

Fire Services Management Committee Update Paper

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

The report outlines issues of interest to the Fire Services Management Committee not covered under other items on the agenda.

Recommendation

That members of the Commission note the report.

Actions

Officers to continue to provide updates to members.

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Fire Services Management Committee Update Paper

LGA Annual Conference and Exhibition 2022

1. The LGA's Annual Conference and Exhibition took place between the 28 and 30 June in Harrogate. A workshop session for members of Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) on 'Governance Reform' was held on the Tuesday afternoon.
 - 1.1. The session was jointly Chaired by Cllr Ian Stephens and Cllr Marianne Overton and speakers included Cllr Keith Aspden - Deputy Chair, LGA Fire Services Management Committee and Leader, York City Council and Cllr Darren O'Donovan - Chair, West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority.
 - 1.2. The focus of the session was exploring the implications of the Fire Reform and Levelling Up White Paper for fire and rescue authorities, mayoral combined authorities, and county and unitary authorities responsible for their local fire and rescue service.
 - 1.3. Discussion concentrated on what new accountability and scrutiny arrangements will be needed across the range of fire and rescue authority types, the possibility of redrawing fire and rescue authority boundaries and what enshrining operational independence in law for chief fire officers will mean for those on fire and rescue authorities

Fire Inclusion and Diversity Member Champions Network

2. The LGA's [Fire Diversity and Inclusion Champions Network](#) met following the last Fire Commission on 10 June.
 - 2.1. The network heard from two expert speakers; Tim Powell, Director of People at London Fire Brigade discussed the cultural review underway in LFB; and Cllr Lud Ramsey, who spoke about his own journey from firefighter to councillor and the work that he has been doing in his local area to take EDI forwards.
 - 2.2. We encourage authorities who are in the process of reviewing outside appointments post elections to make sure that you have a representative on the Member Champions Network. The network brings together elected representatives who are responsible for diversity and inclusion issues on their fire and rescue authorities to develop skills to challenge their services to improve in this area.

- 2.3. We would also like to hear from Members any suggestions for topics that the champions network could cover ahead of the next meeting in the Autumn. Please get in touch with Rebecca Johnson for further information Rebecca.johnson@local.gov.uk.

Fire and Rescue Leadership Essentials

3. We still have places available for the next Fire and Rescue Leadership Essentials course which will take place Tuesday 12 July – Wednesday 13 July at Warwick Conference Centre.

- 3.1. The course is fully subsidised and aims to provide an induction to the fire sector and is a great opportunity to network with other fire members, so new fire authority members as well as existing members are encouraged to attend. By the end of the course, delegates will have had the opportunity to:

- Develop a comprehensive understanding of the fire sector, including clarity on duties and responsibilities and develop skills around leadership in FRAs.
- Develop skills around leadership in FRAs.
- Gain a thorough understanding of scrutiny and governance in FRAs and practical skills to apply that understanding.
- Improve knowledge of the key strategic issues facing the sector, including fire reform, building safety, the fire inspections regime and issues around culture, inclusion and diversity in the fire sector.
- Improve knowledge of the key strategic issues facing the sector, including fire reform, building safety, the fire inspections regime and issues around culture, inclusion and diversity in the fire sector.

- 3.2. For more information or to book, contact Grace Collins - 020 7664 3054 or grace.collins@local.gov.uk

Fire Reform Board

4. The inaugural Ministerial Fire Reform Board was held on 29 June, chaired by Lord Greenhalgh Minister for Building Safety & Fire. Cllr Ian Stephens and Cllr Nick Chard both attended the meeting alongside representatives from the Home Office, the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS), the Fire Standards Board and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners. The Board was set up to assist and advise the Home Office with their objectives set out in the Fire Reform White Paper. Cllrs Stephens and Chard

are using the Board as an opportunity to raise the Committee's and Fire Commission's points about the Fire Reform White Paper's proposals.

5. The first meeting focused on some of the key components of the Fire Reform White paper consultation with Board members offering initial thoughts and feedback on proposals around a Fire College, Fire and Rescue Services Oath, a 21st century leadership course and the NJC Review. The consultation period for the White Paper concludes later in July and the intention is for the Board to take a more in depth look at specific proposals and advise on how these could work in practice and raise any concerns.

Fit for the Future

6. Fit for the Future (FfF), the joint vision for the future of Fire & Rescue services in England has now been endorsed by all three partners - the LGA, National Employers (England) and the National Fire Chiefs Council.
7. Work will now begin on implementing the vision within services and a copy of the updated vision has now been sent to all Fire Authorities.

Governance checklist

8. The LGA has published a [governance checklist](#) for FRAs which provides a high-level, quick reference guide that members can use to consider all aspects of their governance role.
9. The checklist is based around a set of internationally recognised good governance principles developed by International Federation of Accountants and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy and suggests how each might be addressed by FRA members.

Fire and rescue services inspection programme and framework 2023/24

10. The LGA provided a high-level response to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) consultation on proposed fire and rescue services inspection programme and framework 2023/24.
 - 10.1. Our response welcomed the role of HMICFRS in driving improvement whilst being clear that any changes in inspection need to be balanced to ensure it does not become a burden on services to facilitate it.
 - 10.2. The LGA's Fire Sector Led Improvement Offer was highlighted along with the role we can play supporting the sector to respond to inspection recommendations.
 - 10.3. Our response also called on future inspections to acknowledge the financial issues facing the sector as a result of the cost of living crisis, with increasing costs

in a number of areas, including fuel and utilities as well as pressure on public sector pay.

10.4. The LGA has previously been supportive of governance inspections and would welcome the opportunity to provide feedback in the development of any new inspection process. The key principle would be that all services, regardless of governance type, should be treated in the same way by the inspectorate.

10.5. Our response was clear that the introduction of a new graded judgement of “adequate” would be helpful, but that any criteria for why a service has received an “adequate” judgement when they had previously received a “good” would need to be clearly communicated and articulated.

Leadership and People Fire Standards consultation

11. The Fire Standards Board (FSB) are currently consulting on the Leading the Service and Leading and Developing People Fire Standards.

11.1. Consultation is open until 9th September 2022 and more information including how to respond can be found on the FSB website [consultations page](#).

11.2. The FSB are organising two workshops in July to support services with their responses and answer any questions they may have about the two standards. Please contact the FSB for further information by emailing contact@firestandards.org.

Outside bodies update

12. HMICFRS External Reference Group (ERG): In early May the Inspectorate held its External reference Group with the sector. The Group is chaired by HMI Roy Wilsher and discusses a range of issues on inspection, including findings from the tranches, updating of the inspection programme.

13. ESMCP Fire Customer Group: The Fire Customer Group has continued to meet to discuss the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme. We hope to provide a further update at the July FSMC meeting.

14. Strategic Resilience Board: On 19 April the Strategic Resilience Board met. The Board discussed a range of issues on resilience across the UK.