

# **Lancashire Combined Fire Authority Planning Committee**

Meeting to be held on 2 February 2026

## **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.

Planning committee is asked to agree for this to be the last update into Planning Committee due to the same content being reported into Performance Committee.

### **Information**

The Police, Fire & Rescue Service, and Ambulance Service are mandated to work together under the Policing and Crime Act 2017. The aim is to encourage closer working between police, fire, and ambulance services to improve efficiency and emergency response.

This report outlines the progress of major workstreams overseen in Lancashire 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. The following workstreams feed into the BLCB.

### **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.

Following the success and positive feedback from the three leadership events held in 2025, one hosted by each blue light service, planning is underway for another series of events in 2026. It is proposed that they will follow a similar format, with each blue light service hosting one of the events.

The group is also continuing to progress a cross-service coaching and mentoring network where people with similar roles at a comparable level are identified to link with each other in the role of either a coach or a mentor. The events that ran in 2025 provided an opportunity for the attendees to be briefed on the benefits of

this and indicate whether they would be willing to enter into a coaching or mentoring arrangement. This received a positive response.

### **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 and explore joint opportunities to support staff. It is led by LFRS. It is recognised that there are a number of similarities in the challenges faced by personnel across the three services, such as dealing with distressing incidents and shift work. By collaborating and sharing mechanisms to support staff, interventions can be optimised.

The group's initial step was to share policies and procedures for best practice and learning. Work planned for the group includes continuing to develop the idea of a Tri-service wellbeing event for any member of blue light staff and continuing to explore the possibility of a joint blue light fitness and nutrition support offer. LFRS and LanCon are developing an online module for mental health awareness, to be available to all staff and shared more widely once completed.

### **Estates, Co-location & Fleet**

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.

The updated Blue Light Collaboration Project Initiation Document continues to provide 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 continues to consider system knowledge exchange, shared procurement specifications, and joint supplier frameworks.

Fleet have now been added as part of this group and have started work to explore the opportunities around joint servicing of vehicles across the blue light services. The group are also assessing the viability of sharing the use of vehicle maintenance unit (VMU) facilities in cases of high demand or business continuity. Work has already been carried out to reduce the number of notices of intended prosecution (NIPs) sent to blue light partner agencies, where appropriate. Further workstreams will be identified as the group matures such as electric vehicles and supporting infrastructure, collisions and driver management.

## **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. While this model has been successful in parts of the UK, the steer is now to phase out EMR in favour of supporting the CFR volunteer framework.

In Lancashire, the CFR workstream enables LFRS staff volunteers to respond to life-threatening emergencies from their workplace. Since April 2025, nearly 300 incidents have been attended by LFRS personnel acting within phases 1 and 2.

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.

LFRS are currently at the point of developing phase 3. Stations have been identified to align with NWS data indicating greatest demand for CFR and where implementation of the scheme will maximise the positive impact.

## **Recruitment**

Recruitment is the most recent subgroup to be set up and is still in its infancy. This group is looking at opportunities for joint recruitment initiatives, exploring ways to improve the vetting and references protocol, reviewing best practice for supporting applicants with neurodiverse conditions and consider cost saving collaboration through shared recruitment events and recruitment material.

## **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 planning to build on this success. CFR continues to be evaluated as part of the delivery framework.

## **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