

Note of last Fire Services Management Committee meeting

Title: Fire Services Management Committee
Date: Friday 22 July 2022
Venue: Hybrid Meeting - 18 Smith Square and Online

Attendance

An attendance list is attached as **Appendix A** to this note

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
1	Welcome, apologies and declarations of interest The Chair welcomed members to the meeting. Apologies were received from Cllrs Frank Biederman, Carl Johnson, Jane Hugo, Carolyn Lambert and Roger Price. There were no declarations of interest.	
2	Wildfires and resilience - update from the NFCC The Chair invited Mark Hardingham (MH), NFCC Chair, to update members on the latest situation with wildfires across the country. MH reported that there had been more than 460 wildfires across the country in the calendar year to date (cf 247 at this stage in 2021) with a much longer season. Unfortunately, 60 properties had been destroyed in the recent spate of wildfires. 19,000 emergency 999 calls had been received on 19 July (cf daily average of 2,500) and as a result, Operation Willowbeck had been activated for the first time. This had worked well in spreading the load of calls across the country. Mutual aid arrangements had been put under considerable strain due to the number of different FRS's experiencing fires. The London Fire Brigade reported its busiest day since World War 2 and MH expanded upon some of the implications of this for the service. Conversations were taking place with the Home Office to try and capture learning from the events. The science was clear that such occurrences would become much more common over the coming years and FRSs needed to be adequately resourced to deal with the increased risk. Members' comments and questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Members felt that it would be useful to have an away day discussion on resilience in the sector in the face of the increasing frequency and severity of extreme weather events, such as wildfires, high winds and flooding, due to climate change. It was suggested that the discussion needed to include looking at resilience in the broader built environment in addition to the more	

immediate issues of FRS response. MH said that the NFCC would be holding an extreme weather conference in the near future, and they would welcome conversations with the LGA about what resources might be needed moving forward.

- More detail was sought on how fire crews were looked after during challenging incidents such as wildfires. MH said that with the recent wildfires, 7 or 8 services had reported heat stress injuries in their firefighters affecting between 30-40 crew members. Each individual FRS would have procedures in place to help firefighters in such circumstances, but better equipment and tactics were being developed all the time in order to try and make fighting wildfires less arduous and dangerous.

Decision:

FSMC **noted** the update and **agreed** that the issue of resilience should be looked at in more detail at a future meeting in the Autumn.

Action:

Officers to arrange a discussion session on resilience of FRSs in relation to the increasing number of extreme weather events.

3 LGA response to the Fire Reform White Paper

Members' comments on draft response:

- Members broadly welcomed the redrafted LGA response to the Fire Reform White Paper and put on record their thanks to Lucy Ellender (LE) for pulling together a document that all members felt able to sign up to. LE explained that two additional paragraphs had also been added to the response – one on sector-led improvement, and one on resilience in the face of the increasing number and severity of extreme climatic events.
- A request was made to strengthen the wording in paragraph 7.1 to reflect that the LGA should be directly involved in drawing up the terms of reference for the proposed independent review of industrial relations and pay machinery. This was agreed.
- It was also suggested that in the responses to the specific consultation questions, rather than referring to the paragraph number in the narrative, the text itself be pasted in for clarity and ease of reading. This was agreed.
- It was suggested that the wording in paragraph 3.9 be more positive to emphasise the benefits that dedicated fire scrutiny panels would bring, as opposed to panels with a joint police and fire remit. This was agreed.

Decision:

FSMC **agreed** to delegate final sign off of the White Paper response to Lead Members following incorporation of the minor amendments agreed above.

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chair	Cllr Ian Stephens	Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Authority
Vice-Chair	Dr Fiona Twycross	Greater London Authority
Deputy-Chairman	Cllr Nick Chard	Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority
Deputy-Chair	Cllr Keith Aspden	North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service
Members	Cllr Eric Carter	Shropshire and Wrekin Fire & Rescue Authority
	Cllr Mark Healey MBE	Devon and Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority
	Mr Roger Hirst	Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex
	Cllr Rebecca Knox	Dorset and Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service
	Cllr Nikki Hennessy	Lancashire Combined Fire Authority
	Cllr Greg Brackenridge	West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority
	Cllr Leigh Redman	Devon and Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority
	Cllr Jeremy Hilton	Gloucestershire County Council
	Cllr Luke Frost (as sub)	Cleveland Fire & Rescue Authority
Apologies	Cllr Carl Johnson	Tyne & Wear Fire & Rescue Authority
	Cllr Frank Biederman	Devon and Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority
	Cllr Carolyn Lambert	East Sussex Fire Authority
	Cllr Roger Price	Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Authority
	Cllr Jane Hugo	Lancashire Combined Fire Authority
In Attendance	Cllr Les Byrom	Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority
	Cllr Andy Crump	Warwickshire County Council
	Cllr Nigel Smith	North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority
	Mark Hardingham	NFCC (for item 2)
	Susannah Hancock	NFCC
	Steven Adams	NFCC
LGA Officers	Mark Norris	Principal Policy Adviser
	Lucy Ellender	Senior Adviser
	Naomi Cooke	Head of Workforce
	Gill Gittins	Senior Adviser (Workforce & Negotiations)
	Rebecca Johnson	Adviser
	Jonathan Bryant	Member Services Officer