

## Annual Report on Collaborative and Partnership Working

### Report of the Chief Fire Officer

For further information about this report please contact Rod Hammerton Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260201, or Area Manager Jan Morris, Head of Transformation and Collaboration, on 01743 260299.

#### 1 Purpose of Report

This report provides an overview of collaborative and partnership working being undertaken by the Fire Authority and Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service (the Service).

#### 2 Recommendations

The Fire Authority is asked to note this report.

#### 3 Background

Partnership working is a key element in the Service's strategy to meet its vision of "Making Shropshire Safer", this is also reflected in the Fire Service National Framework. The Service is involved in partnerships, which are risk assessed for liability and reputation by the Service's Risk Management Group. The Service maintains a Partnership Register, which is reviewed by the Service Management Team in order to monitor the outcome and productivity of each of the partnerships.

The Service has amended the Partnership Brigade Order and Partnership Register to meet the recommendations of Internal Audit. This was completed in October 2019.

A Service priority is the methodology to identify and access some of the most vulnerable people in the community. Partnership and Collaborative working are key enablers in this work. This report sets out to explain what partnerships and collaborations are whilst presenting the strategy that underpins collaboration. The report also provides examples of collaboration and current partnerships.

## 4 Collaboration

Within the Police and Crime Act 2017 the Government introduced a “duty to collaborate.” This has imposed a statutory duty for the Service to “consider whether entering into a collaboration will be in the interests of efficiency, effectiveness or public safety.”

### **What is Collaboration?**

Collaboration can be simply seen as people’s aspirations to come and act together.

Collaboration can be defined as:

*“a process in which organisations exchange information, alter activities, share resources, and enhance each other's capacity for mutual benefit and a common purpose by sharing risks, responsibilities, and rewards.”*

Collaborating is characterised by substantial time commitments, very high levels of trust, and extensive areas of common ground.

### **How does a Collaboration differ from a Partnership?**

Partnerships are more formal and, in many cases, incorporate formal agreements on outcomes and procedures. (As seen in the Partnership Register)

Collaboration can encompass just about any activity where two or more organisations are working together, where as a partnership sets out some clearly defined guidelines and expected results that the collaborative efforts will be measured against.

In a collaboration, each organisation operates independently and has complete control over the individual resources they bring to the table. In a partnership, there is more of a co-mingling of resources and a separate structure is developed to oversee or manage the engagement. Hence the partnership agreement and its register.

### **SFRS Collaborative Strategy**

#### **We will**

- identify and develop the common ground (synergy) between our Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) and the strategy of our Partners.
- exchange information, alter activities, share resources and enhance capacity of other organisations to achieve a common purpose and or mutual benefit.

Any such benefit will be achieved through the efficient use of the time and resources available and will align to Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service's Service aims.

## **5 Fire Alliance Collaboration**

The Alliance with Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) has been in place since 2018. It currently provides both Services with the strengths of a large organisation without losing individual identities. Both this Service and HWFRS remain separate organisations that operate independently and have full control of their own resources.

The Alliance is guided by a joint Fire Alliance Strategic Plan (2018-2022), which aims to provide both Services with the long-term capacity and resilience to meet the increasing pressures of budgetary restrictions, changing demands and specialist skills requirements. At the heart of this lies collaboration and the benefits are already coming through.

The Services have invested resources, altered activities and exchanged information in the four key areas. These areas were identified as key enablers to support wider future working and currently progressing.

- Fire Control
- Community Risk Management (CRMP)
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
- Procurement

Appendix A to the report sets out the progress of the Alliance against the four key areas, however it should be noted that both services work together to ensure policy and process is mirrored wherever possible.

## **6 Partnership Overview.**

A selection of partnerships is detailed in sections 7, 8 and 9. This is not an exhaustive list. These partnerships are taken from the Partnership Register. It should be noted that some partnerships have been affected by the pandemic. Many partners have had to look at alternative ways of working and whilst this was initially a temporary measure, many have stated that they wish to review working practices in order to capture and continue any good practice identified.

Over the next six months, Departments will work with partners to review existing partnerships to ensure they remain functional in their current form, or whether they need to be changed, so that they continue to provide the best service possible for the communities of Shropshire.

## 7 Prevention and Protection Partnerships

Partnership highlights:

### **Multi Agency Targeted Enforcement Strategy (MATES)**

This consists of; West Mercia Police, Immigration Enforcement, Gangmasters, Probation Service, Shropshire Council Regulatory Enforcement, Telford and Wrekin Council Regulatory Enforcement, Her Majesty's Revenue and Custom.

MATES is aimed at focusing enforcement work of a multitude of departments on high-risk premises where there are links to:

- Illegal Working
- Sales of counterfeit and smuggled tobacco
- Rogue Landlords and unlawful houses of multiple occupation
- Dangerous breaches in fire safety and other safety regulations
- Exploitation of workers
- Modern Slavery
- Human Trafficking
- Child Sexual Exploitation

### **Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS)**

There is ongoing work to formalise partnership agreements with local housing bodies under the above protocols. This will allow for better regulation over the lead enforcing authority for each individual case. It is hoped these agreements will be signed off over the coming months.

### **AICO**

AICO provides fire protection systems and work alongside Local Authorities and Housing Associations to create bespoke solutions so that tenants can be safer in their homes. AICO support the Service in the delivery of training to Prevention, Fire Investigation and Protection Officers. More recently they are providing their site in Oswestry for Fire Authority meetings and Business Fire Safety education seminars, and will sponsor community, commercial and other service events.

### **Telford & Wrekin Council**

Recent work has been undertaken by both organisations to ensure that previous and future protocols meet the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

This agreement has been further developed with Adult Social Care and now means that when a care package is reviewed (annually) the client is given the option of a receiving a Safe and Well visit.

This Council protocol has also been used as a template to create and service other partnerships with organisations, such as Bluebird Care Ltd, with the assurance that the agreements comply with legislation and essentially provide a robust number of referrals to the Service.

### **NHS; Falls and Frailty**

Officers have recently designed a partnership with the NHS for the prevention of falls and injuries in frailer older people. The NHS will be able to use Stations to carry out support sessions.

### **British Red Cross, Home from Hospital Service, Telford and Shrewsbury**

The Red Cross will complete a fire risk assessment on each client within Shropshire/Telford & Wrekin that use the 'Home from Hospital' service. Referrals are then made to the Service. The Red Cross co-ordinators also complete a Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service checklist for new service users.

### **Oswestry Care and Supreme Homecare Partnerships**

Oswestry Care are a private care agency for which the Service has agreed to train and deliver refresher training to the carers that work in the community. This gives them the knowledge of identifiable fire risk within their client's homes and an avenue of referral. Oswestry Care also fill in the Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service fire safety checklist and return it to the Prevention Team. Supreme Homecare replicate this service.

### **Housing Association Support**

The Service offers and delivers Safe and Well advice to Housing Association residents (Wrekin Housing Group) and has delivered numerous visits as part of the programme. The major housing groups offer vulnerability referrals to the Service. This support now includes hoarding case management. The Service currently embed the Telford & Wrekin Vulnerable Persons Officer within The Wrekin Housing Group (WHG) for 1 day a week visiting high risk residents.

WHG have also given the Service access to the WHG Portal. This allows the Service to communicate directly with WHG for a host of issues. Fire Control can directly request boarding up at WHG properties.

### **Rural Partnerships**

The Service's Fire Crime Officer writes regular articles for the National Farmers Union (Midlands), Shropshire Rural Hub and Neighbourhood Watch, raising awareness of rural fires, especially those involving farms and barns.

The Outreach vehicle and members of the Prevention Team also support Police rural crime events in Shrewsbury and at Harper Adams University.

### **Support to young carers**

This incorporates the former British Red Cross scheme which supports young carers across Shropshire. These young people look after adults in the family home, often parents, with a variety of issues.

An agreement provides a referral pathway that has been built into an annual review form. Clients who have consented to such a visit are referred on a monthly basis.

### **Baywater Healthcare**

Baywater Healthcare send addresses of people in Shropshire using oxygen for the first time, and those who have been taken off the list due to no longer requiring oxygen at home. This allows the Prevention team to approach the householder and offer them a Safe and Well visit. The information regarding oxygen use is also recorded onto our command and control system in order to give operational staff additional intelligence if called to the address in an emergency.

This agreement was a regional agreement put together by Baywater Healthcare and Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service on behalf of our region.

### **Domestic Abuse Sub-Group, Sanctuary Scheme and MARAC**

The purpose of this group is to encourage agencies and organisations to work in partnership in order to create an environment where domestic violence and abuse is not tolerated and to reduce the impact on victims in Shropshire. This comes under the Safer Stronger Community Partnership. The partnership is supported by Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and referrals to the Service are triaged by West Mercia Police. The Service's Fire Crime Officer liaises with partners to address areas and individuals of specific concern and measures, such as lockable letterboxes, are employed to target harden premises against the risk of attack.

### **Team Shrewsbury**

Team Shrewsbury is a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which forms the basis of an Integrated Community Management Partnership between various public sector partners, and the business, community and voluntary sectors. This is split into both Strategic and Tactical working groups.

### **Shropshire and Telford Troubled Families**

Agreements have been reached with both Telford and Shropshire who refer their clients to the service to have a Safe and Well Visit. The clientele is those families in urgent need of assistance with a variety of issues that are hindering them from being able to cope with everyday life. The program, run by the individual councils, is designed to offer support so they can become self-sufficient in supporting themselves and their families safely. The Service's contribution to this program is to ensure these families receive valuable fire safety advice and are signposted to services that may be able to assist them with other areas of concern raised at our visit, but which do not fall into our area of expertise.

## **8 Operational Response Partnerships and Other Collaborations.**

The first annual Cost of Collaboration report is provided as Appendix B of this document. However, it should be noted that the report focuses on collaborative response activities not wider collaboration costs and/or savings.

### **Gaining Entry.**

Using our fire crews and rescue equipment to help the Ambulance Service gain access to premises where someone needs urgent medical attention. In the year ending 31 March 2020 the Service assisted at 127 incidents

### **Missing Persons Search.**

Fire crews assist Police with searching for high risk missing persons, this utilises water and line rescue, drones, thermal imagery, multi terrain vehicles and boots on the ground. In the year ending 31 March 2020 the Service attended 11 incidents and fire crews located 3 missing persons.

### **NHS Later Life Training**

This is a partnership enabling access to the NHS Later Life training team and members of the public in their care to their local fire station (currently Craven Arms & Ludlow) as a venue for various training sessions, such as prevention of falls and injuries in older people. Safe and Well advice is given by station personnel to increase contact with local communities. The partnership enables local engagement with the aim of reducing future risk of repeat injuries/falls, therefore reducing impact on emergency services.

### **Burns Care Network**

The Burns Care Network was set up to share casualty information on casualties with burns-related injuries at incidents attended by various stakeholders. The lead hospital for this network is University Hospital Birmingham. This Service and several other regional and national stakeholders within the Midlands region have signed up to this protocol.

### **Light Vehicle Maintenance**

West Mercia Police now carry out SFRS light vehicle maintenance. The Service has access to the Police diagnostic centre and the discounts available to the Police.

### **Telford Central Development**

Re-develop the Telford Central site in a way that maximises the benefits to the public purse, through working in collaboration with partner agencies, the public and charities.

Proposal includes facilities for:

Emergency Planning Unit - Shropshire

Emergency Planning Unit - Telford and Wrekin

Training Facilities - West Mercia Police

Tactical Command Centre - Multi-agencies Shropshire

Virtual Strategic Command Centre - Multi-agencies Shropshire Meeting, conference and community use facilities - public, charities and partners both public and private.

## **Covid Partnerships 2020/21**

Following a request from the local NHS Trust, the Service has supported the roll out of the Covid vaccine programme since January 2021. The Service supported this initially with the appointment of a Station Manager to act as liaison to partners and co-ordinate activities which have included delivering the marshalling at Shropshire's three mass vaccination sites, providing managerial resilience, delivering fire safety advice and training, assisting with logistical support, providing the infrastructure and support for a mobile community 'pop up' vaccination clinic and training around 70 non-registered vaccinators to deliver over 18,000 vaccines. In addition to this, the Service has supported the local NHS Trust by providing a non-emergency ambulance service to relieve pressure from current providers and transport patients for routine hospital appointments.

This work has been carried out by members of SFRS staff from across the Service who volunteered themselves to undertake additional duties to support the Covid programme. As well as fitting in with the organisational goal of making Shropshire safer this work has presented great opportunity for community engagement and community safety.

## **9 Equality and Diversity Groups and Partnerships**

The Service's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team works with a range of partnerships and groups, including Shropshire Disability Network, Safe Ageing No Discrimination (SAND), Older People's Forums in Shropshire and Telford, the Rainbow Film Festival and LGBT History, Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin LGBT+ film festival and Fairness, Respect, Equality Shropshire (FRESH).

SFRS is a Disability Confident Employer which is a scheme designed to help recruit and retain people who have a disability or people with health conditions for their skills and talent.

The Service is a member of the Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA). In 2018 Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service were awarded a certificate for being a founder member of this group. The Service participates in the AFSA regional meetings and workshops, as well as attending National events and conferences.

The Service was among the first corporate members of FRESH, which was established in 2013 to support improved equality and anti-discrimination policy and practice within and beyond Shropshire. The Service is committed to FRESH and its work.

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service are members of Women in the Fire Service, supporting and encouraging employees to attend events. The Service has also addressed the HMICFRS recommendation to provide/enable minority support groups within SFRS, and in 2020 created a Voices group which is made up from employees who have put themselves forward to be representatives for the following:



- Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic employees
- Disability
- Dyslexia
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender + (LGBTQ+) employees
- Menopause
- Mental Health
- Women

The Service shares its work around dyslexia with other fire services and organisations in the United Kingdom and in May 2021 spoke at a conference in the USA to share its experiences in a collaboration with the North American Fire Training Directors (NAFTD) and Microsoft. The service also holds regular Dyslexia Networking Meetings.

## **10 Identified Revenue Funding**

There is no additional revenue funding required at this stage.

## **11 Capacity**

No capacity impacts have been identified.

## **12 Collaboration / Partnership Working**

The Area Manager Transformation and Collaboration will continue to explore opportunities both within and outside the Alliance.

## **13 Community Safety**

There are no community safety impacts arising from this report.

## **14 Environmental**

There are no environmental impacts arising from this report.

## **15 Equality Impact Assessment**

This report sets out factual details of partnerships, in which the Service is involved. An equality impact assessment has not been completed for this report.

## **16 Financial Implications**

Information on income and expenditure within partnerships is collected and updated in line with the frequency of monitoring, which takes place on each partnership and is recorded on the Partnership Register. The Service Management Team reviews the Register every six months.

## **17 Health and Safety**

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

## **18 Human Rights (including Data Protection)**

There are no human rights impacts arising from this report.

## **19 ICT**

There is no impact on ICT.

## **20 Legal Comment**

There are no legal implications arising from this report. The functions exercised within the partnership working arrangements fall within the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the aims and objectives of the Fire Authority.

## **21 Public Value / Service Delivery**

Strategic Aims 1 -4

## **22 Reputation**

There is a reputational risk if the Service enters into an inappropriate partnership or fails to deliver on a partnership's obligations.

## **23 Security**

There are no security impacts arising from this report.

## **24 Training**

There are no training implications within this report.

## **25 Appendices**

### **Appendix A**

Fire Alliance Progress Report

### **Appendix B**

Cost of Collaboration Report

## **26 Background Papers**

There are no background papers associated with this report.

# Fire Alliance Update Report

## 1 Purpose of Report

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

## 2 Background

The alliance with Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (the Fire Alliance) has been in place since 2018. The purpose of the Fire Alliance is to enhance the capacity and resilience of both Services supporting their long-term sustainability. It provides both Services with the strengths of a larger organisation without losing individual identities. Both SFRS and HWFRS remain separate organisations, operating independently, with full control of their own resources.

The Fire Alliance is guided by a joint Fire Alliance Strategic Plan (2018-2022), which aims to provide both Services with the long-term capacity and resilience to meet the increasing pressures of budgetary restrictions, changing demands and specialist skills requirements. At the heart of this lies collaboration in sharing resources, knowledge and expertise.

The Services have identified four key areas that are currently being developed. These areas were identified as foundation activities that would also, in time, support wider future working.

- Fire Control
- Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP)
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
- Procurement

## 3 Progress

### **Project 1: Fire Control**

The project was designed to be able to set out a joint vision for Fire Control. This project explores the potential for creating a shared Fire Control function for both Services.

Both Services jointly funded the post of a dedicated officer to take this work forward and who has overseen the delivery of an in-depth analysis of the technical capabilities and longevity of the current Fire Control arrangements in both Services, as well as an overall risk assessment.

Following an initial options appraisal, the following solutions were all identified as viable, but with varying strengths and weaknesses:

- Continue to operate as two independent control rooms, providing each other fall-back resilience and over-flow capacity – both operating on a single, updated system.
- Pursue a more regional solution with both services partnering with a third party.
- Consolidating resources to a single site and achieving resilience through a third party
- Operating as one control over two sites, possibly, with a primary and secondary control room, that provides mutual resilience and spare capacity.

A joint resilience exercise was planned to determine the current level of capacity and capability to deal with a significant incident, such as a high-rise residential fire in the light of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry findings but this has been postponed due to both services having been in Major Incident status, due to flooding followed by the pandemic, since March 2020. Once this exercise is completed it is anticipated any learning will help to shape the requirements of any new technology and ways of working.

Over the past year emphasis has moved to creating a specification for a new Command and Control system which will be shared across both services, but which can be brought online at different times to support resilience. Both services favour use of tried and tested technology rather than development of something new.

The Alliance Board has identified an implementation timeline of approximately three years and there has been mutual agreement for a joint project team. The next step is to identify and create a new project team who will be able to find and implement a system that can be adapted to meet both current and future needs.

This project will provide good evidence of Alliance benefits.

## **Project 2: Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP)**

This involves aligning each Service's processes for preparing their overall strategies for keeping people, their homes, communities and environment safe from fire and other emergencies.

Since the last report both services have released and published their CRMP. Work is now focused on developing the best ways of measuring the impact services are having on reducing risk, and officers have begun to develop joint performance indicators and evaluation criteria.

Independent analysis and modelling were provided to test plans for aligning attendance standards across both Fire and Rescue Services. The attendance standard is a measure of how long fire engines take to reach incidents wherever they are in the three counties. There is an agreement from both services that both services will align attendance standards, and Hereford & Worcestershire are currently undergoing public consultation to agree the standards.

Corporate Performance Indicators will be reported at Performance & Risk Group (PRG) and monitored at the Fire Alliance Delivery Board to enable comparisons to be made.

By aligning processes such as the CRMP, we can continue to learn from each other and share best practice. We can also plan joint activities across protection, prevention and response for the next four years to continue to work together better.

### **Project 3: Information and Communications Technology (ICT)**

The ICT functions form the crucial infrastructure behind the smooth running of a modern fire and rescue service. It is important in enabling good communication and integration between emergency services locally, regionally and nationally.

An in-depth review of the current ICT provisions across both Services has been carried out, and to take this work forward, both Services have jointly implemented a new structure to enable progress with the key workstreams within the ICT pillar. These are:

- WAN project – Draft tenders have been created for each service, recognising each has a different user requirement. Flexibility has been considered as part of these tenders, specifically the requirement that each service will be able to access the other, thus creating additional resilience.
- Helpdesk System project – Both services have identified end user requirements, with next steps being to align processes and procedures for both ICT teams to create resilience and capacity.
- Software Analysis report – complete and enables informed decisions about proposals and recommendations for both services.
- Govroam Application – Initial exploratory work in progress. Govroam enables end users to access any Gov.UK network, providing an additional layer of resilience.

- Dark Trace Cyber Security – Trials underway in Hereford & Worcester with Shropshire FRS maintaining a watching brief with a view to adoption at a later date.
- Joint ICT Purchasing – discussions are ongoing to create a list of potential procurement items to allow development of joint specifications.

#### **Project 4: Procurement**

This project is aimed at achieving efficiencies through aligning contracts, where practical, and jointly procuring goods and services where this makes sense. However, it should be recognised that both services already take considerable advantage of economies of scale through national and regional frameworks wherever possible.

Joint procurement not only helps to achieve cost and process savings but encourages closer working and sharing of procured resources. This in turn helps to reduce the procurement demand further. It can also provide many other opportunities including sharing the development of operational procedures, operating instructions and equipment risk assessments, thus reducing training costs and minimising maintenance costs.

To this end a formal Fire Alliance Procurement Strategy, together with a Procurement Programme of actions in the short, medium and longer term, was agreed by both Services.

Examples of joint specification, procurement and mutual support include:

- The provision of officers' command response vehicles. The original needs assessment and market research was carried out by HWFRS with SFRS taking this work and using it to introduce new vehicles and move away from leasing to ownership. Ongoing collaboration has enabled refinement of the vehicle. All vehicles are purchased through a national framework.
- The introduction and evaluation of electric vehicles has been led by SFRS, who have used these vehicles for two years. Further market research has led to the joint identification of a suitable vehicle for both Services and common procurement is planned.
- The introduction of gas monitors was led by HWFRS, with further development by SFRS as technology improved. Shropshire have now purchased the same product as Hereford and Worcester, with a limited number of units with enhanced capability. The use of common equipment has enabled shared stock, reduced reserve numbers, improved resilience, and common operating procedures.
- Shropshire has supported Hereford and Worcester in their development of a specification for thermal imaging cameras. Although Shropshire has no need to purchase these items, the shared specification development provides a more diverse perspective on need and performance, leading to an improved specification.

- Although the Services response models remain different, as they address differing community needs, full-sized pumping appliance specifications have been shared and brought together. This has led to the provision of additional water capacity on HWFRS appliances and enabled a common procurement approach, supported by West Midlands Fire Service. Hereford and Worcester have been leading on the introduction of smaller appliances and SFRS are working with them to use their learning and apply it within Shropshire. That learning has been fed back to HWFRS as we jointly look to further develop the principles.
- The Services are working together to develop workwear clothing of a suitable quality and cost, with resilient supply.

## 4 Efficiencies and Savings

Both Services have a well-established history of collaborating on procurement projects. Of the eight projects delivered prior to the formal establishment of the Fire Alliance, an estimated joint overall saving of £307,920 has been achieved. Both Services have also achieved benefits from using National Frameworks that are quick and easy to use, with no sign-up fee, and with quantity price breaks available.

Non-cashable savings have also been made, as neither Service has had to incur the total costs of running a full tender process - which can involve an extensive and lengthy process with high demands on staff and additional risks of legal challenge from suppliers. Collaborative purchases resulted in improved resilience and interoperability aligned to the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP) and new Incident Command Units.

A total of three Incident Command Units (ICUs) were jointly procured, which successfully enabled both Services to satisfy operational requirements through a collaborative approach to manage risk across both Service areas. The three vehicles are strategically located - one in Shropshire and two in Hereford & Worcester. With shared capability and ability to act on each other's behalf, this is a reduction on the previous 5 held across both Services, representing a capital saving of £186,000 per Service.

This supports interoperability between the Services which enhances resilience when dealing with significant incidents. The effective use of technology has enhanced the incident command capability of both Services and has provided a fit for purpose resource for years to come.

Through a positive assessment of need, the Services have jointly identified areas of commonality and others where divergence is appropriate. This is most obvious in the appearance of the vehicles. Whilst the functionality, operating principles and significant cost elements are the same, the low-value branding on the vehicles provides both Services with the resilience of a larger organisation whilst retaining individual identities.

## 5 Future Projects Identified

The Fire Alliance Delivery Board has identified two more projects that will enhance both efficiency and effectiveness. These are:

- Alignment of Fire Investigation standards to meet the requirements of ISO/IEC 17020:2012. This will involve both services working together with West Mercia Police to establish key parameters. Work has just started to produce a resource plan.
- Environmental Plans: Work will shortly begin on a joint Environmental strategy, initially to establish agreement on replacement/update of singular items (such as boilers) and to explore the potential for access to Government grants for building surveys to enable comparisons across both services.

## 6 Summary

The Alliance is taking positive steps forward and is becoming embedded in everyday working for both Services. Change is being carried out at a sustainable pace which enables the people of both organisations to understand and buy in to the collaboration.

Both CRMPs provide examples of how the Services are coming together by aligning department aims where service delivery and public safety can be enhanced. The Alliance continues to learn from the challenge's other alliances both in fire and beyond have faced and remains focussed on enhancing capacity, resilience and public safety.

### Further Information

For further information about this report please contact Rod Hammerton, Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260201, or Area Manager Jan Morris, Head of Transformation and Collaboration, on 01743 260299.



# The Cost of Collaboration

## Report of the Chief Fire Officer

For further information about this report please contact Rod Hammerton Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260201 or Area Manager Jan Morris, Head of Transformation and Collaboration, on 01743 260200.

### 1 Purpose of Report

This report outlines the cost to Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) of mobilising to incidents to support West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS) and West Mercia Police. The report is for information, consideration and discussion.

### 2 Recommendations

The Service Management Team (SMT) is asked to:

- a) Note the report.
- b) Accept the current cost of collaborative response is in the public interest.
- c) Confirm the scope of future reports.

### 3 Background

As part of collaborative working SFRS has for some years supported West Midlands Ambulance Service and West Mercia Police to attend special service incidents such as gaining entry, missing persons, and other miscellaneous incidents labelled as “assist police/ambulance”.

In late 2018/19 the service entered a tri-service Memorandum of Understanding with West Mercia Police and West Midlands Ambulance Service for “gaining entry”. Agreement was that the service would respond if officers from police or ambulance attended an incident where fire service intervention was required – not that fire would respond as the first call. This was extended to the following year.

This report gives a brief overview of the type of calls, the agencies SFRS have assisted and the approximate cost of that collaborative work.

There is a desire that this information be put into the public domain, with twice-yearly reporting to SMT in order to satisfy scrutiny that the cost of such response is best value and in the best interests of the public.

This is the first of such reports and should initiate discussion about future content should changes be required.

## 4 Data & Interpretation

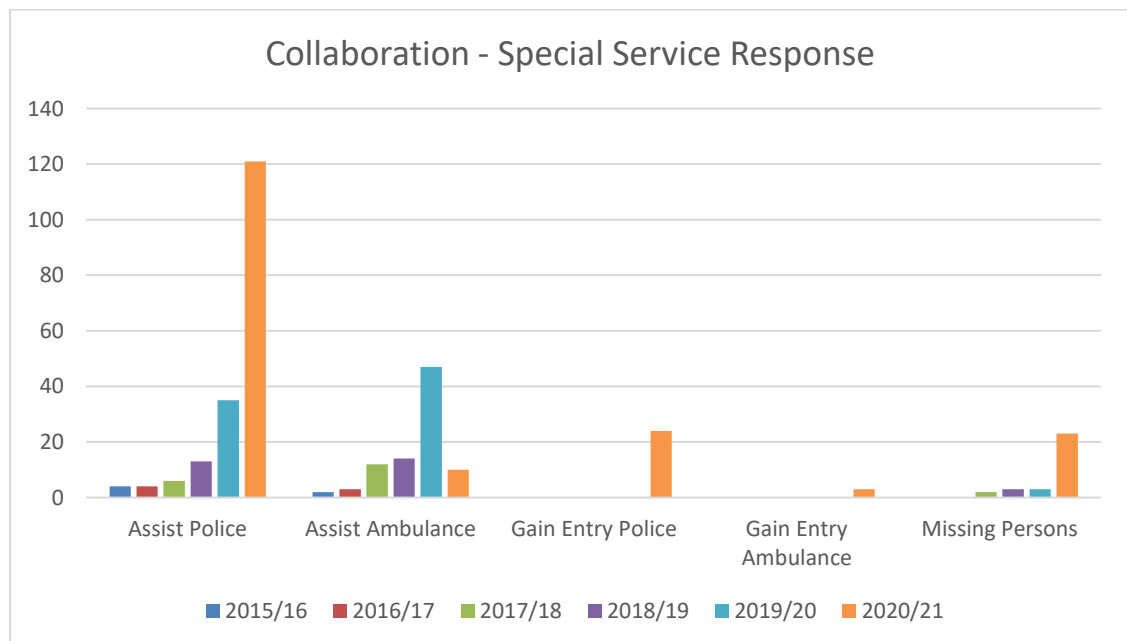
The Business Intelligence (BI) Team has provided an overview of incidents where SFRS has been asked to assist other agencies. These incidents can be broken down into a number of categories, briefly:

- Affect entry/exit
- Assist other agencies
- Good intent
- No action
- Other rescue/release of persons
- Rescue or evacuation from water
- Spills and leaks, and
- Suicide attempts

These are subsequently broken down into sub-categories and allocated the following incident types:

- Assist Ambulance
- Assist Police
- Gain Entry Ambulance
- Gain Entry Police
- Missing Person

The following graph shows the direction of travel since 2015.



SMT will note that activity assisting police colleagues has increased substantially since recording started in 2015/16 – with a significant increase being seen in activity over the past year. Conversely, activity assisting ambulance colleagues that started to increase, peaking in 2019/20, has seen a sharp decline over the past 12 months.

On occasions the call to gain entry for Ambulance will come from Police as they previously provided a gain entry service for Ambulance. This may therefore account for some of the rise in Police figures for 2020/21, and the decrease in Ambulance figures. This may also be attributable to changes to response due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Using the Service’s special services charges 2020/21 (attached at Appendix to report) as a guide, the following costs in £000’s have been calculated.

<b>Agency Costs £000’s</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>Total Cost £000s</b>
<b>Police</b>	£1.5K	£0.3K	£2.4K	£3.2K	£6.2K	£31.1K	£44.7K
<b>Ambulance</b>	£0.3K	£0.4K	£1.9K	£2.7K	£6.9K	£1.9K	£14.1K
<b>Annual costs</b>	£1.8K	£0.7K	£4.3K	£5.9K	£13.1K	£33K	£58.8K

The total cost of assisting Police over the last 12 months has increased to £31.1K, whereas the cost of assisting Ambulance has fallen to £1.9K. This means that the annual cost of responding to special service calls at the request of other agencies has risen to £33K which is an increase of 154% since 2019/20.

## **5 Conclusions**

The report finds that although the cost of collaborative response has increased significantly over the previous 12 months, the cost is low overall and contributes to the Service’s requirement to support collaborative working, is in the best interest of the public and communities of Shropshire and enhances the Service’s reputation as a community focused organisation.

Given the substantial rise in costs over the past 12 months, it is recommended that SMT continue to monitor these figures, giving thought to any additional activity which can be added to contribute towards reporting.

## **6 Capacity**

There are no capacity impacts arising from this report.

## **7 Fire Alliance / Collaboration / Partnership Working**

There may be an opportunity to include/compare SFRS's response with that of Hereford & Worcestershire Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS). SFRS may also want to include events where it has provided support to HWFRS where other agencies are involved, e.g., NILO.

## **8 Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications arising from this report, other than the costs already indicated above.

## **9 Legal Comment**

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

## **10 Community Safety**

These activities contribute towards our strategy and commitment to "Making Shropshire Safer".

## **11 Environmental**

There are no environmental impacts arising from this report.

## **12 Equality Impact Assessment**

There are no equality or diversity implications arising from this report. An e-EQIA is not, therefore, required.

## **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**

There are no ICT impacts arising from this report.

## **16 Public Value / Service Delivery**

The content of this report supports the value to the public that Shropshire Fire and Rescue can provide by working cohesively with its partners.

## **17 Reputation**

Continuing to find ways of improving and supporting emergency response maintains and enhances organisational reputation.

## **18 Security**

There are no security impacts arising from this report.

## **19 Training**

There are no additional training impacts arising from this report.

## **20 Appendix**

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service  
Special Service Charges Tariff 2020/21

## **21 Background Papers**

There are no background papers associated with this report.

**Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service**

**Special Services Charges 2020/21**

<b>Appliances per Hour</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>2020/21 Net Rate per Hour with Crew</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Total</b>
(part of an hour to count as a complete hour)	Pumping Appliance	251.42	50.28	301.70
	Special Appliance (ALP, RT, HPU) with pumping appliance	333.60	66.72	400.32
	Utility Vehicles (pod, boat, ranger)	84.62	16.92	101.54
<b>Miscellaneous Charges</b>		<b>Hourly Rate</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Total</b>
	Search of files (plus document charge, see below) per hour	34.34	6.87	41.21
	Interviews with Brigade personnel (interview plus travelling expenses) minimum charge	66.23	13.25	79.48
	Room hire (£30 for up to 3 hours, £10 for each subsequent hour)	30.00		30.00
<b>Investigation Charges</b>		<b>Charge</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Total</b>
	Copy of Fire Report (either Incident Reporting System (IRS) report , or Fire Damage Report (FDR1) )	79.05	15.81	94.86
	Copy of Fire Investigation Report	326.40	65.28	391.68
	Provision of Fire Investigation Information by Fire Investigation Officer (per hour)	93.50	18.70	112.20
	Scene (subject to copyright) photograph - Capped at £100 for more than 20	4.25	0.85	5.10