Strategic Fire Alliance – Projects Update

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

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1 Purpose of Report

This report updates Members on progress in preparing priority projects
developed by the Strategic Fire Alliance between Shropshire (SFRS) and
Hereford & Worcester (HWFRS) Fire and Rescue Services.

2 Recommendations

The Fire Authority is asked to note the report and the progress it details.

3 Background

At the Fire Authority meeting on 18 December 2018, Members were informed
that the Strategic Alliance Board had agreed terms of governance and a joint
programme plan. The Board comprises the Chairs and Vice Chairs of both
Fire Authorities and both Chief Fire Officers.

The Board also recommended that options be prepared for three priority
projects, and your Authority gave approval for officers to prepare these jointly
with officers from Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service.

The priority projects agreed were as follows;

a.   **Fire Control:** scoping the future requirements for ensuring a resilient
Command & Control function.

b.   **IRMP/CRMP**: reviewing options for aligning integrated risk management
planning processes.

c.   **ICT**: developing organisational arrangements for the provision of
Information & Communications Technology functions.

This report provides progress updates on the three projects, and also includes an update on the development of a fourth project looking at options to align procurement strategies.

4   Update on project progress

A summary of progress for each project to date is set out below.

Fire Control
An options appraisal scoring session took place in September 2019 at Tenbury Wells fire station. This technical assessment day was highly productive and attended by a range of department heads, technical experts and representative bodies.

A draft final report has been completed and was approved by the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) in October 2019. This report now forms the basis of a strategic assessment by chief officers with an initial meeting taking place in November 2019.

Between November and the end of December 2019, the team will:

- Liaise closely with chief officers to finalise the strategic assessment
- Complete the final report

The project team is progressing the work programme within the agreed timeframe.

Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP)
Senior managers from across the Alliance participated in a series of workshops to examine how risk is identified. These meetings utilised a 'PESTLE' analysis looking at the potential impact of **p**olitical, **e**conomic, **s**ocial, **t**echnological, **l**egal and **e**nvironmental concerns over the duration of the new IRMP. These workshops have also identified performance indicators and evaluation criteria to measure the future progress of the Alliance.

A series of staff engagement visits (approximately 40+) designed to help identify risk, are timetabled to conclude on 27 December 2019. This staff engagement process has also included PESTLE analysis. This process was replicated in HWFRS.

In terms of engaging consultants to model and analyse data, the timeline has been amended following further consideration and the tendering exercise will now take place in January 2020. This will also support any requirement for joint modelling of a potential Alliance response standard.

Officers have commenced drafting the narrative for the common template for the IRMP document. This template was previously agreed by Deputy Chief Fire Officer Johnson, who is the Senior Responsible Officer for this project.

ICT
The Authority was previously informed that, following the independent review of current ICT provision across both Services, a recruitment process would take place to appoint a Strategic ICT Change Manager on a 3-year fixed term contract. That process concluded, and Mark Jarvis was appointed.

As part of Mark Jarvis's initial investigations, he has undertaken interviews and reviews with most, if not all the senior uniformed and non-uniformed departmental managers across both fire and rescue services. There have also been opening discussions with members of the ICT teams from both services, to understand their roles and to get a superficial view of current operational practices.

The purpose of these discussions is to both understand the idiosyncrasies of the day-to-day running of the fire and rescue services and to understand the nuances of both SFRS and HWFRS's ICT functions.

Whilst it is early in the process, there are some ICT functions which warrant closer investigation, such as the helpdesk operation, disaster recovery and the wide area network (WAN). These areas are the building blocks of ICT and any changes will have cultural, technical and security impacts.

Mark will continue with investigations around both ICT functions. A further update report will be submitted for the forthcoming Alliance Board and Programme Delivery Board meetings. This will hopefully include an outline proposal of the future phases for this group to approve, including reporting milestones and targets.

Timescales for projects will be determined by the renewal dates of the contracts for both services and may impact on the order in which certain projects are undertaken.

Further investigation is required around contracts and their renewal dates, as well as more in-depth technical discussions around possible areas for collaboration, to ensure both services needs are accounted for.

Procurement
At their meeting on 17 December 2018, the Fire Alliance Programme Delivery Board agreed to incorporate a fourth project into the original programme of works. This project involves reviewing procurement strategies within both Service to examine the potential for alignment.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer of Hereford & Worcester FRS (John Hodges) has been appointed as the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for this project. The Head of Operations Support at Hereford & Worcester FRS (Jon Pryce) has been appointed to the Project Manager (PM) role. Andrew Kelcey is supporting this process and working closely with Jon Pryce.

Representatives from both Services have agreed a draft joint Alliance Procurement Strategy that delivers the agreed strategies that have independently been presented to each Service's senior management team.

The draft joint Alliance Procurement Strategy reinforces the key points made previously in regard to procurement:

- Joint Specifications are the key to delivering the procurement programme and must be entered into by both Services at the earliest possible stage.

- Whilst a number of 'quick wins' have been realised already, and some items have been identified for joint procurement within this financial year, the strategy should focus on aligning significant procurement in the medium to longer term, where possible.

- Not every procurement will be suitable or necessary for joint procurement; however, moving forward, managers should consider joint procurement principles at the earliest stage and at every opportunity and, where it is not considered viable, should establish a methodology within each organisation whereby the rationale for this is recorded.

- Joint procurement may not always be based upon financial savings, though this should be a key consideration, but may be suitable based upon improving interoperability or resilience, for example.

Some significant areas of procurement may require consideration at senior/executive team level and could be IRMP related (for example, vehicle provision, size and capability of vehicles). These areas will be highlighted in future reports.

Should the draft joint Alliance Procurement Strategy be ratified by the Programme Delivery Board, then the document will be formally launched in both organisations. Alongside this there will be a need to develop appropriate structures in each organisation to monitor and review progress against the strategy.

This programme is progressing and establishing the foundation for future aligned procurement between both organisations; however, there is still some progress to be made in regard to embedding this new way of working.

6 Summary

This report provides an overview of each work programme and outlines the next steps over the coming months. Each project is progressing well, and updates are reported regularly to the Strategic Alliance Board and Programme Delivery Board. Further updates will also be brought to future Fire Authority meetings.

7 Capacity

The timescales for the delivery of these workstreams ensures that resources have and will continue to be allocated to the task. This use of SFRS resources is likely to increase as the programme develops.

8 Collaboration / Partnership Working

This is a strategic collaboration that is forming the backbone for more widespread partnership working.

9 Community Safety

There are no community safety impacts arising from this report.

10 Environmental

There are no environmental impacts arising from this report.

11 Equality Impact Assessment

There are no equality or diversity implications arising from this report.
An e-EQIA is not, therefore, required. Each project will complete full equality assessments as the projects develop.

12 Financial Implications

There may be financial implications arising from this report however they will be considered within each project and communicated appropriately.

13 Health and Safety

There are no health and safety impacts arising from this report.

14 Human Rights (including Data Protection)

There are no human rights impacts arising from this report.

15 ICT

The ICT team will be at the forefront of Alliance working especially with the Change Programme

16 Legal Comment

There are no legal implications arising from this report. Any legal impact will be assessed and addressed as part of each individual project.

17 Public Value / Service Delivery

There are no public value or service delivery impacts arising from this report. The Alliance is designed to enhance capacity and resilience within SFRS.

18 Reputation

A reputational impact arising from this report is the risk of failing to deliver these significant Alliance projects.

19 Security

There are no security impacts arising from this report.

20 Training

There are no significant training impacts arising from this report however it should be noted that the new ICT Change Manager will require appropriate support.

21 Appendices

There are no appendices attached to this report.

22 Background Papers

There are no background papers associated with this report.