

## **Lessons Learned from Covid-19**

### **Purpose of report**

For discussion.

### **Summary**

Covid-19 has had a significant impact on the way public services are delivered. Fire and Rescue Authorities and Services responded to the challenges thrown up by the pandemic, and Fire Services Management Committee would like to hear from Fire Commission members what lessons their Authorities and Services drew from responding to Covid-19, the challenges they faced and any issues the Committee should raise with government in the event of a second wave this autumn.

### **Recommendations**

Members are asked to discuss lessons learned from Covid-19 using the questions outlined in paragraph 7.

### **Actions**

Officers to use the discussion to inform the workplan for the Fire Services Management Committee for the forthcoming year.

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## **Lessons Learned from Covid-19**

### **Background**

1. The Covid-19 pandemic has drastically changed not only the way we live our lives but how we are delivering services to our communities. The Fire Commission meeting provides us with an opportunity to capture the fire sector's learning from these changes, and to also consider if there are any changes in national policy needed in the event of a second wave.
2. This will help to inform our workplan going forward, as well as highlight any areas for future work. We would be particularly interested to hear whether as an authority and as a service, areas are looking to change any of their normal practices as a result of Covid-19, and whether there are any issues you would like to see Fire Services Management Committee (FSMC) raise with the Home Office and government.
3. This is one of a number of lessons learned processes that are currently underway not only from the National Fire Chief Council (NFCC) but also HMICFRS's Covid-19 Inspection.

### **Issues**

4. The Covid-19 pandemic saw changes to how we deliver services, what services we deliver, and how we work. Initial discussions with the NFCC have identified a number of themes for further exploration when looking at lessons learned, including:
  - 4.1. Technology and use of technology
  - 4.2. Planning and working with Local Resilience Forums
  - 4.3. Ensuring that members can still perform their authority role through a crisis – eg through the use of technology
  - 4.4. Workforce – including new ways of working
  - 4.5. Tripartite agreements and how they worked for local areas
  - 4.6. Prevention and protection activities – and what activities had to stop to ensure that new tripartite activities could be undertaken
  - 4.7. Role of the NFCC in providing central coordination of FRA activities and working with the Home Office
  - 4.8. Working with partners – including the ambulance service, local authorities and the NHS as a part of the Covid-19 response
5. The LGA is keen to gather members reflections on these issues and see if there is anything further that we need to consider not only in our workplan for the forthcoming year, but also if there are any areas where further support is necessary and anything you would like to see FSMC raise in the event we enter a second wave this autumn. We will therefore be conducting facilitated discussions during this item.

### **Discussion questions**

6. The LGA would be keen to hear from the Fire Commission on their experiences of Covid-19. We are keen to understanding what key lessons your authorities and services have taken from your response to Covid-19, as well as the challenges you have faced and any changes that have happened as a result of the pandemic that you would like to retain. In addition, we would also like to hear of any points you believe need to be addressed nationally in the event of a second wave of Covid-19 this autumn.
  
7. The following questions will help to frame the discussion, however, if there are other challenges or lessons learned that members wish to highlight please do so:
  - 7.1. How has the pandemic impacted your relationships with the wider resilience infrastructure within your area? For example, working with the Local Resilience Forums.
  
  - 7.2. What operational lessons have been identified from the pandemic and how will you as an authority seek to embed this learning within the organisation?
  
  - 7.3. How has the pandemic impacted on staff? For example, if you are a retained service has the pandemic led to an increase in staff availability?
  
  - 7.4. Are there any long-term changes you are seeking to make to your services and/or working practices as a result of coronavirus?
  
  - 7.5. How have your decision-making responsibilities as an FRA member been impacted by coronavirus?

### **Implications for Wales**

8. Coronavirus has impacted the whole of the UK. Responsibility for the fire and rescue services in Wales is devolved to the Welsh government. The tripartite agreements regarding extra activities during the Covid-19 pandemic have been agreed through the National Joint Council, of which the WLGA is a part.

### **Financial Implications**

9. None.

### **Next steps**

10. The discussion under this item will inform the LGA's workplan going forward, which will be discussed by Fire Services Management Committee in October.