



Creating a safer  
**Cambridgeshire**

**To:** Business Coordination Board

**From:** Chief Constable

**Date:** 03 September 2020

## **STRATEGIC POLICE AND FIRE INTEROPERABILITY – OPERATIONAL UPDATE**

### **1. Purpose**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Business Coordination Board (the “Board”) on the Police/Fire/Ambulance initiatives that are currently being delivered as well as those that are being planned.

### **2. Recommendation**

2.1 The Board is recommended to note the contents of this report

### **3. Background**

3.1 The National Emergency Service Collaboration Working Group has showcased the benefits of different organisations coming together to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the services they deliver to their communities. Cambridgeshire Constabulary (the “Constabulary”), Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service (the “Fire Service”) and East of England Ambulance Service (the “Ambulance Service”) have fully supported this ethos and worked hard in recent years to build on their already strong relationships to improve services and save money.

- 3.2 We have an established a joint Police/Fire/Ambulance Interoperability Group which is chaired jointly by Chief Officers in Fire and Police. Through this forum, emergency services within Cambridgeshire are committed to working more closely together to provide services that are value for money and are attuned to the needs of local communities. This positive partnership working provides opportunities to innovate and to align services whilst retaining the distinct identity and public service duties of each organisation.
- 3.3 A range of operational and organisational initiatives have been agreed which allow the development of innovative partnerships to drive service improvements and efficiencies. Chief Officer Teams agreed that both services would identify opportunities for improved interoperability and joint working to protect front line services, reduce duplication across the two organisations, rationalise estates and improve the quality of the response to incidents by pursuing innovative crewing arrangements.
- 3.4 The following strategic principles were set:
- I. Reduce duplication across the Constabulary and the Fire Service.
  - II. Engage with communities on crime prevention, fire prevention and public safety advice, delivered in a cost effective and streamlined way.
  - III. Better support the public in enabling them to manage their own issues.
  - IV. Encourage more specials and volunteers to become involved in the Emergency Services and provide them with a broader set of skills and opportunities.
  - V. Offer improved service to victims of crime and casualties.
  - VI. Protect the public and safeguard the vulnerable more effectively.
  - VII. Offer greater strength and resilience across the emergency services to respond to emerging threats to the community.
  - VIII. Provide value for money by making best use of the Constabulary and Fire Service estate and sharing support functions where it is cost effective to do so.
  - IX. Support the ethos of interoperability.

#### **4. Current Highlights**

4.1 There have been a range of strategic and tactical interoperability initiatives over the last 12 months and tremendous goodwill across agencies to work effectively together.

#### **4.2 Governance**

4.2.1 A Police/Fire/Ambulance Interoperability Group has been established to provide direction and momentum to joint working initiatives. This Group has provided a coordinated approach to interoperability, as well as overseeing short and medium-term projects. A project management infrastructure has been put in place and a process for prioritising work streams established.

4.2.2 The Chief Officer Teams meet regularly to share strategic vision and identify opportunities for collaborative change.

#### **4.3 Arson**

4.3.1 The Fire Service has worked in collaboration with the Constabulary for a number of years to reduce the risk of arson and to respond jointly to issues of fire safety and exploitation in overcrowded domestic premises alongside trading standards. A

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the police forces and fire and rescue services across Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire has been signed, which establishes joint working protocols for arson investigation across the three counties.

#### 4.4 Estates

4.4.1 Schemes are currently being considered jointly with the Constabulary and the Fire Service to further encourage and enhance partnership working and where this will enhance the provision or reduce estate overheads.

4.4.2 Whilst the shared canteen and gym facilities at the Constabulary Headquarters has to be closed during the Covid19 pandemic the ethos of allowing staff to develop, maintain and improve their personal fitness remains. Both organisations are committed to sharing these facilities to enhance the offering and commitment to staff without the need to build additional facilities.

#### 4.5 Local Resilience Forum

4.5.1 The Covid19 pandemic has demonstrated the willingness and ability of the Fire Service and the Constabulary to be key partners of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Resilience Forum. They have taken lead roles in the response phase Strategic Coordinating Group and Tactical Coordinating Group structure and play an active part in the recovery activity.

4.5.2 They are both committed to developing multi-agency emergency management arrangements for emergency or major incidents in other areas as well. The forum produces operational plans which are tested and trained through joint exercise between Category 1 responders. Through this forum the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP) has been implemented and continues to be embedded as business as usual. Both the Constabulary and the Fire Service operate to the Joint Doctrine: The Interoperability Framework, which includes a Joint Decision Model and command practices to ensure an integrated and standardised approach to the joint management of incidents.

4.5.3 All documentation, information and operational plans are shared on a computer platform called Resilience Direct. This is shared with the wider partner agencies such as County and District councils, Public Health and so on.

4.5.4 Whilst the pandemic briefly halted the twelve-month joint training/exercise programme it has since recommenced. This deals with large issues such as mass fatality, urban area evacuation, loss of utilities, severe weather to name just a few.

#### 4.6 Training Opportunities

4.6.1 A joint training sub group continues to look at joint training provision and interoperability opportunities. The following has been implemented jointly:

- Fire delivery of HGV training to police.
- Fire delivery of Level 3 Education and Training to police trainers.
- Police pilot on Fire Aspire Programme.
- Joint delivery of JESIP training.
- Joint command training (Police, Fire Ambulance) at marauding terrorist incidents working alongside armed policing training.

- Fire crews being involved in Public Order Training when a crowd of over 150 protestors are present simulating a riot scenario with burning vehicles.
- 4.6.2 The Specialist Operational Group has developed a series of MoUs for the sharing of equipment and providing added value by staff working jointly across agencies. There has been strong organisational will on all sides. A specialist equipment catalogue has been developed which sets sharing protocols for a wide range of operational equipment and services. Provisions include:
- Drones – The joint training of pilots where both agencies now fly under a single Civil Aviation Authority.
  - Joint river rescue training and capacity.
  - Shared access to lighting, barriers, tents, fencing, mobile toilets and road closure signage.
  - Fire command vehicle being tested at joint incidents and footage from CCTV and body worn video to be accessed at both Major Operations Rooms.
  - Formalising fire support to police officers working at heights in risk to life incidents.
  - Formalising fire Method of Entry support to police/ambulance at risk to life incidents. Police retain primacy in the management of board up services through BOING Rapid Secure Ltd.

#### 4.7 Organisational Support

- 4.7.1 An MoU for police use of Fire Service vehicles at Peterborough is in place. Vehicles are available at Dogsthorpe or Stanground Fire Station for community based work in Peterborough by the Constabulary.
- 4.7.2 Police access to the designated smoking area at Fire Service Headquarters has been established.
- 4.7.3 The provision of security cards to Fire Service/Constabulary staff to allow access to both HQ sites is now business as usual.

#### 4.8 Joint Operations

- 4.8.1 Operation Pheasant in Fenland is a multiagency approach to Modern Day Slavery criminal activity. Fire safety officers form part of the joint enforcement team targeting rogue landlords. This has now been extended to Peterborough.
- 4.8.2 Operational Armitage is a joint Fire and Rescue Service /Norfolk Fire and Rescue Services/the Constabulary/National Farmers Union/Power Stations initiative in combatting Haystack Fires.
- 4.8.3 The Fire Service are working with MIND, the Constabulary and the Ambulance Service in de-stigmatising mental health issues within the emergency service sector through our Blue Light Pledge and cross service working group.

## 5. Memorandum of Understanding

5.1 The current MoU that has been signed between the Constabulary, the Fire Service, and the Ambulance Service to formalise collaborative working arrangements and to demonstrate a strategic commitment to the principles of interoperability continues to assist the future working relations between the emergency services across Cambridgeshire.

## 6. Recommendation

6.1 The Board is recommended to note the contents of this report.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

<b>Source Document</b>	
<b>Contact Officers</b>	Superintendent Robin Sissons, Cambridgeshire Constabulary Chris Parker, Head of Operational Support, Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service