

Note of last Fire Services Management Committee meeting

Title: Fire Services Management Committee
Date: Friday 26 June 2015
Venue: Bevin Hall, Ground Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

Attendance

An attendance list is attached as [Appendix A](#) to this note

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
1	<p>The Future of the Fire and Rescue Service: Report from the New Local Government Network</p> <p>The Chair introduced the report and introduced Claire Mansfield, Head of Research at the New Local Government Network (NLGN). Claire explained that NLGN would be publishing a report, commissioned by CFOA, on Thursday 16 July entitled 'The Future of the Fire and Rescue Service', which focused on widening the prevention agenda, collaboration with other emergency services and achieving greater efficiency. NLGN, in conjunction with CFOA, had held interviews and workshops with a number of officers and councillors from the fire and rescue service, local authorities, other blue light services and social workers to examine how the fire and rescue service could reform to ensure future success and sustainability.</p> <p>NLGN had examined the recommendations of the Knight Review as a model for future change. They had considered what would be required for a merger between two fire and rescue services to be effective, and whether a national fire and rescue service or other national body should oversee such mergers. A study had been undertaken in Manchester on the role of the fire and rescue service in community intervention. Work had also been undertaken to consider the best ways in which the service could work efficiently and effectively with other blue light services. Members of FSMC would be invited to attend the launch of the report on 16 July.</p> <p>Members raised the following points in the discussion on the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The NLGN report may link with the possible outcomes of the Thomas Review.• Some Chief Fire Officers would be more disposed to working with the police than others. It was confirmed that if CFOA did not agree with the outcomes of the report it would still be published as a report from NLGN only.• It was useful that the report was from a local government perspective, which would allow colleagues in public health and other areas to feed in. The increasing prevention role had shown that the fire and rescue service was able to adapt to a different role	

in the community. The fire and rescue service did a lot of work that was not recognised.

- It was anticipated that the recommendations in the final report would be considered by the government in due course.
- The final report would be circulated to all members of FSMC when it was published.

The Chair thanked the Head of Research for attending, and commented that members would look forward to the publication of the report.

Decision

- Members noted the report, and agreed that it should be considered in full by the FSMC when it was published.

Action

- Report to be circulated to FSMC members following publication.

2 LGA Fire Perceptions Survey

Eamon Lally, Principal Policy Adviser, introduced the report which set out the full results of the LGA Fire Perceptions Survey which had been undertaken earlier in the year, and also set out potential actions arising from the results. The survey indicated that the LGA was advocating well on behalf of the sector and in progressing the political agenda for the fire and rescue service nationally. Further work had been identified to ensure that all members were aware of all that the LGA offered to member authorities and the work which was undertaken on their behalf so that FRAs could take full advantage of the support available.

In the discussion on the survey findings, members raised the following points:

- Members asked that the full report from BMG Research be circulated electronically following the meeting. It was confirmed that BMG Research had undertaken a full independent analysis of the results, but did not compare the findings against other organisations of the same type.
- The fire and rescue serviced relied on the LGA to provide links to the health and wellbeing and other agendas, which was important in the context of the wider preventative role of the service.
- There were concerns about the LGA demonstrating value for money for the funding it received from the fire and rescue authorities. The Chair suggested that a report be considered by the Committee in September on this issue.
- The fire and rescue service as a whole should better articulate what it could offer to communities in which it worked, as it was passionate in taking a leading role in public service reform.
- Members noted that all fire and rescue services were currently in the membership of the LGA. It was explained that when letters regarding subscription fees were sent out, the benefits of membership were also set out.
- Authorities which did not engage fully with the LGA and, for

example, did not have a peer review, would have a different opinion on the value for money of membership than those who took full advantage of what the Association had to offer.

- The Knowledge Hub did not currently work well as an online tool for improvement work and accessing documents.
- Members agreed that the survey was useful in gauging what members who were not represented on the FSMC thought about the service provided by the LGA, and how other authorities could be encouraged to have greater involvement. It was suggested that the survey be conducted again in approximately five years.

Decision

- A report on how the LGA provided value for money to member authorities to be considered by the Committee at the next meeting.
- Perceptions Survey to be undertaken again in approximately five years in order to track how the opinions of member authorities altered.

Action

- Full survey analysis report by BMG Research to be circulated to FSMC members following the meeting.

3 LGA Annual Fire Conference and Exhibition Venues and Locations for 2017 and Beyond

Helen Murray, lately Head of Programmes, introduced the report and explained that it set out the benefits and drawbacks of a variety of potential conference venues, as well as a proposal to find a semi-permanent home for the Fire Conference and Exhibition in Gateshead for a two or three year period from 2017-19. A great deal of research had been undertaken to ensure that suggested venues were of a high standard and had a fire sprinkler system installed throughout. Members noted that the Bristol City Marriott had been chosen as the venue for the 2016 conference at the previous meeting.

The Gateshead Hilton was considered the best option for a two or three year deal, as they were amenable to holding delegate fees, and had enough space and rooms to accommodate the conference and all delegates at one site. Members agreed that a two year deal with the Gateshead Hilton for 2017 and 2018 would provide the best value for money, as well as enabling the LGA to deliver an excellent conference and exhibition. The FSMC would consider venues for 2019 and beyond at a future meeting, but it was suggested that following two successive years in a northern venue, a two year deal with a southern venue could be sought for 2019 and 2020.

Decision

- That a two year deal with the Gateshead Hilton be made to host the LGA Fire Conference and Exhibition for 2017 and 2018.

Action

- Officers to bring forward proposals for conference venues for 2019 and beyond at the appropriate time for consideration.

4 Workforce Report - Scheme Advisory Board

Clair Alcock, Fire Pensions Adviser, introduced the report and explained that the Firefighters' Pension Scheme Regulations 2015 introduced the Scheme Advisory Board as a new form of pension scheme governance. Equal representation of persons representing the interests of scheme employers and persons representing the interests of members should be appointed, and the Fire Minister had previously agreed that seven representatives be appointed by each side. Member appointments would be made by the FBU and other unions, and the employer representatives would be appointed through a selection method approved by the FSMC. An independent Chair of the Board would also be appointed who would have a casting vote.

It was proposed that a wide range of employers, including all the different types of fire authority were sufficiently represented, and the LGA political group offices and fire authority political groups be consulted on who should be appointed.

Members agreed that all representatives should be experienced fire authority members that every political group felt comfortable with. It was also agreed that the FSMC would make a final recommendation on the appointments at the next meeting in September after consultation with the political groups.

Decisions

- That the FSMC would recommend to DCLG the seven employer representatives to the Scheme Advisory Board, following consultation with political groups.
- That members who were appointed to the Scheme Advisory Board should be experienced fire authority members, with representation of every type of fire authority.

Action

- Officers to consult political groups on the appointments, and bring recommendations back to the next meeting of the FSMC for consideration.

5 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Members agreed the notes of the meeting held on 9 March 2015 as correct.

Cllr Simon Spencer, who represented the FSMC on the CFOA Retained Duty System (RDS) and Operational Training Working Group, highlighted that the Group were looking at the challenges of recruitment and retention of RDS staff, and had proposed to meet with the Minister for Communities

and Resilience to discuss this. Small companies were financially impacted by employment of RDS firefighters, and the government had been lobbied on business relief tax. The Group had also discussed how the RDS service could be provided with more up to date equipment which was currently a barrier to effectiveness.

Cllr Thomas Wright, who represented the FSMC on the National Occupational Committee, reported that the Committee had almost completed the process of developing a new website which would be of interest to all fire and rescue services. It would provide the primary access to training and development and would therefore affect every firefighter. He suggested that a representative from the Committee be asked to attend the FSMC to make a presentation on the new developments.

Members welcomed the idea of having a part of the meeting where they could report back on the work of the various outside bodies to which they were appointed. The Chair suggested that if a member wished to provide an update they should send it to officers in writing so that it could be included in the regular update report. Officers would contact members to prompt them for updates at the appropriate time.

Decision

- Members to provide updates on the work of various outside bodies as part of the FSMC update report.

Action

- Officers to prompt members to provide written updates at the appropriate time.

6 Farewell

The Chair announced that it would be Helen Murray's last meeting as Head of Programmes for the FSMC, as she was to become the LGA's new Principal Advisor in the West Midlands. Members paid tribute to Helen's advice and leadership over the last few years and thanked her for her hard work.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Jeremy Hilton	Gloucestershire County Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Philip Howson	East Sussex Fire Authority
Deputy-chairman	Cllr David Acton	Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority
Members	Cllr Michele Hodgson	County Durham and Darlington Fire & Rescue Authority
	Cllr John Joyce	Cheshire Fire Authority
	Ms Fiona Twycross	London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA)

Cllr Darrell Pulk

Cllr John Edwards
Cllr John Bell
Cllr Maurice Heaster

Cllr Simon Spencer
Cllr Rebecca Knox
Cllr Roger Price

Apologies

Cllr Kay Hammond

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire
and Rescue Authority
West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority
Greater Manchester FRA
London Fire and Emergency Planning
Authority (LFEPA)
Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Authority
Dorset Fire Authority
Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority

Surrey County Council

In Attendance

LGA Officers

Helen Murray
Eamon Lally
Lucy Ellender
Clair Alcock
Mark Norris
John Wright
Sally Burlington
Paul Goodchild