

HIGHLAND AND ISLANDS FIRE BOARD

10 SEPTEMBER 2009

Agenda Item	
Report No	

ROLE DESCRIPTIONS FOR BOARD MEMBERS

Report by the Clerk

Summary

This report recommends the introduction of Role Descriptions for the Convener, Vice Convener and Board Members.

Background

1. The Board has formally agreed delegated responsibilities for the discharge of Board functions to the Chief Fire Officer, Clerk, Treasurer, Head of Personnel, the Highland Council, and Director of Housing and Property, the Highland Council, and to appropriate sub-committees/working groups; and also Standing Orders relating to the Conduct of Meetings. In the context, however, of forthcoming Best Value audits of all Fire and Rescue authorities and Joint Boards (and Police authorities and Joint Boards), it is recommended that consideration be given to providing Members of this Board with specific role descriptions.

Northern Joint Police Board

2. Members may be aware that Northern Joint Police Board and Northern Constabulary are currently undergoing a Joint Best Value Audit by Audit Scotland and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary. In that context, that Board has carried out an EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) self-assessment exercise, to demonstrate an overarching philosophy of continuous improvement of the Board.
3. As a result of the self-assessment exercise, an action plan was developed to consider areas for improvement. One aspect identified was the provision of specific role descriptions for Members, with the following roles identified: Convener, Vice Convener and a generic Member role. These descriptions, once approved, would form the basis of a training needs analysis, firstly to prepare individual personal development plans and, secondly, to create a training programme for Members, based on the role description.
4. The Northern Joint Police Board approved the draft role descriptions at its meeting held on 28 August 2009, subject to an addition to the generic role description to take account of a Member's responsibilities vis-a-vis his/her appointing authority.

Highland and Islands Fire Board

5. There are circulated at Appendix 1 for consideration by Members draft role descriptions for the equivalent roles, mirroring those adopted by the Police Board.

Recommendation

The Board is asked to agree:

- i. the draft role descriptions as detailed in Appendix 1 to this report;
- ii. that, based on the role descriptions, a training needs analysis be carried out with a view to the development of personal development plans and a training programme for Members.

Signature

Designation Clerk

Date 1 September 2009

Author Mrs R Moir, Assistant Clerk

ROLE DESCRIPTION – BOARD MEMBER

Key Purpose/Role

- To represent the views and interests of your Fire and Rescue Authority and to deal with all enquiries and representations fairly and without prejudice;
- To contribute actively, within the Board's decision making structures, to the formation and scrutiny of the Board's policies, budgets, and strategies, and to the scrutiny of Highlands and Islands Fire and Rescue Service's service delivery and financial performance; and
- To promote the best interests of the Board and the community as they relate to the improvement of the quality of life, safety and wellbeing of the community and its citizens.

Key Tasks/Accountabilities

- To represent and act as an advocate for the interests of the Board;
- *To represent the interests and convey the views of the Board within the Member's own constituent authority and associated bodies*
- To be available to represent and deal effectively with enquiries and representations from members of the local community;
- To liaise and work with local organisations and representative groups to further the interests of the Board;
- To participate effectively and objectively as a Member of any Committee, Sub-Committee or Working Group to which appointed, including related responsibilities for the services and any resources falling within that body's terms of reference;
- To support the development of an effective working relationship with other Board Members and staff and with officers/staff of Highlands and Islands Fire and Rescue Service;
- To participate in the activities of any outside body or partnership forum to which appointed by the Board and to develop and maintain a working knowledge of the Board's policies and practices in relation to that body, and of the community's needs and aspirations in relation to that body's role and functions, e.g. Community Planning Partnerships;
- To fulfil the statutory code of conduct and standards for Elected Members;
- To observe and comply with the Board's Standing Orders Relating to the Conduct of Meetings and the Scheme of Delegation and Administration to Committees, Sub-Committees and officers;
- To undertake appropriate training and development; and
- To adhere to the principles of the Continuous Professional Development Framework for Elected Members in Scottish Local Government.

ROLE DESCRIPTION – CONVENER OF HIGHLAND AND ISLANDS FIRE BOARD

In addition to the roles, tasks and responsibilities expected of Board Members, the following is expected of the Convener –

Key Purpose/Role

- To represent the Board on public occasions;
- To provide leadership in relation to policy formulation, implementation and monitoring of the Board's policies, budgets and strategies, and scrutiny of service delivery and financial performance; and to contribute to the effective governance of the Board;
- To provide strategic leadership and clear direction and guidance to promote the best interests of the Board and the community and thereby to improve the quality of life, safety and wellbeing of the community and its citizens;
- To chair meetings of the full Board and allocated Sub-Committees and Working Groups and to ensure that they are undertaken in line with the Board's Standing Orders Relating to the Conduct of Meetings and Scheme of Reference and Delegation to Committees, Sub-Committees/Working Groups and Officers;
- To represent the Board on the Scottish Fire Conveners' Forum and on COSLA's Community Safety Executive Group; and
- To develop and maintain partnership working with other agencies and to ensure the maintenance of links between the Board and the Constituent Authorities' Community Planning Partnerships.

Key Tasks/Accountabilities

- To ensure that decisions are taken properly, openly and, where appropriate, publicly;
- To liaise with the Chief Fire Officer and the Clerk to the Board in discussions and negotiations with national bodies;
- To provide an external focus for the views of the Board in handling media and press enquiries;
- To ensure that Members of the Board are treated responsibly and responsively at all times;
- To maintain and promote the highest standards of conduct in the Board's affairs;
- To develop and maintain effective working relationships with Board Members and staff and with Officers/staff of Highlands and Islands Fire and Rescue Service;
- To have an overview of corporate and cross cutting risks/issues as they impact on the Board and the community; and
- To promote and support open and transparent government.

ROLE DESCRIPTION – VICE-CONVENER OF HIGHLAND AND ISLANDS FIRE BOARD

In addition to the roles, tasks and responsibilities expected of Board Members, the following is expected of the Vice-Convenor –

Key Purpose/Role

- To represent the Board on public occasions as required;
- To support the Convenor in providing leadership in relation to policy formulation, implementation and monitoring of the Board's policies, budgets and strategies, and scrutiny of service delivery and financial performance; and to contribute to the effective governance of the Board;
- To support the Convenor in providing strategic leadership and clear direction and guidance to promote the best interests of the Board and the community and thereby to improve the quality of life, safety and wellbeing of the community and its citizens;
- To chair meetings of the full Board, in the absence of the Convenor, and meetings of allocated Sub-Committees and Working Groups, and to ensure that they are undertaken in line with the Board's Standing Orders Relating to the Conduct of Meetings and Scheme of Reference and Delegation to Committees, Sub-Committees/Working Groups and Officers;
- To represent the Board on any external bodies to which appointed and to substitute for the Convenor on external bodies where appropriate; and
- To develop and maintain partnership working with other agencies.

Key Tasks/Accountabilities

- To ensure that decisions are taken properly, openly and, where appropriate, publicly;
- To liaise with the Convenor, Chief Fire Officer and Clerk to the Board in discussions and negotiations with national bodies;
- To support the Convenor in providing an external focus for the views of the Board in handling media and press enquiries;
- To ensure that Members of the Board are treated responsibly and responsively at all times;
- To maintain and promote the highest standards of conduct in the Board's affairs;
- To develop and maintain effective working relationships with Board Members and staff and with officers/staff of Highlands and Islands Fire and Rescue Service;
- To have an overview of corporate and cross cutting risks/issues as they impact on the Board and the community; and
- To promote and support open and transparent government.