

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Planning Committee

Meeting to be held on 5 February 2024

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 November 2023.

Recommendation

Planning Committee to note the report.

Information

This paper provides an update on the progress against the five key workstreams being progressed under the Blue Light Collaboration Board (BLCB). The workstreams are effectively managed through the Strategic and Tactical Collaboration Boards.

Missing Persons (Missing from home)

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) have provided significant support to Lancashire Constabulary (LanCon) with our aerial drone assets, supported by a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). LFRS Drone Team has also supported other organisations, including the Environment Agency (EA).

LFRS receives around 200 drone requests on average per year from LanCon, with most requests for Missing Persons searches. LFRS have commenced discussions with LanCon in relation to re-charging for some services, given the on-call nature of our drone team, with each deployment having a budgetary impact for LFRS. Nationally, an MoU is being developed between the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and EA to better co-ordinate future drone activity.

The Service also provides an underwater search capability and assistance was recently requested by HM Coastguard. LFRS responded, and the underwater

deployment immediately de-escalated the incident, significantly reducing the number of resources required from several agencies, for what would normally be a protracted incident.

Estates and Co-location

This is a long-term workstream which may deliver significant efficiencies and effectiveness where co-location sites are identified.

A set of principles are being developed to identify high level areas of opportunities. Blue Light partners are currently reviewing their strategic property asset plans to identify areas for co-ordinating future development plans over the next 5-10 years.

All Blue light partners are included in the discussions and options in relation to Preston area provision.

Community First Responder

A trial commenced in 2023 involving LFRS staff volunteering as Community First Responders (CFR) to support North West Ambulance Service (NWAS). LFRS staff volunteers undertake an initial CFR training programme at LFRS Training Centre. Once qualified, they can shadow existing CFR practitioners to develop their clinical abilities and build confidence in their newly acquired skills.

Five LFRS staff volunteers are now responding to life threatening emergencies in their communities from the workplace, and administering first aid in the initial vital minutes before NWAS colleagues arrive. During 2023, LFRS responded to more than 80 CFR incidents including unresponsive/ collapsed, not breathing, cardiac arrests, seizures, strokes, and choking.

The Service is expanding our support to NWAS on this successful life-saving initiative and 10 LFRS Flexible-Duty Officers (FDOs) are progressing through the onboarding process with NWAS.

Leadership Development

Learning and Development leads from the Blue Light partners are considering leadership development collaboration opportunities.

An analysis of leadership development is ongoing between the three organisations with the Services currently exploring an additional mentorship programme for command and control.

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'.

The new Command Support Unit (CSU) project was listed in this years' Service Plan and seeks to upgrade not only the vehicles but to take advantage in recent technological advances to support operational incidents. On-Call firefighters from Carnforth and Bolton-le-Sands crew the CSU.

As part of the agreed capital vehicle replacement project, two new larger Command Units (CUs) will also be hosted by Fulwood and Blackburn Fire Stations. The CUs boast state of the art technology with 5G and Starlink connectivity.

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.

LFRS have reviewed the policy for recharging other organisations and agencies for use of LFRS personnel and equipment at non-statutory incidents. The policy provides decision-makers with guidance on how and when charging is appropriate and is aligned to the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) published guidance on recharge costs.

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

N/A

Equality and Diversity Implications

N/A

Data Protection (GDPR)

N/A

HR Implications

N/A

Business Risk

Risk if there is limited evidence regarding the duty to collaborate.

Legal implications

The Policing and Crime Act 2017 introduced a statutory duty to collaborate on the Police, Fire, and emergency Ambulance Services where it is in the interests of efficiency and effectiveness. The duty to collaborate is non-prescriptive and locally enabling.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

Paper:

Date:

Contact:

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