

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority Planning Committee

Meeting to be held on 17 November 2025

Blue Light Collaboration Board Update

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Executive Summary

This paper provides an update regarding Blue Light Collaboration.

Recommendation

Planning Committee is asked to note the contents of this report.

Information

The Police, Fire and Rescue Service, and Ambulance Service are mandated to work together under the Policing and Crime Act 2017. The aim is to improve efficiency, effectiveness, and deliver enhanced outcomes.

This report outlines the progress of major workstreams overseen by the Blue Light Collaboration Board (BLCB). These workstreams are managed through both Strategic and Tactical meetings, supporting improved outcomes, better value for money, reduced demand, and addressing inequalities in communities.

Leadership Development

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS), Lancashire Police (LanCon), and North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) continue to seek efficiencies and foster professional relationships across Blue Light Services.

Over the last 12 months, each Service has hosted a Leadership Event, covering three shared themes identified using insights from each organisation. The first session, hosted by LFRS, saw 60 attendees from all three Services, including Area Managers, Group Managers, Heads of Service, and aspiring leaders. The session, titled “Nourish to Flourish,” focused on self-care for effective leadership. The second session addressed media handling for Blue Light leaders. The final leadership event was held by LanCon and focussed on generational differences.

The group is exploring an ‘Outside-In’ Leadership program and the creation of a cross-coaching network for shared learning, potentially including a coaching exchange initiative.

Health and Wellbeing

A new collaborative group was formed earlier this year, bringing together Health and Wellbeing leads from all three Services. The group's goal is to understand and align the health and wellbeing offerings across Blue Light organisations, exploring joint opportunities to support staff.

The group's initial step was to share policies and procedures for best practice and learning. NWAS has delivered menopause awareness sessions, and LFRS has developed a workshop to raise awareness of suicide from a responder's perspective elements of which can be shared across all services.

Estates and Co-location

The estates and co-location initiative between LFRS, NWAS, and LanCon aims to identify opportunities for shared sites, enhancing collaboration and value for money. Successful co-location at Lancaster, St Annes, Darwen, Preston, and other Fire Stations has improved operational efficiency and fostered stronger inter-service relationships, ultimately benefiting Lancashire communities.

An updated Blue Light Collaboration Project Initiation Document has provided direction for the Estates and Co-location sub-group, which is exploring further collaboration. Quarterly meetings between Heads of Estates from LFRS, NWAS, and LanCon have shown that benefits extend beyond site sharing. The project's objectives, principles, and expected benefits have been updated. The group is also considering system knowledge exchange, shared procurement specifications, and joint supplier frameworks.

Community First Responder (CFR)

A cost-benefit analysis by the New Economy shows that Emergency Medical Response (EMR) yields a return of £4.41 for every £1 invested. In areas with EMR co-responding, firefighters are dispatched alongside ambulance services for suspected cardiac arrests, with the first to arrive providing life-saving care. This parallel response increases the likelihood of timely intervention and supports ambulance crews in advanced clinical work.

While this model has been successful in parts of the UK, the South Western Ambulance Service Foundation Trust is phasing out fire EMR in favour of strengthening its volunteer Community First Responder (CFR) scheme, a decision met with disappointment by FRS' involved in EMR.

In Lancashire, the CFR workstream enables LFRS staff volunteers to respond to life-threatening emergencies from their workplace. Since 2023, over 200 incidents have been attended, with LFRS staff providing life-saving interventions before ambulance arrival.

The operational model has three phases:

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

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

Phase 3: On Call staff respond within their communities. This phase is being developed with NWS and stations have been identified in the communities where NWS require most support.

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"*. The evaluation of the three leadership events held over the last 12 months found that all events were positive, with future events now being planned to build on this success.

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