



Finance Co-Ordination Committee

NFCC Finance Co-Ordination Committee update

At time of writing we are in an unprecedented situation with the COVID-19 pandemic impacting on all of our lives and particularly vulnerable people in our communities. Whilst we all do our best to prepare for emergency situations it has never been more critical to support one another in achieving common goals. This update from the National Fire Chiefs Council Finance Co—ordination committee covers current priority areas of work on behalf of the sector.

We also welcome Helen MacArthur to the committee, she joins us from North Wales Fire and Rescue Service. The committee is next due to meet on the 30th April in what is likely to be our first virtual meeting, with news and information available via the NFCC website at <https://www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk/Committees/Finance/131980>

COVID-19 additional funding

Whilst it is recognised that FRAs are prepared for spate conditions and have reserves in place to fund unusual/ increased activity, the Home Office and MHCLG are actively working with the Treasury to identify whether there will be additional funding available as part of the government wider response.

FRAs need to be prepared to track the additional costs related to the extraordinary workload caused by responding and supporting communities in their response to the COVID-19 emergency and the NFCC have agreed to provide a mechanism to track this. Amy will be working with the Home Office to support this work so please stay tuned for updates.

Fire Finance Network

The Fire Finance Network (FFN) is an informal network of finance professionals from across the Fire Sector and is a great way to engage with colleagues from other Fire and Rescue Services, particularly in times when digital connections are essential!

The FFN meets quarterly and holds an annual conference, where attendees receive updates on strategic and technical issues; recent speakers included the Home Office Fire Funding team and CIPFA Police and Fire advisor. Key members of the FFN also sit on the National Fire Chief's Council Finance Co-ordination Committee and so are ideally placed to influence nationally.

We are particularly keen to hear from colleagues who work with county and devolved Fire Services to ensure their voices are heard. Membership is free and the best way to get involved is via our Workplace page as information and events are shared regularly – if you would like to join please contact the FFN Chair, Amy Webb, via email at awebb@dsfire.gov.uk. Expect conversational topics around running year-end and accounts process in turbulent times and the national perspective on local authority audit.

Sector Spending Review Lead

Hopefully you will all be aware that a request for funding went out to Fire Authorities to support a dedicated NFCC team to work with the Local Government Association and Home Office on securing a sustainable funding package in the next spending review. Thank you to all services for agreeing to support this key piece of work.

Amy Webb (Vice-Chair and FFN Chair) has been appointed in to the lead role and started on 16th March, having given updates to the Fire Services Management Committee and speaking with John and Emma Lawrence at the LGA Fire conference last week.

The spending review was expected to be finalised this spring, but national events have overtaken somewhat and therefore recruitment for other team members is on hold. Amy will continue her work (from home) engaging with key stakeholders and the preparatory work for the spend review but will keep an eye on the national situation and reassess timelines and priorities accordingly.

It is vital that the joint sector submission for the spending review is supported by underpinning evidence and therefore Amy will be making direct contact to collect information as well as working with the LGA, CIPFA, ONS etc. on the data. Fire Service's support in providing the information will be most appreciated and should contribute to the aims of the spending review.

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