



COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

14 JUNE 2019

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (LGA) SUBSCRIPTION

REPORT OF CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to provide details of the LGA subscription for 2019/20 and to seek a decision about continued membership.

BACKGROUND

2. A letter from Mark Lloyd, Chief Executive of the LGA, setting out the role provided by the LGA and associated subscription rate for 2019/20 was received on 16 April 2019. A copy of the letter is attached at Appendix A.

LGA SERVICES PROVIDED AND SUBSCRIPTION RATE

3. The LGA lobbies on behalf of local authorities on many issues that affect the sector as a whole and works with councils and fire authorities to develop new approaches to improvement and innovation. The attached letter sets out the recent work of the LGA.
4. A significant amount of work has been undertaken by the LGA and in particular the Fire Services Management Committee (FSMC) to ensure that the views of fire authorities are known in relation to the Hackitt Review of building regulations and fire safety. The LGA participate in the stakeholder group to support Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS).
5. For 2019/20 financial year, the LGA subscription has, for the seventh year running, remained at a rate of £6,778. This includes a 2.5% loyalty discount and a 2.5% prompt payment discount if payment is made in full by 30 June 2019.

ROLE OF THE LGA WITH FIRE AND RESCUE GOING FORWARD

6. On 05 January 2016 responsibility for Fire and Rescue policy moved from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) to the Home Office (HO). This raised questions relating to the role of the LGA in relation to the fire and rescue service (FRS). Further uncertainty has existed as the Policing and Crime Bill made its way through the legislative process and received Royal Assent in February of 2017. The Policing and Crime Act 2017 enables Police and Crime Commissioners to take on responsibility for fire (where a local case is made) adding further complexity to the governance arrangements for the sector.

7. Over and above the changes to governance arrangements that are impacting on some fire and rescue authorities we are also in a time of unprecedented change for the fire and rescue sector. The introduction and development of the Home Office's Fire Reform Programme and the reintroduction of an inspection regime for fire and rescue services is resulting in significant changes to the way fire and rescue authorities operate.
8. There is likely to be further uncertainty for the fire and rescue sector as we approach the next Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) and the possibility of further funding cuts.
9. Given this level of change it is vital that the Authority continues to monitor and influence, where possible the national agenda for fire and rescue services. It is clear that the LGA are still a significant stakeholder and have a key lobbying role on behalf of fire authorities. For this reason, it is important that the Authority continues to be a member of the LGA.

RECOMMENDATIONS

10. Members are requested to **agree** the LGA subscription for 2019/20.

CFO Stuart Errington

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