

Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group

Purpose

For discussion and direction.

Summary

Jonathan Smith, the Lead Officer for the Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group, will attend the meeting to discuss the work of the Group and outline their future work programme.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

1. Note the significant scale and scope of the collaboration already underway across the emergency services and the potential for future work;
2. Note the potential opportunity that the document represents to help drive further collaboration in their local area.

Action

Officers to progress as necessary.

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Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group

Background

1. The Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group was set up in 2014. Since then it has undertaken a programme of work looking at collaboration across the emergency services. The LGA is represented on the Group by Cllr David Acton and Cllr Nick Chard.
2. In November 2014 the Group published an overview of the collaboration underway in blue light services across England. The Group are now publishing an update version of the Overview, a summary of which was recently discussed by Ministers. This summary is attached at **Appendix A**.

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3. The Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group commenced work in September 2014, with the remit of providing strategic leadership, an overview of collaborations across England and Wales; as well as building an evidence base and to act as a champion of innovation and best practice.
4. Membership includes of representatives from: the Chief Fire Officers Association, Association of Ambulance Chief Executives, the National Police Chiefs' Council, College of Policing, Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, Local Government Association and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency. The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner in Hertfordshire and CFOA provides secretariat support and the Working Group received equal funding and ministerial backing from the Home Office, Department of Communities and Local Government and Department of Health respectively.
5. In November 2014, the working group, supported by central government, published an overview report entitled 'Emergency Services Collaboration – The Current Picture'. The report provided the most accurate picture yet of collaborative projects between blue light services in England and Wales, and provided a baseline for the working group to commission further research into the most innovative projects.
6. Following a tendering process, the working group commissioned research into emergency services collaboration from a consortium of universities (Nottingham, Birmingham and West Scotland), in conjunction with the charity Skills for Justice. The study sought to identify the factors that have resulted in positive outcomes, as well as the main barriers to increasing the scope and speed of collaborations between services in England and Wales.

7. The research findings were published on 27 March 2015. The research recommendations were focused on three key areas: promoting enablers, removing barriers and increasing collaboration. They include (but are not limited to): co-location of control rooms, creation of single back offices, better data sharing, capital resource rationalisation, shared command structures, shared operational staff, joint training programmes, intra-service rationalisation, alignment of terms and conditions and integrated local governance structures.
8. Although the original funding arrangement for the working group officially concluded at the end of the financial year 2014/15, interim funding has been provided to enable the working group to continue until 31st March 2016. The group has recommended to Ministers that the working group continues to be funded in the future, although the outcome of those discussions is not yet known.
9. In the interim secretariat and lead officer support has continued to be provided by the OPCC for Hertfordshire and CFOA, with an agreed short term programme of work to include:
 - 9.1. Continuing to promote emerging best practice and developing the evidence base
 - 9.2. Secure an outline agreement between stakeholders on the most effective way of expanding the Multi Agency Information Transfer (MAIT) system
 - 9.3. Identifying and promoting demand reduction between the emergency services
 - 9.4. Promote the increased adoption of emergency care co-responding between fire and rescue and ambulance services
10. In addition to the above programme of works and in response to a request from central government to outline a number of collaborative projects suitable for upscaling on either a regional or national level, the working group have been working with services and associations to refresh the 2014 National Overview with examples of collaborative projects, plans and initiatives from across England and Wales. A summary of this work is attached at **Appendix A**.

Issues

11. The refreshed overview has provided the working group with a significant amount of information and data. This can be used to help both central government and the wider sector in determining how collaboration can help to achieve the most efficient and effective delivery of emergency services in conjunction with wider public sector organisations.
12. The Ministerial Summary groups the main findings of the refreshed overview into seven main subject areas:
 - 12.1. Co-Responding
 - 12.2. Demand Management/Rationalisation
 - 12.3. Shared Estates/Assets
 - 12.4. Strategic Alliances/Partnerships

- 12.5. Multi-Agency Information Transfer
- 12.6. 999/112 and Wider Collaboration.

13. The report outlines what the future potential of each piece of this work is either for the working group or more generally for the wider emergency services.

Next steps

14. Members are asked to:

- 14.1. Note the significant scale and scope of the collaboration already underway across the emergency services and the potential for future work
- 14.2. Note the potential opportunity that the document represents to help drive further collaboration in your local area.

Financial Implications

15. None.