



Date:	11 December 2020
Title:	NFCC activity update
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For:	Information

1 Summary

1.1 This report provides a summary of key NFCC activity since September 2020.

2 Key NFCC activity

- 2.1 Since the last meeting of the Fire Service Management Committee there have been two meetings of the Council. The agenda and reports for the meetings are published on the NFCC website and available publicly. Both Council meetings have been held virtually over Microsoft Teams and the attendance has been very high.
<https://www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk/Meetings>
- 2.2 Updates of the NFCC portfolio of work are available through the latest Council reports. Within the Council pack the Committee will note the current work to develop a three year plan for the NFCC which details how the Council is delivering on its strategic commitments and the financial resources required. The plan forms part of a larger project of a broader business planning framework for the NFCC and this project is also developing the risk management framework for the NFCC.
- 2.3 Weekly calls with Chief Fire Officers were reintroduced at the end of September in order to ensure Chiefs are receiving the most up to date information and encourage further two way engagement. Feedback on the value of these calls has been very positive.
- 2.4 In partnership with London Fire Brigade the recruitment to the position of the Head of Central Programme Office is progressing with a second interview of one candidate scheduled for Monday 23 November 2020. This will be a key appointment for the NFCC and the successful candidate will be overseeing the implementation of recommendations of the reviews that have taken place over the last six months.
- 2.5 The Covid-19 response continues to demonstrate one of the NFCC's major strengths; the ability to work with all fire services and put consistent ways of working in place. The fire and rescue service still has a great deal to offer to support our communities in the fight against

the pandemic which is far from over. As we move to support mass testing and mass vaccination the fire service effort should needs to be supported by all parts of the sector.

- 2.6 The NFCC Chair continues to chair the Protection Board with the Building Risk Review (BRR) Programme of high rise residential buildings over 18m in England continuing to be a main focus. FRSs have been continuing to provide returns to the NFCC Protection Policy and Reform Unit (PPRU) on a monthly basis, and FRSs are now over 100 buildings ahead of the national trajectory compiled from local delivery plans provided in August 2020.
- 2.7 The NFCC made a response to the Fire Safety Order consultation and remains engaged with Government partners to keep up to date with the Government's reform programme progress.
- 2.8 On Monday 14 September NFCC submitted its response to the Select Committee Call for Evidence on the Draft Building Safety Bill. We held a comprehensive consultation process and offer our sincere thanks to all who took part in the many workshops and engagement sessions to enable us to fully reflect the views of the FRS in our response. NFCC's full response can be viewed [here](#). On 14 September, the NFCC Chair took part in an oral evidence session to further discuss our response and reiterate our call for further clarity on the overlapping pieces of legislation. A link to view the session can be found [here](#).
- 2.9 The NFCC Chair continues to attend three significant Ministerial led reform groups. The Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) on FRS reform, linked to the review of Police and Crime Commissioners, the Chair sits on the PCC review advisory board, the draft recommendations have been discussed and are now with the Home Secretary. The final board is the Fire and Building Safety Reform Board that also includes Sir Tom Winsor, Dame Judith Hackitt and Sarah Albon, CEO of the Health & Safety Executive. This board continues to discuss the Building Safety Regulator and associated building safety improvements and also links to the MAG and PCC review.
- 2.10 On 1 October 2020, following extensive consultation, the NFCC-led stakeholder group launched the updated Simultaneous Evacuation Guidance. The NFCC team continue to offer support and advice to FRSs to ensure that the guidance is understood and receive requests for assistance from leaseholders with concerns about measures in place on their buildings.
- 2.11 There has been ongoing and widespread discussion on the valuation of residential flats when linked to the remediation of unsafe cladding systems and wider fire safety issues. There has been some confusion over the link of the MHCLG Consolidated Advice Note (CAN) which is meant for life safety and the External Wall System form (EWS1) which is meant for valuation purposes. The confusion has led to zero valuations on some property and difficulty in gaining building insurance. The Chair is engaged through his role on the independent expert panel that advises government on building safety.
- 2.12 The NFCC responded to the Assaults on Emergency Workers consultation was pleased to see the confirmation that the Government will legislate to double the maximum penalty for assaulting an emergency worker as a result of responses to the consultation. The NFCC has launched a campaign to support the use of body worn cameras on firefighters and condemning those that attack emergency workers. The NFCC has also produced a video to support the campaign.
- 2.13 The Chair and NFCC have engaged in two important reviews of the response to the Covid pandemic, the HMICFRS review of the FRS response and a virtual inspection of each FRS

in England. NFCC-led learning through the NFCC Covid committee will soon provide a report on learning from the first wave and summer months. The Chair and Covid Committee Chair, Phil Garrigan, continue to meet with Home Office officials three times a week and the English Minister once a week.

- 2.14 The Chair was pleased to represent all UK civilian services when laying a wreath at the cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday.
- 2.15 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.
- 2.16 Initially the NFCC and the National Employers (England) worked in partnership to develop 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). Following discussion within the FSMC it was resolved that the LGA would be directly included, supporting the Fit for the Future approach, and becoming the third partner in this work.
- 2.17 All three partners were content to move to wider consultation on the Fit for the Future document. That consultation recently closed, and work is currently underway to analyse the responses in general and to also consider responses specifically sought around the potential impact of the COVID pandemic moving forward.
- 2.18 The process of developing Fit for the Future will not stop at this early engagement exercise. We will also be considering how further involvement and engagement can take place. Accordingly, there will be further opportunities for views to be expressed.