

Member induction and development offer 2021

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

This report outlines the proposed member induction and development offer for Fire and Rescue Authority Members in 2021.

Recommendation

That members approve the proposed member induction and development offer for 2021.

Actions

Officers to continue to provide updates to members.

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Member induction and development offer 2021

Background

1. Each year, the LGA offers a range of Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) member development resources and support to help elected members develop into capable and confident local leaders. This includes development programmes, such as Leadership Essentials for fire and rescue, Diversity and Inclusion workshops and oversight of performance workshops.
2. Due to COVID-19, in-person development activity has been paused since March 2020 due to the public health risk posed by gathering in large numbers. The LGA has continued to support FRA members to develop their leadership skills despite the current pandemic and has refocused its activity to bring together already available resources. This includes developing new online content to support elected members, for example:
 - 2.1. the [Fire Diversity and Inclusion Champions Network](#) has been convening remotely and providing its content online; and
 - 2.2. the LGAs [webinar series focusing on the governance role of Fire and Rescue Authority \(FRA\) members](#) provides an introduction to governance issues for those who are new to FRAs, as well as supporting the development of existing members.
3. In accordance with the government's [Roadmap out of lockdown](#) and subject to the ongoing national vaccination programme, it is not yet possible to predict when in-person development activity will resume this year. This is particularly given Government guidance and local area restrictions are still subject to change. All modes of delivering support – virtual, in-person and hybrid approaches – will remain under review as the year progresses.

Fire Leadership Essentials

4. The LGA has previously delivered a twice-annual Fire Leadership Essentials course to support FRA members with their responsibilities. The LGA encourages all members to attend a fire programme as an induction to the fire sector and as an opportunity to network with other fire members. The objectives of the course are to:
 - 4.1. Develop a comprehensive understanding of the fire sector, including clarity on duties and responsibilities
 - 4.2. Develop skills around leadership in FRAs
 - 4.3. Gain a thorough understanding of scrutiny in FRAs and practical skills to apply that understanding
 - 4.4. Improve knowledge of the key strategic issues facing the sector, including building safety, the fire inspections regime and issues around culture, inclusion and diversity in the fire sector

- 4.5. Share ideas and network with leading members from a variety of FRAs.
5. In March 2021, Fire Leadership Essentials was conducted virtually via Zoom for the first time. Across four days, guest speakers delivered presentations and facilitated interactive sessions with FRA members on the following topics:
 - 5.1. *Introduction to the Fire Sector and The Fire and Rescue Sector's role in responding to crises* - Dr Fiona Twycross, Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience (London) and Vice-Chair, Fire Services Management Committee
 - 5.2. *Building Safety* – Charles Loft, Senior Adviser, Resilience, Safety and Regulation, LGA
 - 5.3. *HMICFRS Inspection Programme* – Laura Gibb, Portfolio Director for Fire and Rescue Inspections, HMICFRS
 - 5.4. *Improving Diversity and Inclusion in the Fire and Rescue Sector* – Kemi Labinjo, Barrister and Director, Amber & Greene
 - 5.5. *Fire Reform* – Jonny Bugg, Head of Fire Strategy and Reform Unit, Public Safety Group, Home Office
 - 5.6. *Governance and Political Oversight in the Fire Sector* – Andy Fry, Co-Founder and Director of Greston Associates Ltd and a Director of Fire Knowledge Ltd (former Chief Fire and Rescue Advisor and Inspector for Wales)
 - 5.7. *Leadership in the Fire Sector* - David Weaver, Senior Partner of DWC Global, and President, British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy
6. In 2021/22, the LGA plans to deliver two Fire Leadership Essentials programmes. The first course is proposed to be held in the Summer (late June/early July), as it is expected that by this time, all authorities will have held their annual general meetings. Given current government guidance, all sessions will be conducted remotely via Zoom.
7. Given the success of the course delivered in March 2021, it is currently planned to deliver this session programme again at the Fire Leadership Essentials in the Summer. This schedule will provide a comprehensive overview of the current priority areas within the fire and rescue sector and best prepare Members for the year ahead.
8. Fire Leadership Essentials is available to all FRA members. As a result of the local council elections held across England on 6 May 2021, all leading Fire Members will be particularly encouraged to attend. All updates regarding the Fire Leadership Essentials programme will be announced via the LGA Fire Bulletin, the LGA Chief Executives Bulletin and via the LGA website.

Governance and leadership workshops

9. Throughout 2020/21, officers have been informally consulting with FRA members and fire and rescue services regarding the LGAs current member development offer. This

includes highlighting areas where the LGA can provide additional options for development support and resources to best respond to the current priorities of the fire and rescue sector.

10. In the context of the government's recent [findings from part one of the Police and Crime Commissioners \(PCC\) Review](#) in March 2021 and the upcoming White Paper on Fire Reform (further detail is provided on this matter in the Update Paper for this meeting), the LGA has identified a need for targeted learning and development options that focus on governance and leadership.
11. To this end, the LGA is proposing to hold four one-day facilitated workshops throughout mid to late July 2021. To be delivered virtually via Zoom, these workshops will aim to provide FRA Members with targeted resources to inform responses to the White Paper consultation. Specifically, the objectives of the workshops are to:
 - 11.1. Provide FRA members with a comprehensive overview of current governance models within the fire and rescue sector and best practice for good governance
 - 11.2. Strengthen knowledge and understanding of various leadership approaches, including a focus on the practical scrutiny skills required to support effective executive decision-making.
12. Each one-day workshop we will host guest speakers specialising in governance and leadership, with all learning and development activity to have a significant interactive focus. These workshops will build on the content covered in the Fire Leadership Essentials programme, as well as the existing resources provided by the LGA.

Member induction

13. The Fire Leadership Essentials course and the proposed governance and leadership workshops will be delivered alongside the LGAs annual member induction offer. This includes engaging with all FRA Chairs to outline the resources and member development programmes available, as well as details of all regional advisers. The LGA has a [Fire Authority Members Guide](#), which acts as a brief induction to the fire sector and new members or those wishing to remind themselves of the national environment should find this document helpful.

Financial Implications

14. All work will be carried out using existing LGA resources.

Next steps

15. Officers will take forward any decisions as directed.