



Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

MEETING	Overview and Audit Committee
DATE OF MEETING	22 July 2020
OFFICER	Calum Bell, Head of Protection and Assurance
LEAD MEMBER	Councillor Lesley Clarke
SUBJECT OF THE REPORT	Emergency Services Collaboration in the Thames Valley
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>This paper provides an update for the Committee on the ongoing work and key achievements that have been delivered through collaboration between the Blue Light Emergency Services within the Thames Valley.</p> <p>The Thames Valley Collaboration Board is made up of five key stakeholders: Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service (BFRS); Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service (OFRS); Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service (RBFRS); South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS) and Thames Valley Police (TVP). The Collaboration structure consists of three tiers of governance: Interoperability Group; Executive Board; and Steering Group. The Governance Structure and Processes can be seen in more detail in Appendix A and B.</p> <p>The programme consists of five main projects: Operational Alignment; Fire Protection; Blue Light Estates; Procurement; and Workforce Reform.</p> <p><u>Operational Alignment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy - integrating operational doctrine aligned to National Operational Guidance (NOG) and working with partner agencies to resolve incidents classified under the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP) protocols. • Equipment - not just the savings from purchasing the same equipment but the benefits from aligning training, technical notes and operational use. • Mobilising - borderless, reduction in the number of vehicle movements, Relief crews, Control room actions etc. • Training - consistent approach to training materials and training outcomes to enable crews from the three fire rescue services to operate seamlessly at incidents. <p><u>Fire Protection</u></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scope is under review and being refreshed <p><u>Blue Light Estates</u></p> <p>Including shared estates, such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Broughton Fire Station• Blue Light Hub Milton Keynes <p>Neighbourhood Police Offices / bases, which free up public estates, improve working practices and provide a focal point for local communities where they see partners working together for them, whilst delivering year on year revenue savings.</p> <p><u>Procurement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appliances• Operational Equipment• Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) <p>Primary benefits include improved interoperability, enhanced resilience, a reduction in cross border mobilisations. Best Value is achieved through collaborative contract negotiation and joint procurement.</p> <p>A recent example is the joint red fleet replacement, which has standardised the front-line fire appliances and equipment across the Thames Valley. Total savings per appliance of the equipment alone, following on from collaboration contracts with Berkshire and Oxfordshire: £7,087.85 per appliance</p> <p>BFRS purchased 12 appliances in 2019, the total saving achieved was £85k with two more to go, resulting in around £100k saved through the life of the contract.</p> <p>In September 2017, the Fire Authority approved funding for a new PPE contract with Bristol Uniforms as part of the national PPE collaborative framework. The contract delivers savings of £152,693 over the contract life when compared with purchasing the equipment outright.</p> <p><u>Workforce Reform</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apprenticeships: recruiting our staff through an apprenticeship framework has delivered a range of benefits across departments, including - Workshops, Finance, Staff Development and Response. Four cohorts of firefighters (57 staff) now directly employed in operational roles and a fifth cohort (16 staff) currently in training who are scheduled to go into operational roles from 8th July, totalling 73 apprentice firefighters. We have had nine support staff, on apprenticeships, complete their qualifications, with five currently enrolled on apprenticeships as part of our upskilling
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	<p>programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment and Selection: Working in partnership with our TVP colleagues at recruitment fayres and apprenticeship shows.
ACTION	Noted
RECOMMENDATIONS	It is recommended that the progress of the Emergency Services Collaboration programme, within the Thames Valley Update, be noted.
RISK MANAGEMENT	<p>Each project is subject to regular review and scrutiny throughout is various stages of delivery. Risks are identified at the Interoperability stage within the Business case and monitored all the way through to oversight by the Steering Group.</p> <p>Programme risks are regularly evaluated and monitored through the Collaboration programme structure.</p>
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	The financial benefits of collaboration will vary depending upon the type of service or procurement arrangements. Major collaboration projects are subject to normal officer and member approval protocols. The recent collaborative work on appliances and associated equipment between the Thames Valley Fire Authorities produced savings on collective budgets of well over £700k over the four years in which they will be procured. This has resulted in standardised equipment enabling standard operating procedures.
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	No direct impact.
CONSISTENCY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DUTY TO COLLABORATE	The Policing and Crime Act 2017 requires the Authority to keep opportunities for collaboration with the police and ambulance services under review.
HEALTH AND SAFETY	No direct impact. However, options to deliver Health, Safety and Welfare functions across the Thames Valley, continue to be part of the Collaboration programme.
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY	Considerations of equality and diversity issues are built into the individual collaboration projects. For example, the Thames Valley Fire and Rescue Services collaborative recruitment and apprenticeships programme set out processes which seek to increase the diversity of the workforce.
USE OF RESOURCES	<p>Strategic context</p> <p>The Authority’s approach to collaborative working aligns well with the Policing and Crime Act 2017 and is well defined to support the strategic objectives set out</p>

	<p>within the 2020 to 2025 Corporate Plan.</p> <p>Communication with stakeholders</p> <p>Internal – updates are included in SMT BLOGs and internal bi-monthly meetings are held with the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) and the project managers</p> <p>External – information is exchanged and shared at the Interoperability Group (SRO’s), Executive Board (CEO’s, CFO’s and Chief Constable) and Steering Group (Elected Members and PCC’s Office)</p> <p>The system of internal control</p> <p>Updates will be provided to the Emergency Services Thames Valley Collaboration Steering Group and Fire Authority as required.</p> <p>The management of the asset base</p> <p>Collaborative opportunities will be actively sought that allow for efficient use of property and equipment assets between Authorities. This may be shared use, shared procurement, or shared back office and systems in respect of asset management.</p>
<p>PROVENANCE SECTION & BACKGROUND PAPERS</p>	<p>Background</p> <p>Report to the Fire Authority, held 12 December 2018, Item 12, Emergency Services Collaboration in the Thames Valley</p> <p>https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2020/03/121218_fire_authority_agenda.pdf/</p>
<p>APPENDICES</p>	<p>Appendix A: Governance Structure</p> <p>Appendix B: Draft Governance Processes</p> <p>Appendix C: Training Alignment Review</p> <p>Appendix D: Letter of thanks</p>
<p>TIME REQUIRED</p>	<p>15 minutes</p>
<p>REPORT ORIGINATOR AND CONTACT</p>	<p>Calum Bell</p> <p>cbell@bucksfire.gov.uk</p> <p>07766340974</p>