



AGENDA ITEM: 14

NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

17 June 2013

WELSH GOVERNMENT'S "FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES IN WALES 2013 PROJECT"

Report by Simon Smith, Chief Fire Officer

Purpose of Report

- 1 To advise Members of the existence of the Welsh Government's "Fire and Rescue Services in Wales 2013 Project" and to seek the Authority's support for involvement of North Wales Fire and Rescue Service officers in the associated working groups.

Background

- 2 At a meeting with the Welsh Government's Deputy Director - Community Safety Division, Karin Phillips, on 21 May 2013 the three Chief Fire Officers in Wales were formally advised of the advent of the "Fire and Rescue Services in Wales 2013 Project". A copy of a letter relating to the establishment of the project is attached as Appendix 1. The terms of reference were due to be discussed and finalised at a meeting of the project working group on 10 June 2013. Chief Fire Officers were asked to make nominations as soon as possible to the project's working group. In view of the potential significance of the outcome of this project, each Chief Fire Officer has determined that he will attend working group meetings personally.

Information

- 3 Supporting the project, in addition to the work referred to in paragraph 4 below, is likely to put a strain on the capacity of the Service in North Wales. Nevertheless, it is the Chief Fire Officer's view that the Authority should participate fully as the project is likely to have significant implications for the future.
- 4 Members will be aware of the work currently being undertaken by the National Issues Committee (previous reports to the Authority refer) and of the fire and rescue data collection exercise undertaken by the Welsh Government in 2012. In addition, the Public Services Commission, led by Sir Paul Williams, will shortly commence its work. It has been confirmed that the fire and rescue services in Wales come under the remit of the Commission. It is not clear as yet what links, if any, there will be between the project and the work of the Commission.
- 5 Members will also wish to be aware of the publication in May of this year of "Facing the Future: Findings from the review of efficiencies and operations in fire and rescue authorities in England", a report authored by Sir Ken Knight, former Chief Fire and Rescue Advisor in England, which made a number of recommendations on proposed efficiency measures for English fire and rescue authorities. This report can be found at:- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/facing-the-future>

Recommendation

- 6 That members note the contents of the report and endorse the involvement of Service officers and other resources in the "Fire and Rescue Services in Wales 2013 Project".