Local Authority Asset Management - Best Practice

Issued by:
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Programmes, Finance and Performance

Addressed to:
- The Chair of the Fire and Rescue Authority
- The Chief Executive of the County Council
- The Clerk to the Fire and Rescue Authority
- The Clerk to the Combined Fire and Rescue Authority
- The Commissioner of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority
- The Commissioner of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority
- The Commissioner of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority

Please forward to:
- The Chief Fire Officer

Summary
A series of seven leaflets have been produced by Royal Institution of Charted Surveyors (RICS) to reflect recent policy changes in asset management best practice. Linked to this, CLG is proposing to organise a workshop for FRS asset and facilities managers on 24 September.

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1.0 Background

1.1 Fixed assets make up a significant proportion of resources that local authorities, including Fire and Rescue Authorities, have to manage. Effective asset management is therefore important in terms of ensuring efficiency and value for money and in effective service planning to meet the needs of communities.

1.2 In 2008 Communities and Local Government (CLG) produced ‘Building on Strong Foundations - a framework for local authority asset management’ which is also relevant to Fire and Rescue Authorities. The Framework aimed to raise the profile of local authority asset management effective practice, and provide an overview of the current policies that authorities should be mindful of when planning their asset management strategies. Fire Service Circular 15/2008 entitled ‘A Framework for Local Authority Asset Management’ issued in April 2008 provided details of this document.

1.3 The publication of the HM Treasury’s ‘Operational Efficiency Report’ and the inclusion of asset management in the Audit Commission’s performance assessment framework for Fire and Rescue Authorities during the CRS07 period reflects the increasing emphasis now being placed on maximising efficiency and the effective use of assets. The Audit Commission are likely to consider these issues in the context of delivery of value for money and effective performance management.

1.4 Following ministerial agreement, CLG commissioned the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) to produce a series of topic based best practice asset management leaflets to reflect recent policy changes.

2.0 The Guidance

2.1 The series of seven leaflets has been designed to give an insight into the key issues, what they mean in terms of asset management and how to implement the suggested best practice.

2.2 The seven leaflets cover the following subjects:

- Introduction: Sustainable Communities and Asset management
- 01: Transfer of Assets to Community Ownership and management
- 02: Making the Right Choices
- 03: Value for Money
- 04: Measuring Asset Management Performance
- 05: Improving the Customer’s Experience
- 06: Tenanted Non Residential Property.

2.3 All seven leaflets are available to download free of charge from either: www.publicsectorassetmanagement.com or www.rics.org. However a set of hard copies are being sent, by post, to all Chief Fire Officers.
2.4 The content of the leaflets may not in all instances be directly relevant to Fire and Rescue Authorities but they do help to highlight the need for asset strategies and for them to be integral to an authority’s overall strategy and vision. We would like to do more to raise awareness of asset management in the Fire and Rescue Service and assist FRAs in improving their asset management performance. To this end we are organising a workshop for Asset and Facilities Managers in the Fire and Rescue Service on Thursday 24 September. Further details will be provided nearer the time but an initial response from FRA managers would be helpful in gauging interest and numbers of potential attendees.

2.5 Anyone requiring more information can contact David Green on 0207 944 4523 or David.green@communities.gsi.gov.uk

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