

From the Chief Executive
Mark Lloyd

Phil Garrigan
Chief Fire Officer
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Merseyside Fire Service Headquarters
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December 2019

Dear Phil

LGA SUBSCRIPTIONS 2020/21

Thank you for your fire authority's continued membership and involvement in the LGA. Your support is such an important part of our ongoing work to secure the best possible deal for fire and rescue authorities.

We have continued to represent the interests of authorities at a national level, respond to the issues you have raised with us and provide support where we are asked.

Since January we have been working with the Home Office and the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) to make the case for certainty and stability in funding for the fire and rescue sector, and this was reflected in the Local Government Finance Settlement announced on 20 December. We will continue to push for the long-term financial sustainability we need from the Spending Review expected in 2020 to ensure services are funded according to risk rather than demand, including the funding to cover the costs of the new roles for fire and rescue services we anticipate arising from the fire and building safety legislation announced in the Queen's Speech, and to increase the amount of fire protection work undertaken by services following the inspections by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

We will be reflecting on the implications for all fire and rescue services of the findings from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry's Phase 1 report at Fire Services Management Committee on 24 January 2020, having initially responded in the media and Parliament to publication of the report. During 2020 we will work closely with the NFCC, the Home Office and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to consider what support services need at a national level going forward to respond to the recommendations.

As you may well be aware, we have refreshed our extensive sector-led improvement (SLI) offer to fire and rescue services and authorities. In 2020 this will focus on assisting services and authorities respond to the results of HMICFRS' inspections, and includes a leadership essentials course for members, two diversity masterclasses for officers and members, and a networking event for authorities' diversity champions, all of which are being held before the end of March.

We continue to support authorities on a wide range of personnel and industrial relations issues. We have continued to collectively represent fire and rescue authorities' interests in the legal proceedings concerning the transitional arrangements introduced as part of the pension scheme changes, and have obtained advice for authorities on the impact of the Matzak case.

These are just some of the examples of the strength of us all working together for the benefit of our residents. We will, of course, continue to work on your behalf and in the best interests of our communities as we engage with the new Government in the coming year.

We know the financial challenges facing fire and rescue authorities and we are committed to keeping costs as low as possible. To help us do this, we have been working hard to increase external income into the LGA and putting that money back into a range of new and existing member benefits.

Although we have frozen subscription levels for the last eight years, increasing costs over this period have meant that our Board has agreed a modest 2 per cent increase in subscriptions for 2020/21.

To provide a smoother and more cost effective payment process, we have introduced a new Direct Debit scheme which will significantly reduce administration on both sides. From the new membership year (1 April 2020) we will replace the 2.5 per cent early payment discount with a 2.5 per cent discount for all fire and rescue authorities joining the Direct Debit scheme.

We have attached a simple Direct Debit mandate form for your team to complete. Please do make sure your fire and rescue authority is signed up by 31 March 2020 to benefit from this new discount. Please return the form to Andrea in my office (andrea.gillian@local.gov.uk).

We will also continue to offer a further 2.5 per cent loyalty discount for fire and rescue authorities not on notice to withdraw from LGA membership.

Therefore, your authority's subscription for 2020 will be £10,669 including all discounts.

Finally, we have published our new business plan for 2019-22, which sets out our priorities, based on the key issues our member authorities have highlighted as being the most important issues for local government. You can find a copy of the plan at www.local.gov.uk/lga-business-plan-2019-2022

I look forward to continuing to work with you and your colleagues over the coming year.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Lloyd', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Mark Lloyd
Chief Executive

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