



**SECTION B**

**MEMBER ROLES AND LEADS**

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Responsible Officer	First Section Issue Date	Section Amended/Updated	Review Date
ACO		July 2014 September 2015 July 2019	



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### **Member Lead Roles for the Fire Authority**

The Fire Authority has considered the positive benefits of having Member Leads on matters being managed by the Policy & Resources and the Scrutiny & Audit Panels. Guidance has been developed on the exact role of Member Leads and includes issues such as:

- i. The scope/restrictions of executive powers for Lead Members to accord with the current CFA governance arrangements and terms of reference of the Panels.
- ii. Working arrangements required for Lead Members to manage their remits via the Policy & Resources and Scrutiny & Audit Panels, as appropriate.
- iii. Working relationships with ESFRS staff.
- iv. The extent to which Lead Members can make statements on their briefs in co-ordination with the Fire Authority's communication strategy and responsible officers.
- v. How Lead Members engage with external parties on behalf of the Fire Authority and how they must work within the context of the Fire Authority's consultation and engagement strategy and its related action plan.
- vi. How Lead Members must operate within the context of all the Fire Authority strategies and working arrangements.
- vii. The appropriate electronic and administrative arrangements required.

The guidance is attached as Appendix A.

Member Leads' areas of work are set out in Appendix B.



**MEMBER LEAD ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**GUIDANCE AS AT DECEMBER 2009 (Reviewed 2013)**

The following guidance is provided for Member Leads to help them manage their respective remits, co-ordinate their activities, communicate on progress being made, as well as providing progress updates at Members' Seminars, and for reporting to the Fire Authority and its Panels. It is not intended to be fully comprehensive, nor unnecessarily restrictive, but gives a framework within which Member roles on Fire Authority matters can develop. It is also intended to assist Principal Officers in their work with Member Leads.

This guidance will be included within future editions of the Constitution and reviewed annually as part of the routine processes.

**i. The scope/restrictions of executive powers for Lead Members to accord with the current CFA governance arrangements and terms of reference of the Panels**

The Fire Authority does not have executive governance arrangements. It runs on the more traditional committee arrangements which are called Panels by this Authority. Any executive powers delegated by the Fire Authority are defined within the terms of reference of the Panels, or delegated functions of officers of the Fire Authority. Member Leads do not have any additional executive powers and, as such, approval for policy changes must be sought through Panel arrangements.

Members are also reminded that the Fire Authority does not have 'executive arrangements' in place and, as such, its Policy & Resources Panel is politically balanced. Therefore, the scrutiny role of the Scrutiny & Audit Panel is to scrutinise whether the policies of the Policy & Resources Panel and Fire Authority are being performed effectively.



**ii. Working arrangements required for Member Leads to manage their remits via the Policy & Resources and Scrutiny & Audit Panels, as appropriate**

The Member Leads will need to understand the broad annual reporting cycles of the Fire Authority:

- Performance reporting takes place from June to September;
- Service planning initial proposals are considered from September to December;
- Outcomes of consultation processes and final decisions on budgets and service investments and improvements are made in January and February;
- Updating of the Constitution (corporate governance and strategy matters); service planning performance target setting and setting the Scrutiny and Audit programme of reviews takes place in February to May.

Where a Member Lead comes across something which they feel needs scrutinising, they should approach the Assistant Chief Officer as the Principal Officer, to add it to the agenda planning list. If there is a serious or urgent matter, Members have the right to ask the Panel Chairman to add it to the agenda under Urgent/Chairman's Business Items or contact the Auditor of the Authority if this is more appropriate.

Preparation of the reports will continue to be the responsibility of the lead Principal Officer/Treasurer and Monitoring Officer as the agenda preparation timetable is extremely tight in relation to other approval and cross referencing requirements.

Such reports, previously made by officers of the Fire Authority on areas which Member Leads now have responsibility for, will be issued for Panel consideration under their name and they, along with the lead Principal Officer/Treasurer and Monitoring Officer, will support the Member to respond to issues raised.

It will be the responsibility of the lead Principal Officer to consult with their Member Lead and ensure their comments are included within the agreed corporate agenda consultation periods.

Principal Officers, with their Member Leads, will pull together a summary of Member Lead actions and news three weeks prior to Fire Authority meetings.



Principal Officers will support Member Leads and advise on strategic issues, until the Member Lead feels comfortable to take charge. Where a Member Lead identifies an area which may possibly require a future policy change, or an area which might merit a future scrutiny review, they should refer the issue to the relevant Principal Officer for consideration who will ensure it is fed into the appropriate Fire Authority business planning arrangements.

Meetings of the Member Leads and Principal Officers will be arranged on a regular basis, to fit in with the Fire Authority timetable.

**iii. Working relationships with ESFRS staff – for current guidance see below**

The following introductory guidance is contained in the current edition of the Constitution:

‘Briefly, good working relations between Members and employees are critical to the successful delivery of the Authority’s business. Any misunderstandings about the roles and acceptable standards of behaviour may give rise to unnecessary stresses and tensions which, if not resolved, may harm the effectiveness of these relationships. The Constitution does not seek to cover every eventuality, but it does aim to strengthen the good working relationships which already exist, to clarify possible areas of doubt and to offer advice as to how any difficulties which might arise can be resolved properly, speedily and, it is hoped, without recourse to the Authority’s more formalised procedures.’

There is a Member and Officer Code of Conduct and it is not expected that further guidance is required.

**iv. The extent to which Member Leads can make statements on their briefs in co-ordination with the Fire Authority’s communication strategy and responsible officers**

All Members and officers must operate within the Fire Authority’s agreed communication strategy and the corporate communication policy arrangements in place.

Member Lead communication statements on their respective remits will be welcomed as a means of enhancing public knowledge and engagement in the work of our organisation and helping us to make our local communities safer and more sustainable.



## **Section B Member Roles and Leads**

All corporate communications should be first agreed by the Chairman and/or lead Principal Officer – Assistant Chief Officer (People and Organisational Development) or, in their respective absences, the Vice Chairman and/or another Principal Officer. Any urgent communication with the Media should be co-ordinated through the ESFRS Communications & Marketing Manager.

Generally, it will be for the lead Principal Officer to prompt/encourage when a press release should be made, but Member Leads will be expected to develop these Fire Authority roles and take the initiative on relevant occasions, in consultation with the lead Principal Officer.

**v. How Member Leads engage with external parties on behalf of the Fire Authority and how they must work within the context of the Fire Authority's consultation and engagement strategy and its related action plan**

In a similar way to the previous guidance on communications, all Members and officers must operate within the Fire Authority's agreed consultation and engagement strategy and the corporate consultation action plan and policy arrangements in place.

Generally, it will be for the lead Principal Officer to prompt/encourage consultation and engagement opportunities, but it is hoped that Member Leads will be expected to develop these Fire Authority roles and take the initiative on relevant occasions, in consultation with the lead Principal Officer, and ensure feedback received is captured for subsequent policy consideration.

The Fire Authority agreed that non-voting co-opted members may be appointed to Panels. Community leaders may also be co-opted in a non-voting capacity on an ad-hoc basis, subject to approval by the Fire Authority following recommendation by the Panel.



**vi. How Member Leads must operate within the context of all the Fire Authority strategies and working arrangements**

Member Leads need to have a broad understanding of the overall impact of the Fire Authority strategies in particular, as well as a working knowledge of how ESFRS functions. This is because many policy issues are cross cutting and have impacts upon service planning and resource management, health and safety, equality and diversity and operational service and risk management prioritisation. As such, care needs to be taken to ensure all issues are given relevant consideration as part of specific Member Lead remits and where potential conflicts arise, these are discussed with fellow Member Leads, Group Leaders and the Principal Officers concerned. Member Leads are not allowed to use their position for political purposes.

**vii. The appropriate electronic and administrative arrangements required**

It is important that Member Leads feel adequately supported, but this must be contained within the existing resources of Democratic Services. There are no additional administrative resources available, and this is why preparations of briefing notes, seminar presentations and consultation and engagement opportunities will need to be co-ordinated through lead Principal Officers who will utilise their available resources to assist, where circumstances allow. Member Lead access to an extranet facility will need to be considered in due course.

Training and development for Member Leads will be included within the Member Development programme as required and covered in future Members' Seminars. It is the Member Leads' responsibility to discuss any changes to their roles, or issues that may arise, with the Assistant Chief Officer (People & Organisational Development).



## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBER LEADS**

### **MEMBER LEADS**

More specific expectations relevant to the particular remits will be developed between the relevant Member Lead and the Principal Officer as supported by Democratic Services and any Member Development requirements will need to be raised through the agreed People and Organisational Development arrangements for Members.

### **ROLES**

The primary roles of Member Leads are to support the Fire Authority's democratic responsibilities and help achieve its Purpose and Commitments; to promote knowledge and understanding on the relevant remits both within and outside the Service; by undertaking the following key activities:

- A** assisting the Fire Authority and Service to champion key services both internally and externally so that they are understood by relevant stakeholders and cohesive partnership working is maximised.
- B** communicating and working with fellow Member Leads to ensure development of the Fire Authority takes place in a proportionate and holistic manner.
- C** assisting the Fire Authority and Service to develop and prioritise cost effective delivery of services within the available medium term resource constraints and refining Service Strategies over the medium term to ensure they remain appropriate to community needs and strategic priorities.
- D** ensure services are properly defined, developed and delivered within a strong performance management framework.
- E** engage with external parties as appropriate to seek opportunities to help ESFRS adopt best practices in a timely manner within the national, regional and local community contexts.



## **DUTIES**

The primary duties placed upon Member Leads are to undertake the following key activities:

- A** Research the subject area through reading documents, website, internet, training sessions, visits, etc., to develop knowledge and understanding of the particular remits to which the Member Lead has been appointed.
- B** Gain awareness of any relevant external assessment recommendations and best practice documents and consider the position of the Service in meeting such expectations for future improvement planning.
- C** Be aware of the performance position of the Service in relation to past performance patterns and within the context of available benchmarking material as well as an overview of the resource inputs, outputs and outcomes expected from the functional area as appropriate
- D** Chair/attend meetings and develop relationships with Fire & Rescue Service Managers/employees to further develop knowledge and understanding of the services provided.
- E** Share the knowledge and understanding gained by:
  - Informal briefings and liaison at both Member and Senior officer level
  - Internal and externally targeted briefing documents
  - Presentations
  - Press releases
  - External consultation and engagement and shared working as appropriateas supported by the relevant Principal Officer
- F** Coach/mentor individual Member colleagues in the development of knowledge and understanding, as requested



**Appendix B**

**Member Lead Arrangements**

<b>Lead Role</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>
Health & Safety	Assistant Director People Services
Performance & Assurance	Assistant Director Planning & Improvement
Inclusion & Diversity	Assistant Director People Services
IT	Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer
Estates	Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer
Sustainability & Environment	Assistant Director Resources/Treasurer

**Note:**

The Member Lead role does not attract an entitlement to Special Responsibility Allowance.