

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

SUBMISSION FROM LOTHIAN AND BORDERS FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

We welcome the opportunity to contribute to the Local Government and Regeneration Committees considerations.

We offer comment on each of the three strands as follows:-

Strand 1—Partnerships and Outcomes

There has been much positive and constructive engagement within and across Community Planning Partnerships. Inevitably there are varying degrees of success in measuring and improving outcomes.

A significant element for Fire Services is the planned introduction of local senior officers and the development of local delivery plans. This development will assist in the integration of Fire issues with CPP's s well as providing a focus on outcomes and prevention approaches.

The proposed funding model for the SFRS may not however support budget sharing.

Our vision is that the LSO arrangements will lead to supporting Local Authorities in influencing and improving outcomes through the implementation and management of local delivery plans. Governance and accountability arrangements are in development.

Strand 2—Benchmarking and Performance Measurement

The Scottish Government has recently published a range of performance indicators for the Fire and Rescue Service. These will be incorporated into the governance and accountability arrangements for local delivery plans. Consequently it is not possible at this time to provide comment on their effectiveness in respect of the development of benchmarking and comparative performance data. However we are of the view that the published performance indicators will support the subsequent development of benchmarking and comparative performance data.

Strand 3—Developing new ways of delivering services

Reform of the Fire Service is part of the Scottish Governments legislative programme. This will reduce the number of services from 8 to 1.

A key element is the introduction, as identified above, of local senior officer arrangements and the introduction of local delivery plans which are aimed at improving local accountability and engagement.

A further key element is achieving economic benefit through the elimination of 'duplicated' costs. The current plans assume that all existing staff will transfer to the new authority on their existing terms and conditions and that staff reductions will be achieved through a combination of natural wastage and voluntary severance.

**Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service
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