



## COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

11 JUNE 2018

## MEMBERSHIP OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

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### REPORT OF CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

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#### PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To inform members of the amended invoicing procedure and seek approval for continuation of the professional partnership arrangement with the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA).

#### BACKGROUND

2. All fire and rescue services (FRS) in the UK are professional partners of CFOA. CFOA and its subsidiary, the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), co-ordinate FRS activity across the UK and provide professional advice to the various UK governments. CFOA has undergone a significant transformation programme over the last two years to ensure that it reflects the needs of the sector following the Fire Reform Programme.
3. The recently published Fire and Rescue Service National Framework for England outlines the government's support for the NFCC:

*"The NFCC brings together the operational leadership of the UK's fire and rescue services to provide co-ordinated professional, operational and technical leadership of the sector, advising and supporting central and local government, and other stakeholders.*

*The NFCC fulfils a multifaceted role that is reflected throughout this document and other national frameworks. The NFCC represents the sector in local and national structures, helping to develop national policies and strategies. The NFCC is the first line of operational advice to central and local government during major incidents. This is outlined within the National Coordination and Advisory Framework (NCAF), which fire and rescue services must proactively engage with.*

*The NFCC has a role to drive continuous improvement and development throughout the sector. Fire and rescue services should consult the NFCC for advice and support when developing improvement plans, particularly in response to inspections.*

*The expectation is that fire and rescue services in England engage with the NFCC and, in turn, that the NFCC works to support and represent every service."*

4. Part of CFOA's transformation and at the request of FRSs, CFOA have changed the way that they invoice for the various elements of the services they provide. Previously separate elements of the services were invoiced individually and were dealt with internally by separate budget holders. In order to reduce bureaucracy and improve transparency it was agreed that CFOA would issue a single invoice to each FRS.

5. There are currently four elements that make-up the total invoice from CFOA:
- The Professional Partnership Fee – this enables each FRS to access all of the guidance and advice produced by CFOA. It also provides membership of the NFCC and the ability to be able to vote on policy decisions.
  - Children and Young People element – this enables a collaborative approach to be taken to the educational programmes for young people that are developed in the sector. The programme will develop standard packages and advice for each FRS in areas such as cadets and the Young Firefighters Association (YFA).
  - Research and Development element – this function will provide evidence-based research that can be shared throughout the sector for the benefit of all FRSs.
  - Central Programme Office element – provides the staff and resources to operate the entire programme.
6. An overarching concept of the NFCC is that if all FRSs pool resources then efficiencies should be achieved by reduced duplication. The NFCC also have an important role in spreading good practice and therefore helping the sector to improve.
7. A copy of the invoice for 2018/19 is attached at Appendix A. Given the new arrangements that have been put in place, Authority approval for continuing with the membership of CFOA is sought.
8. The funding required for CFOA is built into the 2018/19 budget and the MTFP. Going forward it is recommended that the decision around the Service's continued membership is delegated to the Chief Fire Officer (CFO), in consultation with the Treasurer. The CFO will, as part of the decision-making process, consider whether or not CFOA is delivering value for money for the Authority.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

9. Members are requested to:
- a) **Note** the amended process for invoicing from CFOA;
  - b) **Approve** the single invoice for 2018/19;
  - c) **Delegate** future decisions on membership of CFOA/NFCC to the CFO in consultation with the Treasurer.

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