

MEETING: 24 JANUARY 2011**SUBJECT: LGA ANNUAL FIRE CONFERENCE - 8th AND 9th MARCH 2011****REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER****1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The fourteenth Annual Fire Conference of the Local Government Association (LGA) is scheduled to be held in Gateshead on the 8th and 9th March 2011. This report proposes an Authority representation at the conference.

2. LGA ANNUAL FIRE CONFERENCE 2010

2.1 The LGA Annual Fire Conference is the key conference of the year for fire and rescue authorities as it deals with issues of direct concern to the fire and rescue service as a whole.

2.2 This year, the conference will be held at the Hilton Hotel, Gateshead on the 8th and 9th March 2011 and the theme of the conference is 'The Future of Fire'. This theme has been planned to address the issues surrounding the unprecedented financial pressures that authorities will be subject to in the coming months and years.

2.3 Against this backdrop conference sessions will explore a range of issues including topics such as the potential for introducing radically different approaches to the delivery of services as well as specific practical topics such as how to improve sickness management and the potential for sharing back office functions.

2.4 Speakers will be drawn from fire and rescue services, fire and rescue authorities, central government and other key organisations and will include an address from the Fire Minister, Bob Neill MP. In addition, there will also be a number of breakout and plenary sessions available, with opportunities to question speakers on the issues put forward at the conference.

2.5 It is envisaged that there will be a strong attendance from members and officers of fire and rescue authorities as well as key figures from central government, which will provide an ideal opportunity to further develop an understanding of the emerging issues.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The cost of the conference is £360 per person for LGA member authorities, which covers the main conference and workshop sessions and these costs can be met from within the existing budget.

3.2 The Chief Fire Officer proposes that, in line with past procedure, the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and one other member of the Authority be nominated to attend.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The Authority is recommended to approve the attendance of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and one Member at the LGA Fire Conference;

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The undermentioned background papers refer to the subject matter of the above report:

LGA Conference notification letter– December 2011