



Home Office

Home Secretary

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All Chief Fire Officers and Chief Executive Officers of fire and rescue
authorities in England

All Chairs of fire and rescue authorities in England

5 January 2016

Dear all,

I am writing to inform you that the Prime Minister has today made a written statement to Parliament announcing that responsibility for Fire and Rescue Policy, for England, is being transferred from the Department for Communities and Local Government to the Home Office. The change will take immediate effect.

This machinery of government change is a natural progression of the Government's work on emergency services collaboration. We believe that closer working and, where the case is made locally, shared governance of fire services and police, can bring better outcomes for local people.

I am also able to confirm that, in addition to retaining his responsibilities for Policing, Criminal Justice and Victims, Mike Penning will become the new Fire Minister. As a former firefighter, I know he is particularly delighted to take on this responsibility.

I am keen that we seize opportunities for both services to learn from best practice, wherever it is found. For example, I believe that there is much that the fire and rescue service can learn from the journey that policing is undertaking on workforce reform. Equally, the tremendous success of fire and rescue services over the last 15 years in fire prevention, to stop incidents from happening in the first place, holds important lessons for how the police manage crime and non-crime demand.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all those at the frontline involved in the outstanding work in responding to the current widespread flooding. The commitment and dedication shown over the Christmas and New Year period in helping those communities affected is a demonstration of public service at its very best. The response also showed how well fire and police services already work together and I am keen that we continue to build on that strong foundation to protect the public and support local communities.

I know Mike Penning is looking forward to meeting many of you over the coming months and to see the service go from strength to strength.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. May', enclosed within a thin black rectangular border.

The Rt Hon Theresa May MP