

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority Planning Committee

Meeting to be held on 14 July 2025

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.

Recommendation

Planning Committee to note the report.

Information

The Police, Fire and Rescue Service, and Ambulance Service are required to collaborate under the Policing and Crime Act 2017. The goals are to enhance efficiency, effectiveness, and deliver better outcomes.

This paper provides an update on the progress of key workstreams being advanced under the Blue Light Collaboration Board (BLCB). These workstreams are effectively managed through Strategic and Tactical level meetings and contribute to improving outcomes, providing better value for money, reducing demand, and addressing inequalities within communities.

Leadership Development

Collaboration between Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS), Lancashire Police (LanCon) and North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) has continued to explore efficiencies and build professional working relationships across the Blue Light Services.

It was agreed for each Service to host a Leadership Event, and through intelligence from each organisation, three common themes were identified. The first session was organised and hosted by LFRS in October 2024 and 60 people attended across all three Services. LFRS staff consisted of Area Managers, Group Managers, and Heads of Service – similar audiences attended from NWAS and LanCon and this also included aspiring leaders. This session was on “Nourish to Flourish” and focussed on looking after yourself to be an effective leader.

Session 2 was held in March, focussing on handling media as leaders in a Blue Light Service. The two completed events were successful according to the

evaluations. The final leadership event is to take place at Lancon in July and is around generational differences.

The group are also exploring an 'Outside-In' Leadership programme and looking to implement a cross-coaching network to develop shared learning, which may include a coaching exchange programme.

Health and Wellbeing

This is a new collaboration group involving the Health and Wellbeing leads from all three Services. The aim is to understand the health and wellbeing offer across the different blue light services and to explore opportunities to work together to look after our people in a collaborative way.

The starting point for the group is to share policies and procedures for good practice and learning. NWAS have delivered several sessions about menopause and LFRS have developed a workshop to raise awareness of suicide from a responder's point of view – elements of which can be shared across all services.

Estates and Co-location

The co-location initiative between LFRS, NWAS, and LanCon focuses on identifying opportunities for shared site use to enhance collaboration and deliver better value for money. Successful co-location arrangements at Lancaster, St Annes, Darwen, Preston, and other fire stations have led to operational efficiencies and shared facilities. These joint working environments have also fostered stronger relationships and a deeper understanding of each service's role within the Blue Light community - ultimately contributing to improved outcomes for the people of Lancashire.

The updated Blue Light Collaboration Project Initiation Document has given the Estates and Co-location sub-group leads renewed direction in exploring further collaboration opportunities. Quarterly meetings between the Heads of Estates from LFRS, NWAS, and LanCon have revealed that the benefits extend beyond co-location alone. The project's objectives, guiding principles, and expected benefits have been redefined, and the scope of work has been updated accordingly. In addition to site sharing, the group is now exploring collaborative efforts such as system knowledge exchange, shared procurement specifications, and joint supplier framework opportunities.

Community First Responder (CFR)

A cost-benefit analysis by the New Economy confirms that Emergency Medical Response (EMR) delivers a strong return on investment - £4.41 for every £1 spent. In areas where EMR co-responding has been practiced, when a person suffers a suspected cardiac arrest, firefighters are deployed in parallel to the

ambulance service under blue-light conditions. Staff from whichever service arrives first immediately begin to provide potentially life-saving treatment before the other arrives. Not only does parallel mobilisation therefore facilitate the probability of a timely response; the additional on-scene activity also supports ambulance crews to undertake advanced clinical work while FRS operate in a support capacity. This scheme has been running successfully for many years in several parts of the UK, however, South Western Ambulance Service Foundation Trust has recently announced it is phasing out fire EMR to develop and strengthen its volunteer CFR scheme. This decision has been met with sadness and disappointment from Fire and Rescue Services (FRS') involved in EMR, due to the improved outcomes for communities.

The CFR workstream within Lancashire enables LFRS staff volunteers to respond to life-threatening emergencies directly from their workplace. Since 2023, over 200 incidents have been attended, with LFRS staff delivering life-saving interventions before ambulance crews arrived.

The operational model is structured in 3 phases:

Phase 1: Green book staff respond voluntarily while on duty.

Phase 2: Flexi Duty Officers (FDOs) provide response while on duty.

Phase 3: On Call staff provide response within their local communities. This phase is in development, with the assistance of a heat map from NNAS. This identifies areas within Lancashire that are proving difficult to recruit CFRs, and will enable LFRS to target local On-Call Firefighters who are interested in volunteering for the scheme.

Evaluation

Through evaluation LFRS has considered the value and benefits of several workstreams and has considered how the BLCB contributes to LFRS' aim of "Making Lancashire Safer".

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