

Cabinet

19 April 2018

Collaborative working between Warwickshire Fire & Rescue and West Midlands Fire Services

Recommendation

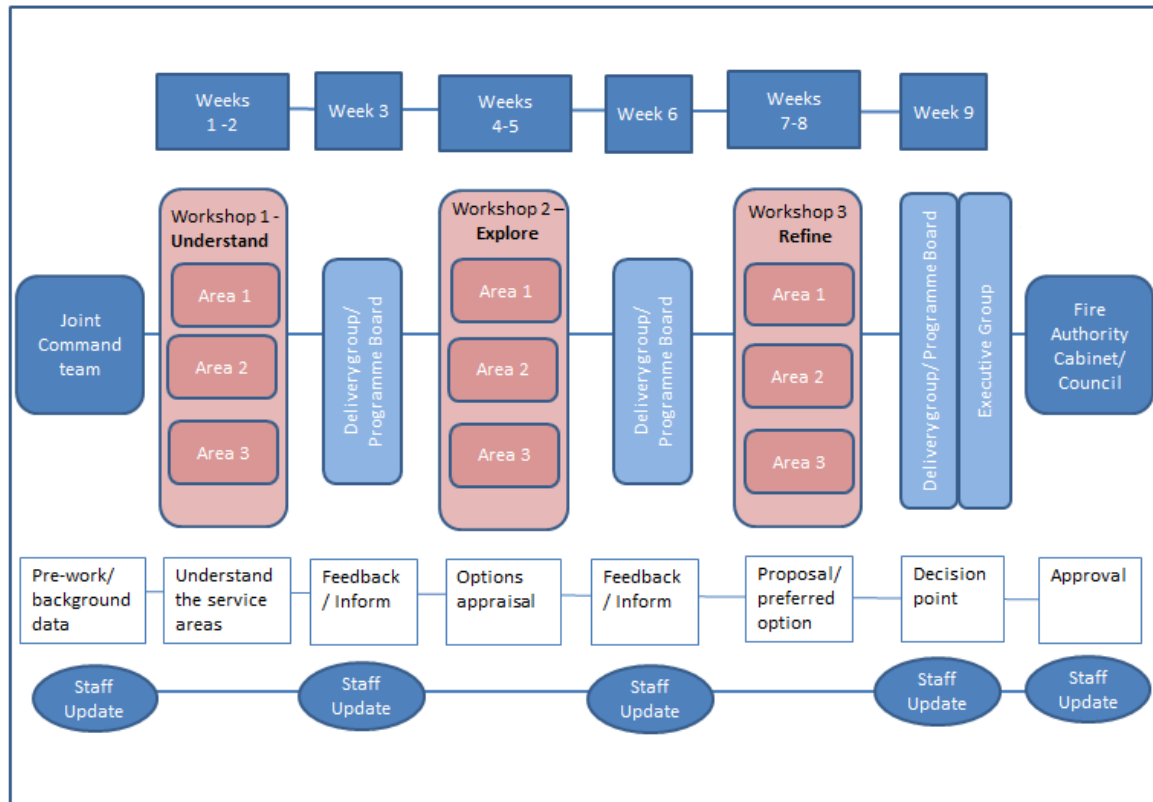
Cabinet endorse the collaborative programme of work between West Midlands Fire Service and Warwickshire Fire & Rescue Services as the first phase in exploring the benefits of joint working.

1.0 Key Issues

- 1.1 The Fire and Rescue Services of Warwickshire and West Midlands believe that a number of positive opportunities exist for joint collaborative working as a means of achieving reform and enhanced service delivery.
- 1.2 On 9th February 2018 a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by the Leader of Warwickshire County Council, Councillor Izzi Seccombe and Chair of the Fire Authority for West Midlands, Councillor John Edwards as a firm statement of intent to pursue opportunities for greater collaboration.
- 1.3 This commitment is supportive of the duty on emergency services to explore opportunities for collaborative working and deliver joined up services as set out in the Policing and Crime Act 2017.
- 1.4 Subsequently a programme approach has been developed and representatives from the Senior leadership teams of both services met on 9th April to commence the programme
- 1.5 This report shares with Members the MoU (Appendix) together with the emerging approach.

2.0 Options and Proposals

2.1 The overall approach to the work is set out in the diagram below:



- 2.2 To commence the work, the leadership teams for both FRS met on 9th April and agreed the Programme Initiation Document.
- 2.3 A rolling programme of reviews has been established, with no more than three service areas being looked or under review at any one time.
- 2.4 To mitigate impact on service delivery each review will be delivered in 60 days and seek evidence-led assessment of collaborative opportunities.
- 2.5 Each review will be delivered through a series of facilitated workshops, involving the relevant teams from each Fire Service.
- 2.6 Workshops will be designed and tailored to build up a robust and evidence-led options appraisal by completion of the 3rd workshop.
- 2.7 Review schedules will be responsive to ongoing pressures and commitments on the two Fire & Rescue services.

Governance of the Programme

- 2.8 A Programme Board has been established to oversee the work. Membership includes Warwickshire County Council's Joint Managing Director, Monica Fogarty, Warwickshire's Chief Fire Officer, Andy Hickmott and West Midlands Fire Service Chief Fire Officer, Phil Loach.
- 2.9 A joint Programme Team has also been established to deliver the work programme. The team will coordinate input from a range of professionals including finance, HR, legal, communication and performance.
- 2.10 At the end of each review the Programme Board will report progress to an Executive Group including the WCC Leader and Portfolio Holder with the Chair of West Midlands Fire Authority.
- 2.11 Key decisions requiring Member approval will not be implemented at Week 9, but will go through the usual decision making processes and brought to Cabinet/Council in Warwickshire and the Fire Authority in West Midlands as required.

How will success be judged?

- 2.12 Success will be judged against the follow criteria:

Public safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>How far does the proposal maintain or improve public safety for the communities served by the two FRSs?</i>• <i>Will the proposals impact on public safety of neighbouring FRS and communities?</i>
Service Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>How far do the proposals enhance service resilience levels within both services to maintain/improve public safety?</i>
Service Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>How far do the proposals enhance the ability of each FRS to keep people safe and secure from fire and other risks?</i>
Service Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>How far do the proposals enhance the ability of each FRS to uses its resources to manage risk, and secures an affordable way of providing its service, now and in the future?</i>
Service Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>How far do the proposals improve the quality of service received by the public?</i>

- 2.13 Each of these drivers will sit at the heart of the discussions which will now take place and be used as the criteria to assess collaborative proposals.
- 2.14 All decisions and outcomes will be evidenced against risk and data available from each service area to ensure alignment with statutory expectations of FRSs.

3 Timescales and next steps

- 3.1 At Programme Initiation stage, no service areas or options are considered to be out of scope for collaboration.
- 3.2 The two leadership teams meet in early April 2018 to commence the programme and agree the initial areas of focus.
- 3.3 The first round of reviews will commence in May and report back to Programme Board and Executive in June/July 2018 as part of the 60 day cycle.
- 3.4 At this point, progress and any potential decisions will be brought back to the Fire Authority in West Midlands and the Cabinet/Full Council in Warwickshire.
- 3.5 A robust communication plan has been put in place to ensure both Services are giving and hearing the same messages around the collaboration. This Communications Plan will also ensure regular and ongoing engagement with all key stakeholders.

Background papers

None

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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): N/A

Other members: Councillors Roberts, Horner, Shilton, Chattaway, Fradgley, Timms, Singh Birdi, O'Rourke, Boad

Appendix – Memorandum of Understanding



WARWICKSHIRE
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE



Warwickshire
County Council



Fire Service Headquarters
99 Moulton Road, Birmingham B7 4W

Warwickshire and West Midlands Fire & Rescue Authorities

Collaboration 2018

1. Warwickshire and West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authorities believe that a number of positive opportunities exist for collaborative working as a means of achieving change and enhanced service delivery.
2. The Public Sector is in a period of pressure – both for efficiency and improved services within reducing resources. Within the West Midlands in particular, agencies have grasped this challenge positively, engaging with devolution, public sector reform and the opportunity to achieve system wide change and development. We believe that the development of Fire and Rescue Services must also benefit from this context of change, and collaboration is a means of doing so. The national policy regarding blue light services sets out a new and clear duty to collaborate and collaboration will move us closer in meeting this duty.
3. The community engagement agenda is an opportunity for Fire and Rescue Services. Within Warwickshire and the West Midlands we have progressive and ever increasing ambitions and expectations about our standards of service and our role within the Community. We recognise that the need to consider working differently within an ever reducing resource base means that working differently is a given, both operationally and politically.
4. Working differently will achieve many things. It must add value, and better protect, the communities we serve. Vulnerability and risk in the community is ever present and ever changing, as are the functions, resources, boundaries, and beliefs of the various public agencies which support them.
5. The geographic boundary between the Warwickshire and West Midlands Fire Services is unique in the UK Fire and Rescue Service. We share 129Km of boundary and the physical geography means it makes sense to look at reciprocal and collaborative opportunities. This is not new and in the past there have been previous considerations of options. Few tangible results have yet been achieved and this time we need to change that outcome. Full political support means that we now have a much better chance of success.



**WARWICKSHIRE
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**



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Making the West Midlands Safer, Stronger and Healthier

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Fire Service Headquarters

?? Vincent Road, Birmingham B7 4HW

6. Both Fire and Rescue Authorities are fully open to the scope of considerations that these opportunities present. These considerations include all aspects of operational service delivery across Fire training; prevention; protection; and response as well as all aspects of operational and organisational support functions. In particular we are committed to exploring fully the opportunities for enhanced community welfare. We wish to exploit the potential for joining up with our colleagues in the NHS and Local Government; recognising the need to work together to support the social care, health and wellbeing of our communities.

7. Finally, it is a governing principle that any collaborative measures must improve on the Status Quo. Such measures must better serve our communities. Demonstrably so, whilst also enhancing efficiency and effectiveness.

Both Warwickshire County Council (Warwickshire Fire & Rescue Service) and the West Midlands Fire Authority endorse this body of work and commit to the programme* of work which will get us there. We expect this programme to be complete by July 2018, and to make the necessary links and connections with wider change under way with both Fire and Rescue Services and the wider West Midlands public service reform agenda.

Signed: 9 February 2018

Cllr John Edwards

Chair

West Midlands Fire & Rescue Authority

Cllr Izzi Seccombe

Leader

Warwickshire County Council

*The Collaboration Programme of Work is enclosed, setting out proposed areas of exploration and development.



WARWICKSHIRE
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE



Warwickshire
County Council



Fire Service Headquarters
77 Younghall Road Birmingham B7 4HW

Initial Collaboration Work Programme

1. Response standards
2. Crewing arrangements
3. Fire control
4. Management and administration
5. Training
6. Full-time/retained balance
7. Social welfare and community support
8. Emergency Planning & Resilience

