

**THE HIGHLAND AND ISLANDS FIRE BOARD
25 AUGUST 2006**

ELECTED MEMBERS SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT

Agenda Item	
Report No	

Summary

At the Fire Board meeting on 27 April 2006, a learning needs questionnaire was circulated. 17 Fire Board members returned the questionnaire and this report provides an overview of the responses and recommends development opportunities are planned for current and future Fire Board members. The report also outlines the role of Champions and recommends that plans are made to initiate a strategy to fully meet the training and development needs of members.

Background

At the Fire Board meeting held on 27 April 2006, learning needs analysis questionnaires were circulated to all members. 17 (71%) members returned the questionnaires and these have been analysed by the Learning and Development Department of the Service. The results are presented below:

Results of Learning Needs Analysis

Q1. Do you require training in the Integrated Risk Management Planning Process?

Existing members results

29% felt they required training in this area

71% felt they did not require training.

Training for new members results

78% felt new members should receive training in this area at the beginning of their membership.

22% felt new members did not require training.

Q2. Do you require training in Fire Service finance issues?

Existing members results

44% felt they required training in this area.

56% felt they did not require training.

Training for new members results

78% felt new members should receive training in this area at the beginning of their membership.

22% felt new members did not require training.

Q3. Do you require training in Learning & Development issues?

Existing members results

27% felt they required training in this area.

73% felt they did not require training.

Training for new members results

78% felt new members should receive training in this area at the beginning of their membership.

22% felt new members did not require training.

Q4. Do you require training in Fire Service Operational issues?

Existing members results

59% felt they required training in this area.

41% felt they did not require training.

Training for new members results

67% felt new members should receive training.

33% felt new members did not require training.

Q5. Do you require training in Corporate Governance/Performance Management issues?

Existing members results

50% felt they required training in this area.

50% felt they did not require training in this area.

Training for new members results

80% felt new members should receive training.

20% felt new members did not require training.

Q6. Do you require training in the structure of the service both Locally and Nationally?

Existing members results

65% felt they required training in this area.

35% felt they did not require training in this area.

Training for new members results

80% felt new members required training.

20% felt new members did not require training.

Q7. Do you require training in partnership working and collaboration?

Existing members results

27% felt they required training in this area.

73% felt they did not require training in this area.

Training for new members results

80% felt new members should receive training.

20% felt new members did not require training.

Q8. Do you require training in equality and diversity issues?Existing members results

13% felt they required training in this area.

87% felt they did not require training in this area.

Training for new members results

80% felt new members should receive training..

20% felt new members did not require training.

Development Opportunities

Overall the results show that the majority of existing members feel well informed about most subjects although there is room for further development. To address this need it is recommended that a seminar for all members is held during November. The seminar will cover all subjects but with greater focus on Finance, Operational Issues, Corporate Governance/Performance Management and Service Structures.

The majority of respondents felt that training on all subjects should be provided to new Fire Board members. To address this need it is recommended that a two day induction programme is organised within the first six months of the new Fire Board being formed. (draft programme attached). Further refresher training would then be planned throughout the life of the Board. This training could be delivered during the Fire Board meetings held on the island groups.

Champions

The Board have nominated Champions for Fairness and Equality (Clr LMacDonald and Clr J Ford) and Training and Development (Clr A Drever).

The role of Champion enables the individual and the Authority members to further develop knowledge and understanding of matters considered essential to the successful delivery of high quality Fire and Rescue Services. As a nominated Champion elected members are able to work with fellow officers and elected members to promote good practice.

The Duties that the Champions are responsible for are:-

- a. Research the subject area through reading materials, website, internet, etc., to develop knowledge and understanding of the services provided by Fire and Rescue Services.
- b. Hold meetings and develop relationships with Fire and Rescue Service managers/employees to develop knowledge and understanding of the services provided by Highlands and Islands Fire and Rescue Service.
- c. Share the knowledge and understanding gained with all Fire Authority Elected Members via (a) a briefing document and/or (b) a short presentation.
- d. Coach/mentor individual Elected Member colleagues in the development of knowledge and understanding as requested.

Existing Champions have had development opportunities within their area of expertise, however, it is clear that to help them fulfil their responsibilities this support must be ongoing. It is therefore recommended that for Champions development plans are agreed with ongoing support, training and development provided by the Service.

Future

The role of Fire Board member is very important in relation to the safety and wellbeing of the communities in the Highlands and Islands. The role requires some specialist knowledge and it is important that the Board and the Service work together to ensure the appropriate development opportunities are available. It is therefore recommended that a strategy is initiated to meet fully elected members' training and development needs.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

A seminar for all members is arranged in November.

A two day induction programme is organised and held within the first six months of the new Fire Board being formed.

Ongoing refresher training is planned throughout the life of the next Board.

Development plans are agreed for Champions with ongoing support, training and development provided by the Service

BRIAN A MURRAY
Designation: Chief Fire Officer
Date: 11 August 2006

Highlands & Islands Fire & Rescue Service

Fireboard Members' Training Days

Day One		Day Two	
9:30	Session 1 Risk Management Planning	9:30	Session 6 Corporate Governance/Performance Management
10:30	tea/coffee	10:30	tea/coffee
11:00	Session 2 Fire Service Finance	11:00	Session 7 Structure of the Service (Local & National)
12:00	Session 3 Equality and Diversity		Session 8 Community Engagement
13:00	lunch	13:00	lunch
14:00	Session 4 Learning & Development	14:00	Session 9 Partnership Working and Collaboration
15:00	tea/coffee	15:00	tea/coffee
15:30	Session 5 Fire Service Operational Issues	15:30	Session 10 Open Forum and Identification of further development needs.