FSMC as the recommendations from the Review are published.

Review into the role of Police and Crime Commissioners (part one) – LGA response
September 2020

1. About the Local Government Association (LGA)

1.1. The Local Government Association (LGA) is the national voice of local government, and our members include councils and fire and rescue authorities, including Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners. We work with our members to support, promote and improve local government.

1.2. We are a politically-led, cross party organisation which works on behalf of councils to ensure local government has a strong, credible voice with national government. We aim to influence and set the political agenda on the issues that matter to councils, so they are able to deliver local solutions to national problems.

2. Key messages

2.1. Two terms after the model was introduced, there continue to be mixed views among the Local Government Association's membership about the merits and value of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)[1] role. However, the LGA welcomes the opportunity to contribute to this review of the PCC model, particularly in light of both the delay to the 2020 elections and the Government's ambitions to broaden the PCC role.

2.2. We agree that the focus should be on making sure that there are appropriate and consistent checks and balances in place to ensure the effectiveness of the role. Additionally, more work is needed to raise awareness of the PCC role, give the public the tools to judge performance and by doing so ensure genuine democratic accountability at the ballot box.

2.3. The PCC model beyond the core policing role should be flexible, reflecting that what is right for one area may not be appropriate for others, depending on local circumstances and other governance structures. We do not believe that there should be forced mergers of fire and policing governance; transfers of fire governance should only take place where there is local agreement (as in Essex and Northamptonshire). Where there is no local agreement, if the Government still intends to proceed with contested business cases , we believe that the process should include an assessment by an independent panel.

2.4. We would support the introduction of an inspection of governance as part of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspection regime, to provide a baseline for assessing the effectiveness of governance within the fire sector.

2.5. Police and Crime Panels provide the key scrutiny and accountability mechanism for PCCs outside of the four-yearly election cycle. There is therefore a need to ensure that PCPs are properly supported to fulfil this

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[1] In this response, the term Police and Crime Commissioner should be read as including PCCs and where appropriate Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners.

function, in terms of recognition of the importance of the panel's role, ensuring they have the tools to fulfil it, resourcing and wider support. Many councils are subsidising the work of their local panel and, for those panels claiming the full amount of their grant, there should be an increase in funding to enable councils to adequately run, support and train members of PCPs, rather than subsidise this from other budgets. Any underspend in the overall PCP grant budget should be used to fund activity to support the wider network of PCPs.

2.6. Although panels have a wide remit of scrutiny, many remain concerned that they do not have the tools to effectively hold their PCC to account, and that there is a case for looking again at the tools available to panels in terms of their complaints role.

2.7. However, the key determinant of a panel's influence with the PCC is often the nature of the relationship between the panel and the PCC, alongside the receptiveness of the PCC to the role of the panel. The Home Office should consider how training and membership requirements could be used to help strengthen the work of panels, as well as ensuring that it consistently emphasises the importance of the role of panels rather than downplaying it. The LGA would be pleased to discuss options for strengthening the support provided to panels.

2.8. Looking ahead to part two of the review, there is a need to assess and clarify how PCCs are expected to work alongside Community Safety Partnerships and Violence Reduction Units, in an evolving and increasingly complex community safety landscape, particularly given that forthcoming legislation (the Domestic Abuse and Serious Violence Bills) will place a significant emphasis on CSPs, and with CSPs reliant on PCCs for some of their funding.

2.9. As part of this assessment of community safety governance, we would welcome further consideration of the balance of statutory responsibilities and expectation, relative to the way in which funding for victim support is routed between councils and PCCs in issues such as domestic abuse. We also urge the review to consider the need to increase the transparency of commissioning/ de-commissioning by PCCs and strengthen approaches to funding, with an emphasis on consistency and longevity of services and sustainable multi-year funding streams. This will help prevent duplication of efforts across different partners in the community safety space while also helping to build resilience in the services delivered by local partners.

3. **Detailed response**

3.1. We have set out below our responses to the key research questions for part one of the review.

   How to reinforce and sharpen the accountability of PCCs to the communities they serve, including how to raise the profile of the PCC model and improve the ease with which the public can access information about their PCC.
   - How effectively do PCCs engage the public?
   - How do we ensure the public can more easily hold their PCC to account at the ballot box, for reducing crime and delivering an effective and efficient police force?

3.2. The majority of PCPs report that their local PCCs have worked hard to try to engage the public in their work through a variety of different approaches including public meetings and Q&A sessions, engaging with the local media and extensive use of social media such as Twitter and Facebook: PCC grant schemes were also felt to be a good way to engage the public on the issues they are concerned about, with community groups able to apply for grants to improve community or road safety.   However, despite PCCs' clear remit in policing and efforts to ensure the visibility of this role, it was felt that many people are only likely to engage with the role when they have a specific interest in doing so.

3.3. While it is the public's democratic right not to engage unless they wish to, low voter turnout for PCC elections remains a concern. The Government should consider the scope for national awareness raising efforts ahead of the rescheduled PCC elections in 2021 to help promote a higher turnout and by extension greater democratic legitimacy.

3.4. To support voters in making informed decisions at election time, consideration could also be given to how to make standardised information about the performance of the PCC and local police based on work by HMICRSA, as well as reports from PCPs, more easily accessible to local residents.

How to ensure that PCCs have sufficient resilience in the event that they cannot undertake their role, by considering existing arrangements for appointing Deputies.
- Is the current model resilient enough to hold up when things go wrong?

3.5. Some concerns have been raised about the resilience of a PCC model in comparison to an authority model, in the event that the PCC is incapacitated. However, there are different views on whether all PCCs should be required to appoint a deputy PCC. Some panels feel that this is desirable, or that a deputy PCC could be elected alongside the PCC, while others feel that the current model works satisfactorily. The LGA does not have a specific position on this issue.

How to improve the current scrutiny model for PCCs, including the provision of common quality standards and considering the role of Panel chairs.
- Are the right checks and balances in place to make PCC-led accountability work?
- Do police and crime panels have the right skills, tools and powers to hold PCCs to account?
- Should a system of recall be introduced for PCCs, and if so, what should be the trigger mechanism?

3.6. PCPs provide the main check and balance on PCCs during the course of the four-year PCC term. In many areas, PCCs and PCPs have developed strong, collaborative relationships, to the benefit of the work of the PCC and overall benefit of local communities. However, in other places, there have been challenges, in part relating to the lack of a shared understanding of the role of PCPs. The LGA has previously received queries from members of staff in PCC offices questioning whether a PCP is permitted to question the PCC on a particular issue, or require them to attend a panel meeting, suggesting a lack of understanding of the breadth of the PCP's scrutiny role. The Home Office could do more to reflect and acknowledge the important role of panels

to help ensure there is consistent understanding of this among all stakeholders. HMICFRS should consider how it could engage with panels in carrying out its own work to assess policing governance (matters?).

3.7. Alongside this, there are steps that could be taken to help strengthen the work of panels. The requirement for political balance, coupled with differing electoral cycles in councils in panel areas, can lead to regular churn in panel membership, yet in any field of scrutiny – whether local government, policing, or school governance – experience helps to develop skills and competence. The Home Office should consider whether there are options that can blend the need to secure political balance over the duration of the PCC's term of office while at the same time seeking to reduce this churn.

3.8. Consideration could also be given to the development of tools such as consistent training content, guidance and skills audits to help develop and extend panel expertise. In relation to independent panel members, we would also support panels having more flexibility in being able to co-opt additional members to respond to any skills gaps, rather than having to seek Home Office approval to do so.

3.9. The handling of police complaints has changed in recent years, but a consistent concern from panels has been that they do not have the tools to adequately manage complaints made against the PCC . Although a Home Office review on this several years ago committed to the development of guidance on complaints handling, this has yet to be produced, and many panels continue to argue that the power to investigate complaints would enable them to undertake their complaints function more effectively.

3.10. Although the LGA itself commissioned updated guidance for PCPs in 2019, which covered complaints handling, we urge the Home Office to work with panels to consider how effectively the complaints process is working, and whether further, specific guidance is still necessary.

3.11. Although panels have a broad remit to scrutinise the work of the PCC, many have highlighted the limitations in their powers to require PCCs to respond to a panel's concerns. The panel's power of veto is a clear illustration of this, with panels able to veto the PCC's first proposed precept, or proposed appointment of a chief constable, but then powerless to require changes beyond this, even, if in the case of the precept, the PCC makes only minor changes. Some panels have therefore suggested that the power or veto could be strengthened to include a second power of veto, or requirement for majority panel support following an initial veto. The idea of pre-scrutiny of major decisions by the PCC has also been proposed.

3.12. Since their inception, panels have consistently raised concerns that the funding provided by the Home Office grant does not support the effective resourcing of panels. While many councils have subsidised the work of panels, typically through the provision of panel support officers, some have also not claimed their full grant entitlement.

3.13. The LGA would support consideration of a grant increase for those panels that are claiming their full grant entitlement. However, we also believe that there is a case for using the underspend on the overall grant funding pot to support measures that can be put in place to support all panels. The LGA's sector led improvement model could be utilised to support the development

of consistent tools and approaches across panels, and we would be happy to work with the Home Office to explore the scope for work in this area.

3.14.   The LGA supports the objective of ensuring the highest standards of integrity and conduct among all elected officials and works with our member organisations and councillors to promote conduct and leadership that is in line with the seven principles of standards in public life. We believe that there is a strong case for taking a consistent approach in how standards issues are managed across different types of elected officials. There is therefore a rationale for applying the same model of recall to Police and Crime Commissioners as currently applies to Members of Parliament, based on the same set of triggers; however, any recall process for PCCs would also need to reflect the role of PCPs in the existing suspension process.

The effectiveness of the current PCC and Chief Constable oversight dynamic, including consideration of the process for the suspension/dismissal of Chief Constables and reviewing the Policing Protocol.
*   Are PCC powers around the removal and appointment of chief constables correctly calibrated?
*   Is the balance right in the PCC/CC relationship? And what changes might be needed to the Policing Protocol?

3.15.   The LGA does not have specific insight on these questions.

Whether any steps are needed to strengthen accountability or clarity of roles within the mayoral PCC model, learning from the transfer of PCC and Fire & Rescue Authority (FRA) functions to mayors. This will lay the foundations for our longer-term ambition to increase the number of mayors with responsibility for public safety, which will be outlined in the forthcoming Local Recovery and Devolution White Paper.

*   What do you see as the strategic benefits of having a single, elected and accountable leader, who is responsible for a range of public safety functions?
*   What are the opportunities and issues with transferring PCC and FRA functions to mayors?
*   What are the lessons learned to date from transferring PCC and FRA functions to mayoral models?

3.16.   The LGA believes that the mayoral model should be implemented only where there is local agreement to do so. Where the PCC/mayor role is joined up, there is a need to ensure that a single elected representative has appropriate capacity to fulfil their role, and that robust scrutiny mechanisms are maintained: some concerns have been raised about the capacity of PCCs to undertake fire on top of their policing remit, especially if it is expanded into new areas.

How we set out our long-term ambition on fire governance reform ahead of the May 2021 PCC elections.
*   What are the benefits and challenges of the current model for transferring fire governance to PCCs?
*   How can we strengthen the accountability and transparency of fire governance?

- How can we strengthen and clarify the distinction between strategic and operational planning in fire?
- Could governance change help maximise collaboration between policing and fire?
- What are the benefits of having a range of services and strategic planning under one elected individual?

3.17.   The LGA believes it should be for local areas to determine how they are governed. Transfers of fire governance to PCCs should only be made where there is local agreement to the transfer: we do not agree with mandatory transfers of governance. It is right that there is an opportunity to challenge and discuss the transfer of governance at a local level so that there is assurance that the community will receive the service that is right for them and issues around coterminosity can be considered from the outset.

3.18.   By ensuring that there is local support for transfers, this will lead to better partnership outcomes and joined up working across a local area. Local determination also allows for consideration to be made of the other partnerships maintained by the fire and rescue services, for instance with adult social care or ambulance services.

3.19.   Where there is no local agreement and a PCC proceeds to submit a business case to the Home Secretary for determination, there should be clear guidance for how to evidence the tests of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness or public safety. Once the business case has been submitted an independent panel should examine the business case and consider the tests of economy, efficiency and effectiveness or public safety. The panel should include expertise in fire, policing, local government and finance to look at the different elements of the business case. An independent panel with expertise in a range of subjects would ensure that the decision on the business case was robust and less open to challenge, as has been the case previously.

3.20.   The LGA has welcomed the reintroduction of inspection to provide scrutiny of the role of the fire and rescue services and help to identify further activities to strengthen services. A similar process could be introduced for fire and rescue authorities including PFCCs to ensure greater transparency to local communities. HMICFRS has started to work on the creation of a governance inspection, and we would support this inspection process being rolled out across the fire sector. This would provide a baseline for examining governance and could strengthen transparency for the sector. Although they are not directly elected to the specific role, FRAs are locally accountable politicians and therefore they are accountable through the ballot box, in a similar way to PCCs.

3.21.   The respective roles of chief fire officers and fire and rescue authorities are clear. Fire and rescue authorities hold the legal responsibility for services, including the assets and budgets as well as being the employer. Chief Fire Officers provide their professional expertise to FRAs to ensure that FRA members can make strategic decisions, and then implement these decisions in the day to day management of the service, in a similar way to council Chief Executives. The LGA and National Fire Chiefs Council are committed to working together on the principles that underpin good decision making in the fire sector, highlighting the distinct roles of both the professional and political leadership. We do not feel that further legislative change is necessary but training would ensure that there is a clear

understanding of how the professional and political leadership work together to run the service.

3.22.   Collaboration agreements were a part of the Policing and Crime Act 2017 that introduced the ability for PCCs to take on fire governance. This provision means that FRAs have to keep under consideration all opportunities for collaboration with other blue light services. We understand that a variety of FRAs are already undertaking joint work with the police, regardless of their governance. Examples include joint fire and police stations and headquarters, joint community safety teams, tri-service officers etc.

3.23.   The fire and rescue service also collaborates with a wider range of partners as well as the police. The recent tripartite agreements during the Covid-19 pandemic show the broad range of work that fire and rescue services undertake at a local level supporting a broad range of partners, including adult social care, the NHS and the ambulance service. It is important that local areas are able to retain the flexibility to enter into partnerships and collaborations that suit their local areas needs.

4. Other issues

4.1. Although part one of this review is primarily focused on accountability and standards, we would like to highlight two issues which we believe should be a focus in part two of the review. At the strategic level, the review should consider how the links between PCCs and councils should be strengthened. Tackling reoffending does not happen in a vacuum and the relationship to services such as housing, education and skills, mental health services is critical, but could be improved.

Partnership working

4.2. PCCs and Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) both work on a wide range of community safety issues; including domestic abuse, anti-social behaviour, modern slavery, burglary, county lines, knife crime etc.

4.3. Since PCCs were created, there has been an expectation that CSPs will work closely with their PCC in order to identify local crime types and assess what resources/ actions are needed to address these challenges locally. The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 outlines that due regard should be paid to the others' priorities in both PCC and CSP plans and includes a duty to co-operate.

4.4. Ideally, both the PCC annual plan and CSP should be closely aligned, reflecting the key trends/ priorities of the local area. It is important that PCCs work with existing partners and structures when constructing their Police and Crime Plan, crime reduction strategies or specific crime type strategies. Engagement and consultation is key to ensuring consistency, effectiveness, and co-ordination. Where there are existing plans that are fit for purpose, duplication should be avoided.

4.5. In recent years there has been an increasing shift in the focus of CSPs from volume crime to assessing threat, harm and vulnerability. A renewed focus on CSPs, either directly or as related partnerships, has been driven by a mix of central Government priorities and local need around "new" key risks – for example counter terrorism, serious and organised crime, serious violence, modern day slavery, counter extremism, county lines, child sexual

exploitation etc. There have also been some changes in the wider partnership landscape i.e. Children's Safeguarding Boards

4.6. In 2019, the Government introduced Violence Reduction Units in 18 police force areas. We understand that some VRUs are closely linked with the PCC and local CSPs, but there is some disparity in areas and partnership working could be stronger.

4.7. Through the introduction of the Serious Violence Strategy and during the COVID-19 response, there have been various funding pots made available to PCCs to bid into. There has been an emphasis on working closely with local CSPs when submitting a bid, but this does not happen consistently; the Home Office should reinforce the need for jointly supported local bids.

4.8. In this complex and sometimes crowded landscape, there is a need for clarity on how PCCs, CSPs and VRUs are expected to work together, given the overlapping, but diverse range of community safety issues they cover and the varied funding streams available to different partners. The need for guidance on this to support better alignment by VRUs with existing statutory functions and partnerships was also highlighted in the Home Office's recent evaluation of VRUs. With forthcoming legislation expected to amend the role and remit of Community Safety Partnerships in the future, it will be important for PCCs and relevant partnerships to have clearly defined roles and ways of working. There should be an emphasis on strong partnership working and joint decision-making as the default position, including in relation to funding bids.

Funding and commissioning

4.9. Following the enactment of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, Government funding of Community Safety Partnerships was moved across to PCCs. This has resulted in a varying picture nationally, with the cessation of grants to many CSPs. From 2014, the majority of support services for victims provided at a local level went via PCC budgets rather than CSPs.

4.10. The PCC therefore has a valuable role as the local victims champion, providing grant funding to key areas of crime and disorder reduction. To do this effectively, it is important that PCCs and their offices work closely with local community safety partners to agree shared priorities, collaborative ways of working, and ensure that funding is routed to address local crime issues in a way that builds resilience across local services and partners.

4.11. We have some concern that in areas such as domestic abuse, there is a mismatch between the statutory responsibilities which are placed on councils and the fact that funding to support domestic abuse services is typically being routed through Police and Crime Commissioners. As noted above, the level of partnership input to PCC bids for funding is variable, and the Home Office should ensure that funding opportunities are aligned with where new responsibilities are being created. The review could also consider funding for victims of modern slavery, who may often need support that does not fit neatly within existing council services (or eligibility).

4.12. The introduction of Violence Reduction Units has created an additional vehicle for commissioning services, that (in some areas) sits wholly separate to the Community Safety Partnerships work. It would be useful for all commissioning / de-commissioning of relevant community safety services to

be discussed between partners. Consideration could be given to a requirement for PCCs to undertake a needs assessment to help frame the approach to commissioning / decommissioning and grant decisions across their term of office. This would help support consistent and transparent commissioning processes and procedures and provide clarity for local partners.

4.13.   The review should consider how a more consistent commitment to the provision of longer-term funding of specialist services can be embedded across PCCs, rather than short term 'quick win' style funding of 12 months. While some PCCs are very open to providing two to three years of funding, others continue to fund for six-twelve months.

4.14.   This can be problematic because short term funding can undermine the resilience and effectiveness of services which need to build trust and relationships with those who are vulnerable and make sustained changes to support a victim's journey and to build partnership working. Longer term funding commitments would facilitate producing three-year strategies for issues such as domestic abuse, providing much needed stability particularly regarding staffing and commissioning arrangements. The Home Office should also continue how its own funding opportunities can support a longer term approach to developing services.

4.15.   It should also be best practice to share evidence and evaluations of the outcomes and results of commissioned or grant funded services by the PCC, with existing partnerships and the Police and Crime Panel.

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Spending Review

Purpose of report

For direction.

Summary

The report seeks members' views on the future options for use of the funding provided by Fire and Rescue Authorities to support the LGA's and National Fire Chiefs Council work around the Spending Review.

Recommendations

Members are asked to consider the options set out in paragraph 7.

Actions

LGA and National Fire Chiefs Council to work together to take forward next steps.

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Spending Review

Background

1. Last year the LGA and National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) agreed to work together with the Home Office on a Spending Review submission that would set out to the Treasury the business case for funding the fire and rescue services.

2. Lead Members and the NFCC held a number of meetings on the content of the submission and it went to the Home Office in August. It is attached at **Appendix A** and has been shared with Chairs and Chief Fire Officers.

3. The work was funded through contributions from Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) and this paper sets out options for what to do with the rest of the contributions, with a view to have a further paper bought back to a future meeting of the Committee.

Issues

4. The LGA and NFCC wrote to FRA Chairs and Chief Fire Officers in December 2019 to seek contributions towards a central team that would take on the role of providing a Spending Review business case to the Home Office. FRAs and FRSs agreed to the creation of a central team and contributions into the team from individual services were based on population size.

5. Applications were invited for the team manager role and Amy Webb, from Devon and Somerset FRS, was appointed to lead this work at the beginning of March. The work was expected to last a number of months, with a team taking on the task of gathering evidence and writing the business case. However, the Spending Review was initially bought forward, then postponed due to Coronavirus then reinstated as a September Spending Review.

6. The shifting timescales meant that it was not possible to recruit a team to support Amy, therefore she carried out the work on her own. The contributions that FRAs were asked for were based on the need to recruit a team, therefore we are currently left with an underspend of approximately £150,000.

7. Members are asked to discuss the options for the funding (subject to wider discussions with the sector). The options are:

    7.1. The money is returned to FRAs minus their contribution to the Spending Review work that Amy undertook.
    7.2. Options for further work that uses the Spending Review contributions are explored. Options could be based on feedback from the Home Office, and as a result of the outcomes of the Spending Review for example using the money to improve data

collection to provide evidence for the next Spending Review. These options can be bought back to a future meeting of the Committee prior to being put to the sector. There would need to be a strong business case for any options put forward.

8. If members do not agree that any of the options are worth pursuing, then we would still be able to return the money to FRAs (minus their contribution for the Spending Review work). That would need to be done within this financial year.

Implications for Wales

9. There are no implications for Wales as the fire and rescue service is a devolved responsibility and funding is provided to Welsh Fire and Rescue Authorities by the Welsh Assembly Government. The Welsh FRAs were not approached to participate in this project.

Financial Implications

10. There are no further financial implications following on from the initial Spending Review contributions.

Next steps

11. Depending on member's discussions the LGA and NFCC will work together on next steps.

Appendix A

Fire Spending Review Proposal

COLLABORATIVE LGA AND NFCC SUBMISSION FOR SR2021

AMY WEBB

Table of Contents

Introduction

This document represents the fire sector request for funding to inform the Spending Review 2020-21. It has been developed in collaboration with colleagues in the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and Local Government Association (LGA) and will focus on three key elements:

1. The base case for Fire and Rescue funding and productivity opportunities
2. Significant cost pressures
3. Improvement activity arising from the Grenfell Tower and other Recommendations

These elements are well aligned with the ministerial priorities of People, Professionalism and Governance.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) State of Fire Report identified that Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) funding position and pressures vary widely, with some services struggling to meet operational requirements. Given that the process for establishing a new Fire Funding Formula has been paused and is not covered in this proposal, changing referendum limits to allow Council Tax precept flexibility of £5 for all FRS is the only viable option for addressing local funding issues.

1. The base case for Fire and Rescue funding – Securing an inflationary increase to FRS funding to maintain firefighter numbers

A decade of austerity measures has had significant impact on fire and rescue services under all governance models. As some fire and rescue services (FRS) in embedded governance models such as county councils and are part of a wider budget where data can be inconsistent and not readily available, figures quoted here are for the 29 standalone Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs). In 2009/10 core spending power was estimated at £1,523m, falling to £1,373m in 2020/21[i], equating to a cut of 28.55%[ii] in real terms.

FRS capabilities are built around our people. Staff costs make up a large proportion of fire and rescue service budgets and therefore it is inevitable that staff numbers have declined whilst services have had to make cuts, with full time equivalent firefighter numbers declining from 41,201[iii] in 2010/11 to 32,233 in 2018/19, a fall of 21.77%. Despite this, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) found in their 2018/19 State of Fire report that the sector is generally effective in responding to fires and other emergencies[iv]. This shows the sector's ability to deliver savings whilst maintaining response services. The picture is not the same for Fire Protection (fire safety audit of buildings), a vital part of integrated service delivery and risk reduction.

The Inspectorate, and the sector, have identified a number of areas for improvement (which will be covered later in this report) but it is clear that improvement activities cannot be delivered if staff numbers are reduced further due to a) needing a base of resource to respond to risk and b) needing the capacity to deliver improvement activity.

1.1. Resourcing to Risk

Unlike some public services which are demand led, we need to have enough resources available to provide an emergency response even in times of exceptional demand. This includes the ability to deal with large scale emergencies and/or a range of smaller incidents but all occurring simultaneously and/or incidents that are of extended duration.

This resilience is vital to ensuring safe systems of work for our people, enables cross-border working (such as that seen in recent wildfires and flooding incidents such as the Whaley Bridge dam collapse) and has enabled significant support for other agencies during the COVID-19 pandemic. FRS are needing to plan, train and respond to an increasing number of weather related incidents such as flooding and wildfire and these risks are likely to increase due to climate change. The LGA and NFCC would welcome a review of Fire and Rescue Statutory duties to include response to flooding. Whilst many FRS have some capability to respond to these incidents, support for a consistent approach based on risk is needed and would require a capital investment similar to that made by the Welsh Government.

Whilst over the long-term incident numbers are down, there is evidence that this trend is reversing, demonstrating the need for continued resourcing for both service response and preventative activities.[v]

Figure 1 - Incident data England 1999-2019
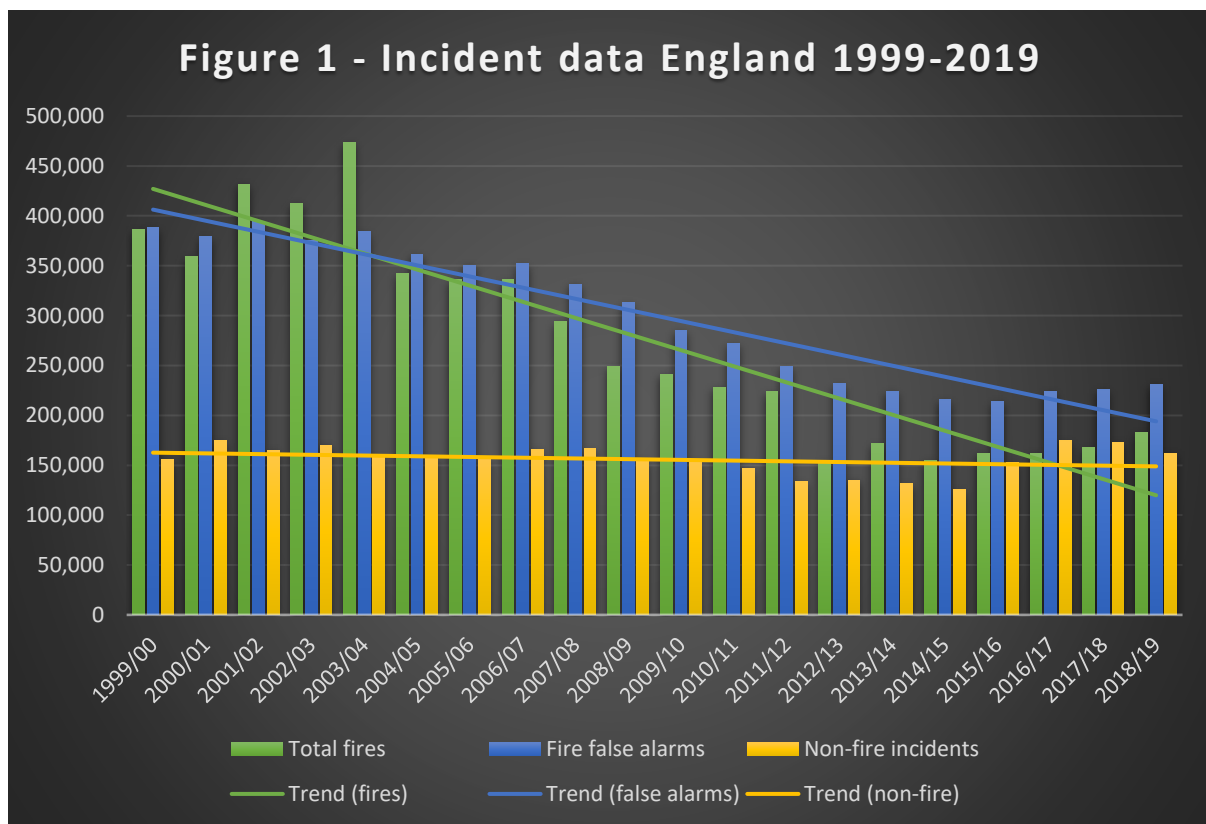
Cutting firefighter numbers further at this time would prohibit FRS ability to meet the inherent risk and have a negative impact on the sectors aspiration to create a more diverse workforce by having fewer vacancies which can be filled by people from under-represented groups.

The benefits of a diverse workforce are well documented; engendering trust by representing the communities we serve, creating positive culture, removing barriers to potential high quality recruits and bringing diversity of thought to planning and decision making. Developing a workforce for the future is a key area of reform for FRS and high up the LGA[vi] and NFCC agenda[vii]. We need to do more to support staff and improve culture, progress towards which will be inhibited if there are further cuts to funding.

Figure 2 - Incident trends England
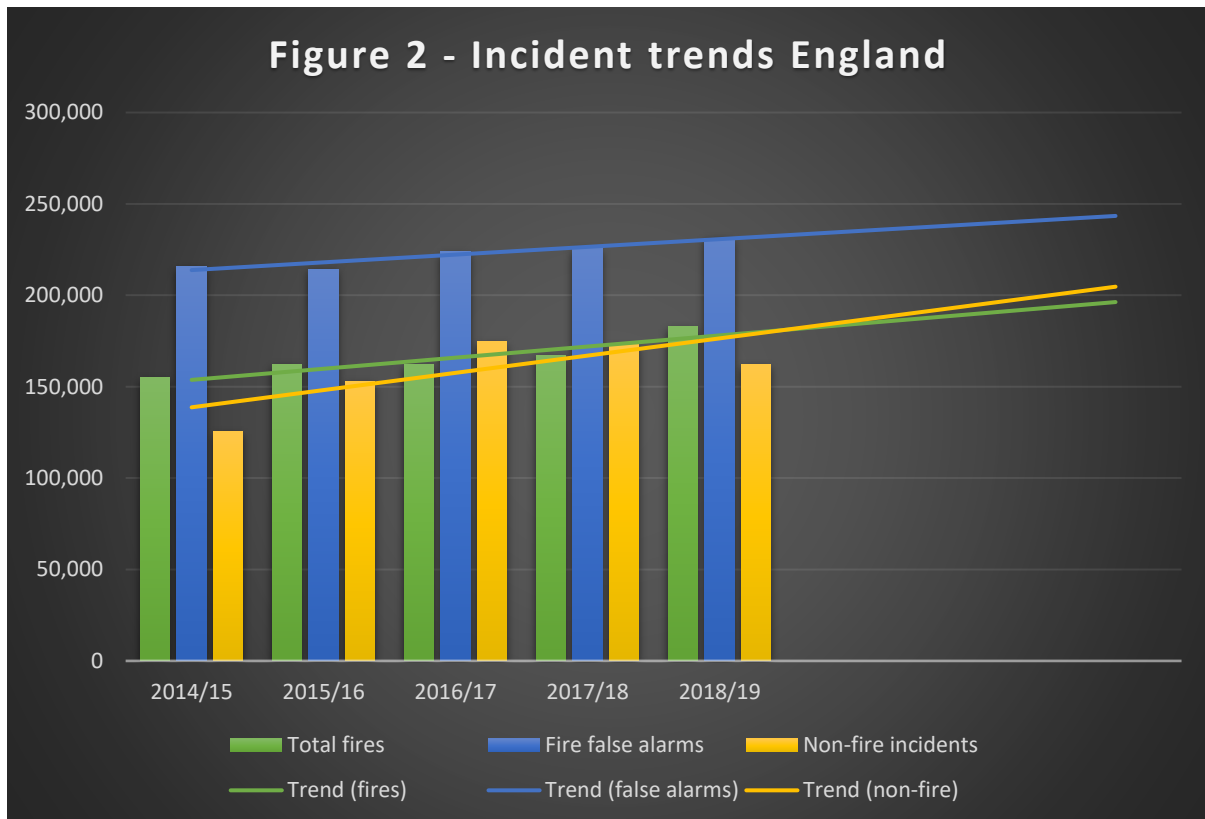
Initial analysis of response times when compared to firefighter numbers has shown significant correlation between a reduction in English firefighter full time equivalent (FTE) and slower response times, since 2009[viii]. This data suggests that a further reduction in FTE firefighters of approximately 6,000 England-wide corresponds to an increase in average response times of 30 seconds[ix]. Whilst this correlation does not directly indicate the cause of slower response times which may be impacted by factors such as traffic, funding pressures have resulted in greater use of On Call (part-time) staff which inevitably slows response. There are inherent risks with the On Call model of resourcing as FRS are struggling to maintain reliable response due to the appeal of the role, commitment required, financial reward and changes to lifestyles and primary working arrangements reducing availability of On Call staff. There are significant differences with how the system works across England, with some FRAs concerned about the future of the on-call system, and some experiencing a good availability of staff. Therefore, more work is necessary to see how we can ensure that the system can be sustainable for everyone into the longer term. Government support for a review of the system would be welcomed. However, it is clear that any alternative to the current system would have cost implications and require funding to deliver.

1.2.   Resilience in times of crisis.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic FRS have demonstrated their ability to flex their resources, with minimal additional financial support, to support other agencies in time of crisis. This is in addition to the ongoing support that FRS give other blue light services; with medical co-responding and gaining entry activity common. Few other agencies have the geographical spread of local resources that FRS do, with good levels of public trust[x] which enables support to vulnerable people in our communities. To the end of June 2020 FRS had delivered considerable additional activity as shown in figure 3.

The NFCC has evidenced how it can support individual FRS and national government by co-ordinating efforts. It has issued communication and guidance to assist fire and rescue services to see their way through this national health emergency, whilst working with partners in other agencies; including nationally with the National Police Chiefs Council and Ambulance Chief Executives, which complemented the local work of FRS through the local resilience forum or similar.

The NFCC, National Employers and Fire Brigades Union have evidenced how they can support individual FRS and national government through the unprecedented tripartite agreements which have been generated to enable such activity.

Figure 3 – TRI-PARTITE AGREEMENT COVID-19 Additional Activity delivery March – June 2020

1.3.   Productivity: Capacity to deliver increased fire prevention and protection activity

We understand that all public services are under pressure to deliver more effectively and efficiently in light of the economic climate and public scrutiny. There are however opportunities to improve FRS by making incremental improvements within existing resources.

HMICFRS found that many services are under-resourcing prevention and protection and need to make sure their workforces are more productive. Office of National Statistics data[xi] shows that productivity of FRS has improved since 2009, perhaps inevitably as a result of reduced staffing numbers.

Figure 4 - Productivity Index of the Fire and Rescue Service
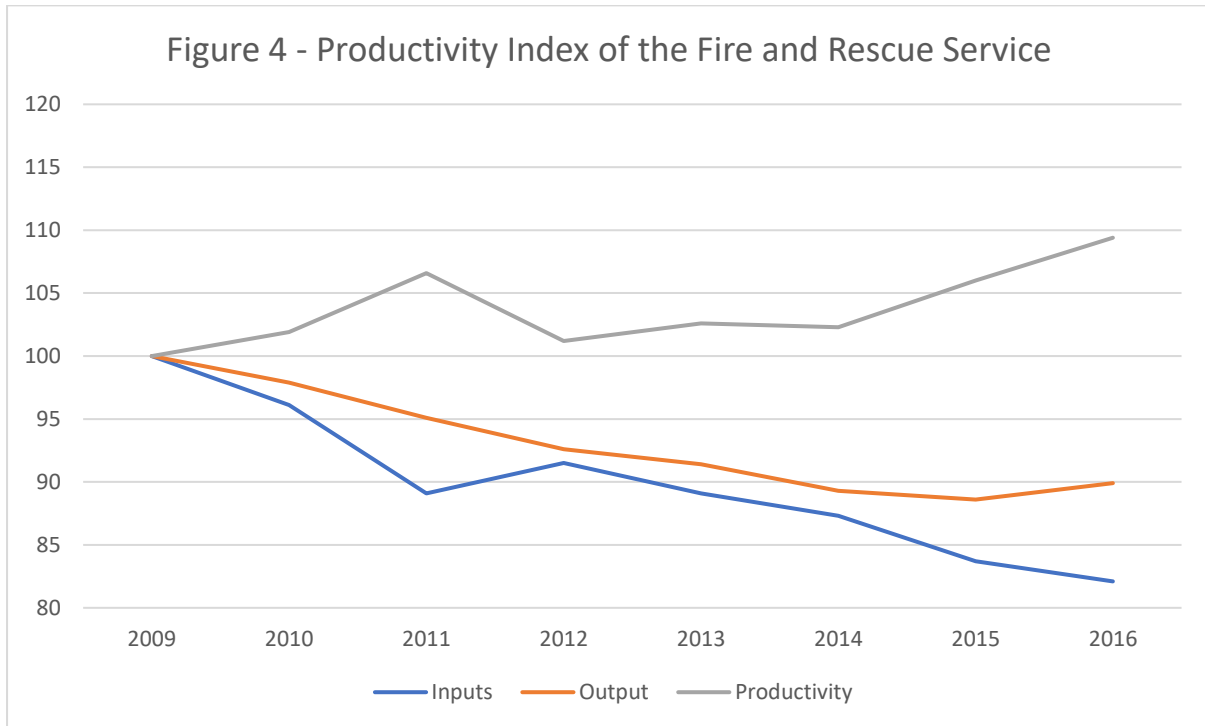
FRS already use their station based staff to deliver targeted fire prevention and protection in their local areas. There is an opportunity to better utilise the fire station based workforce to conduct more home and business fire safety checks in the community. This would have a positive impact on productivity and morale whilst providing an opportunity for FRS to invest in the development and training of staff. One outcome of having fewer fires to attend has been the need to increase training so firefighters are safe as possible when they do attend emergency incidents. Fire station based personnel carrying out more routine fire protection work will improve their knowledge of the built environment and free up higher trained inspecting officers and fire engineers to deal with more complex buildings to support the new building safety regime.

We know that the number of home fire safety checks carried out by fire and rescue services has reduced by a quarter since 2011[xii] and that fire safety audits have reduced by 42% over the same period[xiii]. We believe that FRS have the capacity to deliver a significant productivity increase within existing resources over the three year spending review. Directing 3% of wholetime capacity to these interventions would give FRS the opportunity to deliver up to 523,000 additional hours of activity nationally[xiv] which would equate to an additional 18,000 basic fire safety audits[xv] (with more complex activity being undertaken by specialist protection teams, who will be freed up by the increase in capacity to undertake lower level audits) and 65,000 home safety checks per year[xvi].

There may be further opportunities to improve workforce productivity by diversifying the work undertaken by staff, in line with 'Fit for the Future'.

1.4.   Productivity: impact and outcomes

It is estimated that, in addition to making communities safer and reducing harm from dwelling fires, 65,000 home safety checks will deliver an economic benefit of £127m[xvii]. It is not so easy to identify the direct impact of regulatory fire safety audits and inspections on fires given the very different nature of the sectors that those buildings represent (that range from large hospital complexes to small takeaway food outlets). It is evident that more regulatory fire safety audits will increase the rate at which issues with the built environment, identified through the Government's Building Safety Programme, are able to be addressed. Over the 10 years between 2009/10 and 2018/19 there have been 3,631 fewer accidental fires across England in non-domestic buildings. At 2019 prices, this represents an estimated economic saving to society of £370 million, this reduction is supported by the inspection and enforcement work undertaken by FRS.

The Outcomes of this additional work are expected to be:

- Reduction in number of fires in domestic premises
- Reduction in deaths from these fires
- Reduction in injuries
  - By targeting specific vulnerable groups e.g. elderly and disabled people
  - Providing community safety checks, like smoke alarm etc.
- Reduction in damage to properties from fires as there are fewer domestic fires and less damage as fires that do happen cause less damage
- Advise wider cross Government policies such as security, crime prevention and health and well-being
- Audits resulting in
  - Eventually, a greater proportion of satisfactory fire safety audits
  - publicity - using media to increase the deterrent effect

1.5.   Efficiencies: Delivering collaborative procurement

The NFCC established its national procurement programme in 2015, with individual FRS taking a lead on each category of major expenditure. The programme resources were boosted by transformation grant funding awarded by the Home Office in 2016-17, with the programme expected to deliver savings from collaborative procurement of £27m by 2024-25 and the National Procurement Strategy for Fire published in 2018. As transformation funding was exhausted during 2019-20, the programme is now resourced by the sector and the national savings register has evidenced savings of £13m.

The Fire Commercial Transformation Programme operates under 3 key principles:

- Standardised requirements: developing agreed standard specifications that are operationally driven rather than procurement-led.
- Aggregated volumes: FRS that bring larger volumes to market typically get better deals. Where possible, i.e. non-fire specific goods and services, consider the wider purchasing power of other public sector organisations.
- Collaboratively managed contracts and suppliers: joined-up strategic engagement, supplier performance and contract management

The programme is therefore on track to deliver the remaining £14m of savings over the spending review period, which will be utilised by FRS to offset internal cost pressures. Further investment will generate even bigger savings.

1.6.   Efficiencies: Delivering technological improvement

HMICFRS found that the use of technology in FRS varies considerably, and that whilst there are pockets of innovation the sector as a whole can use technology better. This view is supported by a recent study by Leeds University[xviii] which found that the condition of FRS ICT infrastructure differs greatly across England with a number of services facing significant ICT challenges. The NFCC have responded to this by launching its Digital and Data Programme[xix] to support services.

It is apparent that in order to deliver transformative technology which will support business operations, promote productivity, operational decision making and service improvement to the public, significant investment will need to be in FRS technological capability. FRS have already identified improvements needed and have incorporated digital transformation into their change programmes, often funded by reserves[xx] This investment will not be possible if baseline funding is cut and therefore reserves will be required to support revenue budgets rather than make sustainable changes.

2. Significant Cost pressures – funding for national issues which are putting long-term pressure on FRS budgets

There are a number of issues impacting on the financial sustainability of FRS (amongst other public services) which could have a detrimental impact on the ability of FRS to maintain their services to the public.

2.1. Pay

Firefighters have been subject to pay freezes and below-inflationary increases during austerity and the sector is under significant pressure from unions to deliver a large pay rise in 2020. The National Employers' position, following consultation with Chairs and CFOs, is that any pay rise beyond 2% in 2020/21 would be unaffordable for the sector without additional government funding. Any agreements will be subject to the NJC negotiation process. It is estimated that a 2% increase would cost the sector at least £25m[xxi] per year, representing more than 1% of total funding for FRS. Beyond 2020/21 it is expected that the pressure for pay awards above 2% will increase.

Looking forward, it is clear that the sector would need an increase in central FRS funding if it is going to reform firefighters' roles in line with ongoing and emerging objectives. Any further reforms would need to be supported and sustained by Government funding, previous costing estimates for this have been in the region of 15% of firefighter pay.

2.2. Pensions

Pension cost pressures and administration issues are a significant risk to FRS budgets. Local administration carries inherent risks, particularly around discrepancies in treatment of pension administration changes and whilst there have been several joint procurement exercises between FRS, there is further opportunity to seek collaborative solutions to pension administration.

2.2.1. GAD revaluation

The 2016 GAD revaluation resulted in a headline rate increase of 12.4% of employer pension costs, which in 2019-20 equated to £125m. The Home Office have agreed to fund £115m of this pressure in 2019-20 and 2020-21 but this will need to be added to base budgets rather than offered as a grant to ensure financial sustainability and FRS ability to plan their resources. As pay costs increase, so do employers' pension costs and therefore this would also need to be reflected in funding.

2.2.2. McCloud/Sargeant

There are two issues arising from the potential remedy for discriminatory conditions of tapering in to the 2015 firefighters pension scheme (FFPS):

1. Pension administration costs; amendments to software capability will be chargeable as a special project by third party administrators and it is estimated that will cost the sector in the region of £1.2m[xxii], given the proposed implementation date of 1 April 2022, work will need to commence early in 2021.
2. Increased employer contributions which are likely to impact on FRS budgets in the next valuation, with rates being implemented from 2023-24 and therefore within the three year spending review period. At the moment the sector has no information on what the costs of remedy to Firefighter and Local Government Pensions schemes will be, but given central estimates of £2.5bn per year for all schemes[xxiii] it is clear that this cost pressure cannot be borne by FRS as there will be a significant impact on delivery of services to the public.

2.2.3. O'Brien/Matthews

There are three issues arising from the potential remedy for discriminatory conditions against part-time workers prior to 2000:

1. Pension administration costs; amendments to software capability will be chargeable as a special project by third party administrators and it is estimated that will cost the sector in the region of £1.2m[xxiv] the timing of which is subject to timescales of remedy
2. Pension administration costs; experience of the 2006 modified pension exercise was that this was a considerable burden for those FRS with high numbers of on call staff. It is likely that there will be further take up as any additional employees pension contributions can be deducted from pension due, so at no detriment to the pensioner. It is estimated that this burden will fall to FRS payroll, HR and finance teams at a further cost of approximately £1.4m[xxv] to English services
3. Increased employer contributions which are likely to impact on FRS budgets in the next valuation, with rates being implemented from 2023-24 and therefore within a potential three year spending review period. At the moment the sector has no information on what the costs of remedy will be (and this is also likely to be tied up in the wider scheme valuation).

2.3. Impact of COVID-19 on Collection funds

The COVID pandemic has had a significant impact on FRS, with business continuity processes being in place since March 2020. Whilst the impacts of the pandemic and subsequent lockdown are yet to be fully understood, the resulting recession will impact on households' and business' ability to pay their Council Tax and Business Rates. The impact will be felt across the sector, with FRS picking up a proportion of the collection fund deficit from 2021-22, there may be a higher degree of impact on embedded FRS which have conflicting priorities such as adult social care and children's services.

It is currently difficult to collate data from billing authorities but national forecasts for income losses in 2020-21 are[xxvi]

- 4.54% of Business Rates = **£31.1m** for standalone FRAs
- 2.88% of Council Tax = **£24.5m** for standalone FRAs

For context, these losses of £55.6m are equivalent to 1,300[xxvii] firefighters or around 6% of the wholetime workforce[xxviii] in just one year. Whilst the MHCLG announcement in July allowing local authorities three years to settle collection fund deficits is welcome, we request funding equivalent to, or protection from collection fund losses to prevent cuts to front line services being made as a result of the pandemic. Given there will be local variation in collection rates, precept flexibility for fire would also support the ability of FRS to set balanced budgets over the medium term.

2.4. National Resilience

New Dimensions assets are now coming to the end of their life and require replacement at an estimated cost of £100m. We are clear that financial responsibility for New Dimensions national resilience capability sits with the Home Office and should not become a burden on FRS. The sector positions is that future funding should not be subsumed into the Revenue Support Grant where transparency around the amount and allocation will be lost.

2.5. Emergency Services Network

The Emergency Services Network should improve digital capability in FRS. The delay in roll out of ESN is well documented and we are clear that additional costs arising from central issues with the programme should not become a burden on FRS. Recent research has found that the length of the

ESN programme is creating inertia and restricting innovation by suppliers as well as the potential financial impact. Clarity is needed on the impact at local FRS level to support planning and risk awareness.

3. Sector Improvement – delivering enhanced building safety and ensuring FRS are Fit for the Future

3.1. Focus on Protection

The HMICFRS State of Fire report found that "Many services don't do enough to make sure premises comply with fire safety regulations ", "There is an inconsistent approach to the number of inspections services carry out" and "The lack of fire safety enforcement is a concern". Protection teams have been disproportionately affected by funding cuts within FRS over the last decade, partly due to the rise of prevention since 2000 and more recently as FRS commit to protect frontline operational firefighters in response to public consultation. Consequently, the number of Protection staff have reduced by as much as 32% in the last eight years[xxix], resulting in a loss of specialist skills and experience throughout FRS. This shows that there has been an underinvestment in fire safety under the existing regime.

There is a clear need to invest more in protection activity as the sector responds to systematic deficiencies highlighted by the Grenfell Tower Investigation (GTI), with particular focus on high risk, high rise buildings. Dame Judith Hackitt's recommendations in the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety – Building a Safer Future and resulting legislative changes have increased the duties and responsibilities for Protection teams.

The fire sector is progressing work to build understanding, capacity and capability to meet the requirements of the Building Safety Programme and recent findings for more complex buildings. Whilst there is an opportunity to boost the number of inspections delivered using existing staff as outlined in section 1.5, targeted investment is needed to ensure that services are able to deliver against the new fire safety regime in a safe and sustainable way.

3.1.1. 2020-21 Grant Funding

In the 2020-21 financial year, £20m has been granted to the sector for enhanced protection activity with a further £10m available for implementation of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 report, of which £1.6m is being retained by the Home Office to deliver Control Room ICT infrastructure enhancements.

£21.4m in total has been granted directly to FRS support specific pieces of work, to deliver:

- Building Risk Review Exercise via MHCLG grant - £6m
- The Protection Uplift Programme - £10m
- Recommendations from GTI phase 1 report including purchase of smoke hoods - £5.4m

£7m has been granted to the NFCC (via CFOA Charity) in addition to established £1.5m funds for leadership and standards
- £4m for the Fire Protection Hub and Building Safety Team, including support to FRS for the work above, via MHCLG grant, the benefits of which were outlined in the Protection Board: Programme Business Case finalised on 6 March 2020 and delivery to date of:
  - Framework for Managing Risks for High-rise Residential Buildings with ACM Cladding
  - High-rise Residential Buildings Interventions Feasibility and Impact Assessment
  - Costs for Safety Interventions in High Rise Residential Buildings
  - Risk Assessment Process for High Rise Residential Buildings for the Protection Board Building Risk Review Process

- £3m uplift for Improvement Capability of the sector, to include recruitment of specialist expertise, NFCC capacity and enhance Programme Management Office programme plans, which is covered in more detail on pages 11-13 of this report

3.1.2. Investment needed over the spending review period

Whilst this one-off funding is welcome and will deliver significant improvement to the sector's protection capacity as well as specific pieces of work (such as assurance on high risk, high rise buildings), it is the first investment in fire protection via FRS for many years and represents only 1.3% of core spending power[xxx]. Sustained investment will support continued delivery against priorities already identified through legislative review, which align with ministerial priorities:

- Building upon 2020-21 Grant funded activity to consolidate FRS protection teams' competence and capacity to respond to new legislative environment – maintaining the £10m Protection Uplift Programme to support sustainable recruitment in to specialist roles.
- It is assumed that the *High Rise High Risk Review* exercise was a one-off pending introduction of new legislation. If this work is to continue, ongoing funding of £6m is required
- The current Protection Board Programme is planned to run until December 2021; Augmenting the £0.7m NFCC funded Building Safety Team via a £3m per year grant (£0.75m in year 1) to the Fire Protection Hub will maintain capability in key specialist areas to support new legislative requirements – this represents a £1m saving against the initial investment as individual FRS build their capacity and capability in Fire Safety

Figure 5 – Building Safety Team – planned annual investment

Data & analytics	Fire safety	Central Policy	Comms & education
current staff	current staff	current staff	current staff
new analysts	new legal advisers	new policy/admin staff	new comms/ed staff
IT and software	contracted services	hub leadership	learning
expenses	flexible resource, FRS	miscellaneous	engagement
£0.52m	**£0.67m**	**£0.89m**	**£0.92m**

The board aims to strengthen protection activities across FRSs in England and is charged with delivery of the ministerial commitment to increase the pace of inspection activity across high rise/high risk buildings to inspect or assure these properties no later than December 2021. The board has been developing a programme of work to meet this new expectation and increase the capacity of services ahead of the new Building Safety Regime, helping to identify and help resolve fire safety issues before other major incidents occur. The work of the board will be essential in supporting the new Building Safety Regime going forward, central support capacity will continue to be needed alongside:

- New burdens are being placed upon FRS through the introduction of new legislative requirements. The Fire Safety Bill familiarisation costs are expected to be £0.7m in year 1, with ongoing costs of fire safety inspections increasing by £0.7m[xxxi]
- The draft Building Safety Bill has identified in its central case £30.3 - £44.7m of ongoing costs[xxxii] for FRS to support the safety of 1.7m homes
- The impact assessment for the uplift to the Fire Safety Order and changes to building control consultations with FRS are still unknown but will not be insignificant

3.2. Fit for the Future – enhancing professional expertise

HMICFRS has identified an urgent need for the sector to enhance its capability to deal with existing and emerging issues: the assessment of risk, data needed to inform decision making, developing a diverse and inclusive workforce which is appropriately trained to prevent and respond to incidents and incorporates learning. These issues are well highlighted by the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, Lord Greenhalgh's ministerial priorities, the LGA Fire Service Management Committee and previous reviews of Fire (such as Thomas/ Knight). The NFCC, LGA and National Employers (England) have therefore developed a "Fit for the Future" plan which identifies sector improvement objectives.

The NFCC Central Programme Office (CPO) coordinates the multiple improvement programmes of work on behalf of the NFCC. This overarching coordination helps the NFCC avoid duplication; prioritise work more effectively; and develop solutions and tools more efficiently which support fire and rescue services where a national approach would be beneficial. The NFCC CPO also provides support to the Fire Standards Board and coordinates the development of the full suite of Fire Standards. The guidance that underpins each Fire Standard will be developed by the subject matter expertise drawn from the NFCC network of services and other relevant stakeholders. All NFCC products and Fire Standards will be subject to Quality Assurance to ensure those products have been produced efficiently and effectively involving all stakeholders and are fit for use. Use of those products, especially when they underpin fire Standards, will help bring about national consistency and drive transformation across services[xxxiii].

Development of guidance and standards works well but it has been identified that the FRS needs a central resource to aid implementation and support consistency. The NFCC working with the LGA is well placed to provide this implementation support, subject to funding.

3.2.1. 2020-21 Grant Funding

In the 2020-21 financial year, a £3m grant has been provided as an uplift for Improvement Capability of the sector, to include recruitment of specialist expertise, NFCC capacity and enhance Programme Management Office programme plans. This funding is in addition to the £1.5m funding available for the Fire Standards Board. The deliverables against this funding have been identified in the Home Office Grant Conditions[xxxiv] and performance against plans will be monitored on a quarterly basis.

3.2.2. Investment needed over the spending review period

Whilst this one-off funding is welcome and will deliver significant improvement to the sector's capability and capacity as well as specific pieces of work (such as fire standards), sustained investment will support continued delivery against priorities already identified through legislative review.

- The Fire Standards Board will continue to require funding and support by the CPO as this is ongoing work
- The current programme of deliverables is due to complete by Q1 of 2021-22; Augmenting the £1.1m NFCC funded CPO via a £2.5m per year grant (£1.5m in year 1) to enable further activity– this represents a £0.5m saving against the initial investment as individual FRS build their capacity and capability in these key areas
- This will also need to fund a team of implementation officers - embedded within the LGA and NFCC - to support roll out of the established programmes in to FRS If supported by further funding, the CPO has identified specific deliverables[xxxv] which cannot be supported by the current programme, which will be aligned to the key areas of
    - Leadership
    - Digital & Data

- o   Community Risk
- o   Culture & Ethics

3.3. Leadership development

Governance is a central pillar of the fire sector and elected members have a key role to play setting the policy direction of their services and challenging them to make improvements where necessary. The LGA as the representative body for 44 out of 45 English authorities provides a voice for the sector and supports member development through a sector improvement offer. The LGA offer is open to elected members from all fire authority types and helps to develop leadership and governance skills, and to promote an understanding of key issues like building safety and diversity and inclusion. This is done through a series of activities including training, such as the Leadership Essentials programme for fire and rescue authority members, Oversight of performance training events and the Diversity and Inclusion Champions Network. It is vital that the LGA is able to continue to support members in this way and to ensure members have access to resources that can help them govern their authorities well.

The HMICFRS' inspections identified the governance as an area of tension and the NFCC and LGA are working together to address this by defining a shared set of principles which underpin good decision-making in all the fire and rescue services. To support the work of fire and rescue authorities and senior officers, the LGA has commissioned a series of video resources which will include these principles and maintaining effective member/officer relations. However, sustained activity to embed these principles will be required to create the desired impact.

3.3.1. Investment needed over the spending review period

Previously this work has been funded through other departmental grants, however, responsibility for the member development offer should sit within the Home Office fire budget.

- This work will continue to require funding and support by the LGA to ensure that we can provide ongoing development for members. A grant of £120,000 over the spending review period would allow the LGA to continue to provide the member development offer and to work with the NFCC to develop and support the development of a programme of activity around principles of good governance and decision-making and to develop training events for members and officers to embed those principles.

CPO Activity Plan beyond grant funding

Activity/Project	Deliverables
Developing effective communications and data sharing (including improving site specific information to operational crews) at operational incidents	Review of the nature and structure of communication between incident ground and control rooms considering technical solutions, message discipline and existing changes in technology.
Developing effective communications and data sharing (including improving site specific information to operational crews) at operational incidents	Conduct feasibility study and survey into existing technical solution and impact upon command and control structure.
Reviewing National Operational Guidance (NOG)	NFCC guidance on risk inspection visits and ensure all actions relating to plans and 7(2)(d)s are incorporated.
Review of National Operational Learning system and arrangements	Recommendations for expansion of National Operational Learning (NOL) to accommodate organisational learning inputs
Supervisory Leader Development Programme	A development programme to nurture leadership at the first level of management with an FRS organisation.
Direct Entry Pathways	A Direct Entry Pathway to include a training programme for entrants on operational duties above firefighter level.
Organisational Learning project	To be scoped
Culture (diagnostic tools)	To be scoped - review of the diagnostic tools available to fire service organisations that support cultural improvement
Health & Wellbeing	To be scoped - would include research projects to provide the evidence-base to support delivery of standards and improved practice in the physical and mental health and wellbeing.
Training courses procurement framework	To be scoped - A procurement framework that aligns National Operational Guidance against training courses bringing consistency and best value.
Immersive technologies	To be scoped - A review and research project into the immersive technologies available (such as virtual reality) and how they might translate to address some of the challenges around maintaining the competency of the workforce.

Fire Protection national guidance	Develop Fire Protection national guidance to support changes made following recommendations by MHCLG Building Safety Programme Resident's Voice Work stream. Development will follow the NFCC Quality Assured approach, hosted on a digital platform using the same integrated approach and accessibility as NOG.
Enforcement toolkit	To maintain a toolkit that can be used by services to improve the consistency and effectiveness of enforcement.
Online public services	Equitable online access to the public for all non-response services.
Data skills	All fire and rescue service staff have a level of data literacy appropriate to their role.
Application development guidance	Standards for local development of software and applications to enable sharing and scalability across services.
Evaluation	Areas of best practice within the UK fire and rescue service will be identified and scaled to be made available to all, improving consistency and maximising existing investment.
Evaluation	Consistent and comparable methodologies to evaluate the performance of local activities.
National Organisational Learning	Evolution of National Operational Learning into National Organisational Learning platform
Digital information service	A national Digital Information Service provides clear direction and consistency in relation to the use and implementation of data analytics within the UK fire and rescue services.

4. Summary

Integrated Review; The FRS has demonstrated through national incidents such as flooding and the C19 pandemic its ability to step up and meet demands placed on the country. Within this the FRS has demonstrated its expertise in command and control and logistics. With further development there is no doubt that the FRS can be the primary rescue organization for the UK, with control of the inner cordon at major incidents and a more significant role in command, logistics and resourcing of national emergencies.

A decade of austerity measures and the localism agenda has had a significant impact on the way that fire and rescue services operate and their financial sustainability. Because FRS are resourced to risk rather than demand, focus must be placed on delivering greater consistency and productivity whilst maintaining essential cover across England. There are clearly opportunities for increased collaboration and more efficient ways of working. However any resulting savings are tiny when compared to the amount of investment needed to deliver against the new legislative requirements alongside legacy improvements and reform.

The sector is responding to these challenges using a coordinated approach to deliver sustainable change to fire and rescue services and ultimately improved outcomes for the public.

Annex 1 – Fire Sector funding proposal[xxxvi]

Funding Requirement	Recipient	Sector proposal for Spending Review (£m)				Notes
		2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	
Baseline FRS Funding	FRS (SFA)	1.70%	2.12%	2.12%	2.07%	Inflationary uplift
Flooding Capability	FRS (Capital)	-	30.0	-	-	Purchase of response assets to meet new duties
Precept Flexibility	FRS	2.00%	£5 flexibility			
Pay	FRS	2.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	Estimate - subject to negotiations over reformed role
GAD revaluation	FRS (SFA)	115	117.4	119.9	122.4	Inflationary uplift as a minimum - should track pay
McCloud Sargeant	FRS	n/a	1.2	-	-	Admin cost
Resulting revaluation and compensation	FRS	n/a	compensation	compensation	revaluation	In base funding
O'Brien/Matthews	FRS	n/a	1.3	1.3	1.3	Admin - Assumes implementation 2022-23
Resulting revaluation	FRS	n/a	-	-	revaluation	In base funding
Collection Fund Deficits 2020/21	FRS	n/a	18.5	18.5	18.5	Third of calculated figures in section 2.3, to be updated by Home Office
Collection Fund Deficits 2021/22	FRS	n/a	-	?	?	To be assessed by Home Office
Collection Fund Deficits 2022/23	FRS	n/a	-	-	?	To be assessed by Home Office
National Resilience	FRS	10.01	10.2	10.4	10.6	support required to project and FRS grant funding
Protection Capacity	FRS	16	10	10	10	Assumes high risk high rise one off exercise
Building Safety Programme	NFCC	4	3	3	3	
Fire Safety Bill	FRS	-	1.4	0.7	0.7	
Building Safety Bill	FRS	-	30.3	30.3	30.3	Assumes implementation 2021-22
Fire Safety Order	FRS	-	?			
Leadership Capability uplift	LGA	-	0.12	-	-	
Leadership Capability uplift	NFCC	3	2.5	2.5	2.5	
Fire Standards Board	NFCC	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	

Annex 2 – NFCC, LGA and National Employers (England) Fit for the Future Improvement Objectives

1. Fire and rescue services have evidence based, high quality and consistent risk management plans that encompass all aspects of service deployment and delivery, addressing issues of local risk and ensuring they are resilient to national risks and threats including terrorism.

2. Fire and rescue services refocus their investment in the selection, training, development and support of employees to maintain, support and improve their skills and knowledge throughout their careers.

3. Fire and rescue services have access to a comprehensive national infrastructure and repository of standards, guidance and tools that are embedded in their own local service delivery.

4. Fire and rescue services support new and innovative ways to prevent fires and other emergencies. Firefighters work with people who are at risk in local communities to make them safer in all aspects of their lives, not only from fire.

5. Fire protection activity carried out by fire and rescue services is redefined and expanded by using new professional standards, competence requirements and training for firefighters and specialist protection staff assisted by a significant reallocation of resources through increases in productivity.

6. The benefits of all fire and rescue service activity are measured and evaluated so that decision making about resource allocation can be improved.

7. Prospective employees are attracted to fire and rescue services as an employer of choice where inclusive recruitment practices and the available diverse roles and responsibilities help the service manage risk in the local community.

8. An inclusive culture is at the heart of every fire and rescue service. They are a welcoming and supportive place to work for the widest variety of people from all backgrounds.

9. Political leaders, governments and fire and rescue service officers use a single leadership framework that sets out clearly a suite of service values, expectations and behaviours which all can promote and support. It is the basis on which fire and rescue services and all their employees operate.

10. Working with others in all aspects of fire and rescue service activity is core business, based on solid evidence and data that determines the most efficient and effective use of resources to ensure firefighter and public safety.

11. The National Employers (England), LGA and the NFCC jointly own and maintain an organisational learning system that will promote continuous improvement at a strategic level.

Annex 3 - Notes

[i] Core Spending Power supporting detail - https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/core-spending-power-provisional-local-government-finance-settlement-2020-to-2021

ii Indexation of Core Spending Power against CPI April 2009 to April 2020 https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/datasets/consumerpriceinflation

iii https://lginform.local.gov.uk/reports/lgastandard?mod-metric=964&mod-period=11&mod-area=E92000001&mod-group=AllRegions_England&mod-type=namedComparisonGroup

iv https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/state-of-fire-and-rescue-2019-2.pdf

[v] Fire 0102 updated 14 May 2020 https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fire-statistics-data-tables#incidents-attended

[vi] https://www.local.gov.uk/inclusive-service-twenty-first-century-fire-and-rescue-service

vii

https://www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk/write/MediaUploads/NFCC%20Guidance%20publications/NFCC%20Position%20papers%202020/People/NFCC_Equality_and_Diversity_position_statement.pdf

FRA Response Times and Staffing.p

[viii] Somerset Technical Team report "FRA Response Times and Staffing", July 2020

[ix] Somerset Technical Team report "FRA Response Times and Staffing", July 2020

[x] https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/public-perceptions-of-fire-and-rescue-services-in-england-2019-report.pdf

[xi] ONS presentation "Fire & Rescue Productivity measure"

[xii] https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/state-of-fire-and-rescue-2019-2.pdf

[xiii] FIRE1202 comparison of 2010/11 to 2018/19 total audits https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fire-statistics-data-tables#fire-prevention-and-protection

[xiv] Based on 3% of 22,801 FF (assumed 50% station based) at 70% active time = 522,872 hours per year / crew of 4 https://lginform.local.gov.uk/reports/lgastandard?mod-metric=964&mod-period=1&mod-area=E92000001&mod-group=AllRegions_England&mod-type=namedComparisonGroup

[xv] Home Office statistics (FIRE1204) are considered for 2018/19 it can be seen that there were 33,265 satisfactory audits which took FRS in England 120,701 hours to complete therefore 3.63 hours per audit

[xvi] Estimate of 45 minutes per visit from NFCC, made an hour inc. travel time

Illustration of 65000 more HFSC.do

xvii

[xviii] https://business.leeds.ac.uk/downloads/download/187/aimtech_-_delivering_and_implementing_ict_in_the_fire_and_rescue_services_across_england_-_key_findings_and_recommendations

[xix] https://www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk/digital-and-data

[xx] NFCC Reserves Surveys 2018 and 2019 identified 18% of reserves for change programmes and a further 2% for specific digital enhancements

[xxi] CIPFA Fire and Rescue Services Statistics 2019 – 2% of operational pay bill inflated by 2% for 2020

[xxii] 50% of grossed up admin cost per http://www.fpsboard.org/images/PDF/Surveys/Aonreportfinal.pdf

xxiii

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/900766/Public_Service_Pensions_Consultation.pdf, page 31 para 2.58

[xxiv] 50% of grossed up admin cost per http://www.fpsboard.org/images/PDF/Surveys/Aonreportfinal.pdf

[xxv] 2 x grossed up admin costs per http://www.fpsboard.org/images/PDF/Surveys/Aonreportfinal.pdf

[xxvi] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-authority-covid-19-financial-impact-monitoring-information

[xxvii] Using pay including on costs of £41,100 = 1,352 FF

xxviii % of 22,108 FF per https://lginform.local.gov.uk/reports/lgastandard?mod-metric=964&mod-period=1&mod-area=E92000001&mod-group=AllRegions_England&mod-type=namedComparisonGroup

xxix HMICFRS State of Fire 2019 "In the 27 services that provided comparable data, the number of appropriately trained staff who were allocated to protection work had reduced from 655 in 2011 to 450 in 2019. Another problem the sector faces is the number of qualified protection staff who move to more lucrative posts in the private sector. With inspecting officer qualifications taking at least 18 months to complete, services don't have a quick fix to fill staffing shortfalls." (p87, para 3.)

xxx £30m / £2.367bn from Fire Core Spending Power spreadsheet

xxxi https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-01/0121/20200316FireSafetyBill2020IA.pdf

xxxii "Further Costs to the FRS" Page 48 of
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/901866/20200708__Fire_Safety_Order__2005__Uplift_Consultation_IA.pdf

xxxiii NFCC Plan on a Page 2020-21.docx

xxxiv CFOA GRANT CONDITIONS- FINAL

xxxv CPO Deliverables list for Grant Conditions, July 2020 filtered by "Red" funding status and no timeline allocated

xxxvi https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/gdp-deflators-at-market-prices-and-money-gdp-june-2020-quarterly-national-accounts

Fire Services Management Committee

16 October 2020

Workforce Report

Purpose of Report

To update the FSMC on matters in relation to fire service industrial relations and pension matters.

Summary

This briefly describes the main industrial relations and pension issues at present.

Recommendation:

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

Action

Officers are asked to note member comments

Contact officer:	Gill Gittins (industrial relations)	Clair Alcock (pensions)
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Fire Services Management Committee

16 October 2020

PENSIONS

Age Discrimination Remedy

1. The [formal HMT consultation](#) on remedying age discrimination was published on 16 July 2020 with a closing date of 11 October 2020. The paused employer cost-cap process will also resume.

2. The proposals are in two parts, the first is the retrospective effect of the current age discriminatory regulations and the proposals to rectify these, by allowing members to be returned to their former legacy schemes or to allow a choice to receive benefits based on the current Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) scheme if it is better to do so.

3. The proposals consult on two options on when the member might make the choice, this could be;

    1) Immediate Choice: The choice will be made during a twelve-month period following the end of the remedy period, this will be the same time right across public sector.

        OR

    2) Deferred Choice Underpin (DCU): All members will be returned to the legacy scheme at 1 April 2022 and the member can make a choice at retirement whether they wish to choose benefits from the reformed scheme.

4. Each of those options have pros and cons, under immediate choice, the choice is irrevocable once made and therefore in order to make it the member will need to be provided with robust information to make that choice. The consultation references 'schemes would have to develop online resources including benefit calculators for members to use to inform their decision.' This potentially introduces considerable risk to the member that they make the 'wrong' choice.

5. Under the DCU there is no risk to the member as they will be able to choose which option is better at retirement.

6. The consultation acknowledges that both options represent an administrative challenge, and this is especially true of the Firefighters Pension Scheme, given that the scheme is managed by each FRA and administered by 18 different administrators.

7. Within the response to HMT, we have requested clarity on the mechanism to recover employer contributions for the remedy period. The difference in employer contributuions between FPS 1992 and FPS 2015 is 7.4% per annum from 2015 based on the [2012](#) valuation and 8.5% per annum from 2019 based on the [2016](#) valuation. The preferred mechanism would be that these are recovered through employer contributions based on the 2020 valuation, as there would be considerable funding pressures if these were required to be paid in 2022/2023.

8. GAD valuations are not yet available in order to consider the cost of either option on employer contributions.

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9.   The second part of the HMT proposals are to rectify the age discrimination going forward and move all members into the reformed CARE schemes with effect of 1 April 2022.

10.   The background to the Age Discrimination Remedy along with the consultation documents are available on www.fpsregs.org[1]

11.   An [age discrimination information note](#) for stakeholders was published on 1 October 2020.

12.   An assessment of risk to both the FRA and member was considered the highest priority by the SAB, which was supported by both employee and employer members of the board.

13.   Illustrations of reputational risk are:

        a. Risk of inconsistency
        The arrangements for responsibility and funding of the scheme mean that some FRAs have less resources and knowledge than others, which will likely lead to inconsistencies of approach with regards to the levels of technology and information members are given to support their decisions

        b. Resources

        Available resources and knowledge to implement a complex choice system are likely to be lower than for a centrally administered and managed scheme.

14. For these reasons the SAB and the Employers response will be indicating a preference for Deferred Choice Underpin (DCU) as this is considered the option that provides most mitigation to the risks that have been identified.

Immediate Detriment Guidance

15.   Following the 2018 Court of Appeal judgment in Sargeant an interim order was made by the Employment Tribunal on **18 December 2019** which stated that claimants would be treated as satisfying the age criteria regardless of their actual age, thereby providing protection to those members to be treated as members of FPS 1992, as long as they met the other criteria, which was to have been in the scheme at 31 March 2012 and 31 March 2015.

        Pending the final determination of the issues of remedy, all existing Claimants who, by reason of their age would not satisfy paragraphs 12(2)(c), 12(3)(c), 13(e) or 14(e) of Schedule 2 to the 2014 English Regulations or the 2015 Welsh Regulations from 31st March 2015 are entitled to be treated as satisfying those paragraphs from that date.

16.   The SAB requested guidance on dealing with immediate events as per their [paper submitted to Home Office in March 2020.](#)

17.   On 21 August 2020, at the request of the Fire Brigades Union the Home Office issued a [note](#) directly to Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) via the finance leads headed "McCloud

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[1] http://www.fpsregs.org/index.php/legal-landscape/age-discrimination-remedy-sargeant

/ Sargeant ruling – Guidance on treatment of 'Immediate Detriment' cases" for both the Firefighters' and Police Pension Schemes.

18.   The note says that the guidance is informal guidance only and does not confirm on what basis FRAs may rely on the note for the purpose of making pension payments.

19.   It is understood that the legal position that underpins the application of the note is Section 61 of the Equality Act. That power is currently being contested in the courts under the FRA defence to age discrimination and legal advice will be needed to determine what that means for FRAs which has been requested by LGA on behalf of FRAs.

20.   The LGA have asked for further clarification about several technical areas on the application of the note, including paragraph 5.13 that suggests employer contributions for the remedy period would need to be repaid, this could potentially lead to severe funding pressures.

KEY CURRENT WIDER WORKFORCE ISSUES

Pay 2020

21.   At the time of the last FSMC meeting a pay claim had been put forward by the employees' side of the NJC for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services (covering firefighters to area managers).It did not seek a specific figure, referring instead to seeking a substantial pay increase and a number of factors it believed should be taken into account including an increase of £4,091 at firefighter level to restore wages in comparison to inflation (CPI) 'over a decade of austerity' and additionally increased pay for any changes in working practices sought by the employers.

22.   The employers' side has since undertaken three well attended 'virtual' consultation meetings with local Chairs and chief fire officers on the content of the claim and the current position in respect of affordability. The outcomes from the consultation meetings informed the employers' side decision to make an offer of 2.0% on basic pay and continual professional development payments, backdated to 1 July 20. The Fire Brigades Union then consulted its membership. Agreement was subsequently reached within the NJC at 2.0%. However, the FBU has been clear that it will now be focusing on lobbying and campaigning in support of increased pay going forward.

23.   In addition, a 2.75% claim has been put forward by the employees' side of the NJC for Brigade Managers (chief, deputy chief and assistant chief fire officers or equivalents). The employers' side of that NJC decided to consult Chairs separately on this matter and discussions with Chairs indicated they were content for this to be done through correspondence. That consultation is on-going.

Inclusive Fire Service Group

24. The Inclusive Fire Service Group (IFSG) is an NJC for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services led group. Its membership however is wider and includes the National Employers, NFCC, FBU, FOA and the FRSA. It is unique in that it comprises national employer and employee representation, senior management and trade unions. It considers matters such as equality, diversity, inclusion and cultural issues including bullying and harassment in the fire service with the aim of securing improvement.

25. Having undertaken a detailed assessment of the positions in the fire service it issued a number of improvement strategies, which were widely welcomed with virtually all services indicating their support and providing, as requested, timescales within which they expected to see improvement. The IFSG resolved to monitor and measure use of the improvement strategies at a point when they should be embedded into each service.

26. Members will be aware that this has recently included:

    26.1 an online survey of FRAs - to which all 49 services responded, to understand the extent of use and impact of the improvement strategies;
    26.2 employee focus groups to capture the experiences of employees (who identified as at least one of the following protected characteristic groups: BAME, LGBT and Female) on a range of equality, diversity and cultural issues and views going forward; and
    26.3 workshops - with FRS equality and diversity officers and local union representatives to capture their experiences, comparisons and views going forward.

27. The intention had been for the outcomes to be considered within the IFSG towards the end of March/early April, a full report issued to FRAs and an approach going forward. Members will appreciate the COVID-19 situation has inevitably slowed down other work. However, the IFSG has now met and we expect a full report to be issued to FRAs later this month.

LGA and NFCC Core Code of Ethics

28. The HMICFRS State of Fire & Rescue report 2019 recommended that by December 2020, the Local Government Association and the National Fire Chiefs Council, should produce a Code of Ethics for fire and rescue services, which should be adopted by every service in England.

29. In initial feedback to HMICFRS, both the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and the Local Government Association (following discussion with members) indicated the potentially inadvertent difficulty in imposing a single prescriptive code, with no local flexibility, upon FRAs and FRSs. There should also be recognition that most services have an established ethical framework, and where these are well embedded, the culture has improved, compared with FRSs that had not embedded such frameworks.

30. Accordingly, joint work to respond to the recommendation has focused on a Core Code of Ethics (Core Code), which reflects best practice principles and has been designed to underpin the way we serve our communities, carry out our role and work together. It is intended to become the common foundation across all services in England. However, to

recognise the differing positions within FRSs currently, as well as differing governance arrangements, it has been written as a Core Code. This means that whilst all the principles within the Core Code should be adopted and embedded within each FRS, it also has the flexibility to add to (but not detract from) those principles at local level. This will help local FRAs/FRSs to reflect their local values, behaviours, and governance arrangement. Examples include where:

- • an FRS is part of a county council and is likely to still have obligations placed upon it to evidence it also complies with the council's code.
- • an FRS has a well-developed local ethical framework and/or related policies, which should be reviewed against the Core Code.

31. A joint consultation on the Core Code commenced on the 5th October with a closing date of Monday 2 November 2020. It is open to all interested parties, though within FRAs/FRSs it targets Chairs, CFO/CEs and HR Directors / Strategic Leads.

32. Members will also wish to be aware that the Fire Standards Board is now ready to consult on a related Fire Standard.

Pension Scheme Transitional Protection Arrangements Discrimination Cases

33. These cases concern the issue of whether the transitional protections in the 2015 Fire Pension Scheme (FPS), which provide protections based on age allowing older members to remain in their former final salary scheme, are age discriminatory (other claims were made but it is the age discrimination claim which is the primary one).

34. As they were named as respondents in the case, Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) had to submit a defence to the legal challenge. This defence continues to be managed collectively on behalf of the FRAs by the LGA under the auspices of the National Employers and decisions have been taken by a central steering group which is comprised of a number of legal and HR advisers from varying types of fire and rescue services across the UK, the Advisory Forum legal adviser, employers' secretariat, and from the LGA its Corporate Legal Adviser and a Senior Employment Law Adviser.

35. The Court of Appeal found that the transitional protections unlawfully discriminated on age and the case has now returned to the Employment Tribunal for it to determine remedy. Members will be aware that in common with its approach to a request from Government, the Supreme Court rejected the fire authorities' application to appeal.

36. A case management preliminary hearing on remedy was held on 18 December 2019. An interim Order was agreed by all parties and the detail is contained in circular EMP/8/19. The Order does not bind the parties beyond the limited interim period before the final declaration.

37. Paragraph 2 of the Order in effect provides that pending the final determination of all of the remedy issues, those that brought claims in England and Wales (the claimants) are entitled to be treated as if they remained in the in 1992 FPS.

38.   The Order anticipated that the final determination on the remedy issue in regards to membership of the 1992 FPS should be resolved in 2020, although that is expected to be affected by what the postion is on the FRA's Schedule 22 appeal (see paragraph 31 below). It should be noted that even when we have a final determination on that issue it may be some time before this part of the remedy can be put into effect for all claimants. Furthermore, there may be other issues relating to remedies to be resolved, for example in regards to claims for injury to feelings. It should also be noted that the Order does not cover those who did not bring claims (non-claimants). However, discussions are taking place on how to provide a remedy for those non-claimants as appropriate.

39.   In addition, the FRAs still have the live and separate appeal in relation to their potential defence under Schedule 22 (which is that the FRAs had no choice but to follow the Government's legislation) which again was fully considered with the Steering Committee and legal representatives. The appeal has now been listed for 16 December 2020.

40.   Since the outset, the position of FRAs that any costs arising from these cases should be met by governments has been made clear. Work continues with legal representatives on appropriate approaches to reinforce that position. Most recently, a formal letter has been sent to government on behalf of FRAs. The same action has been taken in respect of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland as the National Employers is a UK-wide body. Responses are awaited.

Defence of other categories of claims

41.   Another related category of employment tribunal claims has been issued by the Fire Brigades Union against fire and rescue authorities on behalf of firefighters. In short, the claims relate to members of the 2006 Scheme who were not transferred to the 2015 Scheme (and never will be), which they claim would have provided them with better benefits.

42.   We approached FRAs to seek their views on whether they would like the LGA, along with the Steering Committee to coordinate the defence of the new claims on their behalf, as we have done for the original claims. This would be on a cost-sharing basis, based on headcount, as they are for the original claims. The overwhelming majority of respondents were in favour and defences have now been submitted on behalf of the FRAs who have to date received claims.

43.   Furthermore, another related category of employment tribunal cases has emerged. These have been issued by Slater and Gordon solicitors against fire and rescue authorities on behalf of firefighters. Slater and Gordon is working with the Fire Officers Association. In short, the claims are of the same type as the main claims brought by the FBU on behalf of their members in that they allege that the transfer of younger firefighters to the 2015 pension scheme amounts to age discrimination. We anticipate the claims have been brought in order to protect these particular claimants' position in relation to any injury to feelings award.

44.   We again asked FRAs if they would like the LGA, along with the Steering Committee made up of representatives from fire authorities, to coordinate the defence of these new claims on their behalf, as we have done for the original claims. The overwhelming majority of respondents were in favour and we are therefore taking this forward and submitting defences.

Matthews & others v Kent & Medway Towns Fire Authority & others

45.   This case relates to application of the Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000 to retained duty system employees. Those Regulations were brought into force to implement the EU Part-time Workers Directive.

46.   Members may recall that following a protracted legal process up to and including the House of Lords judgment, settlement agreements were reached in respect of terms and conditions in 2015 with both the RFU (now FRSA) and the FBU in regard to the many thousands of Employment Tribunal cases relating to potential discrimination under those Regulations. The LGA acted for FRAs through the auspices of the National Employers on the basis of a cost-sharing arrangement with FRAs similar to the arrangements in place for the legal cases already referred to in this report.

47.   Defence of the pensions aspect of the case was led by central government. The House of Lords judgment allowed those who were serving during the period 1 July 2000 (the date the Regulations came into force) to the date on which they elected to join the 2006 Scheme, to have special provisions which generally reflect the rules of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme 1992 ("FPS 1992"). An options exercise took place to provide for those who qualified for membership of the modified Scheme, to elect to join by no later than 30 September 2015.

48.   More recently, work has again had to take place on the pensions aspect of this case. This is because of a European Court of Justice judgment involving part-time judges (O'Brien) which in effect held that remedy could extend back before the Part-time Worker Regulations were implemented in July 2000. This also impacts on the fire service as the impact of the judgment and its interpretation of part-time workers' rights applies across all employers.

49.   Consequently, together with legal representatives, we are in discussions with the government's legal department and legal representatives for the FBU and FRSA. As you would expect, we have also raised concern that this will be unbudgeted expenditure for FRAs, should central government not provide them with the necessary funding.

Fit for the Future

50.   Members will recall receiving updates on the development of an agreed improvement narrative, *Fit for the Future,* which includes improvement objectives that will give a national sense of direction to the future of Fire and Rescue Services in England.

51. The NFCC and the National Employers (England) working in partnership have developed the narrative and objectives based on analysis of the evidence available from a wide variety of sources, including the recommendations of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry (GTI) and the outcomes of inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS). This evidence has been brought together, analysed to identify themes and has led to the development of the improvement objectives within the document. This analysis will be ongoing as more evidence becomes available, e.g. learning from the COVID-19 pandemic, and the objectives may develop over time. The work should be regarded as a system that reflects the current position, based on current evidence.

52. LGA representatives on the employers' side of the NJC for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services, referred to in the document as National Employers (England), have endorsed the direction of travel and are content to continue to work in partnership with the NFCC on this matter. The LGA's Fire Service Management Committee has also endorsed the direction of travel and resolved that the LGA be directly included and support the Fit for the Future approach, becoming the third partner alongside National Employers (England) and the NFCC and was also content to move to wider consultation..

53. The partnership is just in the process of finalising an online process to capture stakeholder views.

54. Discussions between employer and trade union representatives, undertaken by the National Employers (England), will also begin as the outcomes of such work will also be relevant to them.

55. In addition, the work could also inform formulation of any business case to government on pay funding.

Coronavirus

56. The National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services issued a circular in respect of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) which provided sources of further information across the UK and confirmed pay arrangements should an employee be required to self-isolate or be placed in quarantine.

57. Employer advice has also been issued in respect of quarantine on return from travel abroad.

58. Members will also be aware that both sides of the National Joint Council and the NFCC have developed a series of tripartite statements on additional areas of work that firefighters can undertake to alleviate pressure on ambulances services and other partners during the COVID-19 pandemic.

59. Since agreement on the principles document on 26 March a number of additional work areas have been identified:

Fire Services Management Committee

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- ambulance driving and patient/ambulance personnel support
- delivery of essential items to vulnerable persons
- movement of bodies (COVID-19)
- face fitting for masks to be used by frontline NHS and clinical care staff working with COVID-19 patients;
- delivery of PPE and other medical supplies to NHS and care facilities;
- assisting in taking samples for COVID-19 antigen testing;
- driving ambulance transport not on blue lights (excluding known COVID-19 patients) to outpatients appointments or to receive urgent care;
- driving instruction by FRS driver trainers to deliver training for non-Service personnel to drive ambulances (not on blue lights)
- assembly of single use face shields for the NHS and care work front line staff;
- packing/repacking food supplies for vulnerable people;
- Known or suspected COVID-19 patients: transfer to and from Nightingale hospitals under emergency response (blue light) or through non-emergency patient transfer (not on blue lights)
- Non COVID-19 patients: transfer to and from Nightingale hospitals under emergency response (blue light) or through non-emergency patient transfer (not on blue lights) – this includes recovering and recuperating patients no longer infected with COVID-19
- Delivery of pre-designed training packages on Infection Prevention and Control, including hand, hygiene, PPE 'donning' & 'doffing' guidance and procedures; and supporting the care home staff testing i.e. to train care home staff to train others according to the principle of 'train the trainers.'
- Delivery of pre-designed training packages on Infection Prevention and Control, including hand, hygiene, PPE 'donning' & 'doffing' guidance and procedures; and supporting the care home staff testing i.e. direct to care home staff.

60. Where an employee chooses to volunteer to facilitate such work, the NJC for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services has agreed such work will be regarded as part of the core job. This ensures there are no potential pension/compensation complications, which encompasses all Grey Book employees undertaking such work.

61. National best practice risk assessments have also been developed for each of the activities.

Implications for Wales

62. Each of the wider workforce matters in this report have the same implications for Wales as for England and we are working with WLGA, Welsh FRAs and FRSs as appropriate. The exception in this report is the Core Code of Ethics, which applies in England only. The WLGA is one of the four employer stakeholder bodies on the NJC for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services.

63. The HMT consultation on age discrimination applies across all the devolved Fire and Rescue Authorities, however separate responses will be made. References in this report to the age discrimination consultation response are in relation to English FRAs only, Wales has its own advisory board who will be responding separately to the government consultation on reform, albeit they will also be indicating a preference for DCU.

64. The immediate detriment matters raised are the same in Wales where the matter of Section 61 of the Equality Act also applies. Welsh Government are dealing with immediate detriment cases arising from the guidance.

Building Safety update

Purpose of report

For discussion.

Summary

This report updates Fire Services Management Committee members on the LGA's building safety related work since its last meeting.

Recommendation

That members note and comment on the LGA's building safety related work.

Actions

Officers to incorporate members' views in the LGA's ongoing building safety related work.

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Building Safety update

Summary of events since the previous meeting

1. Since the Committee's last meeting the LGA has continued to work with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and the Home Office to support building safety reform and the remediation of dangerous buildings. The Joint Inspection Team has resumed inspections. The Building Safety Bill has been published in draft form and is now subject to pre-legislative scrutiny by the Housing Communities and Local Government Select Committee. The Fire Safety Bill has passed its third reading in the House of Commons and has now been introduced in the Lords. The LGA is participating in an officer-level task and finish group looking at the timing of the Bill's commencement. A consultation on measures to be included in secondary legislation under the Fire Safety Order, including the implementation of recommendations from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, has been published.

Remediation

Progress

2. In the three years since Grenfell Tower fire fewer than half the 458 buildings with dangerous aluminium composite material (ACM) cladding systems have been fully remediated; nearly a fifth have yet to even begin work.

3. As reported to the Fire Commission last month, between the end of April and the end of July only 6 social sector buildings and 1 private building had completed remediation work. No new remediation work had begun in the social sector and only 8 buildings had started remediation in the private sector.

4. Covid-19 was a factor in this. At the end of July work on 19 buildings remained paused while work on a further 60 had restarted after being interrupted (work on 50 buildings had not been interrupted by Covid-19 and the position on 19 was unknown).

5. MHCLG statistics show that 14 private sector blocks began work in August and 3 of those previously underway finished work. 1 social sector block began work and five completed.

6. While this is an improvement compared to previous months, progress on remediation remains worryingly slow in the private sector. Remediation has finished on 83 of the 155 social sector blocks, the cladding has been removed from or work has started on 63 and a further 9 have plans in place. However, only 32 private high-rise residential buildings with ACM have completed remediation. A further 177 buildings are yet to be remediated; of these, 88 have not begun work

7. These figures are placed in a very worrying context by the early data on non-ACM remediation. MHCLG has now begun publishing statistics on applications to the non-ACM remediation fund. The headline figures are that 2,784 buildings have registered for the fund. The department is assessing their eligibility and by 25th September 2020, 138 decisions had been made, with 65 proceeding with a full application and 73 shown to be ineligible and withdrawn by registrants. Reasons for ineligibility include height, no leaseholders present or social housing where owners do not meet criteria – in other words it is likely that nearly 3,000 buildings have non-ACM cladding systems requiring remediation.

8. The Government is funding most ACM removal, but its £1 billion non-ACM cladding fund is being operated on a first-come-first-served basis and is likely to cover only about one third of cases. Councils are struggling to access it and the Ministry has been clear that the fund is only supposed to help social housing providers if they would face financial viability issues without that help (these were asked to register with the fund prior to 31 July).

9. There is a separate Social Sector Grants element of the Building Safety Fund for funding equivalent to the value of remediation work *which would otherwise be charged to leaseholders in those buildings*. This grant funding is specifically for social sector providers whose remediation costs are *not* deemed unaffordable or a threat to financial viability. The deadline for claims is 31 December 2020. Funding guidance and supporting documents can be downloaded here. Any questions can go directly to the team via BSFsocialsector@communities.gov.uk.

10. The LGA has already criticised these funding arrangements and will continue to call for central government to cover social sector remediation costs in full.

11. While councils' and fire authorities' overriding concern will be the safety of residents, those living in the affected blocks face mounting costs from interim fire safety measures such as waking watch. There is growing evidence (for example here and here) that increasing numbers of residents in high rise blocks are finding it difficult or impossible to sell, re-mortgage or staircase due to the reluctance of finance companies to lend money without the provision of an EWS1 form (which certifies that the cladding system is safe), the shortage of surveyors able to sign off EWS1 forms and the reluctance of the insurance industry to provide those who can do the work with professional indemnity insurance. There is also evidence that building insurance costs are rising. Not only are these issues this slowly bankrupting leaseholders, if unchecked they must sooner or later have a negative effect on the housing market.

12. The best solution to all of these problems is to remove unsafe cladding systems. However, at the current rate that will take around 20 years and, in the meantime, there is a significant risk of psychological problems for all residents, financial problems for

leaseholders and a possible knock-on effect to the economy without government intervention.

13. The Minister wrote to councils with buildings that have no plan to start remediation work this year on 31 July 2020 asking them to consider enforcement action. He also wrote to building owners and fire services. He wants to see fire services and councils taking a case-conferencing approach to these buildings.

Joint Inspection Team

14. As members will recall the LGA is hosting the Joint Inspection Team (JIT) to support councils to use their enforcement powers under the Housing Act and the Housing Health and Safety Rating System.

15. The team has resumed inspections following a hiatus caused by covid 19 and has recruited its full complement of staff. It is inspecting roughly two buildings a month, twice the previous rate. At the time of writing the JIT has inspected 11 buildings in total and has several other inspections pending. A number of improvement notices have been issued by the local authorities that have been supported by the team. No tribunal hearings have taken place as yet.

Data collection on external wall systems

16. In July 2019 councils were asked by MHCLG to collect data on the external wall systems on all high-rise residential buildings in England. MHCLG had hoped that the exercise would be complete by March 2020, although it was recognised that for some councils with large numbers of blocks this would be a challenge – one that has been exacerbated by Covid-19 issues. We understand that 25 per cent of the data remains uncollected.

17. MHCLG is also looking at how to collect data on buildings between 11m and 18m. No easy way to do this has been identified so far.

Public Accounts Committee Report

18. The Public Accounts Committee has now [reported](#) on the progress of remediation. The LGA's written evidence, which was essentially the same as that submitted to the Housing Communities and Local Government (HCLG) committee, and which the Committee received an update on at its last meeting.

19. The committee has recommended that MHCLG should:
    19.1. within six months: a) be working with the new Building Safety Regulator to begin vigorous enforcement action against any building owners whose remediation projects are not on track to complete by the end of 2021; and b) begin publishing monthly updates of projected completion dates for all remaining high-rise buildings

with ACM cladding, to increase transparency of progress without identifying individual buildings.

19.2. within three months: a) publish its impact assessment of the safety risks and financial impacts on private leaseholders and social landlords (including knock-on impacts on house building and maintenance of existing stock) arising from only funding a fraction of the estimated costs of replacing non-ACM cladding from high-rise blocks; and b) write to the Committee, outlining its assessment of the risks to public money of committing all £1 billion of the Building Safety Fund by the end of March 2021, and how it will monitor and mitigate these risks.

19.3. working with the Care Quality Commission and local authorities, should make it a priority for its forthcoming data collection exercise to identify any care homes below 18 metres which have dangerous cladding. The Department should write to the Committee by the end of 2020 setting out progress on this and on its wider data collection.

19.4. write to the Committee within three months, setting out what specific steps it will take to provide greater transparency for residents throughout the application and remediation process, and how it will ensure that building owners meet a standard of service in communication with residents.

19.5. ensure that cross-sector work to resolve issues with the External Wall Fire Review process progress at pace. As part of this cross-sector work, the Department must ensure that professionals can acquire indemnity insurance, and leaseholders are not facing escalating insurance premiums. The Department should write to the Committee within three months setting out its assurance that these processes are operating effectively.

19.6. within the next three months, assess the capacity of specialist fire safety skills within the sector and set out what the impact is on delivery of its timetables for the removal and replacement of unsafe cladding. It should include in this assessment options to tackle the skills shortage so that this does not become a barrier to remediation work continuing at pace.

20. The LGA's [response](#) to the report urged the Government to act on its recommendations without delay.

Updated NFCC guidance on simultaneous evacuation

21. On 1 October the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) launched updated [guidance on simultaneous evacuation](#), which:
   21.1. advises consultation with residents and leaseholders to explore cost/benefit options.

21.2. emphasises the need to consider the installation of common fire alarms where measures are now, or are likely to be in place for the longer term.

21.3. provides a clear distinction between waking watch and evacuation management as separate roles.

21.4. emphasises that residents can carry out waking watches and/or evacuation management duties so long as they are appropriately trained.

21.5. It also provides new definitions:

21.5.1. Short-term: the time required to formulate a longer-term remediation plan, as soon as practically possible and no longer than 12 months; and

21.5.2. Temporary: non-permanent measures implemented to mitigate an unacceptable risk in a building, as an interim measure, adopted for the safety of residents while works to rectify the identified fire safety failings are carried out.

Fire Protection Board

22. As members will recall, the Home Office has established the Fire Protection Board, membership of which includes the LGA and NFCC. The Board oversaw a Building Risk Review exercise to establish the effectiveness of interim measures at buildings with ACM cladding and whether the relevant fire and rescue service (FRS) had plans in place to deal with a fire in the relevant buildings.

23. The Board is now overseeing a wider programme of reviewing the risk in other buildings over 18m. Letters detailing this work went to CFOs with copies to Fire and Rescue Authority Chairs earlier this summer. This work is ahead of trajectory.

24. To support the work of the Board, £10 million of funding has been made available, divided between central funding to the NFCC and individual fire and rescue services, in addition to funding announced in the budget to support protection (£20 million).

Reform

Fire Safety Bill

25. The Bill has now passed its second reading in the House of Lords. The LGA has welcomed the Bill.

26. The Bill will require Responsible Persons to review their fire risk assessments. This should be relatively straightforward where the building has no cladding system (EWS) or where the duty-holder has evidence to show that the cladding system is safe. However, where a more complex review is necessary, those currently undertaking fire risk assessments are unlikely to have either the specific competence or the professional indemnity insurance to cover EWS.

27. The Home Office has established a task and finish group on the commencement of the Bill. Officers of the LGA and NFCC are on this group, as are a number of other stakeholders including the Fire Sector Federation and the Fire Industry Association. The Group has made recommendations to the Home Office on how to commence the Bill in a way that does not leave duty-holders unable to meet their obligations and we anticipate that the Government will take these forward. This is likely to involve statutory guidance.

Fire Safety Consultation

28. The Government is consulting on proposals to:
    28.1. strengthen the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and improve compliance.
    28.2. implement the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 Report recommendations that require a change in law to place new requirements on building owners or managers of multi-occupied residential buildings, mostly high-rise buildings.
    28.3. strengthen the regulatory framework for how building control bodies consult with Fire and Rescue Authorities and the handover of fire safety information.

29. The consultation closes on 12 October. A draft of the LGA's response has been circulated to lead members of the FSMC, other relevant LGA boards and the Grenfell Task and Finish Group.

Building Safety Bill

30. The Bill was published in draft form before the summer recess and is to be subject to pre-legislative scrutiny by the HCLG committee.

31. The Bill establishes a building safety regulator within the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to:
    31.1. Implement the new, more stringent, regulatory regime for higher-risk buildings.
    31.2. Oversee the safety and performance of all buildings.
    31.3. Assist and encourage competence among the built environment industry, and registered building inspectors.

32. The implementation of the new regime will see the HSE, councils and fire services form a new, close relationship as council building control services and fire services deliver the regime for higher-risk buildings (Environmental Health services may also be involved). It leaves the HSE and local regulators to work out the practical details but places all three under a duty to cooperate and gives the HSE the power to direct councils and fire services. The latter power is to be used only in exceptional circumstances and the Bill provides safeguards to prevent it becoming a default option.

33. In practice the regime for higher-risk buildings is expected to involve multi-disciplinary teams not dissimilar to the Joint Inspection Team which LGA currently hosts and MHCLG funds.

34. The HSE is very keen to engage with the sector and we are facilitating this. Although we have a very good relationship with the HSE, the scale of reform and its complexity make engagement a challenge.

35. In addition, the LGA and Local Authority Building Control are represented on the Joint Regulators Group, an HSE-chaired body advising on policy and implementation, which has been working on the issue for a couple of years.

36. The LGA's evidence to the committee argues that, subject to the necessary secondary legislation being passed and sufficient funds provided - the Bill provides the strong regulatory system needed to deliver an effective system of building safety. Nevertheless, the LGA has expressed the following concerns:
    36.1. The difficulty of funding building safety measures without bankrupting leaseholders.
    36.2. The conflict between the new building safety system and the Government's planning white paper.
    36.3. The scope of the Bill, the speed at which its scope can be expanded and the constraints on its expansion.
    36.4. How the charging provisions in the Bill will work and set-up costs for the Building Safety Regulator.
    36.5. The alignment of this Bill with the Fire Safety Bill.
    36.6. The adequacy of the product safety provisions.
    36.7. The limited removal of competition in building control.

37. Lord Porter gave evidence to the committee on behalf of the LGA on 21 September.

Letter to Minister

38. The lead members of the Fire Services Management Committee wrote to Lord Greenhalgh, the Minister for Fire and Building Safety, to ask that officials discuss with the LGA measures to ensure that extension of Permitted Development Rights does not undermine fire safety. The letter is attached at **Appendix A**.

Implications for Wales

39. Building regulations and fire and rescue services are devolved responsibilities of the Welsh Assembly Government, and the main implications arising from the recommendations of the Hackitt Review and the government's response to it are on building regulations and fire safety in England. However, the Welsh government has announced that it will be making the changes recommended in the report to the

regulatory system in Wales, and the LGA has been keeping in contact to ensure the WLGA is kept informed of the latest developments in England.

Financial Implications

40. Although the LGA has set up the Joint Inspection Team, the cost of doing so is being met by MHCLG. Other work arising from this report will continue to be delivered within the planned staffing budget, which includes an additional fixed term post in the safer communities team to support the LGA's building safety work.

Next steps

41. Officers to continue to support the sector's work to keep residents safe and reform the buildings safety system, as directed by members.

Appendix A

Lord Greenhalgh – Minister of State
Home Office
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

13 August 2020

Dear Minister

When you met the lead members of the LGA Fire Safety Management Committee on 20 July, we raised with you the concerns we have about the effect of expanding Permitted Development Rights (PDR) on fire safety.

You said you would consider the fire safety implications of PDR in more detail, for which we are very grateful.

I am therefore writing to set out our concerns in more detail, to suggest two possible approaches to a solution and to ask that your officials consider this approach with appropriate stakeholders. The experience of the Joint Inspection Team suggests that conversions of offices to housing has produced some buildings with a wide range of defects. We are concerned that conversion of commercial premises to multiple residential buildings under PDR has already increased the number of buildings with fire safety issues and that an extension of PDR could inadvertently lead to a further increase at a time when the regulatory system is struggling to deal with those already built.

The planning stage is an opportunity for the fire and rescue service to raise concerns about a building and engage with the developer at an early stage, including through building control bodies. One key advantage is that it is easier for regulators to work with developers if engagement takes place at this early stage, with their comments acknowledged, which can avoid the need for abortive works or subsequent enforcement action.

Changes made under PDR are still subject to the Building Regulations and work that complies with the Building Regulations should comply with the Fire Safety Order. However, the Building Regulations only apply to the work being done to the building; existing parts of the building that are not directly impacted are not covered. This can mean that, for example, a shop converted into flats containing existing walls that do not meet the fire compartmentation standards that would normally apply to a new building of the same layout and purpose, not being addressed. Additionally, where a PDR commences above an existing building there is no requirement to enhance the fire safety measures in that existing part of the building, this places the parts of the PDR at an increased risk from fire developing in the existing building below.

One possible solution to these issues could be an amendment to the Building Regulations, under the Fire Safety Bill or the Building Safety Bill, requiring the whole of a building converted to

residential purpose under PDR to comply with the Building Regulations, rather than just that part subject to actual building work.

Such an approach would encourage early engagement between developers and building control bodies and ensure the final residential building meets modern fire safety standards, without impacting on the government's aims in extending PDR.

An alternative solution could be to require the developer to consult with the fire and rescue service if PDR was being applied and for any PDR conversion to residential to be accompanied with a fire statement. We anticipate that some change will be required to adapt the Building Safety Bill to the proposed changes to planning law and suggest this offers an opportunity to address the fire safety challenges raised by PDR conversions at the same time.

I am therefore writing to suggest that your officials consider these approaches in conjunction with the LGA, the National Fire Chiefs Council and Local Authority Building Control and Approved Inspectors.

Thank you once again for your time on 20 July and of course officers here will be happy to discuss the matter further with your officials.

Sent on behalf of:

Councillor Ian Stephens – Chair of the Fire Services Management Committee

Fiona Twycross AM – Vice-Chair of the Fire Services Management Committee

Councillor Nick Chard – Deputy-Chairman of the Fire Services Management Committee

Councillor Keith Aspden – Deputy-Chair of the Fire Services Management Committee

NFCC
National Fire
Chiefs Council

The professional voice of the UK Fire & Rescue Service

Date:	16 October 2020
Title:	National Fire Chiefs Council update to the Fire Service Management Committee
Author:	NFCC
Presented by:	Roy Wilsher
For information or decision:	For Information

1. Summary

1.1. This report provides progress updates on the work activity the National Fire Chiefs Council NFCC). Each of the sections of this report provide updates in relation to the various areas of activity.

2. Content Management

2.1. Three pieces of National Operational Guidance (NOG) have been published:

- *Incident command (Third Edition, Version One)*

- *Operations (Third Edition, Version One)*

- *Foundation for Environmental Protection (First Edition, Version One)*

2.2. Current guidance reviews include:

- Review of *National Operational Guidance: Subsurface, height structures and confined spaces (1st Edition)* Draft completed – expected release for consultation September 2020

- Review of *National Operational Guidance: Performing rescues (2nd Edition).* Draft completed undergoing peer review – expected release for consultation October 2020

- Review of *National Operational Guidance Training specification: Operations (Third Edition, Version one)* Completed submission to Operations Committee September 2020

2.3. A successful Home Office bid coordinated by the NFCC Operational Communications lead Darryl Keen has been approved and two additional staff have been appointed to provide support to fire and rescue services for the Multi Agency Incident Transfer roll out, they will also assist with other communication guidance, training, support and engagement.

2.4. Fire service manuals are currently being reviewed as part of the ongoing legacy review. Initial review of documents relating to ongoing NOG review work have been completed.

3. National Operational Learning

3.1. National Operational Learning (NOL) have received 67 cases since March 2020, following which 45 cases have been submitted to the National Operational Learning User Group (NOLUG). This has resulted in 24 information notes issued to services and 7 recommendations for changes to NOG.

4. Community Risk Programme

4.1. The Community Risk Programme is continuing to make good progress with the Definition of Risk Project concluding its virtual 'Roadshow' over the summer during which it consulted with Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) to review the draft Conceptualisation of Risk Framework. 47 FRSs signed up to the roadshow and 44 responses were received. The feedback from Services was largely positive and the framework was approved at Programme Board in July 2020.

4.2. The Home Office has paused its work on the revised Economic & Social Cost of Fire whilst Spending Review work is progressed. Work will start again after the review submission and whilst the Home Office has shared its approach to its work, we are yet to receive a completion date for it.

5. People Programme

5.1. The progression of the Leadership project has run smoothly through COVID-19, with very little disruption. As part of the improvement money NFCC has secured from the Home Office this year, £250,000 has been allocated to support the project and this will ensure the project can conduct the necessary research and build capacity to drive the work forwards.

5.2. The inaugural Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) project board meeting took place 3 July 2020. It was agreed to commence consultation on the NFCC People Impact Assessment template which had been developed prior to the project boards establishment. The consultation will also offer access to expertise in undertaking impact assessment for FRSs that have not yet incorporated these processes into their organisations. There was a good uptake from fire and rescue staff to be a contributor under each work stream. An initial piece of work has commenced to produce a number of Equal Access and Provision of Service documents with the initial focus on BAME, Neurodiversity, LGBTQ+ and Gypsy, Traveller and Roma groups. It is anticipated the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) will take an interest in FRSs consideration of service delivery to these groups and so these documents should significantly support FRSs in ensuring they arrangements or an action plan in place.

5.3. Following the discussion with Chief Fire Officers in June 2020 on the challenges and direction in the area of competencies and qualifications, the programme ran a survey socialising some problems statements and seeking agreement on the direction required by the project to address these challenges. The results of this survey did indicate a good level of consensus on the matter and these findings supported a project scoping meeting that took place in September 2020.

5.4. Working closely with twenty seven Services, the rep bodies (FBU and FRSA) and the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education the apprenticeship project has overseen the review of the Operational Firefighter Apprenticeship ensuring it is mapped to both NOS and NOG, and in line with recommendations for the GTI report. The revised apprenticeship standard will be available for use by November 2020. The funding band for this apprenticeship will also be reviewed in this process.

5.5.   The Fire Safety Engineer (degree level) apprenticeship was submitted to Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education in July and will be available to use by October 2020. Working closely with the IFE, the apprenticeship trailblazer group have successfully brought the apprenticeship EPA and the Engineering Council requirements together using the Professional discussion element of the apprenticeship EPA to meet the needs of the apprenticeship and the Engineering Council requirements for Incorporated Engineer (IENG) membership.

6. Digital and Data Programme

6.1.   The revised Digital and Data strategy has been approved and will soon be published on ukfrs.com.

6.2.   A key area of current focus is the new national data hub which is proposed to consist of a centralised approach to governance, collation and analytics of data that will include:

- A scalable technical solution that will standardise the way that data can be shared, accessed and interrogated

- A central analytics function working across the NFCC portfolio to identify, specify, capture and aggregate relevant local datasets at the national level, providing analysis to determine trends and insight that informs local and national decision making

- A common approach to data governance

6.3.   The pandemic presented an opportunity to streamline the way in which COVID-19 data is collected, interrogated and accessed, and is serving as a discrete case study to test the proof of concept. By end of September 2020, all COVID-19 data collection will be funnelled through the platform which leverages existing FRS technology to prove the concept. This will reduce the burden on local data teams, standardise data entry, provide a single national view of the landscape, and provide common BI dashboards for all stakeholders to access the data.

6.4.   Building on the investment, success and functionality of the web platform and cloud database developed for National Operational Guidance, ukfrs.com has now been developed to become the main hub for all products established through the NFCC portfolio. The main homepage now serves as a hub to access all available products, currently categorised by programme.

7. Prevention Programme

7.1.   With uplift funding from the Home Office secured, scoping of the Prevention Programme will now begin.

8. Building Safety Programme

8.1.   The NFCC Building Safety Programme (BSP) Team have reviewed both the Fire Safety Consultation and draft Building Safety Bill in depth and are working towards submissions on behalf of NFCC. To this end, the Team organised a series of eight workshops to run from 12 August to 2 September 2020 to brief FRS staff on the content of the documents, what this could mean for FRSs, and to gather views and discussion from attendees which can then be used to inform the final submission with over 45 different FRSs participating.

8.2. Whilst the Team are largely pleased with the proposals contained in the Fire Safety Consultation, we will be continuing to work alongside colleagues in the Home Office Fire Safety Unit to ensure additional improvements from FRSs are included and remaining issues are ironed out. Furthermore, NFCC believes that the Building Safety Bill is not strong enough in its current form, especially due to the continuation of non-worsening provisions, which still have not been addressed despite being raised in Dame Judith's Interim Report in 2017.

8.3. NFCC coordinated the second review of the *Guidance: to support a temporary change to a simultaneous evacuation strategy in purpose-built blocks of flats*. The revised version of the guidance was published at the start of October 2020 and was joint badged with other stakeholder organisations, following an extended consultation with leaseholder groups and other stakeholders in the wider fire sector.

8.4. Over the summer the NFCC, following further financial support from government, the Protection Policy and Reform Unit has been recruiting to build the team in a variety of areas, including fire safety regulations, communications, data management and analytics, governance, and service delivery and improvement. Further recruitment is planned for Autumn 2020.

8.5. Following launch of the next phase of the Building Risk Review (BRR), the BSP Team held a question and answer session with over 70 attendees from almost 40 different English FRSs, and have established a dedicated BRR Workplace group and email inbox to ensure smooth and consistent communication and engagement with FRS Protection departments for the duration of the BRR Programme.

DYHPG Guide

8.6. In order to address the rise in shared economy tourism and accommodation letting websites, such as Airbnb, the "Do you have paying guests" guide has been reviewed to introduce a new Fire Safety Standard. This has sought to equalise the fire safety requirements expected of traditional accommodation and of lettings by newer companies such as Airbnb.

8.7. The "Do you have paying guests" guide has been reviewed to introduce the new Fire Safety Standard and urges pragmatism and proportionality, and the launch is currently planned for autumn 2020.

9. The National Fire Commercial Transformation Programme

9.1. The National Fire Commercial Transformation Programme (NFCTP) Procurement Hub is focussed on delivering the best commercial outcome for the c£500 million annual third party influential spend. Total savings reported for financial year 2019/20 is £12.9 million, of which, £3.23 million is reported as collaborative savings. Overall, we have achieved £39.9 million savings over 3 years through improved commercial approach.

9.2. The COVID-19 response was the first time we have seen 100 per cent collaboration across the sector in terms of procurement and it is the NFCC's intention is to build on this success going forward.

9.3. We now have sector led and specific commercial arrangements covering the majority of expenditure in two of our key 'Fire' specific categories of expenditure – these being national arrangements for Firefighting (structural) PPE, with c30,000 firefighters wearing the standard kit & Workwear ('Clothing' Category) and Emergency Response Vehicles ('Fleet' Category), with all FRS signed up to the framework and over 600 vehicles in the pipeline.

9.4. We are currently engaging with both FRS's and our sectors supply base for a number of other high profile national procurements including but not limited to Emergency Response Equipment and Specialist PPE. In addition, we have completed a number of sector wide aggregated procurements within the ICT and Fleet categories and realised significant benefits in terms of efficiency (i.e. less duplication, increased standardisation) and cashable savings. This includes a recent aggregated procurement for Fuel Cards across all three Emergency Services and smoke alarms, which has delivered £2.47 million savings for a majority of the sector against £12 million spend.

9.5. The NFCC is now represented at the newly formed National Fire Estates Group, which follows in the success of the Police equivalent to deliver, where feasible, standardised approach to design and facilities management.

9.6. Through the hub the NFCC has established better ways of sharing information about what we spend and who we spend it with, providing useful intelligence to prioritise activities and identify common interests both at local/regional and national level. In addition, we share the same platform and have national data sharing agreements in place with the Police which enables the identification of potential cross emergency services collaboration opportunities.

FIRE STANDARDS BOARD

Title of Paper	Fire Standards Progress Report
Decision or Information	For information
Date of Meeting	16 October 2020
Attachments	Appendix A – Fire Standards Progress Status and Timeline

Summary

This paper provides members of the Fire Services Management Committee with a summary of the progress on Fire Standards development to date.

With a number of Fire Standards now in progress and due for publication within six months, this paper aims to ensure members are aware of the Fire Standards proposed and the potential impact on fire authorities, and by default services, as they are published.

It includes clarification of the role of the Fire Standards Board (Board) and how they are supported through the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Central Programme Office and the network of NFCC national subject specific lead officers. There is also a timeline for the first phase of Fire Standards development approved by the Board in June 2020.

From phase one, the intention is for seven Fire Standards to be approved by the Board and published online by March 2021. These include:

Fire Standard	NFCC Lead
Emergency Response Driving (the pilot Fire Standard)	ACO Paul Stewart (NFCC Operations Committee)
Operational Response: • Operational Preparedness • Operational Competence • Operational Learning	CFO Chris Lowther (NFCC Operations Committee)
Code of Ethics	CFO Becci Bryant (NFCC People Programme)
Risk Management Planning	CFO Phil Loach (NFCC Community Risk Programme)
Fire Protection	CFO Mark Hardingham (NFCC Protection and Business Safety Committee)

It is anticipated that shortly following this will be Fire Standards covering the following:

- Leadership (*subject to agreement on scope*)
- Prevention (*subject to agreement on scope*)
- Data requirements and management *(subject to agreement on scope)*

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the contents of this report for information.

Background Information

As part of the Government's Fire Reform agenda, the Board was established as a new entity in 2019 with funding support from the Home Office to develop a suite of professional Fire Standards for fire and rescue services in England.

As a reminder, the model for the Fire Standards Board was to be sector-led but with an independent Chair and Vice Chair to provide experience and diversity of thought. Membership includes the NFCC, employers (both the LGA and the APCC) and the Home Office. The LGA representative on the Board is Cllr Nick Chard.

Once approved, the Fire Standards will be the responsibility of the Fire Standards Board as outlined in their Terms of Reference. The Board are striving to create a suite of Fire Standards that are easily understandable and clear, consistent in structure and are based on defining what good looks like at an organisational level.

The key part of each Fire Standard is the "desired outcome" statement. It is proposed the outcome statements will be aspirational in part, driving for continuous improvement.

It will be the responsibility of services to achieve the outcomes set out in each Fire Standard. With each Fire Standard will be information about what services must, should or may do to achieve the outcome and any useful supporting information. If there is related national guidance or tools available these will also be referenced.

All approved Fire Standards will be shared on the Fire Standards Board website.

Board support

The Board commissions work to the NFCC, as the lead subject matter experts, for support with developing the Fire Standards. The NFCC Central Programme Office (CPO) supports the Board with executive support and secretariat services as well as coordinating and facilitating development work. Other relevant wider stakeholders are included in the development process where appropriate.

Much of the development work is linked and aligned to that being undertaken through the various national improvement programmes and NFCC Committees. The NFCC improvement programmes are producing national guidance, tools and templates for use by services where a national approach is beneficial. Much of this supporting information will underpin the Fire Standards.

FIRE SERVICES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE - PROGRESS REPORT

Phase One Fire Standards

The first phase of Fire Standards was agreed by the Board and is shown in the figure below. The order for Fire Standards development has been based on the national priorities for improvement identified through the SIM, taking into consideration where work was already in progress to support a Fire Standard.

This figure shows:

- the responsible NFCC Programme or Committee
- the proposed Fire Standard title and;
- the source of evidence providing the rationale for the requirement for a Fire Standard drawn from the NFCC Strategic Improvement Model (SIM).

A table showing progress against each Fire Standard and a timeline is shown in **Appendix A.**

NFCC Programme and/or Committee	People				NFCC Operations (NOG)				Community risk	Protection	Prevention	Data and digital
Proposed Fire Standard	Leadership	Code of Ethics	Selection and recruitment, including fitness standards	Promotion and succession planning	Operational preparedness	Operational competence	Operational learning	Emergency Response Driving	Risk Management Planning (RMP)	Fire Protection	Prevention interventions	Fire and rescue service data requirements and management
Source data (SIM)	[HMICFRS]	[HMICFRS]	[HMICFRS]	[HMICFRS]	[GTI & HMICFRS]	[GTI & HMICFRS]	[GTI & HMICFRS]	(pilot)	[HMICFRS]	[GTI & HMICFRS]	[HMICFRS]	[HMICFRS}

FIRE SERVICES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE - PROGRESS REPORT

Implementation

As part of the Fire Standards development process, the impact on services is being considered. Whilst many services may already be achieving the Fire Standards at the time they are published, other services may need time to fully align and achieve them, which is accepted by the Board.

To help with implementation of both Fire Standards and other national products developed through the NFCC, the NFCC CPO is planning to establish an implementation team to increase levels of engagement with services and provide implementation support.

Work to support services with achievement of the Operational Response (NOG) Fire Standards is in the planning stage. The aspiration is to connect services to share experiences in how successful implementation has been achieved with those services who are further behind with implementation.

The Board and HMICFRS

Dialogue is already underway between the Board and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) as they prepare for the next round of inspections to plan for how the Fire Standards will be integrated into the HMICFRS inspection frameworks and judgement criteria.

How well Fire Standards are contributing to sector improvement will be based on feedback from the HMICFRS through their inspection findings.

All Fire Standards will be periodically reviewed but should there be the need, dynamic reviews will be initiated if the Board become aware that the Fire Standard is not achieving the benefits and improvements it was proposed to do.

Communications and Engagement

Direct communication and engagement with authorities regarding Fire Standards has been constricted and limited by COVID-19 and its impact on services.

The Board are conscious that they have not had the opportunity to engage with service leaders and senior managers in the ways traditionally available through conferences and workshops. Earlier in the summer a newsletter providing a summary of progress and introducing the first phase of Fire Standards was produced and is available online.

As a number of consultations are due for release in the coming months, to aid communications with services, the Board have proposed that each service nominate a strategic manager as a single point of contact for the Board. This is especially key as a number of Fire Standards will progress to consultation over the Autumn and the Board are keen to ensure all services take the opportunity to engage in that process.

The Board would welcome and appreciate the support of fire authority chairs and members in ensuring their services engage in the Fire Standards consultations as they are published and support activities to achieve those Fire Standards once approved.

FIRE
STANDARDS
BOARD

Activity Area for Fire Standard	Stage 1 (Scoping)	Stage 2 (Development to post-consultation draft)	Stage 3 (Final governance check, QA and sign off)	Summary of progress to date	Next steps
Pilot Fire Standard – Emergency Response Driving	Complete	In progress	Dec 2020	• Awaiting outcomes of discussions with DfT regarding legislation and impact on services	• Review underpinning guidance in light of outcomes of NFCC / Home Office / DfT discussions
Operational preparedness	In progress	In progress	Dec 2020	• Being led by the NFCC Operations Committee • Draft Fire Standards completed • Peer review completed during June 2020 • Consultation started in mid-July 2020 • Implication impacts identified • Work to establish an implementation working group to support services - initiated July 2020 • Development of implementation handbook planned	• Consultation due to complete early September • Results collated, analysed and findings report produced during September • Re-present to Board to gain approval for stage 3
Operational competence	In progress	In progress	Dec 2020		
Operational learning	In progress	In progress	Dec 2020		

Activity Area for Fire Standard	Stage 1 (Scoping)	Stage 2 (Development to post-consultation draft)	Stage 3 (Final governance check, QA and sign off)	Summary of progress to date	Next steps
Code of Ethics	In progress	In progress	Dec 2020/ Jan2021	• Being led by NFCC People Programme (Leadership Project) • Draft Fire Standard being revised following feedback from Board • Re-defined to be a national Code of Ethics • Work to develop the draft Code of Ethics is underway which will allow completion of the draft Fire Standard • Peer review continued during July and August	• Identify implementation impacts and decision on supporting guidelines required • Consultation of both Fire Standards and Code of Ethics planned to start Sep 2020 for 6 weeks • Consultation responses to be collated analysed and findings report produced during November 2020 • Potential for post-consultation draft and supporting Code of Ethics to be re-presented to Board Dec 2020
Risk Management Planning	In progress	By Nov	By Jan 2021	• Being led by the NFCC Community Risk Programme (CRP) • Scoping work initiated in May 2020 • Drafting of the Fire Standard in progress now in peer review	• Complete peer review and revise draft if required • Consultation planned start by early Oct 2020 • Consultation responses to be collated analysed and findings report produced by end of November 2020

Activity Area for Fire Standard	Stage 1 (Scoping)	Stage 2 (Development to post-consultation draft)	Stage 3 (Final governance check, QA and sign off)	Summary of progress to date	Next steps
Leadership	In progress	In progress	TBC	- Being led by NFCC People Programme (Leadership Project) - Scoping work in progress - NFCC Leadership Project proposals in draft and workshop to engage with services planned	- If agreed by the Board, a Commissioning Brief to be drafted clarifying and confirming the Board's requirements - Timeline for development reviewed by the Project Team - Drafting of the Fire Standard followed by peer review then consultation
Fire Protection *(roles and competence)*	To be scoped	By Nov	By Apr 2021	- Being led by the NFCC Protection Hub - Delays to scoping work as Protection Hub brings resources online (recruitment) - Proposals to review scope (see Item 3 – Paper 1 for details)	- Consider need for Commissioning Brief from the Board - Start Scoping work with NFCC Protection Hub Sep 2020 - Timeline for development reviewed and agreed
Prevention interventions	To be scoped	By Nov	By Apr 2021	- To be led by the NFCC Prevention Programme - Scoping work yet to be initiated – programme being established Sep 2020	- Consider need for Commissioning Brief from the Board - Identify any existing related work and activities that may underpin and support this/these Fire Standard(s)

Activity Area for Fire Standard	Stage 1 (Scoping)	Stage 2 (Development to post-consultation draft)	Stage 3 (Final governance check, QA and sign off)	Summary of progress to date	Next steps
Selection and recruitment, including fitness standards	To be scoped	TBC	TBC	• To be led by the NFCC People Programme • Dependent on conclusions of Leadership Fire Standard	• Review and consider specific requirements of this Fire Standard(s) as part of scoping work on the Leadership Fire Standard
Promotion and succession planning	To be scoped	TBC	TBC	• To be led by the NFCC People Programme • Dependent on conclusions of Leadership Fire Standard	• Review and consider specific requirements of this Fire Standard(s) as part of scoping work on the Leadership Fire Standard
Fire and rescue service data requirements and management	To be scoped	TBC	TBC	• To be led by the NFCC Digital and Data Programme • Scoping to be initiated Sep 2020	• Programme to review and consider specific requirements of this Fire Standard

NFCC Programme or Committee	Activity Area for Fire Standards	Mar - May	Jun - Aug	Sep - Nov	Dec - Mar	Apr - Jun	Jul - Sep	Oct - Dec
Operations	Pilot - Emergency Response							
Operations	Operational Preparedness							
Operations	Operational Competence							
Operations	Operational Learning							
People	Code of Ethics							
People	Leadership							
Community	Risk Management Planning							
BSP	Fire Protection							
Prevention	Preventions Interventions							
People	Preventions Interventions							
People	Promotion and Succession							
Data and Digital	Fire and Rescue Service Data Requirements and Management							

STAGE 4 TIMESCALES TBD

Key	Meetings/Milestones
Stage 1	Scoping
Stage 2	Post consultation draft
Stage 3	Governance, QA, Sign Off
Stage 4	Impact and Evaluation

Fire Services Management Committee Update paper

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

The report outlines issues of interest to the Fire Services Management Committee not covered under other items on the agenda, including the LGA member improvement offer.

Recommendation

That members of the Committee note the report.

Actions

Officers to continue to provide updates to members.

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Fire Services Management Committee Update paper

LGA Annual Fire Conference 2021

1. The LGA Annual Fire Conference is held each year in early March. At the January 2020 Fire Services Management Committee meeting, members agreed that the 2021 conference would take place from 1-3 March at the Hilton in Gateshead. Due to COVID-19, physical conference activity has now been cancelled for the foreseeable future, due to the public health risk posed by gathering in large numbers.

2. As a result, the LGA Annual Fire Conference 2021 will now be conducted as a virtual conference. It is not possible to predict whether in-person conference events will resume by March 2021, given Government guidance and local area restrictions change relative to the level of risk posed by COVID-19. Further, even if it is possible to hold a physical conference, the required safety precautions - including wearing of protective equipment such as face masks, social distancing and reducing numbers of attendees – render the event financially unviable.

3. LGA Officers are progressing with planning processes to determine the format, structure and dates of plenary sessions. It is proposed that the Fire Conference 2021 replicates the delivery model used during the LGA Annual Conference 2020. This includes individual plenaries and 'spotlight' sessions held on different days, with members and non-members registered individually for each session and attend via Zoom.

4. Subject to Lead Member approval, a final proposed Conference schedule will be provided to Members in December 2020. Proposed topics to cover in the plenary sessions currently include:

    4.1. Ministerial address
    4.2. Building safety
    4.3. Finance/Comprehensive Spending Review
    4.4. Diversity and inclusion
    4.5. HMICFRS – 2nd State of Fire report
    4.6. Governance – PFCCs
    4.7. COVID-19 – What we have learned
    4.8. Climate change.

Fire member development offer

5. The LGA has commissioned Andy Fry, ex-Chief Fire Officer and former HM Inspector of Fire Services in Wales, to deliver a series of instructive videos covering various topics associated with the governance role of Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) members. The first video, "*The Role of Fire and Rescue Authority Members,*" will be available on the [Leading the fire sector: member development support webpage](#) in late October 2020.

6. The videos follow the publication of the [Leading the fire sector: Oversight of performance guide](#) in November 2019 and five successful workshops led by Andy. The videos intend

to support the induction of those who are new to FRAs, as well as the development of existing members. This work will also cover governance in times of crisis, which is informed by recent experiences of FRAs responding to COVID-19.

Fire Diversity and Inclusion Champions Network

7. The LGA's Fire Diversity and Inclusion Champions Network is designed to bring together elected representatives who are responsible for diversity and inclusion issues in their fire and rescue authorities, to develop skills to challenge their services to improve in this area. This includes hearing from experts about key equality and diversity issues for the fire sector, to identify barriers to greater diversity and inclusion in fire and rescue services and to share best practice from across the country

8. The Network held its first virtual meeting in July, which focused on the theme of positive action. The session was led by experienced speakers Jagtar Sing, National Adviser for the Asian Fire Service Association, and Nicola Green, Legal Director at Capsticks Solicitors. A video of the presentation is available on the Champions Network webpage.

9. The Network is scheduled to meet on Friday 9 October, where the meeting will focus on the benefits of staff networks. Members will hear presentations from a panel of speakers, including: Anna James, Watch Manager, and Zoe Baker-Powell, PMO Manager (Service Transformation Team) from Avon Fire and Rescue Service, to discuss their staff engagement network; and Serena Simon, Westminster City Council, to discuss the Council's BAME Network.

10. The presentations and subsequent question and answer session will be recorded and transcribed, then made available on the Champions Network webpage.

Consultation - Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services (England)

11. The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and LGA commenced their consultation on the Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services (England) (Core Code), open until 2 November 2020. The Core Code was written in response to the recommendation in the State of Fire 2019. It is designed to guide all Fire and Rescue Service employees in their day-to-day conduct, providing professional standards of practice and behaviour to carry out business honestly and with integrity, and to underpin organisational culture. It provides the expectations for how employees should behave in any given situation, to assist with decision-making.

12. The Fire Standards Board (FSB) commenced its consultation on the draft Code of Ethics Fire Standard, open until 2 November 2020. The draft Standard is underpinned by the Core Code.

Outside bodies update

13. Strategic Resilience Board (SRB): On 14 July, Cllr Cleo Lake and Cllr Les Byrom attended the SRB meeting, where the impact of COVID-19 on the fire sector was discussed alongside other resilience issues.

14. Senior Sector Group (SSG): On 28 July, the Fire Minister chaired an SSG meeting to discuss the Comprehensive Spending Review, which was attended by Lead Members, PFCC Roger Hirst, and representatives from HMICFRS, the NFCC and the Home Office.

15. Fire Standard Boards: On 3 September, Cllr Nick Chard attended the FSB meeting where Members discussed progress on the development of future fire standards.

16. *HM Inspectorate for Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service (HMICRFRS):*

- HMISCFRS External Reference Group: On 8 July, Cllr Ian Stephens and Cllr Rebecca Knox attended this meeting, at which Members were updated on current COVID-19 activity in their local areas and discussed proposed inspection activity ahead of the COVID-19 inspection.

- Meeting with HM Chief Inspector Sir Tom Windsor: On 30 July, Cllr Ian Stephens, Cllr Nick Chard (in his capacity as Chair of the Employers Side of the NJC), representatives from the Home Office and NFCC, and LGA Officers attended a meeting with Sir Tom Windsor to discuss the timing of the recommendations provided in State of Fire 2020.

- (HMISCFRS) Online Event: On 20 August, HMICFRS ran a Chiefs and Chairs online event to look at their proposed COVID-19 Inspection. Members and Officers had the chance to provide feedback on the themes that the inspection would be looking at.

- Lead Members provided feedback on the draft State of Fire 2021.