



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE
AUTHORITY**

Item 13

MEETING	Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority
DATE OF MEETING	23 June 2016
SUBJECT OF THE REPORT	National Fire and Rescue Service Governance
STATUS OF REPORT	For open publication
PURPOSE OF REPORT	For information
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	This report outlines the current national developments in respect of the emerging issues arising from the Policing and Crime Bill. Of particular note is a recent letter where stakeholders have been invited to respond in respect of a new title for those Police and Crime Commissioners that take responsibility for their fire and rescue service.
RISK ASSESSMENT	Failure to consider, discuss and respond to new and emerging national issues associated to the governance of the fire and rescue service could have potential local adverse impact.
COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT	None for the purposes of this report
BUDGET IMPLICATIONS	None
RECOMMENDATIONS	That members consider the contents of the this report and provide a steer in respect of a response to the Home Office on issues associated to the tile of Police and Crime Commissioners.
BACKGROUND PAPERS	<p>Enabling closer working between emergency services – 11 September 2015</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/enabling-closer-working-between-the-emergency-services</p> <p>Response by DWFRA to enabling closer working between emergency services – 23 October 2015</p> <p>http://www.dwfire.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Item-5-Response-to-Emergency-Services-Consultation.pdf</p> <p>Enabling closer working between emergency services – summary of</p>

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

	consultation responses and next steps. 26 January 2016 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/495371/6.1722_HO_Enabling_Closer_Working_Between_the_Emergency_Services_Consult....pdf
APPENDICES	A: Home Secretary Speech on Fire Reform B: Letter from Mike Penning MP
REPORT ORIGINATOR AND CONTACT	Darran Gunter, Chief Fire Officer Direct Dial: 01722 691066 Email: darran.gunter@dwfire.org.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At its meeting on 23 October 2015 the Shadow Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority considered and approved a consultation submission in respect of the document *Enabling Closer Working between Emergency Services*.
- 1.2 This consultation document originated from the previous Conservative manifesto which made a number of commitments that have implications for the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS). Among them was an undertaking to enable fire and police services to work more closely together and develop the role of our elected and accountable Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs). The key issues within the consultation document included:
 - 1.2.1 Enabling PCCs to take on the duties and responsibilities of fire and rescue authorities (FRAs), where a local case is made.
 - 1.2.2 Where a PCC takes on the responsibilities of a FRA, enabling them to create a single employer for police and fire staff, facilitating the sharing of back office functions and streamlining management.
 - 1.2.3 In areas where a PCC has not become responsible for the FRS, enabling them to have representation on their local fire and rescue authority.
 - 1.2.4 Abolishing the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) and giving the Mayor of London direct responsibility for the FRS in London, as will be the case in Greater Manchester.
- 1.3 On 26 January Government published a summary of consultation responses and next steps within which it committed to:
 - 1.3.1 Introduce a high level duty to collaborate on all three emergency services, to improve efficiency or effectiveness;
 - 1.3.2 Enable Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) to take on the functions of fire and rescue authorities (FRAs), where a local case is made;
 - 1.3.3 Where a PCC takes on the responsibilities of their local FRA, further enabling him or her to create a single employer for police and fire personnel;
 - 1.3.4 In areas where a PCC has not become responsible for fire and rescue services, enabling them to have representation on their local FRA with voting rights, where the local FRA agrees; and
 - 1.3.5 Abolish the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority and give the Mayor of London direct responsibility for the fire and rescue service in London.

- 1.4 On 5 January 2016 Ministerial responsibility for the Fire and Rescue Service moved from DCLG to the Home Office. In February 2016 the Policing and Crime Bill began its Parliamentary approval process and is emerging as the key vehicle to progress further changes associated to collaboration and governance

2. Policing and Crime Bill

- 2.1 The Policing and Crime Bill was introduced in the House of Commons on 10 February 2016. MPs considered the Bill at Report Stage on Tuesday 26 April. This was the first of two days of debate in the House of Commons. MPs are expected to debate the second day of the Report Stage followed by the Legislative Grand Committee and Third Reading on Monday 13 June 2016. It is anticipated that the Bill will pass through the Houses of Common and Lords during 2016 which will enable Royal Assent in early 2017
- 2.2 Whilst the main provisions of the Bill are focused on Police reform, a key provision is to place a duty on police, fire and ambulance services to work together and enable PCCs to take on responsibility for fire and rescue services where a local case is made.
- 2.3 Whilst there have been a number of amendments tabled in respect of the Bill, to-date the main provisions in relation to fire and rescue service remain largely unchanged.

3. The Fire Reform Programme

- 3.1 Shortly after the transfer of responsibility for fire and rescue services from DCLG to the Home Office, Officials and Ministers announced the need for and development of a Fire Reform Programme. This concept was evidenced against a similar successful programme that had been developed and delivered in respect of the Police. Whilst the Fire Reform Programme is yet to be circulated, the clearest indications of its content were provided within a speech by the Rt Hon Theresa on 24 May. This speech is attached in Appendix A. The key issues include:
 - 3.1.1 Reflections on the Police Reform Programme and despite the initial apprehensions the success it has delivered.
 - 3.1.2 Recognition of the success of Fire and Rescue Services particularly in relation to prevention and demand reduction.
 - 3.1.3 The need for continued reform to address fire deaths and injuries.
 - 3.1.4 A perception of poor governance and structures managing fire and rescue services , a workforce that lacks diversity and that is bound by traditional ways of working.
 - 3.1.5 Reflecting on a number of examples where police and fire work closely together.
 - 3.1.6 The intention to publish data in relation to procurement spend across a number of common items. (This has since been requested and is being actioned).

- 3.1.7 A challenge to the NJC to change the arrangements or *have the courage of your convictions and withdraw*.
- 3.1.8 Concern regarding the disparity of pay amongst chief fire officers and ability of fire chiefs to retire and thereafter to be re engaged.
- 3.1.9 An intention to monitor the progress of Essex with their focus on cultural development and also criticism of the levels of representation achieved in the fire and rescue service. Mention was also made of the intention to publish the Thomas Review of the fire and rescue service workforce as *soon as possible*.
4. **Changing the title of PCCs who take responsibility for fire and rescue services**
- 4.1 On 7 June the Rt Hon Mike Penning MP wrote to a number of stakeholders regarding consequential amendment to the Policing and Crime Bill to make provision to change the name of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and Police and Crime Panels (PCPs) who take on responsibility for fire and rescue. This letter is attached in appendix B
- 4.2 The letter outlines discussion at the debate stage of the Policing and Crime Bill and the preference to include the reference to Fire in both the title of PCCs and Police and Crime Panels where the PCC has assumed responsibility for Fire. Whilst the closing date for responses is 21 June, I understand the Chairman has negotiated an extension to allow for the view of the Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority to be included.
5. **Summary**
- 5.1 As the Bill travels through the Parliamentary enactment process there appears to be a gathering pace in the Home Office to encourage local consideration and development of Police – Fire collaboration and discussions regarding future governance. Key to these discussions will be the necessary contents, evidence and consultation associated to the business case process for a change of governance of Fire to a PCC and indeed a potential single employer model. Further clarity will also be needed in respect of where there are not shared boundaries (coterminosity) with one Police Force and their PCC.
- 5.2 Whilst Members and Officers will of course keep abreast of developments and look wherever possible to further strengthen our collaboration with all partners. There are issues outlined within this report that the Authority may wish to consider, discuss and communicate as appropriate.

DARRAN GUNTER

CHIEF FIRE OFFICER