



AGENDA ITEM: 11

NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY EXECUTIVE PANEL

18 July 2016

COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS – TRI-EMERGENCY SERVICES

Report by Richard Fairhead, Assistant Chief Fire Officer

Purpose of Report

- 1 To inform Members of the collaborative projects being developed between North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (NWFRS), North Wales Police (NWP) and Wales Ambulance Service Trust (WAST).

Background

- 2 For several years there has been collaboration between NWFRS and NWP in relation to the Joint Control Centre (JCC), a shared estates department and Corporate Communications out of hours service. Additionally there has been collaboration with WAST in relation to shared premises with the Wrexham project being the most recent.
- 3 In June 2015, a strategic collaboration group was set up to look at opportunities for NWFRS, NWP and WAST to further collaborate with the aim to identify possible efficiencies and improve services to the communities of North Wales. The group consisting of the Assistant Chief Constable from NWP, the Head of Operations for WAST in North Wales and an Assistant Chief Fire Officer from NWFR set up the Tri Service Collaboration Programme Board (TSCPB).
- 4 This Board also supported NWFRS in meeting the Welsh Government National Framework desire for FRAs to work more collaboratively at a strategic level and develop the role of the firefighter.

Information

- 5 The TSCPb undertook scoping work to identify where opportunities existed for each of the three agencies to collaborate with all options open for discussion.
- 6 The TSCPb devised a terms of reference and categorised activities under three project headings, with Project Managers assigned from each of the services to lead on each of the following areas:
 - Control Project– WAST lead
 - Support services – NWP lead
 - Prevent and response – NWFRS lead
- 7 All scoping work and project briefs were presented to the Chief Fire Officer, the Chief Constable and the Chief Executive Officer from WAST and were agreed as being in keeping with all three services strategic direction of travel.

Control Project

- 8 The control project had two strands.
 - a. The first was in relation to bringing WAST emergency call handlers into the existing NWP and NWFRS joint control room, so as to provide a tri service control room for North Wales.
 - b. The second strand was in relation to the integration of staff within the control room environment so certain activities could be undertaken by any control operator regardless of whom they were employed by and subsequently utilising any latent capacity that an agency may have during quieter periods.
- 9 Following careful consideration WAST has now decided that it wishes to pursue a clinical hub model, that will bring together all health related call handlers such as NHS Direct and out of hours GP helplines, and as the capacity does not exist within the site in St Asaph a tri service control room is not currently its preferred option.

- 10 WAST has however given an undertaking to provide a small number of clinicians to work out of the JCC room in order to feed into decision making around the need for ambulance deployments and subsequently reduce WAST's demand.
- 11 Staff members from both NWP and NWFRS continue to progress and develop the opportunities to work more collaboratively in the control room and shared systems and training to facilitate this work are currently being provided.

Support Services

- 12 The support services scoping work took account of where positive examples of collaboration is already demonstrated and looked to build on previous successes.
- 13 A variety of support service departments were considered during scoping and these included:
 - Fleet / Transport
 - Communications
 - Language Services
 - Estates
 - Procurement
 - Design and Print
 - Human Resources
 - Finance
 - Training
- 14 An early decision was to focus on two or three of those areas in the short term and to date most progress has been made in relation to the sharing of fleet services, the sharing of language services and estates.
- 15 WAST, NWP and NWFRS currently operate out of a number of shared estates including the new NWFRS/WAST resource centre in Wrexham, the first tri service facility at Deeside and the NWFRS/NWP facilities in Tywyn and Nefyn.

- 16 Ongoing work with regard to fleet services has identified areas where there is the potential for either tri service collaboration or shared services between two of the three agencies that may provide enhanced and more efficient services.

Prevent and Respond

- 17 The prevent and respond project had a number of activities that were in scope, with some that could be implemented in the short term, some in the medium term and some that were longer term aspirational goals. Included in the scope was:

- NWFRS co-responders
- NWP PCSOs completing home safety checks on behalf of NWFRS
- NWFRS Home Safety Support Workers delivering crime reduction interventions and target hardening advice on behalf of NWP
- Falls risk assessments to be undertaken by both NWP and NWFRS
- Crime reduction training for all NWFRS staff
- Co-location of staff where appropriate
- NWFRS staff to be mobilised to vulnerable persons who are reported to be missing from home in the first hours following their disappearance on behalf of NWP
- Development of a new multi-agency role to deal with high volume low priority calls for service and negate the need for specialist officers to attend, thus freeing them up to attend higher priority calls.

- 18 To date significant progress has been made with the first five bullet points. NWFRS is awaiting the outcome of national discussions about the future of co-responding, but a recent decision was to extend the pilot for an additional eight months.

- 19 NWFRS staff will begin their training in mid-July in relation to the NWP search protocols so that they can be deployed to assist with missing from home incidents before the end of summer 2016.

- 20 A new pilot response team will be launched on 1 August 2016 that will see NWFRS staff being mobilised in Denbighshire to non-injury falls in the home on behalf of WAST, with the ultimate aim to negate the need for an ambulance to attend. This team will also be undertaking a variety of prevention activities and interventions, as well as attending 'concern for safety' calls for NWP.

Recommendation

- 21 That Members note the information contained within this report.