



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority
Human Resources Committee

HOSTING OF THE LOCAL RESILIENCE FORUM SECRETARIAT

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Date: 24 January 2025

Purpose of Report:

To update Members on arrangements to host the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) Secretariat by Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service and Nottinghamshire Police.

Recommendations:

That Members support the approach of the Chief Fire Officer to hosting the Local Resilience Forum Secretariat.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service is a statutory partner of Nottinghamshire Local Resilience Forum (LRF). This requirement comes from the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 which outlines the statutory duties of Category One and Two responders.
- 1.2 The LRF is not a legal entity, but the purpose of the LRF is to ensure the effective delivery of those duties under the Act which need to be developed in a multi-agency environment, and individually, as a Category One responder.
- 1.3 The Nottinghamshire LRF is currently Chaired by the Chief Constable and Vice-Chaired by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Service Delivery.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 A review, commissioned by the LRF Chair and supported by representatives from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) was undertaken in early 2024 into the structure of the LRF in Nottinghamshire.
- 2.2 The review highlighted that Nottinghamshire LRF was one of only two LRFs that did not have a permanent, partner-funded approach to the secretariat function. Nottinghamshire LRF previously supported the work of the LRF through partner contributions to workstream delivery, and a two-year rotational approach to support a secretariat function between City and County Councils.
- 2.3 An agreed action from the review was to seek proposals for the hosting of a permanent, partner-funded secretariat function which would professionalise the approach of the LRF and ensure a sustainable, consistent approach to the delivery of the required statutory duties, as well as supporting a more robust approach to supporting major incidents.
- 2.4 In conjunction with the Chief Constable, the Chief Fire Officer supported an approach to jointly host the permanent secretariat function alongside the already established collocated emergency planning teams at Police and Fire Joint Headquarters.
- 2.5 The proposal also saw the introduction of an on-call support function that would assist in the multi-agency approach to major incidents across the LRF, such as wide-spread flooding or terrorism-related incidents; supporting recommendations from the Manchester Arena and Grenfell Tower Inquiry findings.
- 2.6 At the LRF Executive meeting in December 2024, the joint Police and Fire proposal was tabled and supported by LRF partners. The approach was highlighted as offering a resilient and sustainable model which utilises both

partner and Government grant funding and it was highlighted that the hosting by Police and Fire ensures that the team is embedded within organisations that are inextricably linked to the emergency planning, preparedness and response functions of Nottinghamshire, with the ability to draw on the experience and support of these organisations, whilst continuing to be a standalone entity to support the LRF.

- 2.7 As the LRF is not a legal entity, it was supported that Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) would be the sole employer and NFRS will provide oversight and line management for the team, whilst all work and direction for the team will be delivered through the LRF and its sub-groups.
- 2.8 Work is now underway to ensure the necessary legal agreements are in place to finalise funding, advertise and recruit to the new roles, and ensure a smooth transition of activity from April 2025.
- 2.9 The team will be evaluated after twelve months to ensure that the objectives of the LRF are being achieved and that the team is embedded across partners to ensure effective working.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Service will pay an agreed £17k contribution to the permanent secretariat function alongside funding from statutory partners of the LRF. This will be met from existing budgets and incorporated into the ongoing base budget requirements.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Under the delegated authority of the Chief Fire Officer to amend the permanent establishment within the current budget, the Chief Fire Officer has established four new posts as proposed by the LRF secretariat proposal. These changes are made in consultation with the Chair of the Authority and will be reported to the Fire Authority in the annual establishment report.
- 4.2 Employment risks (such as potential future redundancy costs) will be written in to the legal agreements for partners through the LRF.

5. EQUALITIES AND ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The provision of a permanent secretariat function will enhance the Service's commitment to '*putting our communities first*' through ensuring that an effective, multi-agency response is achievable during times of major or significant incidents.
- 5.2 As the employer of the secretariat function, all appointments will be made supporting the Service's values and the Core Code of Ethics.

- 5.3 An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken because this is not a change to policy or procedure.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental or sustainability implications arising from this report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The approach outlined in this report supports the Fire Authority in ensuring that it meets the statutory requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The approach outlined in this report presents an increased risk in relation to setting a balanced budget, as outlined in the Corporate Risk Register, due to the additional employment of four personnel, however this is undertaken within the Service's current budget commitments and additional risks are mitigated through an agreed legal position with LRF partners relating to employment costs and risks.
- 8.2 The approach of hosting a permanent LRF secretariat function mitigates the risk of 'availability of resources' through the provision of a dedicated resource to assist in the response to major or substantial incidents that may occur.

9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The approach outlined in this report directly supports the Nottinghamshire LRF in ensuring a collaborative approach to discharging the statutory duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.
- 9.2 The joint hosting of the team with Nottinghamshire Police builds on the successful, embedded colocation of the Service's emergency planning teams and ensures a consistent, sustainable approach.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members support the approach of the Chief Fire Officer to hosting the Local Resilience Forum Secretariat.

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

None.

Craig Parkin
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER