

**TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**Item No 8**

**MEETING: 10 SEPTEMBER 2018**

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**SUBJECT: FIRE AND RESCUE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR ENGLAND**

**JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER/CHIEF EXECUTIVE (THE CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY) THE STRATEGIC FINANCE OFFICER AND THE PERSONNEL ADVISOR TO THE AUTHORITY**

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**1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England provides the overall strategic direction to Fire and Rescue Authorities in England. The previous framework was issued in 2012 and is reported against annually.
- 1.2 The Authority must have due regard to the National Framework in carrying out its functions. The Authority publishes an annual Statement of Assurance of Compliance with the Framework as part of the Authority's governance arrangements.
- 1.3 Due to a number of national changes such the launch of the Fire Service Reform Programme, which aims to improve accountability, transparency, professional standards and deliver workforce reform throughout the fire service nationally, the government felt it was an appropriate time to revise the National Framework.
- 1.4 The Government launched a consultation on the proposed revisions in December 2017. The Authority responded to that consultation.
- 1.5 The Government then published the revised national framework, which came into effect on 1 June 2018.

**2 CHANGES TO THE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK**

- 2.1 The revised National Framework embeds the government's fire reform agenda, alongside provisions in the Policing and Crime Act 2017. It sets national priorities and objectives for all Fire and Rescue Authorities in England to follow.
- 2.2 The changes that came into effect include:
  - new guidance on how we should work with the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) ( All chapters);

- changes in guidance to reflect legislative changes that enabled new governance models involving police and crime commissioners (Chapter 4);
- provisions supporting the development and delivery of professional standards, to provide co-ordination of standards across all fire services in England (Chapter 6);
- workforce developments and people strategy which takes into account NFCC guidance; together with new rules on the re-engagement of senior officers (Chapter 6);
- changes to encourage commercial transformation by FRAs, aimed at further collaboration, innovative thinking and sharing of best practice (Chapter 5);
- increased transparency of FRA's reserves with clear criteria on what is published (Chapter 5);
- the introduction of a new intervention protocol (Chapter 7); and
- clarity that where FRAs work collaboratively with partners to make an important contribution to increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of public services and alleviating pressures on local response resources, this should not be at the expense of effective delivery of their statutory core fire functions (Chapter 2).

### **3 ASSESSMENT AGAINST REQUIREMENTS**

- 3.1 An assessment against the requirements of the National Framework as they apply to the Authority is attached at Appendix A. This analysis shows we are in a strong position in complying with the national standards.
- 3.2 There are two areas of the Framework the Service are currently progressing:
- The introduction of a formal Reserves Policy, which builds upon the previous papers providing transparency in our approach to managing reserves.
  - The approach to professional standards, which will be progressed alongside national developments in this area.
- 3.3 ELT monitor performance against the Framework, and will reported performance to Fire Authority at year-end as part of the Statement of Assurance and Annual Report.

## **4 RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 4.1 The Authority has statutory responsibility to have due regard to the National Framework in carrying out its functions. The Authority must also publish an annual statement of assurance of compliance with the National Framework as part of the Authority's governance arrangements. Failure to comply with these requirements could result in government intervention.
- 4.2 The Authority has strong governance frameworks that keep the requirements of the National Framework under constant review thus mitigating any risk.

## **5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no financial implications in respect of this report.

## **6 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no equality and fairness implications in respect of this report.
- 6.2 If any changes are needed as a result of progressing the National Framework, they will be assessed as part of those changes for example any changes required relating to the developing professional standards.

## **7 HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no health and safety implications in respect of this report.

## **8 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 The Authority is recommended to:
- a) Note the revised Fire and Rescue National Framework for England
  - b) Endorse the contents of this report and the Annex attached
  - c) Receive further reports as appropriate.

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## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

There are no background papers.

