

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 Jan Morris, Head of Transformation and Collaboration, on 01743 260299.

1 Executive Summary

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 the 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 to monitor the outcome and productivity of each of the partnerships.

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.

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service Collaborative Strategy

We will:

- identify and develop the common ground (synergy) between our Community 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.

Both 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

In addition, work is ongoing to include the Fire Investigation ISO and the Environment.

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 of this report. 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 to capture and continue any good practice identified.

Significant work has been carried out by the Service Development Team to update the register to ensure currency, relevance, and accessibility. Department Heads have been asked to review the register to ensure all partnerships are up to date and relevant, removing any that are no longer viable or current.

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

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.

Home Instead

Home Instead are a care provider that give home visit care to clients around Shropshire. The aim of the partnership is to have Home Instead clients referred to the Service for a Safe & Well visit and to provide training to Home Instead staff to identify hazards in the home.

Institute of Advanced Motoring (Young Driver/Young Rider schemes)

The main objective of this partnership is to reduce the number of people killed or injured on the roads of Shropshire, through advanced driver training of young drivers and motorcyclists.

Multi-Agency Public Protection Agreement (MAPPA)

This partnership is a means to share critical information about those who are vulnerable or those who may provide a potential threat to the community. The information sharing is signed by statutory partners. The Service are invited to MAPPA meetings where the offender has been convicted of an offence of arson.

Royal British Legion (RBL)

The Royal British Legion will refer vulnerable members to the Service to have a Safe and Well visit following which the Service will refer back to the RBL where it is identified that members require further help and support.

Royal National Lifeboat Institute (RNLI) Waterside Responder Scheme

The Throwline Responder Scheme supports the delivery of throwline training by Service staff to various volunteers using RNLI scheme and materials. This supports water safety in the county.

8 Operational Response Partnerships and Other Collaborations

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

Environment Agency

This partnership provides a joint assurance for each agency to ensure that a rapid and proportionate response is made to either pre-planned or “rising tide” incidents.

The partnership also makes provision for the equipment to mitigate pollution in the early stages of an incident and new equipment such as water gates to stem the flow of larger water courses or in flooding situations.

Police Property Sharing

This partnership seeks to support the rationalisation of the total public sector estate. There is currently provision of police accommodation at Whitchurch, Bridgnorth and Church Stretton fire stations. Sharing of other sites will enable closer working, release of capital assets and reduced revenue costs.

Southern Police Vehicle Framework

This partnership assures efficiency of vehicle procurement processes of cars and light vans. It ensures that Fire Service vehicles comply with Police safety standards and there are benefits such as increased warranty terms and lower purchase prices.

West Mercia Police Light Vehicle Maintenance

West Mercia Police workshops are maintaining the Service’s light vehicle fleet, with an intention to move towards a fully managed service linked in with the Service’s inclusion on the Southern Police Vehicle Framework. This partnership removes the need for the Service to provide additional staff capacity to service its own light fleet.

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).

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service 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). The Service participates in the AFSA regional meetings and workshops, as well as attending National events and conferences.

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 2019 HMICFRS inspection recommendation to provide/enable minority support groups within Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service, and in 2020 created a Voices group which is made up from employees who have put themselves forward to be representatives. The Voices Group is in its early stages but is working well and has been recognised as good practice in the soon to be released HMICFRS inspection report.

The Service has won awards and shares its work around dyslexia with other fire services. It holds regular Dyslexia Networking Meetings.

10 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.

11 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.

12 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.

13 Appendices

Appendix A

Fire Alliance Update Report

Appendix B

Cost of Collaboration Report

14 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 on the programme of priority projects developed by the Fire Alliance between Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) and Hereford & Worcester and Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS).

2 Background

At its meetings on 24 September 2018 and 17 December 2018, the Fire Alliance agreed four priority projects: to review the future requirements for the fire control mobilising command and control function; to develop organisational arrangements for ICT functions; to prepare options for aligning the community/ risk management plan (CRMP) process for HWFRS and SFRS, and to review procurement strategies within both Services to examine the potential for alignment.

This report provides an update on progress on these key projects.

3 Programme Update

Throughout 2021 and into 2022, both Services have continued to deal with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Whilst resources continue to be directed to support partners and maintain service delivery the new Senior Responsible Owners (SROs) have managed to progress the alliance projects.

Officers previously discussed governance of the four priority projects, and it was agreed that each Project would convene a Project Working Group as outlined on page 16 of the Fire Alliance Strategic Plan 2018 – 2022.

Communications Strategy

At the February 2020 meeting of the Fire Alliance Programme Board, members requested an updated version of the Communications Strategy and the supporting Deliverables Plan. This work has been significantly impacted by the pandemic, however communications teams from across the alliance have now successfully completed this work.

Community Risk Management Plans (CRMP)

The CRMP's for both services were published on 1 April 2021.

Next Steps:

- HWFRS to agree the attendance standards of 10 minutes (urban), 15 minutes (town & fringe) and 20 minutes (rural). This will be done through public consultation.

- Standards will feature in both Service's Corporate Performance Indicators and a future action will be for both Services to report back to the Alliance Programme Delivery Board on this to enable comparisons to be made.
- Formalisation of Protection enforcement future workstream.

Procurement

Regular liaison continues between the fleet and operational equipment teams. Currently the teams are reviewing joint options for purchase of uniform clothing following the closure of the national Ballyclare contract to new entrants. Available frameworks are being reviewed due to the value of any joint award which would cover the whole range of clothing provided. The Head of Operations and Risk will be preparing a Project Initiation Document for Shropshire's Resource Review Project, which includes possible Aerial Ladder Platform replacement leading to the development of a joint statement of need and specification.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

Wide Area Network (WAN) Project

Progress continues with the implementation of a Wide Area Network that will ensure capacity and resilience across both Services.

SFRS moved to the new contract in August 2021 and further work will be undertaken to gradually migrate to SD WAN technology, once assurances into the stability and maturity of the solution are in place.

HWFRS has confirmed that progress is being made according to the schedules. There remains a considerable amount of work to be completed, but no significant risks or delays have been identified at the time of producing this update.

Fleet Management System

Following the awarding of the contract for a new fleet management system, work started in SFRS in March 2022 to implement. A member of the Tech Services team is leading the on boarding of the new system. No significant barriers or issues are highlighted at the time of this report being produced and the timeline remains for a June 2022 switchover. All learning will be shared with colleagues across the Alliance.

Opportunities:

Future mobilising

Work continues within SFRS in relation to the Alerter project and the rollout of replacement station end equipment has commenced. Trials are now underway with alerters and some app-based technology via mobile phones.

SFRS have established a Project team to look at current arrangements for mobilising on call staff. The Project Team also consists of a colleague from H&WFRS, to ensure the approach is shared.

Due to the closure of a primary supplier of alerters to the sector, this project has captured the interest of National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and learning will be shared in terms of new technology and Apps.

Consideration is also being given as to how this project can support wider Service work and initial evaluation of the ability to provide lone worker safety systems is being explored.

H&WFRS are also in the process of replacing Station End equipment.

Other Activity

Office365

Colleagues within HWFRS have transitioned to Office 365 and are currently rolling out further facilities within the application. Multi Factor Authentication (MFA) has been introduced and will allow access to the corporate network from any location on any device.

SFRS are all using Office 365 and to reduce the threat posed by cyber-attack and to enhance cyber security, Multi Factor Authentication has gone live.

Operational Debrief Monitoring Software

SFRS have recently procured a new Ops monitoring and debriefing system. This system will ensure all operational observations and learning opportunities are captured and acted upon, leading to operational improvement and effectiveness.

The system is now in Service, and work is underway to integrate the software with other systems and implement full functionality. This is being supported through weekly meetings with the supplier and the Operations Team.

This information has been shared between Operations teams, with colleagues from HWFRS attending a show and tell presentation and any subsequent learning will continue to be shared.

Next Steps

Work to commence on the alignment of policy and process to ensure the Helpdesk workstream meets the original objective of creating capacity and resilience for both Services.

Continue to progress with the WAN workstream with the primary objective being to increase resilience across both services.

Develop and share understanding of Service activities and continue to share intelligence and information.

ICT Conclusion/Summary

Work continues to progress towards agreed outcomes.

Fire Control

A meeting was held on 6 April 2022 with representatives from both Services. The project was discussed at length and agreement that the project must be managed jointly was approved.

A HWFRS and SFRS joint project to replace the Command-and-Control system is being initiated. This will be jointly funded and resourced as a combined project team. A specification of requirements is in the process of being agreed, the new system to be installed separately into HWFRS and SFRS control rooms but with the capability to allow the fire control functions to be carried out from either site when required for resilience.

Environmental Management

SFRS has appointed a consultancy firm to carry out energy surveys of their stations, as previously carried out for Hereford and Worcester stations. These surveys are due to be carried out in May 2022, with the report following. When the reports are received, they will be compared with those carried out across the HWFRS estate to consider and share lessons from recent schemes, and to identify opportunities for joint improvement activities and projects.

4 Conclusion / Summary

Officers continue to make progress on each priority project, though some delays have been inevitable, given the ongoing impact of COVID-19. The tempo of delivery is increasing as teams across both Service's become more accustomed to the evolving new ways of working.

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.

Service Management Team
25 May 2022

Cost of Collaboration

Report for the Chief Fire Officer

For further information about this report please contact Adam Matthews, Area Manager Operations & Risk on 01743 260299.

1 Executive Summary

This report outlines the estimated cost to Shropshire FRS (the Service) of mobilising to incidents to support West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS) and West Mercia Police (WMP).

2 Recommendations

The Service Management Team is asked to note the contents of the report

3 Background

As part of collaborative working the Service has for some years supported WMAS and WMP 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'. The agreement was that the Service would respond if officers from police or ambulance attended an incident where fire service intervention was required.

This report gives a brief overview of the type of call, the agency assisted and the approximate cost of that collaborative work.

4 Data & Interpretation

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

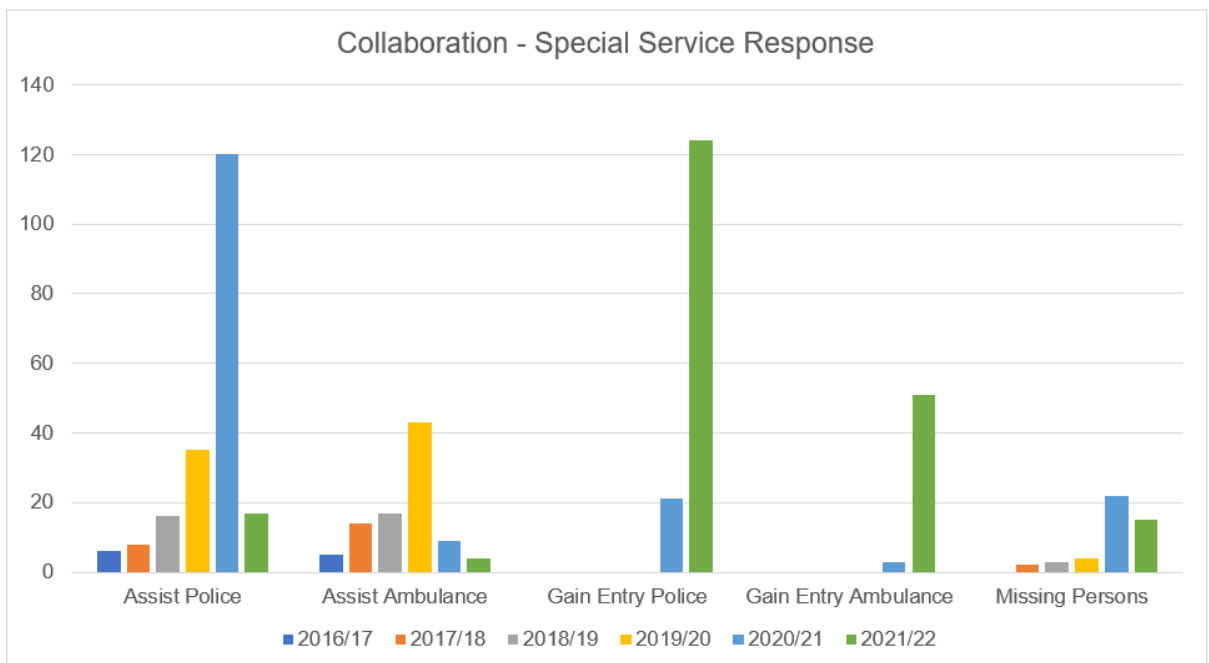
- Affect entry/exit
- Assist other agencies
- Good intent

- 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 2016/17.



For the purpose of this report both Police and Ambulance statistics should be considered as a collective for each respective service.

The table below shows the number of calls the Service has attended to “assist Police/Ambulance” over a six year period:

Year	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Total	11	24	36	82	166	171

Using Shropshire FRS Special Services charges 2021/22 (Appendix A) as a guide, the following costs in £000's have been calculated.

Agency Costs £000's (Ex VAT)	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Police	£0.3K	£2.4K	£3.2K	£6.2K	£31.1K	£36.5K
Ambulance	£0.4K	£1.9K	£2.7K	£6.9K	£1.9K	£7K
Annual costs	£0.7K	£4.3K	£5.9K	£13.1K	£33K	£43.5K

The recent pandemic and the ongoing challenges being faced by the WMAS will have undoubtedly impacted upon the activity rise seen.

5 Conclusions

The report finds that although the cost of collaborative response has increased, it supports our collaborative working objectives. It is in the best interests of the public and communities of Shropshire and enhances our reputation as a community focused organisation.

Given the current strain on other partners it is highly likely activity levels will not decrease in the immediate future, it is recommended that SMT continue to monitor these figures on a 6 monthly basis.

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 our response with that of Hereford & Worcestershire FRS.

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 vision 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 Fire Standard Core Code of Ethics and Human Rights (including Data Protection)

There are no impacts on compliance with the Fire Standards Core Code of Ethics or human rights arising from this report.

15 ICT

There are no ICT impacts arising from this report.

16 Insurance

There are no insurance impacts arising from this report.

17 The On-call Service

Impacts on the On-call are minimal, although responding to these incidents does increase operational activity and can assist with retention.

On the other hand, this activity could take personnel away from their primary employment.

Overall the number of incidents are low and is unlikely to have any significant impacts.

18 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.

19 Reputation

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

20 Security

There are no security impacts arising from this report.

21 Training

There are no training impacts arising from this report.

22 Appendix

[Shropshire Fire & Rescue Service Special Service Charges tariff 2020/21](#)

23 Background Papers

There are no background papers associated with this report.