



COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

12 JUNE 2017

THE ADRIAN THOMAS REVIEW

REPORT OF AREA MANAGER WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on the progress of the action plan which was developed in response to the 'Independent review of conditions of service for fire and rescue staff in England'.

BACKGROUND

2. In October 2014, the then Fire Minister, Penny Mordaunt MP, announced that she had commissioned Adrian Thomas to undertake an independent review to investigate further barriers to change that had been suggested by Sir Ken Knight within his review of the efficiencies and operations of the fire and rescue authorities in England.
3. The methodology employed by Adrian Thomas involved: a desk-top review of previous reports and studies in to the fire and rescue service; a review of the applicable legislative frameworks in place; visits to 21 fire and rescue authorities; issued questionnaires; the acceptance of written responses; meetings with the representative bodies; and meetings with other key stakeholders such as the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA), key players within government, the Fire Service College, Skills for Justice and diversity groups.
4. Adrian Thomas visited County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS) on 28 October 2014. He met with the Chair and the Service Leadership Team, the representative bodies and visited Consett Fire Station. Notes were made from the various meetings held and the meeting participants were asked to review and agree the final contents of the notes.
5. Although the report was complete in February 2015 it was only published on Thursday 03 November 2016. A copy of the report, the key findings and letter from the Fire Minister were presented to the Fire Authority at its meeting on 24 November 2016.

Contents of the report

6. The report makes a total of 45 recommendations which are directed at: the Local Government Association (LGA); the National Joint Council (NJC); fire and rescue authorities; and government and are divided into 5 main themes:
 - The working environment
 - Documented conditions of service
 - Industrial relations

- Retained Duty System
- Management of fire and rescue services.

7. The Service undertook a gap analysis and developed an action plan divided into the 5 themes above to ensure that all the applicable recommendations are fully considered and progress against each is measured. A copy of the action plan is attached as Appendix A. Members were last updated on progress of the action plan at the Fire Authority meeting on 24 November 2016.
8. Of the 45 recommendations, 28 are directed at the LGA; the NJC and government and 17 are to be actioned by fire and rescue authorities. Of these 17 recommendations, 7 have been completed.

Conclusion

9. Whilst CDDFRS has made good progress against the action plan and appears to be in a relatively strong position in relation to the findings from the Adrian Thomas Review we will not be complacent. Workforce reform is one of the three key pillars of the Fire Reform Programme and there is no doubt that the government are determined to introduce changes in these areas. The fire service inspectorate once introduced, which is also a key feature of the Fire Reform Programme, we assume will expect to see significant progress made against the recommendations in the Report.

Recommendations

10. The Authority is requested to:
 - (a) **note** the progress made against the action plan;
 - (b) **receive** further future reports and monitor progress against the action plan.

Sarah Nattrass, Area Manager Workforce Development, 0191 3755587