

Policing and Crime Bill

Emergency Services Collaboration: Background

Governance

1. The Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) for an area sets the strategic priorities and objectives for fire and rescue within the area as well as handling the budget. The FRA may be the county council or a statutory body with a membership of councillors nominated by local authorities who oversee the policy and delivery of fire and rescue functions.
2. There are currently 45 FRAs in England. They have a range of different governance models:
 - 6 stand-alone metropolitan fire authorities: for example, Greater Manchester, West Midlands;
 - 23 combined fire authorities, which are stand-alone authorities covering areas where there is more than one county and unitary council, for example: Durham and Darlington, Devon and Somerset, Kent and Medway;
 - 15 county fire authorities, where the service is provided by the county council: for example, Norfolk, Hertfordshire;
 - The London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEP): a functional body of the Greater London Assembly. Whilst it has responsibility for decisions relating to fire provision, it does not, like other Metropolitan fire authorities, set the annual budget for fire - that is the responsibility of the Mayor of London.
3. The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 replaced police authorities with Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) – directly elected individuals who are accountable to the public. There are 39 police areas in England, 37 of which have PCCs. There are separate arrangements for the City of London and Metropolitan police areas.
4. PCCs are under a statutory duty to secure and maintain an efficient and effective police force. They determine strategic policing priorities in their force areas and appoint (and, if necessary, dismiss) the chief constable. PCCs work with the police to cut crime, give the public a voice at the highest level, hold forces to account and help build trust.
5. The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (as amended by the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016) includes provisions which enable the transfer of fire and rescue and/or PCC functions to the elected mayor of a combined authority area. The Greater Manchester devolution deal will establish a combined authority mayor, and includes the transfer of fire and rescue and PCC functions. This will be implemented via

secondary legislation drawing on the powers in the 2009 Act.

6. There are 11 NHS trusts in England, which provide ambulance services; five of which are currently NHS Foundation Trusts. An ambulance trust is governed by a trust board, which meets periodically. A trust board is made up of a non-executive chairman, a selection of the service's executive directors (including the chief executive), and a selection of non-executive directors.

Boundaries

7. In England, excluding London, 28 PCCs have police areas that are coterminous with FRA boundaries, five PCCs have police areas which are coterminous with the boundaries of the FRAs in their area when taken together, and only four PCCs have police areas which do not align with FRA boundaries.
8. Most NHS ambulance trusts encompass several police areas within their boundaries. For instance, North East Ambulance Service NHS Trust serves a region consisting of three police areas: Cleveland, Durham and Northumbria. Only four police areas are served by two different ambulance trusts: Derbyshire, Hampshire, Humberside and Northants.

Demand

9. The profile of demand for all three emergency services is changing. Incidents attended by fire and rescue services have been on a long term downward trend and have fallen by 42% over the last decade¹. Conversely, there is an increasing demand on the ambulance service. Total calls to the ambulance switchboard have increased by 15% from just over 8 million in 2011/12 to over 9.4 million in 2015/16 and emergency responses to the most urgent calls have increased by 33%². And whilst crime, as measured by the independent Crime Survey for England and Wales³, has fallen by more than a quarter since June 2010– overall demand on the police has not reduced in the same way. Evidence from the College of Policing⁴ suggests that an increasing amount of police time is directed towards public protection work, such as managing high-risk offenders and protecting vulnerable victims, which often require considerable police resource. Collaboration presents a real opportunity for emergency services to increase efficiency and effectiveness, maximise available resources, enhance local resilience and improve the service delivered to the public.

The Knight review

10. Sir Ken Knight's 2013 review of the efficiencies and operations in fire and rescue authorities in England, '*Facing the Future*', highlighted that merging fire and rescue services with one or more of the other blue light services and/or sharing governance structures could result in considerable gains. Sir Ken stated that "if

¹ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/ambulance-quality-indicators/>

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https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/511628/Fire_Statistics_Monitor_April_to_September_2015.pdf

³ Crime Survey for England and Wales 2014/15

⁴ http://www.college.police.uk/News/College-news/Documents/Demand%20Report%2023_1_15_noBleed.pdf

all authorities spending more than the average reduced their expenditure to the average, savings could amount to £196 million a year⁵.

11. Collaboration and innovation that will deliver necessary efficiencies requires leaders to drive forward change. The Knight Review found that progress could be “hindered by local relationships” and concluded “economies of scale are likely to be missed in this way without greater leadership”. Sir Ken stated that PCCs “could clarify accountability arrangements and ensure more direct visibility to the electorate” and he raised the prospect of PCCs taking on responsibility for the fire and rescue service.
12. In their 2016 report ‘*Police and Crime Commissioners: here to stay*’, the Home Affairs Select Committee concluded that: ‘the introduction of PCCs has worked well to date and has had some beneficial effect on public accountability and clarity of leadership’⁶.
13. The Government believes that the sharp focus of directly accountable leadership can play a critical role in securing better commissioning and delivery of emergency services at a local level. PCCs up and down the country have shown the benefits of bringing fire and police services together at local level, including through shared back office services, combined buildings or vehicles, and joint response to incidents.

Examples of good collaboration

14. The Government has already invested over £88 million, through the Police Innovation Fund (PIF) and Fire Transformation Fund, since 2013 to help drive blue light collaboration projects.
15. There are examples across the country of collaboration delivering savings and improving outcomes for the public:
 - **Critical Risk Intervention Team (CRIT)** – CRIT teams in **Greater Manchester** are led by Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service. The team respond to low priority calls from North West Ambulance Service regarding falls in the home as well as calls from police involving low level mental health incidents. They provide specific home safety advice to those identified as being at a higher risk from fire, falls, burns, crime and poor health and fit equipment to reduce those risks. This preventative approach reduces demand for all the emergency services and adult local authority social care services. In the first six months of the CRIT pilot, involving just three teams, evidence has shown that they have added more than £13m of value to Greater Manchester while costing less than £800,000.
 - **Hampshire’s H3 project** has successfully integrated its police, fire and county council back office functions including transactional services,

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https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/200092/FINAL_Facing_the_Future_3_md.pdf

⁶ <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201516/cmselect/cmhaff/844/844.pdf>

procurement, occupational health, property services, HR and facilities management. The H3 partnership received £1.3m from the Home Office and £500,000 from DCLG to support the project and has made savings of approximately £4 million a year with the potential to create a franchise of the model.

- **Northamptonshire's Interoperability Programme** is working towards bringing the police and fire services and, in the longer term, the NHS ambulance service ever closer together. Their achievements to date include joint delivery of training, fleet and logistics; co-location of premises; a fully integrated Prevention and Community Protection Team from police and fire; and a joint operations team which plans all operational activity across the three emergency services. They expect these collaboration projects to make the police savings of £21 million and the fire service £2 million, over four years.
- **Multi-Agency Information Transfer (MAIT)** – all three emergency services across **Surrey and Sussex** are delivering a programme which includes a suite of projects to bring the contact and control functions closer together. One of these is intended to enable the longer term vision of a fully integrated joint contact and control centre for partners able to do so. The MAIT project involves procurement and implementation of a 'hub' to transfer incident data between emergency partners, where more than one service is required at an incident, saving an estimated 7,500 operator hours per year.
- In **Durham**, the Police Innovation Fund support is enabling the training of **Tri-service Community Safety Responders** acting as police community support officers, retained firefighters and community first responders (i.e. volunteers trained and dispatched by the NHS ambulance service).
- **Suffolk** Police and Suffolk Fire Service have **five shared fire and police stations**, used by retained fire fighters and police Safer Neighbourhood Teams, and are looking to expand this further. They have a joint cadet scheme and plan to introduce a joint community safety unit.

16. Although there are many good local examples of joint working between the emergency services, the overall picture remains patchy and there is much more we can do to improve taxpayer value for money and the service to communities.

Consultation

17. In its manifesto, the Government made a commitment to “enable fire and police services to work more closely together and develop the role of our elected and accountable Police and Crime Commissioners”.

18. The Home Office, Department for Communities and Local Government⁷ and the Department of Health jointly launched a public consultation on 11 September

⁷ On 5 January 2016, the Prime Minister announced a Machinery of Government change transferring responsibility for fire and rescue policy from the Department for Communities and Local Government to the Home Office.

2015, which sought views on how to implement a range of proposals to enable greater collaboration between the emergency services. The consultation ran for six weeks, ending on 23 October 2015. There were over 300 responses to the consultation.

19. The Government's response to the consultation was published⁸ on 26 January 2016. This set out legislative proposals to:

- introduce a high-level duty to collaborate on all three emergency services, to improve efficiency or effectiveness;
- enable PCCs to take on the functions and duties of their local FRA, where a local case is made ('the governance model');
- further enable PCCs who have taken on responsibility for fire and rescue and mayors of combined authorities who exercise both police and fire functions to delegated fire and rescue functions to a single chief officer for police and fire, where a local case is made ('the single employer model');
- in areas where a Police and Crime Commissioner has not become responsible for fire and rescue, enabling them to have representation on their local fire and rescue authority with voting rights, where the fire and rescue authority agrees; and
- abolish the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority and give the Mayor of London direct responsibility for the fire and rescue service in London.

**Home Office
July 2016**

⁸https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/495371/6.1722_HO_Enabling_Closer_Working_Between_the_Emergency_Services_Consult....pdf