

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority Planning Committee

Meeting to be held on 17 July 2023.

Blue Light Collaboration Board Update

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Executive Summary

This is an update regarding Blue Light Collaboration Board progress since the last paper in February 2023.

Recommendation

Planning Committee to note the report

Information

This paper provides an overview on the progress against the ongoing workstreams that are being progressed under the Blue Light Collaboration Board (BLCB). The workstreams are being managed effectively through both the Strategic and Tactical boards. Recently Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) has added resource to support this work with the On Call and Blue Light Collaboration Station Manager role being introduced which will help support and deliver the key workstreams that are detailed below.

Missing Persons (Missing from home)

The existing collaboration for missing from home has continued to be a success. While the number of requests for the attendance of LFRS has decreased over the past few years LFRS has supported Lancashire Constabulary (LanCon) with a number of high-profile cases; including the search for Nicola Bulley - where LFRS provided support from the initial search on day one up to, and including, the inquest.

The main objective of the project is to now improve, even further, the existing collaboration between LFRS and LanCon by providing support where it is most required. The aim is to enhance specialist teams from several 'on-call' and specialist crews in Lancashire where the locality is close to 'hot spots' where people are known to go missing from home – and, often, where LanCon has limited resources thus allowing LFRS specialist search teams to search familiar ground in a reduced time frame.

The training ensures that our specialist teams develop an increased knowledge of what is required by LanCon in the management of a missing from home case and the importance of intelligence gathering, record keeping where an area has been searched, ensuring a crime scene isn't contaminated and enhancing the working relationships, at ground level, between the two services.

Estates and Co-location

This is a longer-term work stream with interdependencies, as there are several internal projects within Lancashire Constabulary to review current building stock. This includes Lancashire Constabulary headquarters, and various police stations. Property Leads from all three agencies met on 22 June 2023 and a review of existing work and future opportunities was discussed. This will now become a bi-monthly meeting to ensure work is progressed. As part of this work North West Ambulance Service (NWAS), LanCon and LFRS have shared information with regards facilities and estates management linked to current and future workstreams to enable a more cohesive approach to future proofing opportunities within the estate's portfolios. LFRS has also progressed work with the potential to re-negotiate leases and licences at Lytham and St Annes fire stations for the next three years with LanCon. In addition to this, the Service will ensure that all Blue Light partners are included in the scoping work we are undertaking in relation to the Preston area review.

First Responder

A phased approach was agreed in terms of volunteers signing up to the scheme. Phase 1 is being rolled out to non-operational LFRS staff, such as Community Fire Safety and other Green Book members of staff. Phase 2 will consider the option to broaden the scope to roll out to Grey Book operational staff, including Flexi Duty Officers, all on a voluntary basis.

Progress on phase 1 has resulted in the successful onboarding of 1 non-operational member of LFRS, who is responding to category 1 incidents, and has already provided lifesaving care whilst responding. A further 4 members of staff have successfully passed their interviews and Enhanced DBS checks and are currently awaiting suitable training dates before being fully onboarded, which is expected to be delivered within the next 3 months.

An NWAS application is used to mobilise First Responders who can accept or decline the notification. The information that is then held by NWAS enables LFRS to monitor the data provided by the reporting system to ensure suitable provisions such as welfare arrangements are in place to support staff, post incident(s). A more in-depth analysis will be completed once the next 4 members of staff are onboarded. The findings of this analysis will form options to progress to phase 2 of the project.

Further discussion will take place with Lancashire Constabulary to review if there are any suitable non-operational roles that could be added as First Responders. It was noted that operational staff did attend cardiac arrests alongside NWS and that collaboration to this effect was already taking place.

Leadership Development

Work is currently ongoing in Phase 1 for scoping further opportunities to collaborate. LFRS has identified 3 individuals who have been nominated to take part in the “Inside Out” leadership programme that is being led by LanCon, and this will hopefully come to fruition towards the end of 2023. This will then enable a review of the programme with a view to further expanding the offer across the organisation.

Phase 2 of the project will look to explore opportunities to offer places to external partners within LFRS delivered ILM courses and some of the “softer skill” courses that embed and reinforce effective leadership and raise self-awareness. The ongoing work will aim to realise efficiencies and help build professional working relationships across the Blue Light Services.

Command Units

The aim of this project is to establish and deliver additional collaborative uses of the command units in LFRS to support effective multi agency working amongst emergency responders. The key objectives are to improve operational effectiveness and in line with LFRS mission; ‘Making Lancashire Safer’.

LFRS is currently rolling out a small command unit and have two further large command units in build as part of a previously agreed capital vehicle replacement project. It is anticipated the two larger units will be in Service by October 2023. It is expected that the initial benefits to be realised will be technological advances that will further develop information sharing and situational awareness aligned to improving and embedding the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP). Further scoping and development will be overseen by the Blue Light Collaboration board to ensure opportunities for joint working are effectively co-ordinated and delivered.

Financial Implications

All collaboration projects within this update are included within existing agreed revenue and capital budgets

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

N/a

Equality and Diversity Implications

N/a

Human Resource Implications

N/a

Business Risk Implications

Reputational risk if there is limited evidence regarding the duty to collaborate, as a result of the Policing and Crime Act 2017.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

Paper:

Date:

Contact:

Reason for inclusion in Part 2 if appropriate: N/a