

# **Lancashire Combined Fire Authority**

## **Planning Committee**

Meeting to be held on 15 July 2024

### **Blue Light Collaboration Board Update**

Contact for further information: DCFO Steve Healey  
Tel: 01772 866802

#### **Executive Summary**

This paper provides an update regarding Blue Light Collaboration Board progress.

#### **Recommendation**

Planning Committee to note the report.

#### **Information**

The Police, Fire & Rescue Service, and Ambulance Service have a duty to collaborate under the Policing and Crime Act 2017. The objectives are to improve efficiency, effectiveness, and deliver improved outcomes.

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

The Service have evaluated the benefits and outcomes of our Blue Light Collaboration Workstreams; Missing Persons, Leadership Development, Estates and Co-location, and Community First Responder. The workstreams are contributing towards improving outcomes, providing better value for money, reducing demand, and reducing inequalities within communities.

#### **Missing Persons (Missing from home)**

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) have increasing experience and can provide local or specialist advice for consideration by Lancashire Constabulary (LanCon). Searches have become streamlined allowing a more structured and effective approach to locating a high-risk missing person. The Service's drone development (aerial and sub-surface), for which LFRS has the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) lead role, has further enhanced our capabilities for Missing Person Searches. LFRS have provided significant support to LanCon

with our aerial drone assets, supported by an updated Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). Further investment in 2023/24 led to us strengthening sub-surface rescue/ recovery capability of persons, with an underwater Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV). This asset has been deployed regionally and nationally including Carlisle, Manchester, Merseyside, Cheshire, Birmingham, and Norfolk and has delivered improved outcomes for incident resolution.

LFRS received around 200 drone requests last year from LanCon, with most requests for Missing Persons searches.

### **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 property asset management strategies to identify potential areas for co-ordinating future development plans over the next 5-10 years.

All Blue light partners are included in the discussions in relation to future opportunities. All current locations for each organisation have been mapped, with the focus now moving to the understanding of longer-term plans for each service, consideration of site sharing opportunities at existing locations, along with a procedure to facilitate site sharing. The LFRS 'Preston Area Review' continues to be discussed and considered with Blue light partners regarding collaboration opportunities for the area.

In addition to the physical estate and site sharing, Blue light partners have identified other areas for learning, development and sharing of information in support of providing efficient and effective estate management within respective organisations.

### **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.

5 LFRS staff volunteers have been responding to life threatening emergencies in their communities from the workplace and administering life-saving interventions 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. This has resulted in many successful outcomes.

The Service has now expanded our support to NWS on this successful life-saving initiative. 8 LFRS Flexible-Duty Officers (FDOs) completed their 4-day CFR training in July and are now also responding to critical medical emergencies across Lancashire.

## **Leadership Development**

Blue Light partners have scoped collaboration opportunities for leadership development. Each Service will host a leadership development event for middle and senior leaders from all Blue light partner organisations, with LFRS hosting the first event in October 2024.

## **Command Units**

The aim of this project was 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 were to improve operational effectiveness and in line with LFRS mission of 'Making Lancashire Safer'.

The Command Support Unit (CSU) project aimed to upgrade the vehicles and adopt technological advancements to support operational incidents. On-Call firefighters crew a CSU, and as part of the agreed capital vehicle replacement project, two new larger Command Units (CUs) are now operational and have been deployed to several incidents, with excellent feedback received from the firefighters, FDOs, and partner agencies. LFRS continue to demonstrate the unit and software to other fire and rescue services with a recent visit from Northern Ireland FRS taking place in May, and a further visit from several other FRS' in June. The Service have also hosted multi-agency familiarisations, including in June for the Blackburn-with-Darwen Emergency Planning Team.

The benefits realised include improved information sharing and situational awareness, aligned to improving and embedding the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP). This successful workstream has now transitioned to business as usual.

## **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 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