

For Publication

Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority
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Item No. 13

REPORT AUTHOR(S): CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

SUBJECT: METROPOLITAN FIRE CHIEFS' ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE 2018

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Background Papers:

None

Implications (tick ✓):

LEGAL		FINANCIAL	
HUMAN RESOURCES		EQUALITY IMPACT	
ENVIRONMENTAL		POLICY	
CORPORATE RISK	Known	OTHER (please specify)	
	New	CORE BRIEF	

Any implications affecting this report are noted at the end of the report.

PURPOSE:

To advise Members of the key issues arising from the Metropolitan Fire Chiefs' Conference 2018.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the learning outcomes in the report be noted and future attendance at the Metropolitan Fire Chiefs' Conference be supported, as appropriate.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Metropolitan Fire Chiefs' Association is an organisation set up within the auspices of the International Association of Fire Chiefs but is designed specifically to provide a network for Fire Chiefs in Services that have more than 400 staff or service a population of more than 200,000 people.
- 1.2 By British standards this includes most of our Fire and Rescue Services but in the United States there are some 33,000 fire departments the vast majority of which serve small towns with largely volunteer response. The 'Metro Chiefs' account for about 300 of the US Departments.
- 1.3 Each year the Association holds a conference which is normally attended by around 100 delegates representing the United States, Canada, the UK, Australasia and occasionally others. The UK sends a varying contingent of UK Chiefs.
- 1.4 Clearly, at CFO level, there are limited opportunities for continuing personal development but the opportunity to consider UK issues in context of how similar issues are being dealt with elsewhere is very beneficial. A number of initiatives and awareness of issues subsequently adopted or impacting on BFRS have come out of attendance.
- 1.5 There is also an important opportunity to enhance the profile of this Service and Authority, both in terms of the issues and involvement but also in how we are perceived nationally.

2. Outcomes

2.1 There are a number of themes which were covered during the conference some of which are worthy of further explanation both here and by other national bodies.

- a) Next steps in emergency medical care and implications of introducing immediate and post overdose interventions by fire crews.
- b) Developing community health and wellbeing.
- c) Major operational incident reviews – Hurricane response and Miami pedestrian bridge collapse.
- d) Managing fire fighter cancer risk in United States, supported by the ongoing cancer risk enquiry in the Australian Fire and Rescue Service. The potential impact of presumptive cancer in firefighters.
- e) Widening the use of fire sprinklers.
- f) New research ongoing in fire behaviour analysis.
- g) Occupational health screening for firefighters.
- h) Firefighter mental health management and awareness (CFO Fuller was one of the presenters in this area).
- i) Deployment of emergency response resources, assessing risk and capacity.
- j) Update on new work on NFPA standards.
- k) Response and preparedness for major incidents in the UK.
- l) Update on formation of CTIF women Fire Chiefs Group.

2.2 The Metro Chiefs' Conference also facilitates a collegial network which enables us to challenge our thinking in a number of different areas of work.

3. Conclusion

3.1 In conclusion, many of the issues discussed or faced by fire departments/services represented are very similar. It is the way in which they are approached and responded to which differ and it is the consideration of these various responses which offer the CFO the greatest development opportunities.

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