

LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

Meeting to be held on 13th December 2021

REPORTS FROM MEMBERS ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Contact for further information:

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Table 1 Executive Summary and Recommendations

Executive Summary

The Chairman has agreed that as appropriate, Members who sit on outside bodies provide a report to the full Authority to feedback on key topics discussed in other forums such as Local Government Association meetings.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to note and endorse the report.

Information

County Councillor Nikki Hennessy has attended the following Local Government Association meeting and is privy to confidential conversations and would like to draw Members' attention to the following:

Fire Services Management Committee (Virtual) Friday, 9th July, 2021

Building Safety Bill (BSR) – published 5th July 2021

LGA's initial general concerns

- The Bill did not resolve the issue of costs to leaseholders of remediation work;
- Links with planning reform, in particular, concerns around building safety in buildings converted under permitted development rights ;
- The proposals on product safety lacked detail and there were concerns about whether they would actually work in practice;
- Limited removal of private sector competition in building control.

The main task to recruit the approximately 200 new fire protection staff that the Home Office estimate would be required to support the work of the new Building Safety Regulator (BSR). Given the 4-5 years of training required to become a fire engineer, it would not be possible to get all 200 in place by the time the new regime was scheduled to begin in April 2023. A high-level plan has been developed with the NFCC to recruit and train staff, largely through in-house

upskilling and backfilling. Money has been secured through the Protection Uplift Grant to deliver new duties under the Fire Safety Order but a further bid for funding had been submitted to the Treasury.

The shortage was a real concern that could be exacerbated by loss to the private sector where pay was generally higher agreed that there needed to be greater detail and clarity on where the BSR made demands on FRAs that might be at odds with their IRMPs.

Fire Commission (Virtual) 11th June 2021

Update on the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP) Full Business Case

A confidential report was delivered, and it was agreed that a member of the ESMCP focus group should be established to both draft a response to the Home Office on the Full Business Case, and to address wider concerns of FRAs moving forward.

New Providence Wharf Fire and Building Safety Update

A presentation was given of the fire which occurred on the 8th floor of the block on 7 May 2021, and in particular spoke about the improvements in the LFB's response compared to the Grenfell Tower fire.

It was agreed that the LGA's sprinkler task group should be restarted.

Workforce update

- The first national Firefighter pension website www.fpsmember.org went live in May, to provide a central resource for firefighters to find out about their pension scheme and the benefits and options that are available;
- Scheme Advisory Board launched a consultation with FRAs to better understand the current arrangements for managing the pension scheme in general and, more specifically, for implementing the age discrimination remedy;
- There were still a number of gaps in the new updated Home Office guidance on immediate detriment which pose problems for FRAs with retiring firefighters who wanted to access benefits on the old system. The LGA was having urgent discussions with legal officers but the issues were complex and caveated by legal privilege.

Fire Commission update

FSMC Lead Members had agreed to set up a governance task and finish group to inform the LGA's response to the Fire Reform White Paper.

Firefighter's pensions (England) Scheme Advisory Board (Virtual) 24th June 2021

Bulletins are produced monthly to provide guidance to scheme and board members. They include fact sheets, updates on legislations and technical queries etc.

[Bulletins \(fpsregs.org\)](https://www.fpsregs.org)

National Fire Chiefs Council – Community Risk Program (CRP) (Virtual) 23rd September 2021

The programme hosted its first Roundtable session with wider sector stakeholders in the West Midlands.

The CRP intention is to produce a set of standardised tools for FRSs, enabling consistent identification, assessment and mitigation strategies for community risks. The toolkit will be digitised and will be accessible and applicable by all UK FRSs.

Further information can be found.

[CRP \(nationalfirechiefs.org.uk\)](https://www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk)

Financial Implications

None

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

None

Equality and Diversity Implications

None

Human Resource Implications

None

Business Risk Implications

None

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
List of Background Papers

Table 2 Details of any background papers

Paper:	
Date:	
Contact:	
Reason for inclusion in Part 2 if appropriate:	