

## **LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY**

Meeting to be held on Monday 20 February 2017

### **ADRIAN THOMAS' INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF CONDITIONS OF SERVICE FOR FIRE AND RESCUE STAFF IN ENGLAND – FEBRUARY 2015**

**(Appendices 1 and 2 refer)**

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#### **Executive Summary**

This report is provided for information.

A paper advising the Authority that the Adrian Thomas Review on Conditions of Service (AT) had been published on 3 November 2016 was tabled at the CFA meeting held on 19 January 2017. The Authority was advised that the report contained 45 recommendations grouped around 5 themes which needed to be reflected on by the various elements of the Fire Sector (Government, LGA, CFOA, Unions as well as individual authorities and services) and that an update report would be brought to the next Fire Authority meeting.

The Review is confined to Fire & Rescue Authorities in England (46) but has wider impact. The findings are grouped into five areas:

- The Working Environment
- Documented Conditions of Service
- Industrial Relations
- Retained Duty System
- Management of the Fire & Rescue Service

The Government has commented on the suggestion to limit the ability to strike whilst the LGA are considering how and which recommendations to pursue. Similarly the other stakeholders, such as unions and Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA), are considering their positions. Whilst this work is ongoing, this paper provides Members with an assessment of LFRS' position against the recommendations in the AT report. (To assist Members, in some instances a personal view has been provided as the detail for informed positioning is not available).

What is evident is that in Government circles the report has been favourably received and has been referenced in various conversations and speeches such as the Fire Minister's "Reform" speech.

#### **Recommendation**

The Authority is asked to note the assessment of the Service's position against the findings of the Report and the current position.

## Information

The Adrian Thomas Report was commissioned in August 2014 by the then Fire Minister, Penny Mordant MP, to review the barriers to change highlighted by Sir Ken Knight in the Facing the Future Report (May 2013) and was formally commenced in October 2014 with the report being submitted to DCLG in Spring 2015.

The terms of reference are attached as Appendix 1. Although a copy of the report was provided at the last Authority meeting the link for the report is <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/conditions-of-service-for-fire-and-rescue-staff-independent-review>.

The publication of the report in November 2016 is over two years after the Report was commissioned and a number of comments made have now become historical in context or overtaken by events. Similarly, LFRS can demonstrate its position in a favourable light in respect of many of the findings, as the Service/Authority did do in respect of the Sir Ken Knight Review. In effect, many of the issues directly in LFRS' control are being progressed within existing activity.

The Local Government Association (LGA) given the reference to applying only to England are considering the review through its Fire Services Management Committee prior to consideration at the NJC which would then involve the devolved administrations and the unions. These detailed discussions are on-going. However it is clear the Report's recommendations have the potential to impact to varying degrees on the Authority. So it is considered prudent to consider the thrust and direction of the Report when framing and further developing LFRS' main Human Resources (HR) and Organisational Development activities.

In this respect, whilst the key areas are identified below, an early gap analysis has been undertaken between the Report's recommendations and the Service's position which is attached (Appendix 2) to inform that consideration. It is hoped that the gap analysis will also be beneficial in future interactions with the proposed inspectorate regime.

### Key Themes

Employment costs are a significant element if not the majority of costs for all Fire Services.

The main findings are summarised in pages 12-18 of the Report.

The themes emerging for consideration in the sector are:

- How can some authorities make progress whilst others do not;
- Greater cross fertilisation of issues should be developed (institutional learning);
- The Conditions of Service and negotiation arrangements should be "modernised" including Role Maps and Duty Systems and content;
- Issues in respect of employee engagement including culture and trust, including equality & diversity and bullying and harassment issues;

- National Leadership development/standards;
- Remove the Right to Strike;
- Greater use of Retained Duty System, ie more RDS appliances;
- Future Recruitment.

The key strap line is “where change is common sense, it should become common practice”.

Contained within the findings are many other areas such as governance and pay statements.

### **Business Risk**

Although the Report has been published well after both its commissioning and construct, it contains ‘food for thought’ in respect of our organisational development.

### **Environmental Impact**

N/A.

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

Utilised correctly, the Report and any national response could assist the Service’s approaches.

### **HR Implications**

Whilst the content of the Report, in some areas, is not considered robust, the thrust is in line with the Service’s HR strategies and should not be a significant issue in any inspection regime process.

### **Financial Implications**

No additional implications have been identified as a result of the report, although the report supports and reinforces the existing HR plans contained within the service plan and 2017/8 budget.

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

Paper	Date	Contact
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate:		