

Minutes of the Collaboration and Transformation Committee

12 December 2022

Conducted as a public meeting at Headquarters and digitally via Microsoft Teams

Present: Councillor Dehar (Chair), Councillor Jalil, Councillor Lloyd

Virtual: Councillor Hogarth, Councillor Kettle, Prof Simon Brake, APCC Wasim Ali

Officers: Hannah Spencer, Kirsty Tuffin, Mike Griffiths, Tom Embury, Will Doolan

Observers: Councillor Miks

Please note: the meeting was adjourned until 14:08 due to non-quoracy. Cllr Jalil joined the meeting at 14:08.

20/22 **To receive apologies for absence (if any)**

Apologies for absence were received from the Chief Fire Officer Phil Loach and Councillor Hussain, substituted by Cllr Jalil.

21/22 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received.

22/22 **Minutes of the Collaboration and Transformation Committee held on 05 September 2022**

Resolved:

1. That the Minutes of the Collaboration and Transformation Committee held on 05 September 2022 were approved as a correct record of proceedings.

23/22 **Scrutiny Review of Safe and Wells**

Tom Embury, Deputy Clerk to the Authority presented the Scrutiny Review of Safe and Wells (SAW) report that

outlined the learning and recommendations from the recent Scrutiny Review of SAW.

The Committee were advised that over the last 12 months, the Scrutiny Committee had conducted a review of SAW to scope their effectiveness and efficiency. The review found ten recommendations for improvement, four of which were relevant for the Collaboration and Transformation Committee. The four relevant recommendations were as follows:

1. Continue to develop and implement the Tymly system and support automated business processes.
2. Continue with the implantation of Remote SAW (RSAW) as a means of providing SAW to those who were identified as low risk at the point of referral, ensuring there was a clear escalation process to SAW where risk identified at RSAW required this.
3. To support the provision of a consistent and national approach to SAW and continue to implement the eight core components of the NFCC Person Centred Framework for Home Fire Safety Visits.
4. Continue to develop the SAW Membership arrangements and onboard partners who worked with the service users that the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) identified as being at risk/vulnerable to fire.

The Members were advised that should they have any feedback this could be fed into the Prevention Team accordingly. No questions were raised.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed that the learning and recommendations from the recent scrutiny review of Safe and Well be noted.

24/22

Collaboration with Ambulance Services

Tom Embury, Deputy Clerk to the Authority, presented the Collaboration with Ambulance Services report that outlined the current collaboration arrangements with West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS) and other Fire and Rescue

Services (FRS)/Ambulance Collaboration arrangements across England.

The Committee were advised that following their request for potential collaboration work to be conducted with WMAS in June 2022, an update on the current situation and possible actions were outlined within the report. All three emergency services (WMAS, FRS and West Midlands Police (WMP)) had a duty to collaborate under the Policing and Crime Act 2017, but those services were not required to collaborate if they did not believe it to be in their interest.

All three services do collaborate on operational matters to ensure effectiveness at incidents and this is continuously evolving. The example of new downlink technology, that provided all services with access to National Police Air Service aerial footage at incidents, was provided. Collaborative training for all three services is also utilised in the preparations for major incidents and events, including the Commonwealth Games.

The FRS and WMAS had shared estate however, it was highlighted that this had been significantly reduced in recent years as a result of WMAS move to a 'Hub-and-Spoke' model and their efforts to reduce rental costs. There had been little interest from WMAS for co-responding or more direct operation support in their delivery of response to medical emergencies. No co-responding collaboration took place with WMAS and the five FRS within their service area.

Although there had been limited collaboration in the West Midlands, there had been significant collaboration work arrangements elsewhere across the country, as per the report. The positive impact of the collaborative driving of ambulances during the COVID pandemic, with over 100,000 incidents responded to by firefighters, was highlighted.

Members emphasised the need to undertake further collaboration talks with WMAS as it was felt that the current challenges they were experiencing could change their attitude to the FRS offer of collaboration. Following comments on the need to use facilities in Solihull to host

WMAS, Mike Griffiths, Section 151 Officer, advised the Committee that WMAS had only paid a 'peppercorn' rent when previously occupying space on Stations to cover the maintenance cost and there had been no commercial profit for FRS. It was agreed that the WMAS collaboration and potential engagement with them be deferred to the Scrutiny Committee for review.

Resolved:

1. That the current state of collaboration between West Midlands Fire Service and West Midlands Ambulance Service be noted.
2. That the examples of collaboration by other FRS with Ambulance Services in England be noted.
3. That it be agreed that the WMAS collaboration and potential engagement with them be deferred to the Scrutiny Committee for review.

25/22

Collaboration and Transformation Committee CRMP Update

Hannah Spencer, CRMP Co-ordinator, presented the Collaboration and Transformation Committee CRMP Update report that outlined the progress made on relevant CRMP projects.

One of the CRMP proposals, approved by Fire Authority (FRA) in February 2021, was Risk Based Crewing (RBC). This enabled an assessment of incidents and the level of resource required. So far, this approach had been rolled out across 11 core stations and assessments showed that this had increased vehicle availability significantly. It was highlighted that during the recent heatwave experienced in the UK, the use of RBC had enabled the service to use resources effectively to deal with the increased demand.

Training had been collaboratively developed between West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) Prevent representative and West Midlands Police Counter Terrorism Unit (WMP CTU) to enable employees to recognise and refer concerns related to extremism - under the remit of safeguarding. Following the Chair of the Committee query on councillor attendance, it

was agreed that information would be circulated to Members as to whether they are able to attend the training.

Mike Griffiths advised the Committee that as discussed in FRA earlier that morning, there had been an ongoing review of the CRMP proposals, which included RBC. This review had been the result of concerns around funding from Government for the next financial year. A report would be submitted to FRA in February 2023, once there had been a clearer picture on funding.

Resolved:

1. That the Collaboration and Transformation Committee CRMP Update report be noted.
2. That it be agreed that information would be circulated to Members as to whether they are able to attend the prevent training.

26/22

West Midlands Combined Authority – Trailblazing Devolution Deal

Tom Embury, Deputy Clerk to the Authority presented the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) – Trailblazing Devolution Deal report that outlined details of the deal and the opportunities presented to FRS.

The Committee were advised that the West Midlands and Greater Manchester Combined Authorities had been selected for negotiations for ‘deepening devolution’, as part of the Government’s Levelling Up White Paper (February 2022). It was recognised that there had been changes in Government in recent months that could impact timelines for the work, however, it did not stop it.

The Committee were advised that although the FRS were not included in the deals, it would offer opportunities and was likely to have direct impact on the service’s work, including existing collaborations with local authorities. It was anticipated that the some of the following areas of the devolution deal could be amongst the most impactful:

1. Transport – plans to introduce new public and private transport technologies may impact the way in which FRS

respond to traffic incidents and there may be opportunities provided by investment into technology such as drones.

2. Housing, Property and Regeneration – new approaches to affordable housing and retrofit (including “Modern Methods of Construction”) would need to be resilient and safe and may present new challenges for WMFS Fire Safety teams.
3. Crime, community safety and resilience – further intervention in areas such as youth offending could extend to WMFS programmes such as the Cadets.
4. Climate Adaptation and the Natural Environment – as part of the commitment to make the West Midlands Net Zero by 2041, WMFS had a role to play in both reducing our own environmental impact and dealing with the consequences of climate change. This includes FRS response to and planning for extreme weather incidents (flooding, heatwaves etc.).
5. Health Inequalities – WMCA plans in this area are linked to WMFS own work on reducing health inequalities. Talks had been underway on potential funding for these projects.
6. Homelessness – would assist with WMFS work around abandoned properties that are at a greater risk of fire. The proposals would also assist with exempt properties and rogue landlords who put vulnerable people at risk, which included risk of fire.

Following queries, it was agreed that a detailed report be brought back to the Committee on the proposals for homelessness. It was agreed that Tom Embury would share all proposals once they had been finalised and published with Members.

Tom Embury also urged Committee Members to consider how they could seek to influence the Trailblazing Devolution Deal within their respective authorities as each of the seven local authorities was playing a key role in its development and delivery.

Professor Simon Brake, Co-opted Member, advised the Committee that new government regulations had placed a responsibility on Local Authorities to consider the impact decisions may have on Armed Forces veterans and felt this should be a supplementary to this piece of work. Following Members' confirmation that their Local Authorities had undergone work on this, the need for collaboration to develop this work for WMFS was emphasised. It was agreed that collaboration between WMFS, all seven local authorities and the Lord Lieutenant on the impact on Regional armed forces would be beneficial.

Resolved:

1. That the current progress of the West Midlands Trailblazing Devolution Deal and the potential implications or opportunities for WMFS be noted.
2. That it be agreed that a detailed report be brought back to the Committee on the proposals for homelessness. Tom Embury would share all proposals once they had been finalised and published with Members.
3. That it be agreed that collaboration between WMFS, all seven local authorities and the Lord Lieutenant on the impact on Regional armed forces would be beneficial.

27/22

Collaboration and Transformation Committee Work Programme 2022-2023

Tom Embury, Deputy Clerk to the Authority presented the Collaboration and Transformation Committee Work Programme that outlined the planned agenda items for the Committee 2022-2023.

The Committee were advised that the White Paper and the HMICFRS updates had been deferred to the February meeting as these were dependent upon their publication by Government, which was now expected in the new year.

Resolved:

1. That the Collaboration and Transformation Committee Work Programme 2022-2023 be approved.

The meeting finished at 14:51 hours.

Kirsty Tuffin
Strategic Hub
0121 380 6906