

## **Note of last Fire Services Management Committee meeting**

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**Title:** Fire Services Management Committee  
**Date:** Monday 7 March 2016  
**Venue:** Wallace Suite, Lower Ground Floor, Bristol Marriott Hotel City Centre,  
2 Lower Castle Street, Old Market, Bristol BS1 3AD

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### **Attendance**

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

<b>Item</b>	<b>Decisions and actions</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>  There were no Declarations of Interest.	
<b>2</b>	<b>Fire Conference and Exhibition 2016</b>  Catriona Coyle, Events Manager, ran through the programme. It was noted that there were approximately 280 attendees, including delegates, exhibitors and staff, and there was attendance from the majority of Fire and Rescue Authorities. Catriona confirmed the attendance of the Minister for Fire, The Rt Hon Mike Penning MP, who would open the conference in the first plenary session. The Chair thanked the officers on behalf of the committee for their work organising the conference.  <b>Decision:</b>  The committee noted the conference programme, and noted the publication "Beyond Fighting Fires 2".	
<b>3</b>	<b>Policing and Crime Bill</b>  Mark Norris, Principal Policy Advisor, introduced the paper which set out the LGA's approach to the Policing and Crime Bill.  The Government published its response to the autumn consultation on Enabling Closer Working between the Emergency Services at the end of January 2016 and this was followed by the publication of the Bill, which provides the enabling legislation for the changes the Government is proposing.  The Bill's second reading was taking place as the Committee met It is expected that the Bill will be carried over to the new parliamentary session	

and be enacted at the end of the year.

There was a discussion where members made a number of comments:

- There was broad agreement that changes in governance to PCCs should be a matter of local determination. Members felt it was important to engage at member and officer level both with the group established by the Association of Police and Crime Commissioner Chief Executives to develop a business case template, and with the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners after the elections in May.
- There was concern about losing the unique fire service brand and accountability in the event of a Police and Crime Commissioner taking over the functions of FRAs.
- If a PCC were to submit a business case to the Home Secretary without full local support there were concerns that the independent assessment of the business case should be genuinely independent of government.
- Notwithstanding concerns over the governance proposals in the Bill members were agreed that there would be no mileage in being anything other than constructively helpful.
- Members wanted clarification around the potential costs of providing information for developing a business case and agreed that the cost should fall to the PCC. It was further pointed out that there were significant costs to changing the boundaries of a FRA and that a business case was unlikely to add up if there were boundary changes.
- Concerns over governance proposals should not be allowed to undermine universal and strong support for collaboration.
- Members were concerned that proposals for a future national fire model for assurance did not include the LGA.
- Clarification should be sought around the proposed duty to collaborate and how this would be demonstrated.
- The devolution agenda provide an opportunity for fire and rescue authorities to look at alternative governance model to PCCs.

**Decision:**

The Committee agreed to adopt the lobbying strategy set out, to engage with the group established by the Association of Police and Crime Chief Executives, and to encourage local discussion between FRAs, combined authorities and PCCs on how collaboration and cooperation could be increased.

**Action:**

Officers to progress in line with members comments.

**4 Procurement in the Fire and Rescue Service**

The Chair introduced Mike Pearson, Chair of CFOA National Procurement Group who discussed initiatives underway to improve procurement within the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS).

In 2012 DCLG and CFOA commissioned research into what savings could be made from procurement within the FRS. The research involved 13 FRAs, was published in March 2014 and found wide variation across the service. The report identified areas for improvement: good quality professional procurement contracts led to better results. There was variation in capacity, with some teams well developed, some with little capacity and some with none. The CFOA National Procurement Group identified a lack of management information as a barrier to coordination and collaboration. The Home Office has asked CFOA to identify the 20 most common items procured across the FRS and intend to publish price league tables showing which FRSs achieve the best prices and which the worst.

CFOA set up a national collaborative procurement hub the purpose of which is to provide national procurement capability for the fire sector to identify and facilitate opportunities for savings and efficiencies from collaboration. Despite capacity issues a number of successful collaborative arrangements have recently been delivered, either from a sector led approach or through collaboration with other blue light services.

It would be beneficial to have more authorities fully engaged in collaborative procurement and information exchange.

There was a discussion during which a number of comments were made:

- A national asset register could be a means of sharing more information and equipment across the services The cost of research and development is an issue for individual FRAs
- The cost of variance in equipment is in part because of different FRSs seeking a need to trial their own equipment
- CFOA is looking at a central trials, research and development hub based at the Fire College which would carry out testing.

**Decision:**

The Committee agreed to the recommendations outlined in the report.

**Actions:**

Officers to take forward in line with members comments.

## **5 JESIP/NOG update**

Cllr Kay Hammond, introduced the paper which updated members on the activities of the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP) Programme and the National Operational Guidance (NOG) Programme.

Nick Collins, Programme Director at NOG, thanked members for their engagement. He noted his thanks to LFEPA for funding the programme, which is now funded by all FRAs. The Programme is hosted by LFEPA but all projects are led on by different chief officers.

### **Decision:**

Members noted the updates on the JESIP and NOG programmes.

## **6 Workforce Report - Industrial relations and pensions**

Gill Gittins, Principal Negotiating Officer (industrial relations), updated members on employer considerations in respect of any pay award for 2016 in respect of both national negotiating bodies. . She also informed the committee that best practice guidance developed jointly by the Home Office (formerly DCLG) and the NJC for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services, related to firefighter fitness, was due to be published 8 March 2016.

Clair Alcock, Fire Pensions Advisor, informed the committee that members had now been appointed to the Pensions Advisory Committee. Malcolm Eastwood (a past Chief Fire Officer for Hampshire) had been appointed as Chair. Steps will now be taken to organise the first meeting as soon as possible.

The triennial valuation data will be requested as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016, the results of which will impact both employer contribution in 2019 and the cost cap mechanism. The deadline for providing data is very tight and the importance in authorities meeting the dates was stressed due to the financial implications involved.

## **7 Fire Services Management Committee update paper**

The Chair informed the committee that in addition to activity set out in the paper he had had telephone discussions with Mary Calam, Director General of Crime and Policing, Dan Greaves, the Fire Transition Director at the Home Office the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government Greg Clark and the Fire Minister Mike Penning MP.

### **Decision:**

Members noted the update.

**8 Outside Bodies - oral update from members (a maximum of 2 minutes each)**

Nominations were sought for the Fire Service College Engagement Forum which replaces the Customer Advisory Board and Corporate Management Board. Cllrs John Edwards and Rebecca Knox were appointed.

Cllr Simon Spencer updated the Committee on the work of the CFOA RDS and operational training working group. The group recently held their annual conference where the recruitment and retention of officers was highlighted as a continuing issue. The group intends to write to the Fire Minister and Home Secretary proposing that local businesses releasing retained firefighters for duties should receive some form of recompense as an incentive perhaps in the form of a business rate rebate. The Committee was supportive of Cllr Spencer signing this letter.

Cllrs David Acton and Nick Chard updated the Committee on the work of the Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group. The group had produced a national overview of emergency services collaboration, which sets out over 150 collaborations that are currently happening. A concise precise of this is being produced for the Minister and will be shared with members.

Cllr Les Byrom updated the Committee on the discussions at the Strategic Resilience Board and the changes being made around decontamination, Urban Search & Rescue and response to roving firearm terrorists.

Cllrs David Acton and Kay Hammond updated the Committee on the success of the Fire Health Summit.

Cllr Michelle Hodgson updated the Committee about the National Occupational Committee and the issues around the apprenticeship levy on budgets. There are issues around assessment of the apprenticeships and workforce mix. Cllr Hodgson suggested the Committee may want to examine this issue in more detail.

**Decision:**

Cllrs John Edwards and Rebecca Knox were appointed to The Fire Service College Engagement Forum. The Committee noted the reports from outside bodies.

**Action:**

Officers to progress as appropriate.

**9 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2015 were agreed as correct.

**10 AOB**

The next meeting date has been moved from 24 June to 1 July due to proximity to the EU referendum.

**Appendix A -Attendance**

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Jeremy Hilton	Gloucestershire County Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Kay Hammond	Surrey County Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr David Acton	Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority
Members	Cllr Maurice Heaster	London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA)
	Cllr Rebecca Knox	Dorset Fire Authority
	Cllr Simon Spencer	Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Authority
	Cllr Nick Chard	Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority
	Cllr Peter Jackson	Northumberland Council
	Cllr Mark Healy	Devon and Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority
	Cllr Michele Hodgson	County Durham and Darlington Fire & Rescue Authority
	Cllr John Joyce	Cheshire Fire Authority
	Ms Fiona Twycross	London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA)
	Cllr Darrell Pulk	Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority
	Cllr John Edwards	West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority
Apologies	Cllr Peter Jackson	Northumberland Council
	Cllr Philip Howson	East Sussex Fire Authority
In Attendance	Cllr Thomas Wright	Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority
	Cllr Roger Price	Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority
	Cllr Les Byrom CBE	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority
LGA Officers		