



# Fire Peer Challenge & Peer Improvement Framework Consultation

# Introductions

- Chair: **Cllr Thomas Wright**, LGA Fire Services Management, Committee and Chair of Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority
  - **Cllr Kay Hammond**, Cabinet Associate, Community Safety Services, Surrey County Council
  - **Gary Hughes**, Principal Adviser, Local Government Association
  - **Chris Bowron**, Programme Manager, Local Government Association
  - **Geoff Howsego**, CFOA Director, Corporate Services and Sector Improvement
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# Quick update on inspection

- Police and Crime Bill agreed in Parliament
  - Government will bring in new Her Majesty's Fire Inspectorate in 2017
  - Government have engaged and want to work with Fire sector
  - Likely that secondments from Fire into Inspectorate will be requested
  - When we know who we can do the how and when
  - Police PEEL is seen as a good methodology
  - Inspections will start in 2017 – detail yet to be agreed
  - Peer Review and OPA seen as complimentary to new Inspectorate
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# Background and context

- In 2009 the Fire Services Management Committee (FSMC) agreed a partnership between the LGA and CFOA to deliver the OpA peer review programme
- A joint working group was established to oversee the development of the fire peer challenge, which was piloted and then fully launched in 2012



# Working Group

- Cllr Jeremy Hilton, Cllr David Acton and Cllr Kay Hammond, complemented with advisers from the LGA and CFOA. Report into FSMC.

*Commitment to supporting SLI and to develop an offer that works alongside any new inspection regime, is fit for the future and reflects the needs of a modern fire and rescue sector*

## Work to date

- Development teams to work up options
  - Sounding board of Chief & Senior Fire Officers to offer views on the options and thinking as they emerge
  - Chiefs Community. A virtual community of all Chief Fire Officers has been engaged with to seek views and input
  - LGA Fire Conference Consultation
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# The story so far

- Between 2012 and 2015 all 46 Fire and Rescue Services undertook Operational Assessment and fire peer challenge
  - In late 2014 the peer challenge process was reviewed
  - Since late 2015, the opportunity has existed for each FRS to undergo another Operational Assessment and fire peer challenge
  - In May 2016 Fire reform programme, which includes new governance models, greater accountability and the re-introduction of an inspection regime
  - In Feb 2017 a challenge in the Ministers speech “The Local Government Association’s peer review must also change to complement the work of the forthcoming inspectorate”
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# The future

- The LGA and NFCC welcome this challenge and proposals for its new peer improvement framework will:
    - build on the strengths and learning from over 10 years of delivering sector led improvement
    - complement the planned inspection of FRS's
    - add value to the sector and support genuine improvement
    - and help tackle potential areas of under-performance and support any services that are at risk of intervention
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# Fire & Rescue Peer Improvement Framework



Inspection  
Peer  
Support



Corporate  
and  
Governance



Support  
Short of  
Intervention





# Element 1 – Inspection Peer Support



# Pre - Inspection Peer Challenge

- A team of peers deliver a Peer Challenge to help a FRS prepare for their forthcoming inspection
  - The peer challenge would:
    - undertake a diagnostic of existing information and evidence using similar lines of enquiry to inspection
    - adopt an ‘inspection feel’
    - identify strengths and areas for improvement within the inspection remit
    - be delivered at least six months prior to an inspection in order to enable the resulting findings to be responded to
  - The peer challenge would not:
    - Provide a judgement or rating of a FRS
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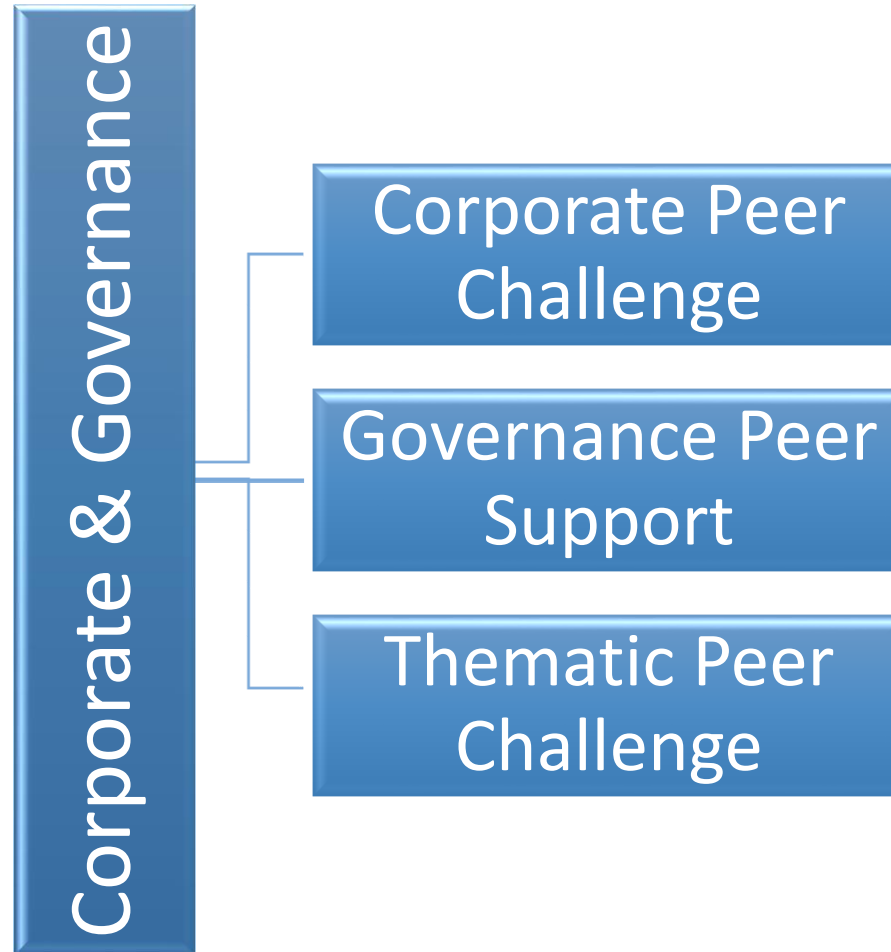
# Post– Inspection Peer Support

- At the request of the FRS, in the light of them having received their inspection findings, the LGA and NFCC draw together a package of improvement support to address areas of under-performance
  - At the heart of this package will be good practice learning from elsewhere and peer expertise
  - The nature and shape of this package would be determined by the circumstances but could be delivered over an extended period of time rather than something concentrated into a few intensive days
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# Peer Inspectors

- A key aspect of current proposals for inspection is the intention to use sector peers on inspection teams
  - LGA & NFCC support this, however, suitable training and development is required
  - The LGA has significant experience in the training of peers and will work with the inspection provider
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# Element 2 – Corporate Peer Challenge and Governance Support



# Corporate Peer Challenge

- Complements inspection by covering organisational leadership and governance
  - Core elements would look at:
    - Delivering outcomes for local communities
    - Financial planning and efficiency
    - Organisational leadership and governance
    - Collaboration, transformation and organisational capacity
    - Optional additional focus area (see thematic peer challenge)
  - Delivered over 3 consecutive days at a time that suits the FRS, with a small focussed team (CFO, Elected Member Peer, Senior Officer)
  - Immediate feedback and short report delivered
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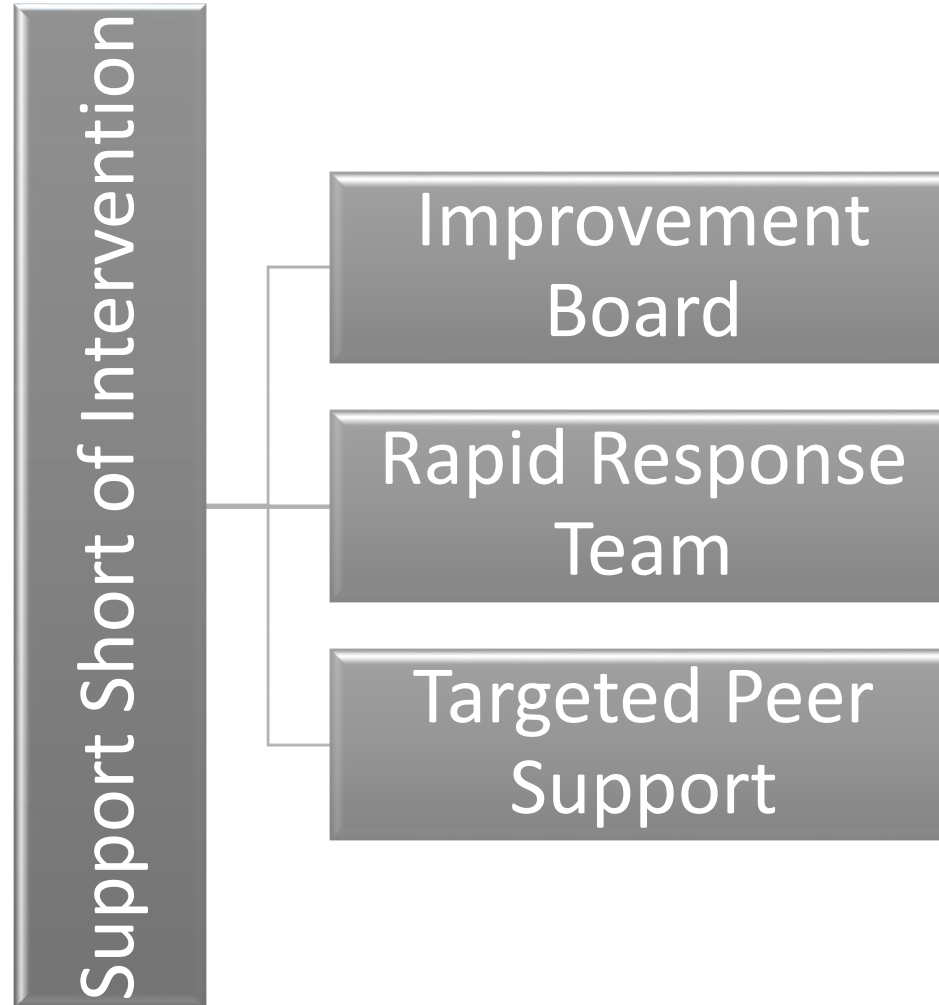
# Governance Peer Support & Thematic Peer Challenge

- LGA is well placed to provide support through its elected member peers
- The support would be multi-faceted and dependent on the needs of the FRA

## Thematic Peer Challenge

- Part of the corporate peer challenge additional focus or delivered as a standalone option which would examine specific issues in greater depth
  - Potential themes
    - Efficiency and collaboration
    - Culture, equalities and diversity
    - Commercialism and income generation
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# Element 3 – Support Short of Intervention





# Support Short of Intervention

- Facilitated by the LGA & NFCC and with an allocated coordinating/over-seeing Chief Fire Officer for each region
  - SSoI would entail a team of peers working closely with an FRS/FRA that is poorly rated to target areas of under-performance identified in the inspection.
  - This approach demonstrates that the sector is collectively responsible and has the capacity to address its own improvement.
  - Support could include
    - Improvement Board
    - Rapid Response Team
    - Targeted peer support
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The resource demands of this approach, in relation to funding, capacity of the sectors peers and new ways of working will need to be very carefully considered by the sector, NFCC and the LGA



# Discussion

- Does this framework sound right?
  - What have we missed?
  - Where would demand lie?
  - Opportunities and risks?
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