



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority

COLLABORATION STRATEGY

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Date: 22 September 2017

Purpose of Report:

To seek approval from Members for the introduction of a Collaboration Strategy to develop existing arrangements and activities.

CONTACT OFFICER

Name : Craig Parkin
Assistant Chief Fire Officer

Tel : 0115 8388100

Email : craig.parkin@notts-fire.gov.uk

Media Enquiries Contact : Therese Easom
(0115) 967 0880 therese.easom@notts-fire.gov.uk

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) has extensive experience of working in collaboration with a wide range of partners. Members will be aware of the update given to the Policy and Strategy Committee in February 2017 on current areas of collaboration for NFRS.
- 1.2 The Policing and Crime Act 2017 places a statutory requirement on the Service to consider collaboration agreements with other emergency services where it would be in the interests of efficiency and effectiveness. As a result, the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) is now invited to attend and contribute to all meetings of the Authority.
- 1.3 Government Ministers have given clear direction on how they propose to implement reform within the sector. They have set out three key areas where they expect to see improvements:
 - Accountability and transparency;
 - Efficiency and collaboration;
 - Workforce reform.
- 1.4 Austerity within public sector finances has been an issue over previous years and is likely to continue for some time increasing the need to make further budgetary savings.
- 1.5 The newly formed Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) will be undertaking inspections, and have already indicated that a key area of focus will be collaboration activities.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 The new statutory duty placed on NFRS by the Policing and Crime Act 2017 (The Act) provides a requirement to continually consider collaboration opportunities with other emergency services.
- 2.2 This report proposes the adoption of the attached overarching Collaboration Strategy (Appendix A) as a generic template that can be tailored for any preferred partners where collaboration has the potential to add public value.
- 2.3 The strategy will enable the collaboration that already exists with Nottinghamshire Police, East Midlands Ambulance Service, and Derbyshire and Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Services to be developed, and provides legitimacy, clear structure and governance to the work of both Members and Officers.
- 2.4 The Act reinforces the need to work with other emergency services, however the strategy will also be applicable to other organisations across the wider public sector.

STRUCTURE

- 2.5 The strategy proposes the formation of a Strategic Collaboration Board with each partner organisation, consisting of Members and Principal Officers that will provide scrutiny and direction to facilitate collaboration. This in turn will receive regular update reports from the Collaboration Delivery Board on progress against key objectives. The Delivery Board will directly oversee the activity of the working groups on specific areas of collaboration.
- 2.6 The Strategic Collaboration Board will report on progress to the Fire Authority on a regular basis, ensuring that the appropriate governance and decision making processes are maintained utilising the well-established authority and committee structures in place.
- 2.7 A joint Terms of Reference document will be developed with individual collaborative partners which will agree the scope and governance arrangements appropriate in each individual circumstance.
- 2.8 The strategy includes periodic reviews after 6 months by the Strategic Collaboration Board to ensure that the structure is delivering real benefits of collaboration and focus on public value.

BENEFITS OF COLLABORATION

- 2.9 The Act states that collaboration should be considered when it improves the effectiveness and efficiency of at least one Service. The benefits that NFRS strive to achieve will be wider than just these two elements, with a clear focus on delivering positive community outcomes.
- 2.10 Increasing public safety and making the organisation more resilient to sustain the delivery of public services through collaboration will also be a theme within future business cases.
- 2.11 Collaboration is a specific section within the current Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service integrated risk management plan (IRMP) and this Authority has responded positively to explore areas of collaboration and is seen as having potential to deliver benefits.
- 2.12 NFRS has engaged with Nottinghamshire Police around collaboration and some sharing of estate has already commenced, however scoping work has been undertaken to identify further opportunities.
- 2.13 The Assistant Chief Fire Officer and the Deputy Chief Constable held discussions around initial areas of collaboration between the two organisations. These have included:
 - Shared estates;
 - Organisational performance;

- Resilience and emergency planning;
- Learning and development;
- Joint prevention activities.

- 2.14 To develop and increase the pace of collaboration with Nottingham Police, attached at Appendix B is the proposed structure in line with the expectations of the Collaboration Strategy. This clearly shows the high level of commitment and scrutiny applied to the critical areas of work. As the work streams develop, reports will be presented to the Authority for consideration.
- 2.15 As the initial areas are developed, the strategy will seek to be ambitious and over time will span the whole organisation, as such, Officers will need to develop organisational capacity to ensure this ambition is delivered. It is envisaged that as the new IRMP is developed, collaboration will form a central element and Members will be actively engaged in that process.
- 2.16 It is vital within any change process that the respective workforces and the wider communities are regularly informed about any proposed changes to the way that services are delivered. A joint communications plan is currently being developed with Nottinghamshire Police to ensure timely and consistent information is disseminated.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Members will be aware that in February 2016 the Authority approved the Sustainability Strategy 2020. This identified that collaboration would be one element contributing to the financial savings required by the Authority.
- 3.2 Collaboration with key partner organisations has the potential to produce financial savings for the Authority, forming part of future business cases presented to the Authority for consideration.
- 3.3 An earmarked reserve to support the organisational transitional arrangements is already in place and will be used to support collaboration activities. Officers will also pursue opportunities for transformational funding with partners that may be available from central government to further support this area of work.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

Collaboration activities will be co-ordinated by the Area Manager, Strategic Support and the existing Shaping our Future Team. Any additional resources required for project support will be managed under the normal human resources policy arrangements for the Service.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken because it will be included in any future business cases that are proposed

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

Collaboration has potential to expand NFRS's ability to discharge its function under the Crime and Disorder Act by providing greater opportunities to share information, deliver community services and improve outcomes.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 NFRS has a statutory duty under the Policing and Crime Act 2017 to consider collaboration with other emergency services to improve efficiency and effectiveness. The structure outlined within this report would allow collaboration opportunities to be considered and demonstrate the Authority's clear commitment to collaboration and transparency
- 7.2 The Local Government Act 1999 places a statutory duty on NFRS to *'secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised'*. Collaboration has the potential to allow NFRS to secure improvements in the way that functions are delivered.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. Gaining Authority approval to introduce the attached strategy will enable Officers to work within an agreed framework that not only satisfies statutory requirements for collaboration, but builds upon the focus for positive community outcomes by how the Service delivers public services and adding public value.
- 8.2 Collaboration will require commitment from all partners in building vision and trust, but will also require resources to be committed over a sustained period. Officers will ensure those resources are identified and managed through the corporate risk register, specifically in relation to project and programme governance.

9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS

This report highlights the statutory duty placed on the Authority to consider collaboration and proposes a strategy to ensure those duties can be delivered effectively.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members adopt the proposed Collaboration Strategy.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)

None.

John Buckley
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

Collaboration Strategy



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Contents

Introduction

Purpose and Intention

Why we should collaborate

Collaboration Principles

Collaboration Commitments

Preferred Partners

Governance and Structure

Collaboration Framework

Performance and Monitoring

Appendix A Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service Collaboration Route Map

Definition of Collaboration

“Collaboration is a working practice whereby individuals work together to a common purpose”

Minister for Policing and the Fire Service, fire reform speech-

“Collaboration presents a real opportunity for emergency services to increase their efficiency and effectiveness, ultimately improving the service that is delivering to the public, to see better outcomes”.

Fire Protection Association Sector Summit October 2016

Introduction

Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) aims to create safer communities throughout the City and County keeping the people in Nottinghamshire safe by responding to incidents professionally and as quick as possible. We ensure that we deliver our preventative and protection activities to our most valuable in our communities.

Collaborating with others to ensure resources are providing best value and minimising risk to the communities of Nottinghamshire must be a key priority. Working with others in collaboration does present challenges, therefore NFRS will only work collaboratively when in the public interest.

To ensure collaboration is in the public interest, NFRS will work within this collaboration strategy and a collaboration framework to provide confidence and assurance to any future collaborative workings.

NFRS have always collaborated with our partners in the emergency services. We are committed to exploring future collaboration for the benefit of the public safety and to ensure we remain a resilient organisation.

Purpose and Intention

This document outlines our collaborative intention for how we will work with a wide range of partners, placing great emphasis on selecting the right partners in order to best serve our Communities. This will assist us in closing any risk gaps that exist both operationally and financially. It provides the high-level framework and principles within which NFRS can assess, progress and review collaboration activities.

Intention: NFRS will seek opportunities to collaborate with partners that enable us to sustainably enhance our effectiveness to deliver Safer Communities within Nottinghamshire.

Why we should collaborate

There are numerous drivers for collaboration, both internal and external to NFRS, these can directly or indirectly benefit the way we deliver our services. Importantly the decision to collaborate must be more than the drive to realise financial benefits, the focus of any collaboration should be the ability to add value to the Communities of Nottinghamshire. The benefits of collaboration can broadly fall into the following themes:

- **Increased effectiveness:** Working with others will enable us to deliver the services our communities need in a timeframe they want. Collaboration has the potential to increase our capacity by gaining access to a broader range of skills, resources and information, increasing our ability to deliver improved services and becoming more resilient as a Service
- **Greater efficiency:** In many cases collaboration can drive a reduction in bureaucracy between different services, enabling those services to concentrate on delivering high quality services to their communities.
- **Improved value:** The catalyst for many collaborative approaches is the desire to deliver improved value and cost savings to the tax payer, via cost avoidance and cashable savings. Collaborating with others may increase bargaining power, access to specialist skills and experience to drive down costs, including resource assets, reduce duplication and ensures efficient use of resources.
- **Improved Public safety:** Collaboration may result in the further sharing of buildings, information and staff. The net result of these change can contribute to our shared vision
- **More resilient organisation:** Working together with other Services and organisations may result in NFRS becoming more resilient in the event of spate conditions and other events which affect business continuity.

In addition, following the Government's consultation 'Enabling Closer Working Between The Emergency Services', the Police and Crime Act 2017, '*places a duty on Emergency Services in England to consider whether entering into a collaboration agreement with one or more other emergency services could be in the interest of efficiency and effectiveness*', this places a clear expectation on NFRS.

Collaboration Principles

Importantly the benefits of collaboration must enhance our ability to deliver NFRS's Corporate objectives, as stated in the Services Integrated Risk Management Plan. NFRS will use the following three guiding principles to form the cornerstones for any collaborative arrangements entered into:

- **Deliver high quality services:** We will place an emphasis on collaboration that enhances NFRS ability to deliver high quality services to the communities of Nottinghamshire.
- **Have strong governance and financial stability:** All collaborations will have clear objectives and benefits. These benefits may be in terms of both operational and financial. A long-term view will be taken when collaborative activities provide long-term sustainable solutions. Governance structures and arrangements will support the Authority's principles of good governance: openness, inclusivity, integrity and accountability.
- **Maintain an engaged and motivated workforce:** At the core of any collaboration will be our workforce, working practices and process will be designed and delivered by the workforce, taking into consideration workforce expertise and experience. NFRS will lead our workforce through the journey of collaboration, engaging and being sensitive to their needs, whilst creating an innovative environment in which all employees feel engaged.

Collaboration Commitments

When working in a collaboration, NFRS will commit to the following behaviours:

‘To act and promote the Service’s values, underpinning our behaviours, to create a positive and achieving culture’. NFRS values are:

- We are open to change
 - We are professional in all we do
 - We value and respect others
 - We are One Team working together.
-
- To remain open minded about collaborative opportunities, focusing on what makes the difference to the public.
 - Appreciate and respect the differences between collaborating organisations.
 - Focus on the benefits of collaborations, accepting that in some circumstances the benefits may favour other organisations more directly but overall the positive impact for our communities is accomplished.
 - To communicate effectively with stakeholders at all stages throughout.
 - We will work to build trust amongst partners to help empower joint, agile and flexible ways of working.

Preferred Partners

NFRS are open to collaborate with others for the benefit of the communities of Nottinghamshire. NFRS will remain open around who it collaborates with and will not limit itself to its traditional partners. Naturally NFRS core work, creating safer communities in Nottinghamshire and values align with specific partners, primarily other blue light emergency services within the geographical borders or bordering Nottinghamshire.

Whilst working with other blue light emergency services has its benefits, NFRS will strive to work with other partners / agencies that enable NFRS to deliver a more effective and efficient Service.

Governance and Structure

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority and its Officers are committed to ensuring that it has an excellent system of corporate governance. The Authority embraces the principles of good governance: openness, inclusivity, integrity and accountability.

Decision making will be informed by recommendations that are underpinned by an analysis of the operational, organisational and financial risk, threats and opportunities that exist. Governance and support structures will achieve flexibility and timely decision making. The Governance structures will ensure that accountability is maintained.

The collaboration governance structure is detailed below –



A Strategic Collaboration Board (SCB) would provide the scrutiny and strategic direction to facilitate collaboration with other key partners.

This in turn would receive regular update reports from the Collaboration Delivery Board (CDB) on collaboration work streams.

The CDB would directly oversee the `task and finish` project teams who are working on specific areas of collaboration.

The SCB will report on progress to the Fire Authority on regular basis.

Collaboration Framework

To ensure effective collaborations are created and are sustainable in the longer term NFRS will adhere to its collaboration framework. The Collaboration Route Map (Appendix A) within the framework aims to provide a consistent approach in assurance and delivery of collaboration projects. This will ensure that effective and crucial assessments of both risks and benefits are carried out for collaborative partnership.

Having a range of choices, including not collaborating, provides flexibility and allows a proper assessment to be undertaken as to who provides the better option for the NFRS and more importantly the public.

All opportunities will undergo robust assessment and must have clear and realistic benefits and outcomes which align to the Services objectives. NFRS will focus resources on areas that bring the biggest benefits either strategically, improve performance or financially. This will allow us to limit the amount of collaborative change to ensure the NFRS can maintain core business.

Performance and Monitoring

Each collaboration arrangement will be developed, monitored and maintained with a supporting assessment and performance matrix.

This will ensure that regular updates on progress and viability are reported through identified internal governance structures to the Fire Authority. The relationship between partners can then grow, whilst providing an assessment of the collaboration effectiveness.

Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service Collaboration Route Map

Collaborative Approach

- Collaborative Leadership
- Core Objective and Rationale
- Vision and Values
- Resources



Business Case

- Funding and Finance
- Risks & Strong Governance
- Legal Structure and Expenses
- Impact on People
- Project Management Strategy



Operate & Improve

- Monitor & Review
- Continuous Improvement
- Measure Success
- Develop Relationship

PROPOSED GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE FOR COLLABORATION WITH NOTTINGHAMSHIRE POLICE

