

report

meeting	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY	
date	7 September 2007	agenda item number

REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

AMENDMENT TO GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek approval from Members for amendments to the Terms of Reference for the Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority Policy and Strategy Committee.

2. BACKGROUND

As part of its response to Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) outcomes, and through a desire to improve Member engagement in the Service's direction, Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service introduced revised governance arrangements in April 2006. The revised governance arrangements included the provision of a Policy and Strategy Committee constituted of the "sub-committee" chairs and opposition spokespersons.

3. REPORT

- 3.1 Following the implementation of the new governance arrangements, the Authority agreed that the structure should be subject to a review process. As part of the review process, issues have arisen where, due to the nature of the delegated responsibilities, endorsement of a decision has had to be sought from the full Fire and Rescue Authority.
- 3.2 At its last meeting on 3 August 2007, the Policy and Strategy Committee considered a report from the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) regarding Member development. The report addressed the recommendations of the 2005 CPA process and detailed action taken to date. The report recommended that "the Chair and the Chief Fire Officer recommend to the full Fire and Rescue Authority that the remit of the Policy and Strategy Committee be amended to include responsibility for the governance and direction of arrangements for commissioning of Authority Members' development programme and succession planning".
- 3.3 The report also recommended that an Officer be assigned to support the Policy and Strategy Committee in the role of Member development and succession planning. Arrangements have been made for the CFO's Strategic Support Officer to fulfil this role.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The revised governance arrangements were subject to an independent remuneration panel review. The outcomes of that review have been implemented by the Authority and the proposed revisions have no affect on the current arrangements.

5. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific personnel implications arising from this report.

6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

An initial impact assessment has revealed there are no specific equality issues arising from this report.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Effective governance arrangements are a key element of external audit processes, such as CPA. Failure to attract favourable reports in CPA could lead to government intervention.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 That Members approve the revisions to governance, that the remit of the Policy and Strategy Committee be amended to include responsibility for the governance and direction of arrangements for commissioning of Authority Members' development programme and succession planning.
- 8.2 That Members continue to monitor and review governance arrangements to ensure the Service maintains high standards in this area as far as CPA and other audit processes are concerned.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)

- Fire and Rescue Authority reports on Governance, June, July, September 2005
- Audit Commission – CPA Report
- ODPM publication – “Local Leadership, Local Choice”
- ODPM publication – “A Share of the Action”
- ODPM publication – “Political Leadership under the new Political Management Structures”
- ODPM publication – “The Future of Local Government Developing a 10-year Vision”
- ODPM publication – White Paper “Our Fire and Rescue Service”
- Fire and Rescue Services Circular 13/2005
- Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004
- Fire and Rescue Services National Framework 2004/2005
- Fire and Rescue Services National Framework 2005/2006
- CPA for Fire and Rescue Services – Audit Commission

Frank Swann
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER