

PESTELO 2017/18

Foreseeable risks and issues facing the Service and sector over the next 12 months

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Key issues to note

- **EU Referendum aftermath and new political landscape** – new PM, new Home Secretary, Policing and Crime Act – Brexit as an all-encompassing political reality dominating the agenda
- **Home Office and Fire Reform Programme** – renewed inspection regime, greater accountability, improved governance, including through PCCs
- **Diversity, culture, leadership and values** – Thomas Review, staff survey outcomes, staff wellbeing (Mind Blue Light Programme) – equality and workforce reform and diversity!
- **Blue Light collaboration** - local programme potentially impacting capacity and areas of service delivery – new ways of working
- **Emergency Response Programme 2 delivery** – consultation, engagement and implementation against shifting political and partner backdrop and major developments and Cheshire/Warrington mayoral devolution bid
- **Public service reform** – joining up prevention and response services, multi-agency collaboration and joint-working – reducing demand

Political

- **Elections** – After May 2016, no elections will take place in any of the four constituent authorities in 2017, providing a degree of local political stability
- Constituent authorities may still decide to change the Members they have appointed to the Authority
- Elections for the Greater Manchester and Liverpool Metro Mayors will take place on 4th May 2017 – Candidates include Andy Burnham MP (Lab, Manchester), Sean Anstee (Con, Manchester) and Steve Rotherham MP (Lab, Liverpool)
- Theresa May has stated that there will be no ‘snap’ General Election, but there is a small possibility that one could be triggered in 2017. The Labour leadership continues to face challenges internally from within the Party and in the opinion polls/by-elections

Political

- **National politics** – Theresa May is the new Conservative Party Leader and has become new Prime Minister
- The main elements of the 2015 Conservative Manifesto stand, as does the Fire Reform Programme, the Policing and Crime Act – which was passed in February 2017 - and the general approach to public service reform
- New leadership at the Home Office, under Amber Rudd, will impact and shape the detail of this agenda, including the intention to transfer responsibility for fire and rescue services from FRAs to PCCs and around blue light collaboration. It is expected that this agenda will remain intact and continue to be pursued.

Political

- **Home Office** – launch of Fire Reform Programme has taken place and there is a clearer sense of what this will now involve – although further detail and guidance will be published by the new Home Secretary, Amber Rudd and new (returning) Fire Minister, Brandon Lewis. Key themes include – efficiency and collaboration, accountability and transparency and workforce reform and diversity – a new assurance and inspection regime will be established under a renewed independent inspectorate - supported by a reformed **CFOA** – becoming the National Fire Chiefs' Council (NFCC) from 2017, supported by a series of themed coordinating committees
- **Policing and Crime Act** – A large, unwieldy Act. This legislation is now in force and translates much of the Government's ambitions to reforming the fire sector into law – details and guidance are still emerging
- **Fire service culture and values** – Reform programme building upon findings of the Thomas and Essex/other Reviews, focussed on workforce diversity, recruitment, culture and bullying, pay and remuneration and the role of representative and negotiating bodies

Political

Devolution and localism

- **Greater Manchester** – impact of new mayoral model on the operation of the fire and rescue service (including major restructure and impact on FRS staff), as well as the police and possibly NWS, but overall model unlikely to be repeated elsewhere (to same extent)
- **Liverpool City Region** – Includes Halton (except for Policing/Fire currently, but outside possibility that might change or be up for discussion further down the line) and there is likely to be further ‘forming’ – especially in relation to Mayor and ongoing relationship with remaining Cheshire and reserved vs mayoral issues
- **Cheshire and Warrington** – acute pressure brought to bear in terms of being sandwiched between MCR/LPL, mayoral bid now moving forward and discussions around a Combined Authority taking place

Political

Health and public service transformation

- **Fragmentation of health** providers/services and further potential for reorganisations as a result of STPs – including combination of CCGs, integration of social care and local authority services (as proposed in Greater Manchester) as well as potentially forcing changes to the structure and operation of the ambulance service and other service providers
- **Multi-partner solutions** – complex dependency, single front door models, health and social care integration, one public estate, triage initiatives, home-based care

Brexit – what will it mean...?



- Referendum held on 23rd June
- Leave won by 52% to 48%
- PM Cameron announced his intention to step down on 24th June sparking an immediate Conservative leadership contest
- Article 50 of Treaty of Lisbon, which will trigger ‘divorce’ proceedings invoked on 29th March 2017, and process will last for two years



Brexit – what will it mean...?



- Immediate implications for Fire – in terms of a changed political agenda, PM, Home Office leadership etc.
- Potential longer term implications i.e. for funding, dependent upon medium-long term effects on the economy and public finances – although immediate perceived risks have not been realised
- Brexit negotiations and subsequent period following |UK's exit will include focus on regulations and issues including safety standards, research, equipment, employment policies, procurement etc.



Economic

Continued programme of austerity

- No emergency budget following Brexit – further austerity and savings planned, additional savings from Govt Departmental budgets required to deliver Government's commitment to balance the budget
- **FRS four year settlement** - £4m savings required over four years, four year funding deal agreed for FRS with detail set out in annual efficiency plans – however, still subject to change depending upon national economic performance
- **Changes to RSG** – will be phased out and replaced by Business Rate regime over four years – but fire's place within the Business Rate regime is up for discussion as part of ongoing Govt consultation
- **Greater local spending freedoms and relaxation of Council Tax freeze rules** for some local authorities, including PCCs and social care, but likelihood of further transformation pots being made available not guaranteed
- **Cheshire and Warrington LEP/Combined Authority** focus remains on economic growth and development – Crewe, Warrington, Chester, HS2, Daresbury etc. but conversations about a Mayor have eclipsed the agenda somewhat
- **International economic uncertainty** suggests economic stability could still be undermined

Socio-cultural

Culture and diversity

- The release of the **Thomas Review** highlighted a range of significant cultural issues across the FRS – this includes, staff diversity and recruitment, bullying, engagement, pay and remuneration and will see a much more rigorous approach by the renewed Inspectorate looking at these issues – that will replace the Fire and Rescue Equality Framework
- **Staff surveys** – biennial survey will continue, and surveys were included within the recommendations of the Thomas Review. Outcomes must address post-industrial action legacy issues, trust, staff engagement and perceptions of bullying
- Impact of **mental health** issues, within the community and internally, within an emergency services context – Mind, Blue Light Programme. Also, an increased awareness of Trans issues and greater visibility.

Shift to digital communication

- Shift of engagement and traffic towards social media and digital channels – including complaints and requests for information

Socio-cultural

Radicalism and protest

- **Increased risk of terrorism** and radicalism, from extreme-Islamist, far-right and other marginalised groups – particularly in wake of attack on Westminster/Parliament in March 2017
- **Heightened threat level** – potential impact on staff and ways of working, access to buildings etc. links to BLC programme and potentially increased risks from collaboration
- **Civil of civil disobedience** and protest arising from political issues and/or marginalisation – including potential protest/unhappiness tied to Brexit negotiations

Behavioural insights

- Increasing use of **‘nudge’** techniques to challenge and shift behaviours around fire safety and wellbeing

Technological

- **Increased home technology** – implications for home fire safety i.e. more fires in bedroom etc. impact of technology
- **Social media** and mobile technology
- New **smoke alarm and detection** equipment technology
- Improvements to **firefighter technology**, kit and vehicles, call-handling and inter-operability (ESMCP)
- **Road safety**, auto-breaking, self-drive and park, dash cams and insurance monitoring
- **Innovative building** designs and materials, self builds

Environmental

Fracking – Shale Gas extraction

- Cheshire basin contains number of potential fracking sites, including around Chester (Upton) and Knutsford, which will create new potential risks and raises the likelihood of public disorder/protests

Environmental issues affecting construction sites

Key points from the **Environmental Strategy**, published in 2014:

- **Energy** – Reduce & promote sustainability (use less, use better, switch off)
- **Waste** – Reduce & promote sustainability (implement waste hierarchy: REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE)
- **Fleet & Transport** – Reduce & promote sustainability (reduction of journeys, car sharing, planned routes)
- **Water** – Reduce & promote sustainability (use less, use better)
- **Behaviour change** – Reduce & promote sustainability (energy, carbon, water, mileage reduction)

Legislative / legal

- A new **Queen's Speech** in May 2016 set out the Government's new legislative agenda – some existing legislation from 2015 is still going through Parliament – the agenda has been impacted by the appointment of Theresa May as Prime Minister. The Queen's Speech in 2017 is expected to be dominated by issues associated with Brexit, although a new Policing Bill is also expected.
- **Emergency Services legislation** – The Policing and Crime Act is now in force – including legal duty to collaborate, FRS reform and accountability and legislation to enable PCCs to take over from FRAs
- **Blue light collaboration** – local legal agreements and HR processes to enable co-location and TUPE transfers
- Reductions in **civil service** personnel – impact on quality and quantity of legislation and Departmental support – also due to Brexit

Organisational

- Implementation of **Emergency Response Programme 1** – and continuation of the new build Programme moving towards completion
- Development and opening of the **Safety Central** – major shift in Prevention focus
- **Blue light Collaboration Programme** – continued implementation and impact on culture and operation of service in light of TUPE transfers of staff during 2017
- **Emergency Response Programme 2** – development, public/staff/partner consultation and engagement process and implementation
- **Staff survey** outcomes, implementation of action plan and recommendations – building up to new survey in 2017
- **Culture, diversity and values** – Implementation of the Thomas Review recommendations, rebuilding trust and engagement