

<b>WYFRA</b>	<b>FULL AUTHORITY</b>	<b>21 DECEMBER 2007</b>	<b>ITEM NO</b>
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**REPORT OF:** Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive

**PURPOSE OF REPORT:** To draw Members' attention to the consultation documents on;

- (i) Centre of Excellence
- (ii) National Framework
- (iii) Equality and Diversity Strategy

**RECOMMENDATION:** That Members note the reports and forward any comments they may have by 28 December 2007 to the Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive

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**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT DETAILS**

**EXEMPTION CATEGORY:**

**ACCESS CONTACT OFFICER:** CFO Toase – 01274 655701

**BACKGROUND PAPERS  
OPEN TO INSPECTION:**

## **1 BACKGROUND**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members that there have been three Fire and Rescue Service Circulars published recently inviting participation in consultation exercises.

1.2 The three circulars are:

- A Centre of Excellence for the Fire and Rescue Service in England
- Fire and Rescue Service National Framework 2008 – 2011
- Fire and Rescue Service Equality and Diversity Strategy: 2008 - 2018

1.3 The link below will take you to the web page from where you can access all three documents.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/fire/publications/consultations/>

Alternatively hard copies of each document can be obtained from Nicky Houseman in Committee Services.

## **2 INFORMATION**

### **2.1 A Centre of Excellence for the Fire and Rescue Service in England**

The consultation paper puts forward options for the establishment of a Centre of Excellence for the Fire and Rescue Service in England – a central body with a focused, strategic co-ordinating role to enable the Fire and Rescue Service to continue to operate effectively both now and in the future.

### **2.2 Fire and Rescue Service National Framework 2008 – 2011**

The National Framework Document underlines the Government's long-term commitment to improving fire and rescue services in England. The Government is now seeking the views of stakeholders on the revised National Framework document whose main proposed changes are:

- Scaling down the narrative to key 'must / should' messages so that our priorities are more transparent.
- Moving to a three year document so that expectations highlighted in the National Framework run alongside the Fire and Rescue Service's financial commitments.
- Moving away from the nine original chapter headings and creating four new chapters focussed on key strategic priorities.

### 2.3 **Fire and Rescue Service Equality and Diversity Strategy: 2008 – 2018**

The strategy covers all strands of diversity (age, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability and religion).

The priority areas for action set out in the Strategy are:

- Providing leadership and promoting inclusion
- Effective service delivery and community engagement
- Attraction, recruitment
- Measuring action and sharing success
- Accountability

It is envisaged that this will be a 10 year high level national strategy that will meet the challenge to transform Service culture and deliver radical change,

2.4 Officers are currently preparing responses to all three documents based upon the questions raised therein (Equality and Diversity comments attached at Annex A). If members wish to make comment it is important to bear the following submission deadlines in mind:

- |                                   |                   |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| • Centre of Excellence            | Deadline: 31/1/08 |
| • National Framework Document     | Deadline: 6/2/08  |
| • Equality and Diversity Strategy | Deadline: 6/2/08  |

## 3 **EQUALITIES AND FAIRNESS IMPLICATIONS**

None

## 4 **CONCLUSIONS**

4.1 The three documents referred to in this report will have a significant impact upon the Fire and Rescue Services nationally and Members should be aware of their content.

4.2 Draft responses to the consultation documents will be presented to an Executive Committee of the Authority in January 2008 prior to submission to Communities and Local Government (CLG).