Community Infrastructure Levy

Issued by:
Alan M Turnbull
Programmes, Finance and Performance

Addressed to: Please forward to:
The Chair of the Fire and Rescue Authority Treasurers
The Chief Executive of the County Council Finance Directors
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 Chief Fire Officer

Summary
This circular draws attention to the new Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and how this may be relevant to Fire and Rescue Authorities.

For further information, contact:
Alan M Turnbull
Fire and Resilience Directorate
Communities and Local Government
1/F1 Ashdown House
123 Victoria Street
London SW1E 6DE

Direct line 020 7944 5690
Fax 020 7944 5599
E-mail Alan.m.turnbull@communities.gsi.gov.uk
Website www.communities.gov.uk
Community Infrastructure Levy

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Communities and Local Government have recently announced the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), the provisions for which are currently going through Parliament. This will be a new charge which local authorities in England and Wales will be empowered, but not required, to charge on most types of new development in their area. Proceeds of the levy will be spent on local and sub-regional infrastructure.

2.0 CIL and Fire and Rescue Authorities

2.1 Only certain authorities (referred to in the Bill as ‘charging authorities’) will be able to levy CIL. The Government proposes that those authorities who prepare development plans should be empowered to charge CIL. Fire and Rescue Authorities will not therefore be CIL charging authorities.

2.2 However, the Government proposes that the definition of infrastructure for CIL purposes should be wide enough to enable local authorities to decide what infrastructure is appropriate for their local areas in order to ensure, or continue to ensure, a ‘good’ quality of life. This definition of infrastructure would include not just transport, schools, flood defences, etc but also police stations and other community safety facilities. By implication, this could include fire and ambulance stations and community life skills centres.

2.3 It is, of course, important that Fire and Rescue Authorities consider carefully their infrastructure needs, planning ahead effectively so that they are able usefully to engage with local planning authorities as part of the infrastructure planning process. The charging authority will identify, working with infrastructure providers, the infrastructure needs of its area.

2.4 It is anticipated that the Bill will come into force in Spring 2009 although authorities should be preparing now for its implementation. Full details on CIL can be found on the Communities and Local Government website at http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/communityinfrastructurelevy.

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