

Note of last Fire Services Management Committee meeting

Title: Fire Services Management Committee
Date: Friday 11 December 2015
Venue: Smith Square 1&2, 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	Declarations of Interest There were no declarations of interest.	
2	Discussion with the Chief Fire Officers Association - CFOA President Paul Hancock The Chair introduced Paul Hancock, CFOA President, who presented to members the latest CFOA strategy and updated them on the work of the organisation. The presentation also covered: the deployment to the recent flooding in Cumbria, the Public Accounts Committee and National Audit Office reports and changes to the CFOA Board. There was a discussion during which members made a number of comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The collaborative work the Fire Service is doing with the health service- the importance of having a national view looking at Fire & Rescue Service in its totality- the mutually beneficial relationship between CFOA and LGA, and the potential of further joint work in the future- the importance of peer review for driving improvement and the benefits of inspection- expanding communications across government departments and beyond DCLG.	
	Decision: Members noted the presentation.	

3 Fire Service College governance update - Sir Ken Knight

The Chair introduced Sir Ken Knight and Martin Thomas, Managing Director of the Fire Service College. Sir Ken updated members on the proposed changes to the Fire Service College governance. The main changes include:

- Scrapping the two existing bodies – the Customer Advisory Board and Corporate Management Board – and creating one new forum
- the proposed new body would have direct access to the Board of directors
- LGA representation to the new body would be reduced to one member.

Mr Thomas stressed to members the mutually beneficial relationship between the College and the Fire Service. He also discussed the financial investment made to the College and competitive prices available.

The Chair thanked Sir Ken and Martin and invited members to give their views. Members made a number of comments:

- Members agreed the two bodies were not working and a single approach would be better
- a single LGA representative would not be sufficient to represent the diversity of the sector and instead two would be better
- members felt it was inappropriate for the new body to have the role of championing the College
- the global reach of the college is part of its strength
- the need for a national training partner and national standards
- improved access to the board of directors was a positive change.

Sir Ken accepted the points members made in relation to the role of champion and increased LGA representation.

Decision:

Members noted the update.

4 The Spending Review and the implications for the Fire Service

Mark Norris, Principal Policy Advisor, presented the report and outlined anticipated reductions in funding and the specific announcements related to the Fire and Rescue Service in the Spending Review papers:

- A new statutory duty for the emergency services to collaborate
- Proposed legislation to enable Police and Crime Commissioners to take on responsibility for fire and rescue services, subject to a clear business case and local support
- The provision of £74 million of funding for the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme.

Cllr Acton proposed a motion, seconded by Cllr Byrom, about reductions to FRS budgets. There was a ten minute adjournment to allow the groups to discuss the text of the proposed motion. Following the adjournment, it was agreed that lead members would issue a joint statement on the funding of the fire and rescue service. The motion was subsequently withdrawn.

Members discussed the report and made a number of comments:

- Council tax and looking again at capping
- carrying out further work on business rates retention and what it will mean for Fire and Rescue Authorities
- disseminating case studies in the bulletin as a way of sharing good collaborative work and achieving savings
- the impact the apprentice levy would have on budgets.

Decision:

Members noted the report.

Action:

Officers to progress taking account of members comments.

5 National Audit Office reports on the Fire Service

Mark Norris, Principal Policy Advisor, introduced the paper for members to comment on. Members welcomed the recognition that fire and rescue authorities are risk-based organisations. Members were particularly concerned in the report's finding that DCLG's understanding of the underlying costs of the service is limited. Members felt they should engage with other government departments and local MPs to enhance their understanding of the costs to the service.

Decision:

Members noted the report and agreed to receive a regular email update on the Chair's activity.

Action:

Officers to send email updates to members on the Chair's activity.

6 Workforce Update

Clair Alcock, Fire Pensions Advisor, introduced the Workforce Report for the consideration of the Committee. She informed the Committee that appointments to the Pension Scheme Advisory Board were still waiting on confirmation from the Secretary of State. She also updated members on the GAD v Milne Commutation Factors.

Clair also updated members on the news from the FBU at the start of the week that DCLG has agreed to settle a case brought jointly with the FBU and to provide a contributions holiday to those regular firefighters who joined the service before the age of 20 and served for over 30 years before reaching the minimum retirement age of 50.

It is expected that the scheme advisory board will be consulted on the practicalities of implementation, and more information will be provided as soon as possible.

Decision:

Members noted the issues set out in the paper.

7 Update paper

Decision:

Members noted the update paper.

Action:

Officers to circulate a copy of the Fire Conference programme to members for input.

8 Outside bodies - oral updates from members (a maximum of 2 minutes each)

Cllr Darrell Pulk updated the Committee on the work of CFOA Fire Futures Forum – Waste Management. The planning process is key in preventing waste fires and Cllr Pulk recommended the LGA lobby to increase involvement of the Fire Service in the planning process.

Cllr Kay Hammond updated the Committee on the National Operational Guidance. She attended a parliamentary reception on behalf of the outside body and would circulate a report to members.

Cllr Spencer updated the Committee on the work of CFOA, RDS and operational training working group. The Committee noted the retirement of Dave Ramskall, *job title*, and the contribution he made to the Fire Service. He also said he wanted to write to the Fire Minister on behalf of the LGA to request a meeting for this outside body

9 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2015 were agreed as correct.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Jeremy Hilton	Gloucestershire County Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Kay Hammond	Surrey County Council
	Cllr Philip Howson	East Sussex Fire Authority
Deputy-chairman	Cllr David Acton	Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority
Members	Cllr Maurice Heaster OBE	London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA)
	Cllr Rebecca Knox	Dorset Fire Authority
	Cllr Simon Spencer	Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Authority
	Cllr Nick Chard	Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority
	Cllr Peter Jackson	Northumberland Council
	Cllr Michele Hodgson	County Durham and Darlington Fire & Rescue Authority
	Cllr John Joyce	Cheshire Fire Authority
	Cllr Darrell Pulk	Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority
	Cllr John Edwards	West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority
	Cllr Thomas Wright	Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority
	Cllr Roger Price	Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority
Apologies	Ms Fiona Twycross	London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA)
In Attendance	Cllr Mark Healey	Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority