

Annex A - Collaboration across Thames Valley Fire and Rescue Services

1. Purpose and summary of report

This report provides Members with an update on progress towards Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) collaboration across the Thames Valley. The Thames Valley Collaboration programme is focussed on the achievement of the shared key objective: "Sharing resources on a fair and equitable basis, to support achievement of excellent outcomes for communities across Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Royal Berkshire."

This key objective is supported by two critical success factors:

- Deliver better outcomes for the communities of Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes, Royal Berkshire and Oxfordshire
- Make changes that result in more effective and efficient services
- Increase resilience levels across all the Thames Valley Fire and Rescue Services

The Programme Blueprint to support the vision is currently being detailed and will cover organisational change holistically across people, process, technology/equipment/facilities and data/management information (MI).

The benefits realisation plan is also being established to ensure that any investment/change effort into collaborative improvement evidences a tangible return by being identified up front, baselined and tracked.

This relies on data and management information which will require some development before we can use it for the Programme.

2. Background and supporting information

Following the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding by the 3 Thames Valley Fire Services in June 2015, the Collaboration Steering Group, represented by a Director Lead from each service, has developed a programme of linked collaboration projects. These projects are focussed on the vision and critical success factors identified above.

Over the last 12 months, significant progress has been made on the first portfolio of agreed projects and more projects are being reviewed for the next phase of delivery. Key achievements to date are outlined below.

In addition, there are informal conversations taking place at all levels about how we might share knowledge to work more effectively across the region.

To assist in driving the programme forward, a new Thames Valley FRS Collaboration Programme Manager has been appointed. Julie Pickford is an experienced programme manager with previous FRS experience and has led a number of complex programmes of transformation. Julie has a regular presence at each FRS headquarters.

3. Key achievements to date

a. Standardised Type B Appliances

Following a joint procurement process, all Services will now be buying the same type B appliance. Over the next four years, 37 Volvo appliances, all built to a standard specification will be procured. During this period, savings are estimated to be £720,704. The estimated delivery timeline is May to June 2017 and the new appliances are aimed to be placed at stations which most frequently cross borders to improve deployment efficiency. This is a great example of how joint working can improve service delivery and reduce our service costs.

b. Standardised Inventory

All Services have reached agreement regarding a standardised inventory to be carried on the Thames Valley standard fire appliance. This will maximise the benefit of the standard appliance as well as support the introduction of common operating procedures across the region.

c. Operational Alignment

A joint TV FRS project team has been working with the aim of creating standardised procedures and incident response across the Thames Valley Services using National Operational Guidance recommendations. This builds on the work originally started within the Thames Valley Fire Control project. Initial recommendations cover incident responses, training and the provision of equipment that will support alignment from original call to incident closure.

This project is a critical aspect of the collaboration work programme and will influence future business requirements for training, procurement and operational alignment of new appliances and equipment and, as it develops, will lead to a reduction in the duplication of resources and facilitate flexible workforce deployment.

d. Operational Training Review

An independent review has identified a range of benefits that can be achieved through developing shared operational training. This review forms the basis of a project to map shared training in areas where operational alignment has taken place.

e. Creating Knowledge and Expertise

A group of 12 staff (four from each service) will be attending a three day course to become 'Thames Valley Collaboration Transformation Practitioners'. This will create 'collaboration champions' with expertise to drive and manage future collaboration throughout each partner organisation.

The course is accredited by Canterbury Christchurch University and CFOA and commences in December 2016.

From December there will be monthly updates cascaded for management regarding the TV Collaboration Programme and they will be made available to all staff via the intranet.

Members of the Collaboration Team will also attend each FRS SMT as required and offer short coffee break updates on the programme and benefits being delivered at a variety of service locations.

f. Collaboration Event and Information

On 28 November 2016, the Lead Member for Human Resources and Equality and Diversity and senior staff from the 3 Thames Valley FRS attended a workshop to discuss collaborative working progress in more detail and heard from a leading expert in collaboration to achieve business change.

A collaboration Newsletter has been created and will be updated monthly and uploaded to each service's intranet. This will support the monthly programme highlight report provided by the Steering Group.

The team are also establishing an overview of all of the collaboration taking place or being planned. This will help to manage interdependencies as well coordinate effort and resources to maximise efforts in a timely way.

The team are also ensuring linkages to external work going on around national operational guidance and standards to ensure that best practice is adopted whilst service delivery is standardised to improve resilience.

The next '**Collaboration Update**' newsletter will be published before Christmas and will include a full list of collaboration underway as well as the TV Collaboration Programme scope in more detail.