

West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority

Collaboration and Transformation Committee

You are summoned to attend the meeting of Collaboration and Transformation Committee to be held on Monday, 27 January 2020 at 10:30

at Fire Service HQ, 99 Vauxhall Road, Nechells, Birmingham B7 4HW

for the purpose of transacting the following business:

Agenda – Public Session

- 1 To receive apologies for absence (if any)
- 2 Declarations of interests
- 3 Minutes of the Collaboration and Transformation Committee held on 11 November 2019 **3 - 8**
- 4 Digital Transformation **9 - 18**

Distribution:

Nicolas Barlow - Member, Jasbinder Dehar - Chair of the Collaboration and Transformation Committee, John Edwards - Member, Peter Hogarth - Member, Zafar Iqbal - Member, Seamus Walsh - Member, Patricia Young - Vice Chair of Collaboration and Transformation Committee

Agenda prepared by Julie Connor

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This agenda and supporting documents are also available electronically on the West Midlands Fire Service website at www.wmfs.net

Minutes of the Collaboration and Transformation Committee

Item 3

11 November 2019

Present: Councillors Dehar (Chair) Brackenridge, Barlow, Edwards, Hogarth and Young

6/19 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Iqbal and Walsh and Prof Simon Brake

7/19 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

8/19 **Minutes of the Collaboration and Transformation Committee held on 7 October 2019**

The minutes of the Collaboration and Transformation Committee held on the 7 October 2019 were approved.

9/19 **Collaboration and Transformation - Developing Strategic Direction**

The Committee received a report setting out the framework to support the development of future collaborations for recommendation to the Fire Authority.

The Committee considered the revised definition for Transformation and Collaboration as considered at the meeting of the Committee on the 7 October 2019.

At the first meeting of the Committee, Members had considered a wide range of collaborative partnerships that the Service was currently engaged in that demonstrated alignment to the achievement of priorities and outcomes as set out in Our Plan.

In Developing Strategic Direction, the Committee considered the feedback from their previous meeting, the importance of focused community benefits and the 'Duty to Collaborate' as part of the Police and Crime Act 2017 and the work of the Emergency

Services Working Group (ESWG). A revised definition was proposed as follows” Item 3

“West Midlands Fire Service will collaborate with other organisations to enable the transformational delivery of value-based services to local communities in a way which supports the priorities of each partner”.

The Duty to Collaborate is a feature of the ESWG, Chaired by Mr Eric Carter, the Chair of Shropshire Fire and Rescue Authority, where there are many conversations and opportunities to foster collaboration.

Delivering Transformation in Services is less structured and it was suggested that this should be likened to the transformation that is being looked at nationally particularly in broadening the role of firefighters.

The priorities of the Service aim to ensure the most vulnerable communities are targeted in the most effective way to mitigate and where possible, remove risk of fire related incidents. A critical aspect of this is how the skills of the workforce are developed to respond to this and the changing nature of risk.

The Committee would need to consider risks so that the Authority did not find itself in a similar position as in previous years and running into blockages.

The HMCIFRS report referred to this area in its recent report within the ‘people’ pillar and cites The Service recognises that the role of a firefighter has changed considerably. Through effective training of staff, the Service was able to deliver transformation in its services. There was also clear evidence, captured in the HMCIFRS report of where transformation and change had continued to result in improved outcomes for communities and this is a key consideration for members in the definition of collaboration set out in paragraph 3.4.

A framework for collaboration and transformation was set out and the considerations could be adopted in a flexible way ensuring that they enable rather than restrict. They recognise the discreet functions and identities of the Service and partner organisations whilst encouraging a positive culture of seeking opportunities to work more closely together to transform services to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

The Framework - a joint assessment and understanding of risk and vulnerability included the following areas:

- Community outcomes
- Shared Vision
- Transformational use of resources and information
- Digital Transformation
- Shared decision making and commitment
- Communication
- Trust
- Realistic timeline and delivery pathway
- Corporate Governance Architecture
- Organisation identity
- Evaluation

In agreeing both the definition and framework set out in the report, officers would, in line with the delegations set out in the Authority's Constitution, develop and engage in structured collaborative relationships, which would support the transformational delivery of services aligned to risk as set out in the IRMP, and Strategic priorities as set out in the rolling 3 year strategy, Our Plan.

One Member felt this was a good direction to take and stated that previously the Authority had worked with the Ambulance Service and hoped that this may be a possibility in the future where the joint use of sites had been used to save on finances.

Another member felt this was a good example of collaboration at low level and following the Election of a new Chair of the Ambulance Trust, a new conversation could be started.

Members felt that the public seem happier for the Fire Service and Ambulance to collaborate. It was noted that Officers had been in discussions with the Police regarding the delivery of procurement and collaboration on estates. Members expressed caution with the shared use of facilities with the Police with a preference for the softer side of policing only on Fire Service premises, eg. Police officers writing reports and dealing with paperwork or to park in unfavourable weather conditions. Members did not want Fire Service premises used for the hard edge of policing.

DCFO Wayne Brown stated that London Fire Brigade had worked with the Police Community Safety Officers and Neighbourhood officers in Safety Enablers Teams and this had worked well on fire stations and was good example of collaborative working

A Members stated that due to financial cuts there were no such teams in the West Midlands and would not be for a long time, although this idea would be ideal and asked how it was managed in London.

DCFO Brown confirmed that a clearly written Memorandum of Understanding included that the team would look at neighbourhood safety only and would not become involved with investigation of crime.

A Member stated that transformation of the Fire Service had been discussed nationally for the last three years and the Service should be prepared for the future and needed to understand local communities and their needs, in order to be prepared for the possible future opportunities when additional funding may become available.

The Chief Fire Officer stated that he was an Adviser to the National Joint Council and at a recent Policy Planning Forum the Chair had given a broad but detailed description of where the Fire Service was at nationally.

Local support would be required so that the Service is prepared to collaborate in future.

The Chief Fire Officer confirmed that as Vice Chair of the National Fire Chief Councils there was a live conversation with the Local Government Association's Fire Services Management Committee about Broadening the Role, but there was little traction. A more evidenced based approach was required. The Service had clarified how it would be developing its capabilities to be prepared for the future.

It was noted that the national pay claim would need to be finalised and the problem recently experienced had been a local issue related to income generation and the Service did not wish to go against the national FBU stance and the government needed to make changes to resolve the issues nationally.

The Chair of the Authority was optimistic that the national pay settlement would be agreed.

One Member stated that following the General Election there may be a change of government and Service needed to be prepared to move in whatever direction it could.

Resolved that the framework to support the development of future collaborations for recommendation to the Fire Authority be approved.

Resolved that the revised definition for Transformation and Collaboration be approved.

The meeting finished at 1415 hours.

Julie Connor Strategic Hub 0121 380 6906
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Item 3

COLLABORATION AND TRANSFORMATION COMMITTEE

27 JANUARY 2020

1. COLLABORATION AND TRANSFORMATION – DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

RECOMMENDED

THAT Members note the good work to date set out within this report and support the ongoing Digital Transformation and collaboration work.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To ensure Members are aware of the progress already made and the commitment to continual Digital Transformation and collaboration aligned to our Digital Declaration.

3. BACKGROUND

Digital Transformation is the integration of digital technology into all areas of a business resulting in fundamental changes to how businesses operate and how they deliver value to stakeholders.

In our case, it is ensuring that the increased use of technology improves the user experience through better, modern ways of working for our staff, partners and communities. It's also part of a wider cultural change that requires the organisation to continually challenge, adapt and enhance its services and ways of working.

Understanding the need to adjust existing practices through Digital Transformation involves a change in leadership, different ways of thinking and the encouragement of innovation and new business models.

Digital is now readily accepted as an essential part of business requirements. As is the need to modernise its products, processes and people in this digital age. ^{Item 4}

Ongoing Digital Transformation is now embedded within the organisation and it is important that we take our staff with us on this journey, developing and enhancing our digital tools as well as their digital skills.

Given the investment required in this area it is important that we work collaboratively to ensure that we are doing the right things and that we are sharing our experiences and benefits with other public sector organisations.

A well-recognised means of achieving this way of working is through Local Digital. Local Digital is a growing community of organisations working together with a shared vision to deliver more user-centred, cost-effective local public services through open, collaborative and reusable work.

We signed up to the Local Digital Declaration in October 2018 (*Appendix A*) as a collective ambition for local public services that collectively commits us to:

- design services that best meet the needs of citizens (our communities)
- challenge the technology market to offer the flexible tools and services we need
- protect citizens' privacy and security
- deliver better value for money

The ambition of the Digital Declaration requires both a culture shift and a technology shift, built on 5 principles:

1. Redesign our services around the needs of the people using them.
2. Remove any dependence on inflexible and expensive technology.
3. Design safe, secure and useful ways of sharing information.
4. Demonstrate digital leadership.
5. Embed an open culture that values, incentivises and expects digital ways of working from our workforce.

Under this Digital Declaration, each organisation is asked to make a commitment that will further enhance and support this ^{Item 4} approach in Digital Transformation and collaboration. Our specific commitment is set out at *Appendix B* and meets the ambitions and design principles of the Declaration.

Our commitment helps to drive central initiatives such as shared software developments, inter-operability and best practice that reduce digital overheads for us and other public sector organisations.

The open approach that we have taken in this area has already benefited from high-profile contributions from a multi-national organisation and Central Government Departments.

The data collection, dissemination and collaboration elements of the work appeals to other organisations as well as our own.

Indeed, we have a number of existing collaboration agreements in place with NFCC and other Fire and Rescue Services that are underpinned by this Digital Declaration. On the back of this work, additional Fire and Rescue Services are now expressing an interest in working with us.

Potential users of the platform include other Fire Services, wider Emergency Services, Schools, Local Businesses, Local Authorities and Health. Discussions are now also taking place around collaboration trials with Local Authorities within the West Midlands region.

We have representatives on national digital boards to better understand and influence the wider needs. In doing so, we are looking to shape the possibility of national Fire solutions that have the potential to cross over into other blue light services.

We have introduced new ways of working for Digital activity across our 3PT Portfolio. Regular reports now plot progress against the agreed plan and provide rationale for any deviation.

This is key as demand regularly outstrips capacity and prioritisation of work is now a more open, transparent and inclusive process.

There has been continual service improvement in the Digital and Data Teams with the area currently undergoing a restructure to ensure efficiency. As part of this work we are providing our staff with digital skillsets that have previously been provided through consultants.

As we continue to attempt to strike the right balance between usability and security we have built our systems across a mixture of in-house, Office 365, Back Office and specialist products to enhance the service to our communities.

These front-end services are enabled by a digital infrastructure that is fast, secure and supports mobile working and a management of information approach that reflects legislation such as GDPR.

As we continue to enhance our Digital Transformation, we are constantly looking to maximise our return on investment to date and extract value from the latest technologies that continue to develop at an ever increasing pace of change.

We have made good progress in our Digital Transformation and collaboration, but we still have some older legacy systems that need to be addressed.

The focus for Digital Transformation in the next financial year is around modernising our emergency response systems, operational staff applications and an improved data centric approach.

Our emergency response systems are in need of modernisation and can bring better ways of working and more efficient processes to our front-line staff.

Our operational workforce has shared frustrations around some of our legacy applications. To address this, we will be working towards an environment where staff can manage their workloads from a single, modern platform.

To enable enhanced evidence-based decision making an improved data centric approach is needed. We will be enhancing our gathering and sharing of meaningful information, only capturing data that is needed and used.

4. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

In preparing this report an initial Equality Impact Assessment is not required and has not been carried out.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct legal implications.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental implications

BACKGROUND PAPERS

<https://localdigital.gov.uk/declaration/>
<https://localdigital.gov.uk/commitments/>

The contact for this report is Jason Danbury, Strategic Enabler for Digital and Data. Tel. No. 0121 380 6510

Phil Loach
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

Introduction

This declaration affirms our collective ambition for local public services in the internet age, and our commitments to realising it. It commits us working on a new scale to:

- design services that best meet the needs of citizens
- challenge the technology market to offer the flexible tools and services we need
- protect citizens' privacy and security
- deliver better value for money

This joint endeavour was initiated by the UK Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), the Government Digital Service (GDS), and a collection of local authorities and sector bodies from across the UK. We invite all local authorities and the organisations we collaborate with to join us by signing the Declaration and committing to deliver a first action from which we can all benefit.

The opportunity

Never before has it been possible to collaborate so effectively, to deliver services across so many boundaries, to interrogate our data so insightfully, to realise such great efficiencies, and to reshape public services for the benefit of all while retaining local sovereignty.

Great work has already been done to transform our services using digital tools and technology. But we have an opportunity to do more.

Our ambition

We want to co-create the conditions for the next generation of local public services, where technology is an enabler rather than a barrier to service improvements, and services are a delight for citizens and officials to use. We know that one size doesn't fit all, but by developing common building blocks local authorities will be able to build services more quickly, flexibly and effectively. Only in this more open and flexible market will we unlock our full potential for innovation.

Our ambition requires both a culture shift and a technology shift, and we've agreed 5 principles to help us do it: Item 4

1. We will go even further to redesign our services around the needs of the people using them. This means continuing to prioritise citizen and user needs above professional, organisational and technological silos.
2. We will 'fix our plumbing' to break our dependence on inflexible and expensive technology that doesn't join up effectively. This means insisting on modular building blocks for the IT we rely on, and open standards to give a common structure to the data we create.
3. We will design safe, secure and useful ways of sharing information to build trust among our partners and citizens, to better support the most vulnerable members of our communities, and to target our resources more effectively.
4. We will demonstrate digital leadership, creating the conditions for genuine organisational transformation to happen, and challenging all those we work with to embrace this Local Digital Declaration.
5. We will embed an open culture that values, incentivises and expects digital ways of working from every member of our workforce. This means working in the open wherever we can, sharing our plans and experience, working collaboratively with other organisations, and reusing good practice.

Our commitments

MHCLG will establish a delivery team to support all Declaration co-signatories in realising this ambition. It will play a leadership role within central government, advocating for the approach set out in this declaration. It will work with councils as equal partners to create the tools and conditions for reform, delivering common technical patterns and routes to procurement for core services. And, as part of a collective effort alongside local government networks, it will help local authorities find out about priority projects that support this mission and support the continued growth of the local digital community.

In addition, each co-signatory will commit to the following activities:

Our leaders, service managers, board members and politicians will:

- Make sure that digital expertise is central to our decision-making and that all technology decisions are approved by the appropriate

person or committee. This will ensure that we are using our collective purchasing power to stimulate a speedy move towards change.

- Have visible, accessible leaders throughout the organisation (publishing blogs, tweeting and actively participating in communities of practice), and support those who champion this Declaration to try new things and work in the open.
- Support our workforce to share ideas and engage in communities of practice by providing the space and time for this to happen.
- Publish our plans and lessons learnt (for example on blogs, Localgov Digital slack; at sector meetups), and talk publicly about things that have could have gone better (like the GOV.UK incident reports blog).
- Try new things, from new digital tools to experiments in collaboration with other organisations.
- Champion the continuous improvement of cyber security practice to support the security, resilience and integrity of our digital services and systems.

Our transformation, information technology and digital teams will:

- Research how to reuse existing user research, service design, common components, and data and technology standards before starting to design or procure something new.
- Build capacity in service-design, so that each service we transform is informally tested by our peers against our national service standard where appropriate.
- Where appropriate every new IT solution procured must operate according to the technology code of practice, putting us in control of our service data, using open standards where they exist and contributing to their creation where they don't.
- Share knowledge about digital projects where there is an opportunity for potential reuse or collaboration with others.
- Work together to establish the trust frameworks we need to safely analyse and share personal data. This will allow us to better serve our shared customers and reduce the need to ask citizens for the same information multiple times.
- Work together to create common solutions that allow us to check people's eligibility for services with central government and others in real time with their consent.
- Take inspiration and ideas from a wide range of sources, and participate individually in communities of practice and interest outside the organisation (for

example, LocalGovCamp, OneTeamGov, and related networks
and events).
Item 4

Appendix B – West Midlands Fire Service Commitment

Item 4

Signed by: Philip Hales on 7th October, 2018

Project commitments:

Commitment 1:

Title: We're seeking to solve prevalent Public Sector issues concerning data collection, dissemination and collaboration that are often attributed to proprietary "system-centric" approaches (vendor lock-in, inflated-costs, complex integrations, prohibitive licenses, barriers to change etc.)

Partners: Our open source approach welcomes input from any organisation, no matter the sector or department (we've had high-profile contributions from a multi-national and Central Government Departments). Potential users of the platform include other Fire Services, wider Emergency Services, Schools, Local Businesses, Local Authorities & Health.

Mission: To develop a modular, open source software platform, built using modern software engineering practices and open standards, that will allow non-traditional developers to create, maintain and share their own data-collection forms and workflows.

Impact: Any end-user can manage their workloads from a single, modern app. This creates an excellent user experience and improves organisational efficiency. Subject matter experts can tune and refine their own processes and data-content to drive continual improvement. Digital overheads are reduced due to a holistic approach to system design, container-based deployment and centralised user-management. Organisations can contribute, shape and improve their core software as they see fit, or use modern API techniques to proxy legacy systems. This approach also helps drive central initiatives such as shared software developments, inter-operability and best practice.