



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM  
FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**POLICY AND STRATEGY COMMITTEE**

**Date: FRIDAY 2 AUGUST 2013**

**Time: 10.00 am**

**Venue: Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Bestwood Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham**

**Members are requested to attend the above meeting to be held at the time, place and date mentioned for the purpose of transacting the following business.**

**Clerk to the Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority**

**AGENDA**

- 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**  
Councillors, colleagues or other participants in meetings are requested to declare any personal or personal and prejudicial interest in any matters(s) on the agenda
- 3 MINUTES** Attached  
Last meeting held on 1 February 2013 (for confirmation)
- 4 PRINCIPAL OFFICER PAY STRUCTURE** Attached  
Report of Chief Fire Officer
- 5 STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT TEAM REVIEW** Attached  
Report of Chief Fire Officer
- 6 SUBMISSION IN RESPONSE TO THE REVIEW INTO FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITIES BY SIR KEN KNIGHT** Attached  
Report of Chief Fire Officer
- 7 RETAINED FIRE FIGHTERS PENSION SETTLEMENT** To follow  
Report of Chief Fire Officer

- 8 TO CONSIDER EXCLUDING THE PUBLIC FROM THE MEETING DURING CONSIDERATION OF THE REMAINING ITEM(S) IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 100A(4) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 ON THE BASIS THAT, HAVING REGARD TO ALL THE CIRCUMSTANCES, THE PUBLIC INTEREST IN MAINTAINING THE EXEMPTION OUTWEIGHS THE PUBLIC INTEREST IN DISCLOSING THE INFORMATION
- 9 RETFORD FIRE STATION DEVELOPMENT To follow  
Report of Chief Fire Officer
- 10 RESILIENCE PLANNING Attached  
Report of Chief Fire Officer

**IF YOU ARE UNSURE WHETHER OR NOT YOU SHOULD DECLARE AN INTEREST IN A PARTICULAR MATTER, PLEASE CONTACT THE CONSTITUTIONAL SERVICES OFFICER SHOWN ON THIS AGENDA, IF POSSIBLE BEFORE THE DAY OF THE MEETING, WHO WILL PROVIDE ADVICE IN THE FIRST INSTANCE**

**ANY COUNCILLOR WHO IS UNABLE TO ATTEND THE MEETING AND WISHES TO SUBMIT APOLOGIES SHOULD DO SO VIA THE PERSONAL ASSISTANT TO THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AT FIRE SERVICES HEADQUARTERS ON 0115 967 0880**

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**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM  
FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**POLICY AND STRATEGY COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

of meeting held on **1 FEBRUARY 2013** at Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Bestwood Lodge from 10.00 am to 10.27 am.

**Membership**

Councillor D Pulk (Chair)  
Councillor J Collins  
Councillor B Grocock  
Councillor E Kerry  
Councillor K Rigby  
Councillor G Wheeler

Members absent are marked ^

**15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received.

**16 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

No declarations of interests were made.

**17 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2012, copies of which had been circulated at the meeting, be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

**18 CONSULTATION FRAMEWORK**

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated, which presented the Committee with a consultation framework for all future consultations and sought approval for its adoption by the Fire Authority. The report was introduced by Frank Swann, Chief Fire Officer, who confirmed that a member led task and finish group had been convened to establish a 'Consultation Framework' at the meeting in November 2012. Following this, a draft document had been produced and with the Service due to commence consultation on its next Integrated Risk Management Plan

(IRMP) in spring 2013, adoption of the document was sought to ensure compliance and that all expectations were met.

The Committee expressed gratitude to the members of the Working Group and felt that to engage with members of the community effectively, consultation would need to tie in to a range of existing community meetings as opposed to a stand alone consultative approach.

**RESOLVED that the Consultation Framework be adopted and forwarded to the Fire Authority for formal ratification.**

## **19 FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE EFFICIENCIES REVIEW**

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated, which sought to update the Committee on the commencement of a Fire and Rescue Service Efficiencies Review. The report was introduced by Frank Swann, Chief Fire Officer, who reported that the outgoing Chief Fire and Rescue Advisor, Sir Ken Knight, would lead a short review into the operational efficiency of the services delivered by the Fire and Rescue Authorities in England. The review would take place from January to March and would report back to Ministers in spring 2013.

Although not intending to come to a Service in the midlands, Sir Ken Knight would be inviting input from authorities to demonstrate their efficiency savings. Fire Authorities in both Oxfordshire and Hampshire had shared their submissions detailing what the Services had done. It was reported that a similar submission could be arranged from the Authority which would need to be reported by the end of spring, the implications being that the mini-comprehensive spending review, due to be announced in spring, would include a 1 year settlement for 2015/16. The Chief Fire Officer surmised that a demonstration of the efficiencies from the Authority could influence the judgement on the grant settlement for 2015/16.

Although no guidance or relevant terms of reference had been provided with regards to participating in the review, the Committee felt that a submission of relevant bullet points was perhaps the most appropriate response at this stage.

### **RESOLVED**

- (1) that the Policy and Strategy Committee note the review being carried out by the Chief Fire and Rescue Advisor;**
- (2) that a draft response on behalf of the Authority be circulated to members for comment prior to submission.**



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Policy and Strategy Committee

# PRINCIPAL OFFICER PAY STRUCTURE

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Agenda Item No:

4.

Date:

02 August 2013

**Purpose of Report:**

To recommend the application of 3-point pay scale for the roles of Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Assistant Chief Fire Officer and Assistant Chief Officer on appointment.

## CONTACT OFFICER

**Name :** Frank Swann  
Chief Fire Officer

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**Media Enquiries  
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## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The current salary of the Chief Fire Officer is determined by utilising a two track approach as stated within the National Joint Council (NJC) for Brigade Managers of Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services Scheme of Conditions of Service (Gold Book).
- 1.2 This entails an annual review by the NJC to set the level of pay increase applicable to Brigade Managers covered by this agreement, with all other decisions about pay and remuneration being determined locally by the Fire Authority.
- 1.3 The Gold Book sets out minimum levels of salary for Chief Fire Officers based upon population size. In 2002, following an external pay review by Deloitte, Nottinghamshire Authority moved away from these minimum salary levels and, in 2009, the Authority established a benchmarking process based upon average pay against the salaries of the CFO's of Staffordshire, Leicestershire and Derbyshire. This review is undertaken biennially by the Authority with any implementation taking place in January.

## 2. REPORT

- 2.1 As set out above, the Fire Authority has established a benchmarking process in respect of the pay of the Chief Fire Officer to ensure that the salary applied remains competitive, is justifiable, and is commensurate with neighbouring Services. It is important for the Fire Authority to set a stable and affordable pay strategy whilst remaining competitive in its recruitment and retention of strategic roles.
- 2.2 The current salary of the Chief Fire Officer is £139,540. This has not been increased since 2010 due to a freezing of cost-of-living awards by the national employers, and a decision by the Fire Authority not to apply any local increase following its biennial review in 2012.
- 2.3 The salary levels of other Principal Officers are set as a % of that determined for the Chief Fire Officer, as follows:

Deputy Chief Fire Officer:	82.5%
Assistant Chief Fire Officer:	75%
Assistant Chief Officer:	65%
- 2.4 Within the current pay structure, any new appointments to Principal Officer roles are therefore made on the basis of single pay point, with no flexibility to acknowledge development within the role or to establish a link between performance and pay.
- 2.5 Within the next 18 months, there is potential for vacancies at Principal Officer level to arise due to the provisions of the Fire-fighter Pension Scheme which

allow for retirement at the age of 50 after 30 years service. The Chief Fire Officer and Assistant Chief Fire Officer would be eligible to elect for retirement under these provisions, and both are contracted to give a minimum six months' notice of their intentions. It is therefore timely to review the salary structure which might be applied on appointment should this situation arise.

- 2.6 In order to build in some flexibility to the current single salary point arrangement, it is recommended that a 3-point salary structure be established based upon completed years in post. The maximum pay point would be reached, subject to agreement, once the post-holder had been in post for three years. The pay points to be based upon a % of the maximum Chief Fire Officer salary – ie: that the appointee would receive 90% of salary in Year One, 95% of salary in Year Two and 100% in Year Three.
- 2.7 The current biennial review by the Fire Authority would continue on the same basis as set out under Paragraph 1.3 above. The next review is due for January 2014
- 2.8 Agreement to progress the post-holder to the next salary point would be undertaken on the anniversary of the appointment. The Policy and Strategy Committee would authorise the progression of the Chief Officer, and the Chief Fire Officer would authorise the progression of other Principal Officers.
- 2.9 The review process will need to be set out within the contract of employment to ensure transparency. Any decision to apply, or to with-hold, salary progression will need to form part of a documented process which will include review meetings to highlight any shortfalls in performance. This would normally form part of the probationary assessment during the first year, and be undertaken as part of the performance and development review (PDR) process in subsequent years. The Chair of the Fire Authority already undertakes an annual PDR with the CFO and targets are set which form the basis of the Strategic Management Team business plan which is presented to the Fire Authority annually. The Human Resources Department will implement the salary review process.
- 2.10 The proposed tiered approach to salary will not impact upon other contractual provisions which will continue to be applied from the commencement of employment. This will include the provision of vehicle based upon the maximum Chief Fire Officer salary rather than the first year salary to take account of the fact that the car leasing scheme is based upon a three year agreement. The value of the provided car is a third of the CFO salary, and 70% of this value for other Principal Officers. It should be noted that car provision will not apply to the appointment of an Assistant Chief Officer as a result of a decision taken by this committee at its meeting on 12 March 2012.
- 2.11 In order to ensure that the Authority retains its competitiveness in the market, it is recommended that the Appointments Committee maintain a discretion to appoint to any point in the salary range to take account of the experience or previous salary of a candidate, in order to effect a successful appointment. Such a decision to be documented as part of the appointments process.

### 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The impact of implementing a three point salary structure is set out below (the figures do not include on-costs):

#### **Chief Fire Officer**

Year 1 - £125,586  
Year 2 - £132,563  
Year 3 - £139,540

Saving: £20,931

#### **Deputy Chief Fire Officer**

Year 1 - £103,308  
Year 2 - £109,364  
Year 3 - £115,120

Saving: £17,268

#### **Assistant Chief Fire Officer**

Year 1 - £94,189  
Year 2 - £99,422  
Year 3 - £104,655

Saving - £15,699

#### **Assistant Chief Officer**

Year 1 - £81,630  
Year 2 - £86,165  
Year 3 - £90,701

Saving - £13,607

- 3.2 The savings arising from the proposed salary structure are set out within the above figures.

### 4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Salary progression forms part of contractual provisions, and will therefore need to be set out within the Contract of Employment, and will form part of an individual's Terms and Conditions of Employment.



- 4.2 As the proposed salary structure will only apply to new Principal Officer appointments, it does not affect the contractual provisions of existing post holders.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

As the proposal does not impact upon policy or service provision, an equality impact assessment has not been undertaken.

## **6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The contractual implications are set out within the report.

## **8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

Reducing the starting salary for strategic roles may adversely impact upon the attractiveness of the role to prospective candidates. For this reason, it is recommended that the Appointments Committee maintain discretion to appoint to an appropriate salary within the salary range for the role, to effect a successful appointment.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that:

- 9.1 The Committee approve the proposed salary structure for appointments to future Principal Officer roles;
- 9.2 The Appointments Committee maintain discretion to appoint to an appropriate salary within the salary range for the role, in order to effect a successful appointment.

## **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)**

None.

Frank Swann  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**





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# **STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT TEAM REVIEW**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

**Agenda No:**

5

**Date:**

02 August 2013

**Purpose of Report:**

To seek Policy and Strategy Committee approval to undertake a further review of strategic management within Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service.

## **CONTACT OFFICER**

**Name :** Frank Swann  
Chief Fire Officer

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## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Since its inception as a Fire Authority in 1998 the responsibility for the day to day running of Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) has rested with the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) under delegated powers. The CFO has been supported by fellow strategic officers at deputy and assistant levels, all of which are member appointments.
- 1.2 Over the years this establishment has been varied with the approval of the Fire Authority. At its highest level the Strategic Management Team consisted of six members (CFO, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO), x2 Assistant Chief Fire Officers (ACFO), Assistant Chief Officer Finance and Resources, Assistant Chief Officer Human Resources), four uniformed and two non-uniformed.
- 1.3 In 2008 the Fire Authority agreed to a reduction in this establishment with the deletion of the Human Resources post and in 2012, following the retirement of the existing DCFO, a ring-fenced appointment process led to the deletion of one of the ACFO posts and a new structure was implemented in August 2012.
- 1.4 Given the financial difficulties the Service is now facing this report seeks the approval of Policy and Strategy Committee for the CFO to explore further options for the potential to reduce the management team level.

## **2. REPORT**

- 2.1 The Strategic Management Team (SMT) level at NFRS has been varied since the organisation was established as a Fire Authority in 1998. At its leanest structure the organisation comprised a CFO and x2 DCFO, and as detailed in Paragraph 1.2 above then numbered six individuals for a period.
- 2.2 Clearly when there were six members of the team the Service was responding to the demands being placed upon it following the publication of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, the introduction of precepting powers and the implementation of pay verification following the modernising agenda.
- 2.3 As these aspects have become more embedded, the CFO has recommended to the Fire Authority the gradual shrinkage of the management team. The 2010 Fire Cover Review contributed to the latest reduction in 2012, when one ACFO post was dis-established.
- 2.4 With the Service now facing difficult decisions relating to its future budgets, it is incumbent on the Service to look at savings potential at all levels of the organisation and the SMT should not be exempt. The Service has already rationalised management levels below SMT and these are now felt to be at the minimum levels given the needs of the organisation at this stage.
- 2.5 Equally it has to be recognised that aside from managerial responsibilities, the Service has to maintain a rota for the provision of strategic command (Gold Rota) across the county on a 24/7 basis. This is currently done utilising

the CFO, DCFO and ACFO as a three week based rota, with all always immediately available on a timed response.

- 2.6 Options available to NFRS should not be restricted in any way and should include utilising retirement profiles, redundancy, sharing with other fire and rescue services and/or straightforward deletion of posts. Equally, Policy and Strategy Committee should be aware that some upfront costs may be unavoidable to relieve longer term savings.
- 2.7 Policy and Strategy Committee may also have to consider any knock-on impacts to the roles of more junior officers who may have to pick up some additional responsibilities as a consequence. This occurred with the deletion of the ACFO post, although savings were still significant in the overall management team budget. The Service has already advised the Fire Authority of its intention to review structures and it is considered timely that any amendments can be accommodated into any review of structure.
- 2.8 It is proposed that the CFO be tasked with exploring all potential options and bring a report back to Policy and Strategy Committee for its meeting scheduled for Friday 1 November 2013. This would allow time for formal Fire Authority approval in December and any processes to be put in place to achieve savings during the 2014/15 budget year.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The financial implications relating to this report are related to the budget reductions required during the 2014/15 financial year and any costs that may be incurred in facilitating any changes to the Strategic Management Team. The base level for any recommendations or options must be the reduction in the salary bill and associated costs.

### **4. HUMAN RESOURCES & LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

There are significant human resources implications arising from this report and the in-house team will be advising the CFO on appropriate process to ensure there are no breaches of employment law and Service policies.

### **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

Throughout this process it will be important to ensure that no-one is disadvantaged and any recommendations do not breach equalities legislation.

### **6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

It is important that any outcomes are in line with employment law and will not affect the Service's ability to comply with its primary legislation.

## **8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

Reducing the Strategic Management Team does present some risks as the Service ultimately reduces its managerial and/or operational capacity. However, these risks have to be balanced against the need to achieve £1.8 million of savings from the 2014/15 budget. Any review should present proposals that mitigate and address both risks.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Policy and Strategy Committee approve the review of the management team and task the Chief Fire Officer with reporting back to the next meeting on 1 November 2013 with options and recommendations.

## **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)**

None.

Frank Swann  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**



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Policy and Strategy Committee

# **SUBMISSION IN RESPONSE TO THE REVIEW INTO FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITIES BY SIR KEN KNIGHT**

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Agenda No:

6

Date:

02 August 2013

**Purpose of Report:**

To propose a submission from the Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority in response to the review into efficiencies and operations in fire and rescue authorities in England by Sir Ken Knight.

## **CONTACT OFFICER**

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Chief Fire Officer

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(0115) 967 0880

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Late in 2012 Sir Ken Knight, the outgoing Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser to the Government, was commissioned by Brandon Lewis MP, the Fire Minister, to undertake a review into efficiencies and operations in fire and rescue authorities in England. The intention of the review was to look at ways fire and rescue authorities could deliver further efficiencies in operational arrangements without reducing the quality of front line services to the public.
- 1.2 The review took place primarily during late 2012 and the early part of 2013 and the final report was published in May 2013. Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) did volunteer to participate in the review, but on 20 December 2012 Sir Ken declined this invitation due to timeframes and capacity. However, a submission highlighting much of the work recently undertaken in NFRS was made to highlight the savings and efficiencies already accomplished.
- 1.3 On 28 June 2013 the Fire Authority considered the outcomes of this review as part of a report from the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) on it, and its implications for NFRS. As part of the recommendations the CFO was tasked with drafting a formal response on behalf of the Fire Authority to be agreed for submission by Policy and Strategy Committee at its next meeting. The draft submission is attached to this report at Appendix A.

## **2. REPORT**

- 2.1 Sir Ken Knight's review was published in May 2013 as an independent review of the fire and rescue service in England. As the outgoing Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser, Sir Ken had been invited by the Fire Minister, Brandon Lewis, to undertake the review. The report is therefore in response to the Minister's request, but equally Sir Ken's comments "there is much here that is for fire and rescue authorities to consider and pursue themselves".
- 2.2 As an outcome of the review the CFO produced a report for the Fire Authority for its meeting on 28 June 2013 highlighting the headline elements from the document, along with cross-referencing much of what NFRS and the Fire Authority had already progressed. Equally it was important for the Fire Authority to recognise that although much had changed in the Service, more would have to be done against a back-drop of reducing budgets.
- 2.3 Whilst that report highlighted the specifics detailed in Sir Ken's review, it did not set out any challenge in respect of its findings nor seek to put forward difficulties faced by authorities such as NFRS, who had already made significant reductions and efficiencies in a lot of areas. By inviting response to the report the Fire Minister had left that opportunity open and it is through this submission that NFRS should challenge where it feels appropriate.



- 2.4 The response appended to this report is meant to be both challenging and in some aspects parochial. Sir Ken often reflects on inequalities within the report with regard to where different fire and rescue authorities are, and yet overall the report seems to question everyone. With tightening budgets it is essential that the Fire Authority makes its case for the position being experienced presently. Additionally, whilst some fire and rescue authorities may have avoided difficult decisions, Nottinghamshire has not, and it is important for this response to reflect that aspect.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.

### **4. HUMAN RESOURCES & LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

There are no specific human resources or learning and development implications arising from this report.

### **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

There are no specific equalities implications arising from this report.

### **6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

There are no specific crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

### **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

### **8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

Failure to respond to the review could leave government of the opinion that the Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority is content with its findings in totality. A formal response allows the Authority to express its views.

### **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Policy and Strategy Committee consider the draft submission to Sir Ken Knight's review and subject to any amendments, task the Chief Fire Officer with submitting it on their behalf.

**10. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)**

None.

Frank Swann  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**



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## **Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority Response to Sir Ken Knight's 2013 Efficiency and Effectiveness Review**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority (NFRA) welcome the opportunity to engage in any debate regarding how the fire and rescue service is currently run. We welcome the opportunity to engage in influencing the future of the fire and rescue service, and we are pleased to see that by commissioning the review, government recognises the importance of the fire and rescue service to its communities.
- 1.2 There is no doubt that the fire and rescue service is something dear to the local community and we challenge Sir Ken Knight's comment regarding "the public's seemingly unconditional attachment to the fire and rescue service" acting as a constraint to efficiency and being outdated. Our experience has been more positive where the fire and rescue service has been able to use that attachment to access some of the most hard to reach, through initiatives such as the Prince's Trust, working with those on the edge of mainstream society. This is something we shall explore more in our response.
- 1.3 NFRA is pleased to see that there is a reference to the size and scale of funding and would welcome the opportunity to look at this and the transparency in which grant is distributed. In one financial year, Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) went from being a net contributor to supporting authorities at the floor, to being a net receiver, having fallen below the floor. Given that fluctuations in population and risk varies little in 12 months, this challenges even the most adept of geographers and economists.
- 1.4 The recognition of the impact of the importance of prevention and protection is also welcome and we agree that staff engaged in such work should, and are, recognised as front line. Equally, we challenge the view that this can replace existing operational staff, who in the main are responsible for the bulk of delivery of such work. If we had to utilise retained crews for this purpose it would increase their costs, and the re-negotiation of non-uniformed contracts to undertake weekend and evening working would also inflate salaries. This should have been reflected in the findings.

- 1.5 Our response will show that we have been innovative, progressive, and have not shirked difficult decisions around shifts, redundancies and appliance decommissioning. Conditions of service have not been seen as an obstacle and we have been able to agree new arrangements with all staff. It is for this reason we will challenge the generalist approach that great savings can be made. NFRS is well on the way to having reduced its front line appliances by one sixth at the time of this submission. On the advice of our Chief Fire Officer, when we reach this point it has the potential to undermine our ability to assure the Minister as he would like.
- 1.6 In summary we would like this report to trigger action where those who have been more progressive in their approach be recognised and the obvious inefficiencies across the country be addressed.

## 2. EFFICIENCIES

- 2.1 Like Sir Ken, we acknowledge that risks within our county have changed over time. Pro-active fire safety work by our staff has led to reduction in mobilisations akin to those quoted within the report.
- 2.2 For example, over the last five years our figures show the following:

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Incidents	15665	15198	13135	13111	10320
Mobilisations	22328	22391	19919	19391	15464

- 2.3 However, we believe that it is floored to base any assessment of operational resources without further looking at what lies under these overall figures. In fact the actual reality of accidental dwelling fires and non-fatal casualties in such incidents is far more static:

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Accidental Dwelling Fires	645	654	680	695	634
Non-Fatal Casualties in ADF	175	168	136	123	150

- 2.4 NFRS is mature enough to recognise that a reduction in operational resources is both achievable and in the best interests of the public finance. However, the reality is these will need to continue to provide a service to those who are most at risk and those to which the Service needs to respond to most effectively. A general assumption that efficiencies equal to those reductions in mobilisations can be achieved is floored and will leave those most vulnerable at greater risk.

- 2.5 Equally, much of the work and capacity which exists within the Service is from within the operational workforce. Retained officers are employed on an as needed basis in Nottinghamshire. If we were to utilise this process for the delivery of early intervention then it would become a more costly model. Therefore simply changing the crewing system in this way, based solely on response statistics, will mask a negative impact in respect of early intervention capacity.
- 2.6 Sir Ken challenges the relationship between a number of factors relating to spend, deprivation, demographic profiling and obvious variations in such. NFRA covers one of the most deprived communities in the UK, where the average income is well below the national average. At approximately £40 per head we consider the service we deliver to be very good value for money, given the profile we face. It is very easy to say that some spend more than others without looking underneath at the challenges we all face. Perhaps Sir Ken's report should have focused less on headline figures and more on the relationship between the demands on Services, rather than coming to the conclusion that it is "fragile and inconclusive".

### **3. DEPLOYING RESOURCES**

- 3.1 The deployment and arrangement of operational resources are a matter for individual fire and rescue authorities. The IRMP process was designed and implemented for that very purpose and the matter quite rightly is a local one with advice from the respective CFOs.
- 3.2 IRMP is the very process by which individual fire authorities match the needs of risk and demand.
- 3.3 Having already affected compulsory redundancies in uniform, non-uniform and control staff, as well as implementing a corresponding reduction in front line appliance provision, this Authority takes issue with the comments made regarding avoiding such matters. NFRS found it disrespectful that comments such as "self-censorship" and "avoidance" are used.
- 3.4 The threat of legal challenge amongst many decisions means that a methodical and well-structured approach to any changes to operational resources has to be taken. The National Framework itself refers to public consultation on a number of occasions and therefore the implied criticism that fire authorities avoid taking decisions because of redundancy and reduction strategies is floored.
- 3.5 In 2006 NFRS introduced its first non-grey book shift pattern, which was updated in 2009 to implement the principles of self-rostering. Officers rotas have operated outside of grey book since 2005 and locally agreed practices are well established. The grey book is not a barrier, either cultural or perceived, where the organisation and the Fire Authority are at one with the need to change.
- 3.6 Our question in response to Sir Ken's report would be "when a FRS has implemented all of these aspects, where do the further efficiencies arise?" Protecting the front line is all very well, but when you have pared down all the

innovative models available, there is only the front line left. This is the position NFRS finds itself in as it looks to meet the further expectations in respect of budget costs.

- 3.7 The example of the success of the home fire risk grant is an interesting one that we as an organisation are already preparing for. As Sir Ken rightly points out the mass installation of smoke detectors was paid for by government; an amount which totalled £25 million over four years. He notes that the 10 year life of these items is now approaching the end of the life span. Faced with a number of follow-up enquiries, NFRA would like to know where the money will come from to replace them or do we simply direct the individual to the local hardware store? If the latter is the case, then if this does not occur due to an expectation that we provided the initial installation, who will deal with any impact?
- 3.8 Perhaps the suggestion might be that we find this by replacing wholetime employees with on-call staff. However, those individuals do not provide a permanent and continuous availability and any additional work would have to be costed. It also ignores the real problem of recruiting and retaining enough staff given the demographics of obtaining individuals in communities where the population migrates away during the day, has little employment locally and there are high levels of turn-over due to the lack of operational calls.
- 3.9 Innovative and creative staffing is clearly the way forward and NFRS will continue to develop its options in this way, so it is sad to see that progress has not been adequately reflected and that the solution appears to be an equally "traditional" option.

#### **4. COLLABORATION**

- 4.1 Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service fought a battle all the way to the High Court twice to implement a joint co-responding scheme with East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS) in 2006. To criticise the Service for "patchy" implementation of such schemes is a difficult pill for this Authority to take.
- 4.2 Not once during this process did CFRA or DCLG voice their opinion.
- 4.3 In 2004, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire FRS stopped a joint control centre business model on the basis of a promised regional control centre by 2006. Almost 10 years later, having waited for that project to complete and having watched the government waste half a billion pounds, the Services, along with Leicestershire, are now delivering a project.
- 4.4 As this submission response is drafted, EMAS are moving into FRS premises in Nottinghamshire as part of a co-location initiative. The savings for EMAS might be considerable, but the income for NFRS will be less than a 1% increase on Council Tax per annum! To imply that such initiatives will provide efficiencies enough to impact on the current budget reductions is financially floored.
- 4.5 NFRS buys its CFB Training from Lincolnshire, with obvious efficiencies, and shared a finance system with Derbyshire and Leicestershire. Payroll and

pensions provision, and fleet maintenance are all outsourced. These are not arrangements which have been driven by a reduction in grant, but provisions that are long standing and periodically tested for cost effectiveness.

- 4.6 This Authority does collaborate, has tried to collaborate more, but is often stifled by legal complexities. Any “duplication of effort” on our part is not through the want of trying and to infer in the report that there is a “lack of political appetite” to collaboration and mergers is floored.
- 4.7 The report is also conspicuous in its lack of reporting around positive collaboration that has had a significant benefit to the community.
- 4.8 Engaging to young people, not only through fire safety legislation, but also through work with charities such as the Prince’s Trust and Duke of Edinburgh, deliver positive outcomes for young people.
- 4.9 Working with Age Concern and Dementia UK is having an impact on protecting an ageing population. The added value of this work to the UK tax payer must be worth millions in terms of crime or health statistics, yet there is no attempt in the report to even acknowledge this.
- 4.10 If this was a review of FRS efficiency, then it should have looked at all aspects including the wider benefits.

## **5. DRIVING EFFICIENCY**

- 5.1 NFRA is disappointed that the report identifies that the major driver for change has been the reduction in central government funding. If Sir Ken’s review had been more in-depth rather than a superficial overview it would have discovered vast attempts by fire authorities to innovate and improve services whilst becoming more efficient.
- 5.2 NFRS has a good track record of projects that are based upon invest to save principles (green technology), has a well-established trading company, despite continuous challenges from the wider fire industry, and has demonstrated clear leadership in its achievements since the revised Act and Framework came into being back in 2004.
- 5.3 We would not want to repeat the achievements already stated in this submission, but believe we can demonstrate clear evidence of driving efficiency through our approach to service delivery.

## **6. THE FUTURE**

- 6.1 The final aspect of Sir Ken’s report lays the question of what is the future for the Fire and Rescue Service. Put simply, this Authority sees the key challenge of maintaining the highly respected service with a significantly diminishing budget.
- 6.2 We agree that the savings identified will probably be unlikely to be sufficient to maintain the current Service and have already started the work on our IRMP to change the public’s expectations of us.

- 6.3 Greater collaboration, co-working, co-location of ambulances, all form part of our approach, along with changing the public's expectation that a fire appliance will respond immediately to every eventuality. The latter aspect we believe is a sad reflection of how government sees the work we do, but unfortunately is a reality.
- 6.4 This Authority will not shirk its responsibility as it has never done, and will not veer from its innovative approach. Our detailed analysis shows us that areas of risk from fire are still areas of risk, and we will concentrate our efforts on the most vulnerable in our society.

## **7. SUMMARY**

- 7.1 NFRA reserves the right to defend that this submission is parochial in its content. This is because we believe the generalist view taken by Sir Ken Knight in his review has failed to reflect the efforts made to develop and evolve this Service.
- 7.2 The media sound-bite approach of the final publication is a simple screen to hide the massive impact that the budget reductions will have on the Service, both locally and nationally. We hope government does not live to regret their actions.

Councillor Darrell Pulk  
**Chair of the Fire Authority**  
**on behalf of the Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham**  
**Fire and Rescue Authority**

02 August 2013