

From the Chief Executive  
Mark Lloyd



Stuart Errington  
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Dear Stuart

### **LGA Membership 2019/2020**

This year will undoubtedly be a challenging one for fire and rescue authorities with continuing financial pressures, and with the conclusions to the next two tranches of fire and rescue service inspections being published, the first report expected from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, changes to the regulatory framework for fire safety in high-rise buildings and a Spending Review later this year.

Over the last 12 months, as your membership association we have worked hard to be your national voice and to call for the resources, support and powers needed to place you in the best position possible to serve your communities. While there is still work to do in making the case for more resources for fire and rescue authorities our hard lobbying, on your behalf, has produced some wins over the course of the year.

The final report by Dame Judith Hackitt following her review of building regulations and fire safety reflected many of the proposals supported by the LGA's Fire Services Management Committee (FSMC). It did not however recommend a ban on the use of combustible materials on high-rise residential buildings, something the LGA immediately pressed for, and which the Government swiftly responded to - as you will know the ban came into effect in December.

Since the autumn the LGA has been working alongside the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) as part of the Joint Regulators Group set up by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to ensure that the new framework recommended by Dame Judith is introduced. We expect the Government to consult on the detail of the framework later in the spring.

The Grenfell fire has led to a debate about whether the current requirements to use automatic fire suppression systems (AFSS) in residential buildings need to be strengthened. The FSMC set up a task and finish group in 2018 to develop proposals for the LGA's position on AFSS and these have now been agreed, and have already been used to inform parliamentary debates on this issue.

As well as continuing to shape the development of the fire and rescue service inspection framework through our participation in HMICFRS's stakeholder group, we commented on and suggested changes to the draft national report on the first tranche of inspections ahead of its publication in December. In order to help authorities address the findings in the people aspect of the inspection framework we ran a series of diversity and inclusion masterclasses for members. We also worked with the Home Office on its campaign material to help recruit a diverse workforce, these were made available on our website so services are able to access it. With the inspections now two-thirds of the way through, we have revised our fire peer challenges offer to fire and rescue services to provide bespoke support designed to assist services respond to the inspection results, and I know many of you are already taking advantage of it.

With the forthcoming Spending Review setting the resources available to Fire and Rescue Authorities for at least a year, we have established the Senior Sector Group with the Home Office and NFCC to inform the Home Office's submission to the Treasury ahead of the Review, and to ensure we collectively make the best possible case for the resources the sector needs.

We have continued to collectively represent fire and rescue authorities' interests in the legal challenge being brought against the transitional arrangements introduced as part of the changes to the pension scheme, and have been seeking advice for authorities on the impact of the Matzak case. In addition we have also provided advice to services on a wide range of workforce issues and support on local industrial relations matters.

We know very well the pressures your authority is facing so, for the seventh year running the LGA Leadership Board have frozen subscriptions. We will again be offering a 2.5 per cent loyalty discount for those authorities committed to maintain their membership, alongside the 2.5 per cent prompt payment discount for those authorities that pay in full by 30 June 2019.

**Your 2019/20 subscription, including discounts will be held at £6,778 (plus VAT) and your invoice is enclosed.**

I look forward to continuing to work with you over the coming year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Lloyd', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Mark Lloyd  
Chief Executive

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