

21 May 2018

Fire Commission update paper

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

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

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report.

Action

Officers to continue to provide updates to members.

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21 May 2018

Fire Services Management Committee update and outside bodies paper

Government

PCCs and fire governance

1. In March the Government announced that the PCCs for West Mercia, Staffordshire and Cambridgeshire would take on the governance of the fire and rescue services in their areas. In April the Home Office confirmed that the Northamptonshire PCC would take on the governance of the fire and rescue service.
2. The LGA has been providing support to the FRAs affected by contested PCC business cases.

National Fire Framework

3. The new National Fire Framework has been published following a consultation. The new Framework is available on the [Government's website](#); The LGA responded to the Home Office's Fire Framework consultation. The full consultation response can be found in **Appendix A**.

Fire Statistics

4. The Government released their latest set of incidents statistics at the start of May. The statistics outline that FRSs attended **563,527 incidents** in the year ending December 2017. This included 169,588 fires, which was a 4 per cent increase compared to the previous year but a 50 per cent decrease compared with 10 years ago. FRSs also attended 170,556 non-fire incidents, which was a 2 per cent decrease compared to the previous year.
5. The full set of statistics can be found on the [Government's website](#).
6. On 25 January the Government released their statistics into response times to fires attended by the fire service. The release stated that overall response times have gradually increased over the last 20 years though it also stated that between 2015-16 and 2016-17 response times to all types of fires either decreased or remained the same with the exception of "other building" fires. The average response time to primary fires (more serious fires that harm people or cause damage to property¹) in England in 2016/17 was 8 minutes and 44 seconds: a decrease of 3 seconds since 2015/16 but an increase of 33 seconds since 2011/12.
7. More information is on the [Government's website](#).

21 May 2018

Inspection

HMICFRS Consultation and External Reference Group

8. The LGA responded to HMICFRS's consultation on their proposed inspection programme and methodology and the recent sector consultation on the judgement criteria.
9. Our main concern has continued to be the potential for additional burdens to be added to fire and rescue services as a result of the inspection programme. In particular rather than focusing on one aspect of community safety, ie road safety, we would prefer to the judgement criteria to look more generally at non-statutory duties in response to risks that are identified through local IRMPs.

Local Government Association

Sprinklers and Automatic Fire Suppression Systems Working Group

10. Following the last Fire Commission the LGA set up a working group to look at sprinklers and automatic fire suppression systems. The Group held its first meeting in February and then held evidence sessions at the beginning of May with a wide range of participants including:
 - 12.1. The Fire Protection Association
 - 12.2. Sir Ken Knight
 - 12.3. The Greater London Assembly
 - 12.4. Residential Sprinklers Association
 - 12.5. European Fire Sprinkler Network
 - 12.6. Business Sprinklers Alliance
 - 12.7. National Fire Chiefs Council
 - 12.8. Ealing Council
 - 12.9. Croydon Council
 - 12.10. Local Authority Building Control
 - 12.11. Welsh Government
11. The next meeting of the working group will take place immediately after the Fire Commission meeting where members will consider the evidence and comment on a report for the June FSMC meeting.

LGA Fire leadership Essentials

12. The LGA will be holding two fire leadership essentials in 2018-19. Dates for those should be confirmed soon.

21 May 2018

LGA Fire Conference

13. The LGA will be publishing a short write up from the Fire Conference on our website to highlight some of the key discussions and themes from the conference.

Other issues

NFCC - Fire Commercial Transformation Programme

14. The programme was established to identify and realise savings and efficiencies across the sector through greater collaboration (including wider emergency services collaboration where opportunities exist), helping Fire and Rescue Services to protect the front line. There are six key categories of expenditure; Operational Equipment, Fleet, Clothing (Including Firefighter PPE), Estates & FM, ICT and Professional Services. Each of the six categories has a sponsor (Chief Fire Officer) and a Commercial Lead (Head of Procurement/Procurement Manager) and a strategy has been produced for each. The FCTP is also supported by a PMO (1.5 FTE) and the Home Office. A Strategic Commercial Board (SCB) is chaired by Ann Millington (Chief Executive Kent FRS & NFCC Procurement Strategic Lead) and provides the strategic direction and governance associated with the programme.
15. In total 9 different FRS are represented on the Strategic Commercial Board (providing Sponsors and/or Commercial Leads) as well as the Home Office and an independent board member who provides scrutiny. The programme is currently funded by the Home Office. We are reliant on involvement from other FRSs to support or lead on procurement/commercial activity through the creation of sector frameworks and/or working with PBO's to aggregate our demand and secure savings and efficiencies for the sector.
16. 44 Fire and Rescue Service CFO's (across England and Wales) have signed an MoU between their FRS and the Fire Commercial Transformation Programme committing them to participate, support or lead on national collaborative activity where it is in their interest to do so. The programme (supported by the Home Office) has also conducted a number of national projects to better understand the procurement/commercial landscape across our sector, these include a national expenditure analysis project, a procurement survey (establishing the number and type of procurement/commercial resources across the sector) and we have just launched a national savings register project. The latter will enable us to report, at national level, on local and national/collaborative savings achieved by FRSs. We are currently reviewing the LGA National Procurement Strategy 2018 with a view to adopting this across our sector.
17. Recognising the impact this activity can have on Suppliers we are actively engaged with FIA/FIRESA and currently meet with them (and others including the Fire Sector Federation) on a quarterly basis to discuss how engagement and strategy can be improved to our mutual benefit. The programme is delivering significant savings, far in excess of the operating costs. Home Office funding will be exhausted early/mid 2019

21 May 2018

and the programme is currently exploring more sustainable funding to enable the programme to continue operating.