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**REPORT AUTHOR: CHIEF FIRE OFFICER****SUBJECT: BLUE LIGHT COLLABORATION**

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Background Papers: Blue Light Collaboration update

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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.*

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**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to update Members of the Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) on progress with collaboration initiatives between the Service (BFRS), Bedfordshire Police (BP) and East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EEAST), co-ordinated managed through the Blue Light Collaboration Strategic Board.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Members are requested to receive the content of the report.

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1. Background

- 1.1. The Policing and Crime Act 2017 places a statutory duty on the emergency services to collaborate, where the collaboration is viewed to be in the interests of efficiency or effectiveness or where it will improve public safety. BFRS, BP and EEAST have a successful track record of collaborating together operationally on a number of initiatives in recent years.

- 1.2. Collaboration within Bedfordshire is co-ordinated through a bi-monthly Programme Board jointly chaired by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Deputy Chief Constable with delivery supported locally within BFRS by the Partnership Development Manager. The meetings alternate between police and fire headquarters.
- 1.3. 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 and all actions identified bar one were completed by the end of March 2018. The final action outstanding was to find a way to engage with all staff regarding the generation and communication of new collaborative ideas. See Section 3 for further details.

## 2. Programme Governance Update

- 2.1. To further strengthen the programme governance arrangements, the joint chairs, DCFO Andrew Hopkinson and DCC Garry Forsyth, have agreed to establish a Tactical Delivery Group (TDG) reporting into the programme board which has been rebranded as the Blue Light Collaboration Strategic Board (CSB).
- 2.2. BFRS will be represented by the Partnership Development Manager and BP will be represented by the Superintendent, Intelligence and Corporate Services.
- 2.3. Improvements to the way in which the numerous projects are tracked and reported to the CSB have been agreed along with the development of a feasibility assessment proforma to allow the feasibility of potential collaboration initiatives to be quickly assessed in a consistent manner.

## 3. Blue Light Collaboration Workshop – 1st August 2018

- 3.1. The CSB have commissioned a 1 day blue light collaboration workshop to be held at Dunstable Community Fire Station on 1st August 2018. This workshop brings together around 45 staff drawn primarily from the operational workforce of both BFRS and BP with the aim of engaging them in a range of exercises to foster a more collaborative culture between the two services.
- 3.2. These will encourage them to discuss the benefits and barriers to effective collaboration as well as identifying ideas for collaboration. Jointly chaired by the DCFO and DCC, BFRS will be represented by a vertical slice of 15-18 staff from Firefighter to Group Manager, along with representatives from our finance and HR teams.
- 3.3. A representative from the national Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group (ESCWG) will help stimulate the debate by speaking about the collaboration initiatives that have been successfully implemented by emergency services around the country.

#### 4. Collaboration Update

- 4.1. Collaboration initiatives are currently structured under the 5 headings of Estates, Operations, Response, Resource Sharing and Support Services.

#### ESTATES

##### Joint Headquarters:

- 4.2. The nominated Senior Responsible Officer for the Project is Assistant Chief Constable Philip Wells.
- 4.3. Following the successful application for a £37.5k grant from Phase 5 of the One Public Estate (OPE) programme, consultants were commissioned to undertake an initial feasibility study of potential options for a joint headquarters site with an initial report received in the spring of this year. This report is currently being considered by both parties.
- 4.4. To further inform the feasibility options appraisal, BP has since commissioned the Carbon Trust to undertake an Energy Audit of their existing headquarters site. At the most recent CSB, BFRS agreed to also commission an Energy Audit on our headquarters site, using the OPE 5 grant monies as with BP. Once this report is received, a further update will be presented the FRA.
- 4.5. Members will be aware that a joint application for further funding was successful and an interest free loan of £230k was successfully awarded in December 2017. Governance arrangements detailing the management and control arrangements for this loan have been agreed with BP.

##### Co-Location Sites:

- 4.6. Ampthill Community Fire Station is now operational with three Police staff and one volunteer based there.
- 4.7. Bedford Community Fire Station is fully operational with six police staff based there with 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.
- 4.8. Shefford Community Fire Station opportunity has been reviewed by BP and is no longer under consideration.
- 4.9. Leighton Buzzard Community Fire Station is fully operational. A scheme to increase the number of female toilet units and shower facilities on site has now been agreed to achieve regulatory compliance.
- 4.10. 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.

- 4.11. Use of Dunstable Community Fire Station was explored with EEAST as a possible base for two vehicles and three staff but they have decided not to go ahead at this time.
- 4.12. Harrold Community Fire Station is now being used a 'drop-in' venue by front line police response vehicles.
- 4.13. Bury Park Community Centre office is now available for collaborative use by BP and BFRS. The official launch was on 5 April 2018 and attended by PCC, FRA and members of the local community. All FRS departments have been encouraged to utilise the facility to increase local presence and engagement.

## OPERATIONS

### Body Worn Cameras:

- 4.14. 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) to enable body worn cameras to be trialled this year.

### Vulnerable People:

- 4.15. BFRS is working in Partnership with Police in taking forward 'Herbert Protocol' referrals. A three-way data-share agreement is in development between partners.
- 4.16. BFRS is working with Alzheimer's Society to develop a regular forum in Bury Park Community Centre, Luton which has a focus on personal and home safety for vulnerable people.

### Drone (UAV):

- 4.17. We are awaiting delivery in late July of a drone jointly procured with BP with plans being developed for joint training and deployment.
- 4.18. Discussions are under way to share the mandatory licensing training with Police Tri-Force Joint Protective Services based in Alconbury.
- 4.19. Once training is completed BFRS will then explore the establishment of a Regional Fire/Police Memorandum of Understanding to provide joint regional support and interoperability.

### Fire Service Control:

- 4.20. Station Commander (Control) has been security cleared and trained to access Police STORM system for 'real time' incident monitoring. In addition, other local inter-control room processes have been agreed which will offer improved communications when major incidents occur. Police are now routinely emailing Control staff with details of any incidents which could impact upon BFRS mobilisation.

#### Red Routes:

4.21. BFRS has provisionally agreed, subject to consultation with representative bodies, to direct BFRS appliances to return to station via known arson and anti-social behaviour “hotspots”. These are known as Red Routes and has operated successfully in other parts of the country as a crime deterrent.

#### Motorcycle Deployment and Training:

4.22. A feasibility assessment has commenced to explore opportunities for deployment of BFRS motorcycles for transporting blood and organs.

4.23. A further feasibility assessment is being undertaken to determine the benefits of collaborating with BP to deliver driver training for both services.

#### RESPONSE

#### Missing Vulnerable Person Searches:

4.24. A evaluation of current arrangements for BFRS being mobilised to support BP in searches for vulnerable persons has recommended we continue with this arrangement.

4.25. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been revised to take account of the learning from the evaluation.

#### Effecting Entry:

4.26. An evaluation of the first 15 months of operation was presented to the CSB with the recommendation to continue. The evaluation concluded 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.

#### Co-Responding:

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

#### RESOURCE SHARING

#### General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR):

4.28. Discussions with Police Tri-Force Information Governance team in April and May have secured agreement for them to support BFRS in achieving GDPR compliance in a very cost effective way and without increasing our staff establishment headcount.

#### Datashare Agreements and Information Sharing:

4.29. BFRS has met with BP Information Services team and agreed the way forward to produce an overarching cross service datashare agreement. BFRS

Community Safety staff now have access to Police Control to undertake known risk flag checks on premises to be visited.

4.30. BFRS Fire Investigators now receive confirmed arson reports on the day confirmation occurs. This marks a change from traditional weekly reports and facilitates an improved response by BFRS as well as improves the amount and quality of data available at an earlier date.

**PAUL M FULLER CBE QFSM DL  
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**