

REPORT AUTHOR: CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

SUBJECT: BLUE LIGHT COLLABORATION

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Background Papers: Blue Light Workstream update Document

Implications (tick ✓):

LEGAL	✓	FINANCIAL	
HUMAN RESOURCES		EQUALITY IMPACT	
ENVIRONMENTAL		POLICY	✓
CORPORATE RISK	Known	OTHER (please specify)	
	New	CORE BRIEF	

Any implications affecting this report are noted at the end of the report.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to inform the Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) of the current status of 'Blue Light' collaboration workstreams.

RECOMMENDATION

That the FRA acknowledges the content of the report.

1. Background

1.1 The Policing and Crime Act 2017 provides a mandate for Blue Light services to achieve closer working, collaboration and integration where appropriate in the interests of greater transparency, efficiency gains and provide improved value to the community. This report provides an update on the workstreams currently in progress and being delivered jointly and primarily between Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service (BFRS) and Bedfordshire Police (BP). East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EEAST) is also a partner in one of the operational initiatives and in estate co-location.

- 1.2 The Project is managed through a Project Board which benefits from joint Chair arrangements between the Assistant Chief Fire Officer and Deputy Chief Constable and delivery is supported locally by the Partnership Development Manager.
- 1.3 As reported in the previous update to FRA, the management of Blue Light Collaboration work has transitioned from a Project Board to being a Programme Board overseeing a range of individual Projects.

2. **Programme Management**

- 2.1 The Programme Management Group continues to meet and is chaired jointly by ACFO Ian Evans and DCC Garry Forsyth. The meetings alternate between respective Headquarters and take place at two month intervals. The host organisation chairs the meeting.
- 2.2 The Programme governance arrangements were strengthened following the recommendations of the RSM audit on Blue Light Collaboration in July 2017. The final report was submitted in November 2017.
- 2.3 The outcomes identified by the RSM audit are either completed or being progressed within the collaboration against their target dates.
- 2.4 The work of the Programme Board is to be supplemented and supported by cross-service meetings of middle managers whose role it will be to seek out and explore collaborative possibilities under the five headings of Estates, Operations, Response, Resource Sharing and Support Services.

3. **Estates**

3.1 **Joint Headquarters:**

- The nominated Senior Responsible Officer for the Project is Assistant Chief Constable Philip Wells.
- The Consultant undertaking the feasibility study completed four meetings with FRA members and BFRS Staff on 16 March 2018.
- Forming part of his data collection process, this was to identify the needs of the various departments and where any space sharing by the two organisations may be possible.
- We are now awaiting the outcome from the study which is expected in early summer 2018.

3.2 **Co-Location Sites:**

- Amptill Community Fire Station is operational with three Police staff and one volunteer being based there. An evaluation of the working arrangements will be undertaken in April 2018.

- Bedford Community Fire Station, Barkers Lane, is fully operational with six Police staff based there and the shared office operating as a 'drop-in' for members of other community policing teams. A joint evaluation process has been completed and will inform future co-location initiatives.
- Shefford Community Fire Station opportunity is being reviewed by Police.
- Leighton Buzzard Community Fire Station is fully operational. Exploratory work is being undertaken to consider improving the number of female toilet units on site as the existing provision may not support the current gender profile of staff now that Police requirements are known.
- Luton Community Fire Station has been removed from the list of potential co-locations for the time being as there is no current business requirement. The accommodation which was intended for this is being considered for other current relationship support.
- Use of Dunstable Community Fire Station has been explored by East of England Ambulance Service Trust (EEAST) as a possible base for two vehicles and three staff, however EEAST have decided not to go ahead at this time and so an alternative but collaborative use of the space is being sought with voluntary sector.
- Harrold Community Fire Station is now being used as a 'drop-in' venue by front line Police response vehicles.
- Bury Park Community Centre office is now available for collaborative use by Police and BFRS. The official launch was on 5 April 2018 and attended by PCC, FRA and members of the local community. A Centre user guide has been produced and is provided on the Service Intranet. All FRS departments have been encouraged to utilise the facility to increase local presence and engagement.

4. **Response**

4.1 **Missing Vulnerable Person Searches:**

- The current arrangements for BFRS being mobilised to support Police in searches for vulnerable persons has been evaluated and a recommendation made that we continue with the support to BP.
- The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been rewritten. The revised MoU takes account of the learning from the evaluation.
- The evaluation for the first year of operation was reported on at The Blue Light Collaboration Programme Board on 27 March 2018.

4.2 **Effecting Entry:**

- An evaluation report on the first 15 months of operation has been produced and submitted for consideration of the issues and recommendations raised.
- The report has also been presented and acknowledged at The Blue Light Collaboration Programme Board on 27 March 2018.
- Both EEAST and BP have provided opinion for the evaluation that,

although it cannot be proven, it is certain that BFRS in supporting them in this initiative is saving lives and reducing levels of damage to property.

- The evaluation concludes that BFRS is achieving increased public safety through provision of a faster response time than can be achieved by EEAST or BP. This is particularly so in those “Risk to Life” situations reported at time of call.
- Work is in progress to identify alternative contractor arrangements for making premises secure following forced entry.

4.3 **Co-Responding:**

- Currently on hold due to on-going national negotiations linked to pay and conditions.

5. **Operations**

5.1 **Body Worn Cameras:**

- It is intended to amalgamate the policies for all video data capture equipment including building mounted cameras, vehicle mounted cameras, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV, or Drone) and those body worn cameras to be trialled this year.

5.2 **Vulnerable People:**

- BFRS is working in Partnership with Police in taking forward ‘Herbert Protocol’ referrals.
- A three-way data-share agreement is in development between partners.

5.3 **Drone (UAV):**

- The initial intent for BP and BFRS to have a two-way agreement is now superseded by an alternative collaboration option for Police and FRS across the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, and Hertfordshire areas. A regional response network is now being explored.
- The initial intention is to align BFRS Drone procurement and training with Herts FRS to achieve inter-operability and mutual support.

5.4 **Fire Service Control:**

- Station Commander (Control) has been security cleared and trained to access Police STORM system for ‘real time’ incident monitoring and risk management when circumstances required it. In addition other local inter-control room processes have been agreed which will offer improved communications when serious incidents occur.
- Given the 24/7/365 access to BFRS stations extended to BP, work is in progress to explore the viability of Control assuming the responsibility for the Services’ security job management system and staff security pass issue. This is seen as reducing a potential security risk. There have been

preliminary discussions with FBU on this proposal however there are some practical process considerations to consider before more detailed consultation occurs.

5.5 Motorcycle Deployment and Training:

- A scoping exercise has commenced to explore opportunities for deployment of BFRS motorcycles for transporting Blood and Organs.
- A further element of the scoping exercise is development of a training provision to other Blue Light services. The first “Train the trainer” course will be in April 2018. This will then allow an exploration of training courses provision to external Blue Light organisations on a full cost recovery basis. This is in direct support of The Policing and Crime Act 2017 which aims to achieve resource sharing and efficiency gains.

6. Resource Sharing

6.1 Joint Chaplaincy

DCC Garry Forsyth will contact the Bishop to explore the opportunity for joint chaplaincy.

6.2 General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Discussions with Police Tri-Force Information Governance team has identified that there is a national policy impetus for cross service Governance arrangements to be agreed between the services and further meetings in April 2018 are scheduled to explore this further.

6.3 Datashare Agreements and Information Sharing

BFRS has met with BP Information Governance team and agreed the way forward to produce an overarching cross service datashare agreement which will apply to any and all initiatives where data sharing is an essential component.

- 6.4 BFRS have agreed with BP how BFRS Community Safety team personal risk and operational efficiency might be improved through process enhancements which enable BP held risk flags on premises to be shared. Additionally, the frequency of arson reporting by BP to BFRS is to be increased to enable a more expedient approach by BFRS in undertaking fire investigations.

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