

## WEST MIDLANDS REGIONAL MANAGEMENT BOARD



---

Mr Jim Fitzpatrick MP  
Parliamentary Under Secretary  
of State  
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
LONDON  
SW1E 5DU

My ref: FNS  
Your ref:  
Please ask for: Nigel Summers  
Telephone: 0121 569 3000  
E-mail: [nigel\\_summers@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:nigel_summers@sandwell.gov.uk)  
Date: 21st October, 2005

Dear Under Secretary

### **Governance of Regional Fire Control Centres**

I refer to your letter of 28th September, 2005, addressed to Chairs of Regional Management Boards. I have been asked to reply on behalf of the West Midlands Regional Management Board.

The Regional Management Board is not due to meet until 28th October, 2005, and will not therefore have the opportunity to debate this issue before your deadline for a reply. Chairs of constituent Fire Authorities did however meet on 3rd October, 2005, discussed the content of your letter, and formulated the basis of a response which has now been agreed by each Fire Authority.

It is accepted that there needs to be a national model of governance. As you know, there was support within this region for both models of governance, and members felt that it was not possible to make a firm decision to support one model over the other as they were not in possession of sufficient data to make an informed decision. We do not feel that the debate has moved forward at all since we raised issues of concern with you in January 2005.

We accept that you have now made a decision that the local authority company model will be adopted. We would stress that there now needs to be meaningful consultation and a full debate between all interested parties and civil servants on the detail of the proposals dealing specifically with concerns already expressed about stability and transparency, financial arrangements, best value and on the scope and location of national functions.

We look forward now to working with you and the FSED Team to bring this exciting scheme to fruition, both regionally and nationally.

Yours sincerely

**F N Summers**  
**Clerk to the Regional Management Board**

cc All Regional Management Boards  
Constituent Authority Chairs and Chief Fire Officers