

Report to the Police, Fire and Crime Panel – 28 October 2019

Staffordshire Police and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service – Service Collaboration Update

Report of the Staffordshire Commissioner

1. Introduction

1.1 The report updates the panel on the current position regarding: -

- The Staffordshire Commissioner's (SC) role in progressing collaborative opportunities between the Fire and Rescue Service and Staffordshire Police;
- The first six months of the s151 Officer arrangement, whereby the SC and the Fire and Rescue Service share the full time role and the person undertaking the role.

2. Recommendation

2.1 That the Panel note and comment on the contents of the report.

3. Background

Business case and decision

3.1 The Panel has received regular updates on collaboration prior to and after the establishment of the Staffordshire Commissioner led Fire and Rescue Authority on 1st August 2018.

3.2 At the Police, Fire and Crime Panel meeting of 15th July 2019, members received more detail on the opportunities being progressed to share enabling services and the police and fire estate owned by the Commissioner. This report further updates on that position and provides detail on estimated savings to be delivered this financial year and potentially next year.

4. Current picture

Collaboration

4.1 There are a number of areas of collaborative working in place between the two services. The Commissioner through his business case outlined the potential for new areas of collaborative working and these have been the focus in the first instance.

- 4.2 The business areas identified within the local business case, which have attracted the most focus are the delivery of a joint enabling service and the delivery of joint estate, where it is appropriate to do so.

An update on both of these areas of work is provided.

Joint Enabling Service

- 4.3 The enabling services plans involve the creation of single support services for policing and the fire and rescue service. Plans have been implemented and on 1st July 2019 (1st August 2019 for Communications), Procurement, Estates and Facilities, Human Resources and Communications became joined-up, integrated services through Fire and Rescue staff transferring under TUPE to become Police Service employees in new team structures designed to meet the needs of both organisations. Finance staff, subject to consultation, will follow suit on 1st November 2019.
- 4.4 This has been a substantial project to take forward and deliver to an implementation date of less than 12 months after the change of Fire and Rescue governance. It has been completed successfully to the satisfaction of both services from a delivery perspective, the staffing issues were managed appropriately and sensitively and the proposals have made financial savings, which will increase further in future years. In addition the project required the development of arrangements for a legal collaboration, governance, ICT, charging and financial agreements, insurances, data and information management and cultural development. Information about the project has been shared with other areas that are aiming to adopt a similar approach, so that learning across the sector is enhanced.
- 4.5 Following the implementation of the first phase of the enabling services plans, a second batch of services has now been assessed for collaboration. The next enabling service that is likely to be considered for implementation is that of business intelligence / knowledge management. Staffordshire Police have recently implemented a new Knowledge Hub and it is envisaged that there will be opportunities for some of the services within the function to be integrated with similar capabilities in fire and rescue. If this progresses, it is anticipated that service benefits rather than financial benefits would be the likely outcome. There are also some services that having been assessed, will not be progressed at this time; these are Legal Services, ICT and Learning and Development.

Joint Emergency Transport Service (JETS)

- 4.6 JETS was an early collaboration promoted by the Commissioner during his first term of office. Whilst the collaboration achieved substantial financial savings at the time, it is believed that further opportunities do exist and can be progressed.
- 4.7 To progress, it is now intended to undertake a full review of JETS and

consider what further collaborative opportunities and potential benefits there are. The review will not be bound by the current operational set-up and will consider all aspects of the current arrangements in looking to optimise the service made available to the fire and rescue, and police service. This review is anticipated to be completed during this year.

Estates

- 4.8 As reported at the July 2019 Panel meeting, estates plans had become the prime focus given the implementation of the enabling services programme. They are the area of work where the next phase of substantial savings will be generated. The Commissioner is absolutely clear that given the financial pressures that exist he must ensure that protecting services to the public is the priority and that this will mean the cost of providing an estate will have to fall.
- 4.9 The Property Team from the Fire services transferred to Staffordshire Police employment from 1st July 2019. The new Estates Department are resourced and are providing estates services to all three organisations now.
- 4.10 A review has taken place of all sites used by the Police and is being aligned with the Fire service to ensure that both services make the most efficient use of the available space across the two estates. This will ensure that available space that can be shared is shared and does so to the benefit of both organisations and the public, in accordance with the business case for single governance. Decisions to co-locate will be approved at the Strategic Governance Board for Collaboration, chaired by the Commissioner.
- 4.11 Detailed work has completed in Tamworth to review neighbourhood policing estates requirements. The co-location of the neighbourhood team at the PFI FARS station in Tamworth will be completed shortly, pending the progression of a data line into the premises that has sufficient bandwidth for police requirements. Discussions have taken place with the PFI provider and these have been constructive and supportive in helping to progress matters. In line with the Commissioner's original business case for the change in governance, the move to the FARS station will generate significant ongoing financial savings for both fire and police services and a capital receipt, which will allow for investment in those teams that deliver services to the public.
- 4.12 Planning work has also continued to move the northern policing response team into Hanley Fire Station. This is far more complex than Tamworth, given the nature of the service and the volume of officers, equipment and vehicles involved. It is also a higher value change, involving capital works and other changes to the operation of the building. As such, the timeframe for delivering the change is longer and expected to be completed around the start of the 2020/21 financial year. Once again, the ongoing financial savings are expected to be significant and a capital receipt will more than offset capital works on the fire station.
- 4.13 Other co-location opportunities are also being taken forward in the county and will be progressed as business cases are presented to the Commissioner and

approved. The detail of these proposals is not in the public domain as yet, so therefore sensitive.

4.14 As part of the rationalisation of estate, a number of existing police service buildings (ex-stations and police posts) have been marketed for sale. These are at the following sites: -

- Stoke
- Newcastle
- Tunstall
- Blythe Bridge
- Eccleshall
- Stone
- Kinver
- Wombourne

To date, Stoke, Newcastle and Kinver have been sold and Wombourne will complete in November 2019. Of the remaining four properties, two are subject to an asset of community value process and the remaining two will be re-marketed to maximise value. Receipts on the three properties sold exceeded valuation. A decision form on the detail of property sales will be published as soon as the sale process is completed and when commercial issues are no longer relevant.

Other

4.15 Other collaborative working opportunities are also being progressed. The Chief Constable and the Chief Fire Officer's teams are developing joint approaches to preventative working and other operational areas, where there is a rationale to do so. This work is made more straightforward by the collaborative governance arrangements that the Commissioner has established. As an example, joint operational protocols have recently been agreed and implemented between the two services as to how they will work together on forced entry and missing persons work.

S151 Officer Role

4.16 The Panel considered a proposal to appoint David Greensmith as Director of Finance at their meeting of 29th April 2019 and at the same time to support a proposal to reduce the overall number of s151 posts from 3 FTE to 2 FTE. The role that David plays as a result is as Director of Finance for the Commissioner's Office / Fire and Rescue Authority and the Fire and Rescue Service.

4.17 The Panel requested that a 6 month update be provided as to how these revised arrangements were working and if the proposed revisions to role and therefore, capacity, were delivering in practice.

4.18 There are a number of factors that impact on the capacity to undertake the role, as summarised below, with a current position statement: -

- **That the post holder has the experience, knowledge and skills to undertake the roles.**

As recognised by the Panel in April 2019, David has that capability and has shown that in the six months since starting the role.

- **That adjustments can be made to the previous role being undertaken, so that capacity can be freed up**

This has taken place as planned, with the support of the Chief Fire Officer. David has however, been able to use his previous experience and expertise in managing the estates team and the ICT function in the fire and rescue service, to assist in the development of collaborative opportunities around estate.

- **That adjustments can be made to the other s151 role (Staffordshire Police) to allow for workload to be balanced between the two roles.**

This is a work in progress, but will be aided by the integration of the police and fire and rescue finance teams, due to take place on 1st November 2019. This single team will be based at Police HQ and under the line management of Staffordshire Police; as part of the team a business partner will support the work of the Commissioner's office and the Director of Finance, providing valuable capacity.

- **That both the Service and the Commissioner are content with the level of service that they are receiving.**

In respect of the s151 role, the Chief Fire Officer and the Chief Executive (SCO) meet regularly and have discussed this item alongside others. Whilst both the service and the Commissioner's office have had to manage with less resource that they had previously, this has been managed well with no major impact on either. The next few months, leading through to the 2020/21 budget reports and revised MTFSSs is a critical period and will test the arrangement further. At this time however, it is not anticipated that there will be problems.

From an external scrutiny perspective, the statutory Audit Panel (Ethics, Transparency and Audit Panel) have considered the new arrangement and have are confident in how the new arrangements are working.

- 4.19 In summary, six months into the new arrangements there is a confidence that the decision to reduce the number of s151 posts and to split the two roles in the way that has taken place, is proving to be a good decision. However, it is important that this continues to be monitored, with any issues arising being managed appropriately.

5. Summary

- 5.1 The Commissioner will hold both chiefs to account regarding the progress and delivery of the collaborative ventures and has established governance arrangements that support them to do this work and prioritise in the first instance.
- 5.2 A governance framework for the FRA and the Fire and Rescue Service is in place and working well. Relationships between the Commissioner's Office and the service are strong and are assisted by the governance framework.

Matthew Ellis
Staffordshire Commissioner – Police, Fire & Rescue, Crime

Contact Officer: Glynn Dixon, Chief Executive
Telephone: 01785 232242
Email: glynn.dixon@staffordshire-pfcc.pnn.gov.uk