

Meeting: Fire Services Management Committee

Date: 9 December 2022



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.

Is this report confidential? No

Recommendation

That the Committee note the report.

Contact details

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Fire Services Management Committee Update Paper



Independent Culture Review of London Fire Brigade

1. In November, London Fire Brigade (LFB) published the outcome report of an [Independent Culture Review](#), led by Nazir Afzal OBE, which was commissioned last year by Commissioner Andy Roe, with the support of the Mayor.
2. The review included experiences of current and former staff, and the public, including members of the Grenfell community and showed examples of poor behaviour and negative experiences over many years. The report showed failings in LFBs processes which have meant women, Black, Asian and minority ethnic people and members of the LGBT+ community have been more likely to experience poor treatment and do less well in their career.
3. The Commissioner has announced immediate action in response to the testimonies, analysis and recommendations from the review, as part of a long-term programme to improve the Brigade's culture.

Letter to new Fire Minister

4. In November, Cllr Frank Biederman wrote to Chris Philp MP the new Minister for Policing and Fire on behalf of the FSMC. The letter outlined the issues facing the sector, including the challenging financial picture, and offered continued support to colleagues at the Home Office to help inform and shape reform proposals.

Fire and Rescue Leadership Essentials

5. The latest Fire and Rescue Leadership Essentials took place between Wednesday 9 and Thursday 10 November at Warwick Conference Centre. It was a well-attended course, with key themes around strengthening governance and driving improvement in equality, diversity and improvement (EDI). Delegates heard from a range of expert speakers including updates from Home Office, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and examples of good practice from Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service.
6. Dates for the next Leadership Essentials in 2023 will be released shortly and we encourage all new Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) Chairs and/ or members to attend. 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.

Fire Inclusion and Diversity Member Champions Network

7. The LGA's Fire Diversity and Inclusion Champions Network met in November for a session focused on exploring how scrutiny can be used as a tool to drive improvement

in EDI. The session was chaired by Baroness Twycross, Deputy Mayor for Fire & Resilience in London and led by Andy Fry (Vale Consulting Solutions), a governance expert.

8. This was the first in a series of meetings for the Champions network in 2022/23 with the next meetings being held on Wednesday 22 March at 10am and Friday 9th June 1.15pm (immediately following Fire Commission).
9. We encourage all authorities to make sure that they have a representative on the Committee's Member Champions Network. Please get in touch with Rebecca Johnson for further information Rebecca.johnson@local.gov.uk

LGA/NFCC joint Fire Finance meeting

10. FSMC Lead Members held a meeting with the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) in November to discuss a joint approach to lobbying government on fire finance, which will be discussed further under the finance item on the agenda for this meeting.

HMICFRS Chairs and Chiefs Event

11. In October Cllr Frank Biederman and Baroness Fiona Twycross spoke at the HMICFRS Chairs and Chiefs event in London.
12. They updated Chairs and Chiefs on FSMC priorities and provided reflections on inspection, speaking about LGA support of inspection and working with the sector to improve and provide the services that the public need whilst also setting out the LGA's view that inspection must be proportionate and not become overly burdensome for FRAs.

Implications for Wales

13. None.

Financial Implications

14. None.

Equalities implications

15. HMICFRS's inspection reports highlighted a range of issues that impact on equality, diversity and inclusion within the fire and rescue sector. The LGA's Fire Diversity and Inclusion Champions Network has been specifically established to assist authorities in improving equality, diversity and inclusion in fire and rescue services.