

# Fire Commission

## Agenda

Friday 15 February 2013  
11.00am

Smith Square Rooms 3 & 4 (Ground floor)  
Local Government House  
Smith Square  
London  
SW1P 3HZ

**To:** Members of the Fire Commission  
**cc:** Named officers for briefing purposes

[www.local.gov.uk](http://www.local.gov.uk)

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### Local Government House, Smith Square, London SW1P 3HZ

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**Please don't forget to sign out at reception and return your badge when you depart.**

**Fire Commission**  
**15 February 2013**

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There will be a meeting of the **LGA Fire Commission at 11.00am on Friday 15 February 2013 in Smith Square Rooms 3 & 4 (Ground Floor)**, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ.

**Group Meetings (from 10.00am)\* PLEASE NOTE: The Labour Group meeting will start at 9.00am**

Conservative Group (Rathbone Room 1) (7<sup>th</sup> floor)  
Labour Group (Smith Square Room 1) (Ground floor)  
Lib Dem Group (Smith Square Room 2) (Ground floor)  
Independent Group (Meeting Room 6) (6<sup>th</sup> floor)

**Tea and coffee will be provided in Political Group Meetings from 9.45am.**

Lunch will be provided following the meeting in Smith Square Room 1.

**Apologies**

Please notify your political group office (see contact telephone numbers below) if you are unable to attend this meeting, so that a substitute can be arranged and catering numbers adjusted, if necessary.

<b>Labour:</b>	Aicha Less: [REDACTED]	email: <a href="mailto:aicha.less@local.gov.uk">aicha.less@local.gov.uk</a>
<b>Conservative:</b>	Luke Taylor: [REDACTED]	email: <a href="mailto:luke.taylor@local.gov.uk">luke.taylor@local.gov.uk</a>
<b>Liberal Democrat:</b>	Group Office: [REDACTED]	email: <a href="mailto:libdem@local.gov.uk">libdem@local.gov.uk</a>
<b>Independent:</b>	Group Office: [REDACTED]	email: <a href="mailto:independent.group@local.gov.uk">independent.group@local.gov.uk</a>

**Attendance Sheet**

Please ensure that you sign the attendance register, which will be available in the meeting room. It is the only record of your presence at the meeting.

**Location**

A map showing the location of Local Government House is printed on the back cover.

**Contact**

Stephen Service (Tel: [REDACTED] e-mail: [stephen.service@local.gov.uk](mailto:stephen.service@local.gov.uk))

**Hotels**

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## Fire Commission 2012/13

*All Fire Authorities in full or corporate membership of the Association have the right to representation and voting on this Commission in accordance with Article 10 (and Schedule 1) of the LGA Constitution, Standing Orders and Political Conventions.*

*Additional members from fire authorities appointed as necessary by the political groups to ensure political balance as provided by Article 9.3.*

<b>Nominating Body</b>	<b>Authority</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>Party</b>
<b>Combined Fire Authorities</b>	Avon	Peter Abraham	Con
"	Bedfordshire & Luton	David McVicar	Con
"	Royal Berkshire	Iain McCracken	Con
"	Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes	Adrian Busby	Con
"	Cambridgeshire & Peterborough	Fred Brown	Con
"	Cheshire	John Joyce	Lab
"	Cleveland	Robbie Payne	Lab
"	Derbyshire/Derby City	David Wilson	Con
"	Devon & Somerset	Mark Healey	Con
"	Dorset	Rebecca Knox	Con
"	Durham & Darlington	Gordon Tennant	Lab
"	East Sussex	John Livings	Con
"	Essex	Anthony Hedley	Con
"	Hampshire	Royston Smith	Con
"	Hereford & Worcester	Derek Prodger	Con
"	Humberside	John Briggs	Con
"	Kent and Medway	Bryan Cope	Con
"	Lancashire	David O'Toole	Con
"	Leicestershire	Peter Roffey DL	Con
"	North Yorkshire	John Fort	Con
"	Nottinghamshire & City of Nottingham	Darrell Pulk	Lab
"	Shropshire & Wrekin	Stuart West	Con
"	Stoke on Trent & Staffordshire	Len Bloomer	Con
"	Wiltshire & Swindon	Robert Hall	Con
<b>County</b>	Cumbria	Gary Strong	Con

<b>Councils</b>			
"	Gloucestershire	Will Windsor-Clive	Con
"	Hertfordshire	Richard Thake	Con
"	Lincolnshire	Peter Robinson	Con
"	Norfolk	Nigel Dixon	Con
"	Northamptonshire	Andre Gonzalez De Savage	Con
"	Northumberland	Anita Romer	Lib/Dem
"	Oxfordshire	Judith Heathcoat	Con
"	Suffolk	Colin Spence	Con
"	Surrey	Kay Hammond	Con
"	Warwickshire	Richard Hobbs	Con
"	West Sussex	Christine Field	Con
<b>London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority</b>		Crada Onuegbu	Lab
"		Maurice Heaster OBE	Mayoral Appointee (Con)
"		Tony Arbour	Con
"		David Cartwright	Mayoral Appointee (Con)
"		Navin Shah	Lab
"		Fiona Twycross	Lab
"		Terry Stacy	Lib/Dem
"		Colin Tandy	Con
<b>Metropolitan Fire &amp; Rescue Authorities</b>			
"	Greater Manchester	David Acton	Lab
"	"	Tommy Judge	Lab
"	"	John Bell	Con
"	Merseyside	Dave Hanratty	Lab
"	"	Les Byrom	Lab
"	"	Linda Maloney (Observer)	Lab
"	South Yorkshire	James Andrews	Lab
"	"	Alan Atkin	Lab
"	Tyne & Wear	Tom Wright	Lab
"	"	Nick Forbes	Lab
"	West Midlands	John Edwards	Lab
"	"	Mohammed Idrees	Lab
"	"	Kevin Foster	Con
"	West Yorkshire	Mehboob Khan	Lab
"	"	Peter Harrand	Con
"	"	Judith Hughes	Lab
<b>Unitary</b>	Isle of Wight	Barry Abraham	Con
	Cornwall	Lance Kennedy	Con
<b>Welsh Fire Authorities</b>	Mid & West Wales Fire	Roy Llewellyn	Ind

	North Wales Fire	Aled Morris Jones	Lib/Dem
	South Wales Fire	Tudor Davies	Lab
<b>Balancing Members</b>			
<b>Conservative (3)</b>			
	Cheshire	David Topping	
	Essex	Ann Holland	
	Royal Berkshire	Paul Bryant	
<b>Labour (16)</b>			
	Tyne & Wear FRA	Gary Haley	
	Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland	Stephen Corrall	
	Tyne & Wear FRA	Tommy Mulvenna	
	Luton BC	Sian Timoney	
	Essex	Julie Young	
	Durham & Darlington	Jane Brown	
	Kent	Leslie Christie	
	Durham & Darlington	John Robinson	
	Merseyside	Linda Maloney	
	West Midlands	Tersaim Singh	
	TBC		
	TBC		
	TBC		
	TBC		
	TBC		
	TBC		
<b>Liberal Democrat (11)</b>			
	Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes FA	Mary Baldwin	
	Cambs & Peterborough FA	Nigel Bell	
	Cheshire FA	Mike Biggin	
	Dorset FA	David Milsted	
	Gloucestershire CC	Jeremy Hilton	
	Hampshire FA	Roger Price	
	Leicestershire & Rutland FA	Michael Wyatt	
	Mid & West Wales FA	Jeff Holmes	
	Royal Berkshire FA	Prue Bray	
	North Yorkshire FA	Keith Aspden	
	Suffolk CC	Dave Wood	
<b>Independent (6)</b>			
	Shepway DC	Brian Copping	
	Wigan Council	Jim Ellis	
	Swansea Council	Gordon Walker	
	TBC		





## Agenda

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### Fire Commission

Friday 15 February 2012

11.00am

Smith Square Rooms 3 & 4, Local Government House, London

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### For discussion

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3.	<b>Attendance of Fire Minister</b>  Brandon Lewis MP will be answering questions for this item.	<b>11</b>
4.	<b>Fire Service College</b>  The Commission will receive a presentation from representatives of Capita, the successful bidder for the college.	<b>13</b>

### For information

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**Date of Next Meeting:** Friday, 14 June 2013, 11.00am, Westminster Suite Room 8.1, Local Government House



## **Atherstone-on-Stour**

### **Purpose of report**

For discussion and direction.

### **Summary**

Cllr Richard Hobbs, Portfolio Holder for Fire in Warwickshire County Council and Graeme Smith, Chief Fire Officer, Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service will give a presentation on the lessons to be learned from the Atherstone-on-Stour Fire in 2007 in which four firefighters tragically lost their lives.

### **Recommendation**

Members are asked to note the implications of the Atherstone-on-Stour fire and subsequent proceedings and indicate whether any collective action is required on the issues raised.

### **Action**

Officers will take action as directed.

**Contact officer:**

Eamon Lally

**Position:**

Senior Adviser

**Phone no:**

[REDACTED]

**E-mail:**

Eamon.lally@local.gov.uk



## **Atherstone-on-Stour**

### **Background**

1. In November 2007 a fire at a vegetable packing plant warehouse in Atherstone-on-Stour resulted in the tragic death of four retained firefighters.
2. Subsequent investigation found that the fire had been set deliberately.
3. A number of investigations were carried out including those by the police and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).
4. A decision was taken in the winter of 2011 by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) to prosecute three incident commanders with manslaughter of the four firefighters who died in the fire.
5. The four week trial began in April 2012 and at the end the all three incident commanders were acquitted. At the time of the acquittal CFO Graeme Smith called for the Home Office and Ministry of Justice to investigate how and why the prosecution was allowed to proceed. This call has been repeated by CFA.
6. In January 2012 Warwickshire County Council (as the Fire Authority) pleaded guilty, on a limited basis, to infringements of Section 2 of Health and Safety at Work Act. The Sentencing Hearing began on 3 December 2012. The council was fined £30,000.
7. Nobody has been charged with arson in connection with the case.

### **Key issues**

8. The fire and the subsequent proceedings have wide ranging implications. These will be picked up in the presentation by Graeme Smith. In brief they include:
  - 8.1. potential gaps in the Building Control system;
  - 8.2. training issues, including record keeping;
  - 8.3. the appropriateness of the decision to prosecute three incident commanders and the potential implications of that decision; and
  - 8.4. practical implications of dealing with investigations of this type.

### **Conclusion and next steps**

9. Members are asked to note the implications of the Atherstone-on-Stour fire and subsequent proceedings and determine whether any collective action is required on the issues raised.



## **Sprinklers update**

### **Purpose of report**

For discussion and direction.

### **Summary**

Cllr John Edwards, Chairman of West Midlands Fire Authority will set out the progress that has been made in establishing a toolkit that can be used by fire authorities to generate local campaigns for the greater use of sprinklers.

### **Recommendation**

Members are asked to note the presentation and to consider how their own authorities can use the toolkit to support their own work in this area.

### **Action**

Officers will take action as directed.

### **Contact officer:**

Eamon Lally

### **Position:**

Senior Adviser

### **Phone no:**

[REDACTED]

### **E-mail:**

Eamon.lally@local.gov.uk





## **Sprinklers update**

### **Background**

1. In July 2012, the Sprinklers Working Group reported back to FSMC on its work, recommending the creation of a campaign toolkit aimed at Fire and Rescue Authorities and any other interested public organisations to facilitate local campaigns in collaboration with the public.
2. This recommendation was adopted by FSMC and the Working Group has overseen the development of the toolkit, its testing and soft launch.
3. The toolkit is intended to support campaigns lobbying for the installation of sprinklers in sites and dwellings where the most vulnerable in society either reside or regularly visit.

### **The sprinklers toolkit**

4. The toolkit is hosted on the LGA website and can be found at:  
[http://www.local.gov.uk/web/quest/fire-and-rescue-services/-/journal\\_content/56/10171/3796487/ARTICLE-TEMPLATE](http://www.local.gov.uk/web/quest/fire-and-rescue-services/-/journal_content/56/10171/3796487/ARTICLE-TEMPLATE)
5. The tool kit includes:
  - 5.1. a national sprinkler promotion strategy;
  - 5.2. a media and communication centre;
  - 5.3. a “Why Sprinklers” report;
  - 5.4. a myth busting section; and
  - 5.5. a section on parliamentary engagement.
6. This is the first time that the sector has come together to compile this information and hold it in one place. It is intended that the toolkit will continue to grow as fire authorities post examples of their own local campaigns and the successes they have had.
7. Partly as a result of the profile that the Working Group has given to this issue in the last year, we have seen a renewed effort by fire authorities to make the case for sprinklers. CFOA also recognise this as a key lobbying objective and has sought to press the case with Ministers and in the Media as and when the opportunity arises. The Chairman of the FSMC and the Fire Commission, Councillor Kay Hammond, has also lobbied the Minister in her private meetings with Brandon Lewis.

**Conference launch**

8. The toolkit will be formally launched at this year's fire conference. A plenary session, chaired by Cllr John Edwards, is scheduled for the second day of the conference, 13 March 2013. The launch will be supported by Nick Ross, journalist and broadcaster, who has campaigned on this issue for a number of years.

**National Lobbying**

9. The Working Group took the view that it was important to focus on building support for sprinklers in local areas and developing alliances with the insurance and building sectors. However, the sector has continued to lobby government when the opportunity has arisen. At the FSMC meeting on 16 November 2012, the Fire Minister agreed to press the case for Building Control reforms with Don Foster MP, the relevant CLG Minister. We are currently pressing CLG for information on the outcome of their discussions.

**Conclusion and next steps**

10. The Fire Commission meeting will be a further opportunity to discuss this issue with the Fire Minister.

## **Attendance by the Fire Minister**

### **Purpose of report**

For discussion and direction.

### **Summary**

Following the Minister's attendance at the Fire Services Management Committee in November, this session provides an opportunity for the wider Fire Commission membership to ask questions on areas of priority for their authorities and raise issues affecting the fire service.

### **Recommendations**

Members are invited to ask questions regarding the latest developments in Government policy and its implications for the fire service.

### **Action**

Officers will take follow-up action as directed.

**Contact officer:** Helen Murray  
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## **Fire Services College**

### **Purpose of report**

For discussion.

### **Summary**

This report provides members with a summary of the situation regarding the Fire Services College, the preferred bidder and the sector's key requirements for the College in the future.

### **Recommendation**

Members are asked to use the content of the report to inform discussion with the preferred bidders at the Commission meeting.

### **Action**

Officers to take forward actions as directed.

**Contact officer:**

Clive Harris

**Position:**

Adviser

**Phone no:**

[REDACTED]

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[clive.harris@local.gov.uk](mailto:clive.harris@local.gov.uk)



## **Fire Services College**

### **Current situation**

1. The Department for Communities and Local Government announced in December that Capita is the preferred bidder for the contract to run the College and we anticipate that the sale will be agreed on 28 February.
2. The Commission will receive the attached presentation from Capita at the meeting and this discussion will allow members to examine the proposals, provide input to the developing plans and provide an opportunity to discuss FRA representation on the future governance arrangements.

### **Background**

3. Members will recall that the LGA working group identified the following areas where the College could add value to the work of FRAs:
  - 3.1 improving and assuring FRS interoperability and therefore local and national resilience;
  - 3.2 providing operational assurance, by improving standards and consistency of training through common, proper and benchmarked training standards provided by an approved organisation; and
  - 3.3 achieving economies of scale for training.
4. The College is in need of significant capital investment in its infrastructure and facilities which will be especially challenging in the current financial climate.
5. Members agreed that the College's new business model would need to be based on relevant and timely products and training provision which could be provided at a competitive price.

### **Government Covenants**

6. Members should note the undertakings drawn up by the Department for Communities and Local Government governing the sale of the Fire Service College to Capita. These reflect the concerns Members have raised and it is extremely positive that these will be formally written in to the contract. The undertakings are to:
  - 6.1 Maintain, and make available to Category 1 Responders, all the Key Capabilities either at the Site or elsewhere in England. The Key Capabilities comprise a number of training requirements.
  - 6.2 Maintain, and make available (on reasonable commercial terms) to Category 1 Responders (which will include availability on short notice (subject to existing scheduled training exercises already planned/booked in respect of the Incident Ground at the time of receipt of such notice)), the Incident Ground for Multi-operational Exercises.

**Item 4**

7. Additionally Capita must not, without the prior written consent of DCLG:
  - 7.1 dispose of or destroy all or any part of any National Resilience Asset or relocate any National Resilience Asset away from the Site (where the National Resilience Assets consist of the USAR rig and associated facilities);
  - 7.2 voluntarily undertake the closure of any National Resilience Asset;
  - 7.3 cease to comply with the obligations set out in paragraph 6 above;
  - 7.4 dispose of the Incident Ground or any part thereof; and
  - 7.5 alter, re-configure or change the use of the Incident Ground so that it is not available for Multi-operational Exercises.
8. Should Capita conclude that the facility is not financially viable in the future, they will need to discuss and agree any change of use/amendment with DCLG in line with the provisions at **paragraph 7**.
9. Additionally, if Capita wishes to sell the College it must procure a direct undertaking from the subsequent purchaser that it will continue to comply with these undertakings.



## **Industrial Relations**

### **Purpose of the Report**

To update the Fire Commission on matters in relation to fire service industrial relations.

### **Summary**

This paper is for information and briefly describes the main industrial relations issues at present.

### **Recommendation**

Members are asked to note the issues set out in the paper.

### **Action**

This report is for information.

**Contact officer:**

Gill Gittins

**Position:**

Principal Negotiating Officer

**Phone no:**



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## **Industrial Relations**

### **Background**

1. As far as uniformed operational staff from firefighter to chief fire officer level are concerned they are in the main represented by one of four unions specific to the fire service – the Fire Brigades Union (FBU), the Fire Officers Association (FOA) the Retained Firefighters Union (RFU) and the Association Principal Fire Officers (APFO).

### **Pension scheme reform**

2. The Government's pension reform proposals are continuing to progress, bringing focus again on two of the most contentious issues – further increase in the employee contribution rate and publication of the normal pension age review recommendations. Should the unions remain aggrieved the risk of potential industrial unrest could return.
3. As far as industrial relations are concerned, Members will recall that the LGA worked closely with all parties on the first stage of this work, which moved forward without recourse to industrial unrest. We shall endeavour to do so again.

### **National issues**

4. There are no national issues with short term industrial relations implications at the present time.
5. Work continues on the two reviews currently underway under the auspices of the NJC for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services. Employers' Side members and advisers will meet again later this month to continue consideration of employer priorities in respect of the joint review on pay and terms and conditions. Negotiations are also continuing in respect of the separate review on car mileage rates.
6. At the time of writing it is expected that the final group of settlement offers in relation to the Employment Tribunal claimants/potential claimants' cases brought under the Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations, will be issued shortly. This is in relation to the terms and conditions aspect of the claims/potential claims only.
7. At the most recent meeting of the FSMC members reviewed the current arrangements for stakeholder involvement in informing the work of the Employers' Sides of the NJC for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services and NJC for Brigade Managers. FSMC members were content that the current approach should continue, which includes members of the Employers' Side taking political

soundings within their own stakeholder groups, the views of the National Employers' professional advisers, communication with CFOA on key issues, updates to FSMC and the Fire Commission, regular communications with authorities, surveys etc. Members of the FSMC recognised that all new members of the Employers' Sides receive a detailed half-day induction session with the Employers' Secretariat (provided by the LGA). It was recommended and agreed that periodic refresher training would be provided.

**Local issues**

8. Since the last meeting of the FSMC, there have been two formal Joint Secretaries conciliations, both of which assisted the local parties to identify positions they were content to recommend for acceptance to their respective stakeholders. We are currently dealing with two further requests for assistance in resolution of disputes at local level – one for conciliation and one to the NJC's Technical Advisory Panel (which deals with the introduction of new shift systems only).
9. There has also been a considerable amount of informal work with a number of fire and rescue services on industrial relations issues.
10. We have also assisted fire authorities by providing general advice and interpretation on the terms and conditions of employment of uniformed personnel.
11. The national Joint Secretariat recently visited a Fire and Rescue Service to provide a full day session with its key local management and union representatives to explore the current relationship and whether it could be improved. Feedback on the day has been very positive.

## Fire Commission update paper

### Purpose of report

For information.

### Summary

The report outlines issues of interest to the Commission not covered under the other items on the agenda.

### Recommendation

Members to note the update.

### Action

Officers to progress as appropriate.

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## **Fire Commission update paper**

### **Fire Settlement**

1. The local government settlement, including the settlement for fire authorities was announced on the 19 December. The settlement set out funding for 2013/14 and indicative funding for 2014/15. The overall budget reductions were broadly as expected. Overall the reductions in funding are around 21 per cent for the spending review period.
2. As part of the settlement the Government provided some flexibility for eight fire authorities in the level of council tax increase allowed before a local referendum is required. The eight fire authorities selected for this flexibility were those whose council tax is in the 2012/13 lower quartile. There is some degree of arbitrariness in this selection as some of the factors determining council tax levels, particularly for CFAs are historic and not politically determined.
3. The Government also announced the allocation of the capital grant. Although subject to a competitive bidding round, in practice 2/3 of the grant has been allocated on a formula basis.
4. The prospect is that the Government will operate on the principle that departmental resource budgets will continue on the same trajectory in 2015-16 as over the period of the Spending Review 2010. This implies a further reduction of around -6 per cent.

### **Appointment of Chief Fire and Rescue Advisor**

5. Peter Holland CBE, the former Chief Fire Officer, was appointed as the new CFRA on 22nd January. Peter will provide professional advice to both civil servants and the fire minister, Brandon Lewis MP. Councillor Kay Hammond has written on behalf of the FSMC and the Fire Commission to congratulate Peter on his appointment.

### **CLG's Operational Efficiencies Review**

6. On 14 December 2012, Minister for Fire, Brandon Lewis announced that Sir Ken Knight, the outgoing Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser, would lead a short review into the operational efficiency of the services delivered by fire and rescue authorities in England.
7. The review will seek to identify the ways in which fire and rescue authorities may deliver further efficiencies and operational improvements without reducing the quality of front line services to the public. The review will examine options for savings both within and beyond the current Spending Review period.
8. Sir Ken has already embarked on a series of discussions with key organisations in the fire sector, including the LGA, the Chief Fire Officers Association, the Fire Brigades Union, the Fire Sector Federation, individual fire and rescue authorities and other relevant partners. All fire and rescue authorities have been invited to have input and

put forward their views. Should you wish to input you can send your views to the dedicated email account: [firereview@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:firereview@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

9. In addition Sir Ken will undertake a number of visits to a representative range of fire and rescue authorities. These are: Cleveland, Cornwall, Cumbria, Devon and Somerset, Essex, Manchester, Hampshire, Humberside, London, Merseyside, Oxfordshire, Shropshire, Bedfordshire, Suffolk, Surrey, West Yorkshire.) Sir Ken will be attending the March meeting of the Fire Services Management Committee in Brighton to discuss his emerging findings.

#### **Fire Capital Bidding Outcome 2013 - 2015**

10. The Minister for Fire, Brandon Lewis, approved the method of distribution of £140million fire capital funding for the next two years. This was announced along with the local government finance settlement on 19 December 2012.
11. The bidding process for fire capital funding closed on 2 July 2012. In all, the Department is allocating £38 million to fire and rescue authorities as part of the bidding exercise across the next two financial years and the remaining £102 million will be distributed to all fire and rescue authorities using a population formula. The LGA lobbied strongly for the distribution of this funding via a population formula and although this is largely delivered, FRAs did compile extensive bids cases which in the end, were unnecessary.
12. A letter was issued to all chief fire officers on 19th December 2012 setting out the allocation of funding for their authority over the next two years. The headline amounts by area can be found here:  
<http://www.local.communities.gov.uk/finance/1314/settle.htm#Settle>

#### **Control Centre buildings update**

13. Following the termination of the FiReControl project progress has been made to find emergency service tenants for four of the nine regional control centres that were built. In order to find tenants for the remaining control centres the Department for Communities and Local Government is currently conducting a marketing campaign. Further information about the buildings can be found here:  
<http://www.zenithcontrol.co.uk/>
14. The London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority are already using the Merton centre as their control room. North West Fire Control Ltd will use the Warrington building as a shared control room. The Maritime and Coastguard Agency will use the building in Fareham as their operations centre and County Durham and Darlington will use the Durham building as their headquarters. The remaining five control centres are those in Cambridge (Waterbeach), Taunton, Castle Donington, Wolverhampton and Wakefield.
15. In addition to the marketing campaign CLG is continuing to take action to reduce the running costs of the empty control centres. Last year the facilities management costs



were reduced by 25% and the utilities costs by 35%. CLG are currently piloting a further reduction in the utilities costs and are undertaking a further exercise to reduce facilities management costs again from April 2013.

### **Protective Security Strategy - Framework and Toolkit**

16. Fire and Rescue Circular 64/2009 outlined a strategy for implementing protective security within fire and rescue authorities, developed and agreed between the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser and the Chief Fire Officers Association, to align the sector with the security policies of the Government's Security Policy Framework. This is principally about the physical security of documents, personnel and IT.
17. The new strategy is available on the Inside Government website at:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-and-rescue-protective-security-strategy-2012>

### **Fire conference – 12-13 March 2012**

18. Planning continues for the LGA's Annual Fire Conference which is taking place in Brighton on the 12th and 13th March 2012. All English FRAs are now registered. The current programme and booking instructions can be found on the LGA website:  
[http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/events/-/journal\\_content/56/10171/3700831/EVENT-TEMPLATE](http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/events/-/journal_content/56/10171/3700831/EVENT-TEMPLATE)

### **Update on the SSCB/FSMC Working Group on PCCs**

19. The task and finish group met for the first time on the 1 February to agree its work programme and next steps. Members and officers are now seeking to identify how FRAs are engaging with Police and Crime Commissioners and are keen to get as much feedback as possible. Examples of emerging good practice can be sent to [clive.harris@local.gov.uk](mailto:clive.harris@local.gov.uk)

### **Communications Data Bill**

20. We continue to lobby for councils and FRAs to retain these powers. Early indications are that Ministers are persuaded by the business case for FRAs to retain these powers, in common with the police. Councillor Joanna Spicer will be meeting James Brokenshire on 26 February to press the case for councils.

### **Firemark**

21. Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service have developed an interactive education package targeted at, but not exclusive to landlords in the private rented sector. The education package named 'Firemark' will provide fire and rescue services and their partners with information to support engagement through a short interactive training session for landlords held within their communities. The materials for the session are dynamic and interactive yet simple enough to enable delivery by any suitable organisation.

22. The CFOA Social Housing Group has developed a programme for regional seminar to launch the project. These seminars will incorporate relevant content for the full range of stakeholders involved in the private rented sector.

### **Operational Assessment & Fire Peer Challenge**

23. As of January 2013 all Fire & Rescue Authorities are engaged in the Local Government Association and Chief Fire Officers Association Operational Assessment and Fire Peer Challenge programme.
- 23.1 12 FRAs have undertaken Operational Assessment and had a sector led fire peer challenge.
- 23.2 4 more FRAs are scheduled until the end of March 2013.
- 23.3 A further 19 are planned in 2013 and the remainder in 2014.
24. To support the development of a comprehensive peer pool, the LGA and CFOA delivered 13 Officer and Member Peer training events in 2012.
25. The learning, the emerging themes and the notable practice from the first tranche of peer challenges is being collated and assessed and will be shared with FSMC and the sector.

### **National Operational Guidance**

26. The National Operational Guidance Programme (NOGP) is seeking to create, review and renew the catalogue of National Operational Guidance (Guidance) for the Fire and Rescue Service (the Service). In doing so, the Programme aims to:
- 26.1 define the parameters of Guidance; and
- 26.2 address common criticisms of previous Guidance.
27. In order to define the parameters of Guidance, the Programme developed a 'concept' of National Operational Guidance, which was discussed at the CFOA National Operations Committee and in CFOA Circular 2012 - 033. To support that work, and to define the parameters of this Programme and its products more precisely, the Programme has led the development of the Service's first operational policy framework, and is now seeking the Service's view of that framework.
28. The Operational Guidance Strategic Board comprises of DLCG, CFOA, LGA and LFB and provides strategic oversight of the efficient production, authorisation and publication of operational guidance. Below this Board, there is an Operational Guidance Group made up of representatives from the Fire Service College, union representatives and other relevant stakeholders such as the Health and Safety Executive and industry bodies.

29. In order to address the common criticisms of previous guidance - that guidance has been very long, had a tendency to duplicate information and was variable in scope - the programme is proposing to structure the actual library of guidance differently. The National Operational Guidance Programme Boards met in December 2012 to discuss the Service's first definitive library of National Operational Guidance and proposals for the first phase of new guidance projects, and is now seeking the Service's view of that proposed structure.



## Note of decisions taken and actions required

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<b>Title:</b>	Fire Commission
<b>Date and time:</b>	Friday 07 December 2012, 11.00
<b>Venue:</b>	Bevin Hall, Local Government House

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Item	Decisions and actions	Action by
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Cllr Hammond welcomed Members to the meeting.

### 1. Autumn Statement

Eamon Lally, LGA Senior Policy Advisor introduced this item and outlined the main impact of the “mini-budget” on the fire service. He also noted that in a letter received that day, Brandon Lewis MP suggested that there were still savings to be made in back office services. Eamon further noted that the letter was equivocal on relief on the council tax cap.

Cllr Stuart West (Shropshire FA) said that his authority had been out to public consultation on a spending precept in line with the localism act. Despite agreeing 5p per household per month, the government have since ignored this and set precepts centrally. Other Members reported similar results and emphasised that the Government could not “have it both ways” when it came to giving FAs the power to act.

Eamon confirmed that the letter would be formally sent out by email to all commission members.

#### Action

Officers to send out electronic version of Brandon Lewis response letter on Fire funding to Commission.

**Stephen Service**

### 2. Safe and Independent Living (SAIL)

The Commission received a presentation from Cllr Rebecca Knox, Chief Fire Officer Darran Gunter and Linzi Holt, Head of Prevention at

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Dorset FA on Safe and Independent Living, a partnership initiative with local agencies to increase the reach of Dorset's fire prevention services among the elderly and vulnerable.

Members congratulated Dorset and its partners on an excellent scheme, commenting that while partnership working was sometimes difficult, the SAIL approach demonstrated the power that FAs have as part of the process. They questioned whether the same outcomes could be achieved with a mutualised system.

Councillors commented on the broad application of the scheme for partnerships and organisations dealing with elderly and vulnerable residents, noting that the presentation held interest for both Care in the Community panels and organisations operating outside of this partnership.

Some members felt that despite the clear benefits, such initiatives could cease to be seen as a priority as the budget cuts continued to bite. Mr Gunter shared these concerns, but highlighted that regardless of cuts, there were statutory responsibilities around prevention that needed to be fulfilled. He pointed out numerous other outcomes from SAIL's referral approach, including a large increase in attendance at flu clinics. Ms Holt added that information received often triggered the involvement of other agencies. The £8000 a year total cost included the ability to map the areas where those referred live via GIS.

Members referred to a comment made by Mr Gunter in the presentation regarding the number of mister systems which could be purchased for the price of a single fire engine. Mr Gunter said that while it was still too early to assess the full impact of misters, early indications suggested that they could be substantially more effective in dealing with fires due to the speed at which they could act. He said that the often repeated quote was that they were "like having a fire officer in the same room at all times".

Councillors commented that if volunteers could be accessed to visit elderly and vulnerable parts of the community, there were potential savings to be made here too.

Cllr Hammond thanked Dorset for their presentation, emphasising that while recognising the increasing funding pressures she hoped it would stimulate debate about preventative work. She suggested that the Commission write to Safer Communities portfolioholders to raise awareness of the scheme more widely.

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**Action**

Officers to circulate SAIL presentation and the associated tender specification document to Fire Commission.

**Stephen Service**

Officers to write to Safer Communities portfolioholders regarding prevention partnerships, collating the SAIL information.

**Clive Harris**

**3. Fire Pensions Update**

Eamon Lally updated Members on the latest position with regards to retained firefighter pensions. The LGA continues to make the case against FAs bearing the cost. The Government is yet to come back with a firm decision. There may be a case for taking additional legal advice once their position is formally declared.

The fairness of the government's proposals was questioned, with all authorities having to pay under the Government's proposals rather than just those who employed retained staff.

Members agreed that the LGA should continue to take a robust line on this issue and get more information on the cost implications of the scheme.

Eamon also outlined details of the current consultation on increases to employee contribution rates. Members noted an increase in the instances of both younger firefighters and women leaving the pension scheme. as a result of the 2012/13 increases, with potential knock-on effects for its affordability. With few firefighters on less than £21,000 a year, there was little protection offered.

**Action**

Officers to take forward as directed by Members.

**Eamon Lally**

**4. Priorities**

Cllr Hammond said she had written to all Chairs thanking them for their input into the LGA's priorities for 2012/13. She announced that the Minister would be attending the next Fire Commission in February.

Cllr Timoney said that the Labour Group welcomed the new approach outlined. However, she said that Chiefs and Chairs had expressed frustration that despite being invited to the last FSMC with the

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Minister, they had not been allowed to input.

Cllr Hammond responded that she felt it was important that the Minister had spoken to the FSMC first and he had already agreed to attend the Fire Commission for a more open meeting. She hoped that the quality of questions from Committee members justified her decision and argued that the letter to Chairs and Chiefs clearly stated that they were being invited to observe rather than participate.

Cllr Timoney asked that the Shadow Minister for Fire also be invited to a forthcoming meeting. Cllr Hammond said that the Shadow Minister's attendance had already been confirmed for the conference and she would consider other opportunities beyond this.

David Cartwright highlighted that the college was not currently on the list of priorities, despite an announcement likely soon regarding a successful bidder. He asked if the College could be included on the next agenda with the possibility of the successful bidder being asked to take a slot at the forthcoming conference.

On sprinklers, Members pointed out that Brandon Lewis had agreed at the last FSMC to speak to Don Foster, the Minister for building regulations to see if there was potential to make installation easier. Officers agreed to follow this up with DCLG.

Some Members felt that an item on preventable deaths at the next Fire Commission would help to reinforce the importance of Sprinklers as an issue to the Minister.

Cllr Edwards reported that the Sprinklers campaign working group would be unveiling their plans going forward at the fire conference, with the toolkit being piloted at the end of this year.

Cllr Healey reminded Members that from January every new piece of legislation introduced would require 2 other pieces to be taken out.

**Action**

Officers to follow up with Brandon Lewis' office regarding building regulations and sprinklers.

**Eamon Lally**

Fire College to be added as agenda item to next Fire Commission

**Stephen Service**



**5. Minutes from 16 November Fire Services Management Committee**

Cllr Hammond stressed the importance of Members writing to their newly elected **PCCs** to make connections between their work.

On the **Maritime Incident Response Group**, Cllr Hilton said that the issue had been taken to the Strategic Resilience Board where the Government had given assurances that there would be no comeback for FAs in terms of fires at sea in the wake of funding withdrawal.

Cllr Hammond said that she would remind the Minister that he had promised to write to the FSMC on this issue.

**6. Industrial Relations**

Simon Pannell from the Workforce team presented the industrial relations update to Members.

***Decision***

Members ***noted*** the update.

**7. Fire Commission update paper**

On the **Fire Conference** programme, some Members highlighted that those attending fringe events the previous year had only had 15 minutes for lunch. They asked if the schedule could allow more time.

Cllr Hammond responded that while she took the point raised, the event was arranged to ensure the maximum amount of content possible in the day and a half available. While hesitating to extend the Conference to 2 days and the departure time for Members living in other areas of the UK, she offered to give a reminder to colleagues prior to the fringe meetings to get their lunch quickly.

Referring to the briefing paper on fire mutuals, Cllr Hammond said that if Members received any similar papers from outside sources on areas which needed further clarification, they could contact the LGA and they would try to provide further information.

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**8. Note of the last meeting**

*Decision*

The note of the last meeting was agreed as a correct record.

**Date of next meeting:** 11.00am, Friday 15 February 2013, Local Government House



# LGA location map

## Local Government Association

Local Government House  
Smith Square  
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Tel: 020 7664 3131  
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Website: [www.local.gov.uk](http://www.local.gov.uk)

## Public transport

Local Government House is well served by public transport. The nearest mainline stations are:

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Victoria and Waterloo: the local underground stations are **St James's Park** (Circle and District Lines), **Westminster** (Circle, District and Jubilee Lines), and **Pimlico** (Victoria Line) - all about 10 minutes walk away.

Buses 3 and 87 travel along Millbank, and the 507 between Victoria and Waterloo stops in Horseferry Road close to Dean Bradley Street.

## Bus routes – Horseferry Road

**507** Waterloo – Victoria

**C10** Canada Water – Pimlico – Victoria

**88** Camden Town – Whitehall – Westminster – Pimlico – Clapham Common

## Bus routes – Millbank

**87** Wandsworth – Aldwych

**3** Crystal Palace – Brixton – Oxford Circus

For further information, visit the Transport for London website at [www.tfl.gov.uk](http://www.tfl.gov.uk)

## Cycling facilities

The nearest Barclays cycle hire racks are in Smith Square. Cycle racks are also available at Local Government House. Please telephone the LGA on 020 7664 3131.

## Central London Congestion Charging Zone

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For further details, please call 0845 900 1234 or visit the website at [www.cclondon.com](http://www.cclondon.com)

## Car parks

Abingdon Street Car Park (off Great College Street)

Horseferry Road Car Park  
Horseferry Road/Arneway Street. Visit the website at

[www.westminster.gov.uk/parking](http://www.westminster.gov.uk/parking)

