John Campion
Police and Crime Commissioner
West Mercia



West Mercia Fire and Rescue Governance

Consultation Pack

I believe that by changing governance arrangements for our local fire services we can deliver more effective, efficient services to our communities.

By assuming the role of our two Fire Authorities we can significantly improve local police and fire services, whilst saving the taxpayer £4m a year.

I am consulting our communities and partners on these proposals and want to hear from as many people as possible before the closing date on the 11th of September. This pack is designed to give you all the information you need to understand the plans, the reasons behind them and to take part in the consultation. It contains:

- The commitments I would hold myself to as Commissioner for local fire services
- The business case setting out recommendations and evidence for change
- A Q&A document, covering questions that may arise as part of this consultation
- A copy of the consultation document

These documents are also available on my website, www.westmercia-pcc.gov.uk. Alternative formats of the consultation are available via my office on request.

For me, these proposals are about delivering the best long term results for our communities and our emergency services. Our Fire Authorities have laid some good foundations, but it's clear to me that our communities are not getting the most effective, efficient services they could. That can only be achieved by making this change.

By ensuring our police and fire services are collaborating and integrated as much as possible we can deliver better emergency responses, improve prevention measures, and increase information sharing between the services. It allows us to deliver necessary efficiencies in a way that protects the frontline, fully respecting and retaining the professional skills and knowledge within each service and geographic area, which I think is a key priority for our communities.

Thank you for taking part in the consultation.



John Campion, West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner

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John Campion
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West Mercia Fire and Rescue Governance

June 2017

Foreword

I stood to become West Mercia's Police and Crime Commissioner because I believed I could improve the service our communities get from their police force. It is for the same reason that I believe we need to pursue the opportunity to move to a joint Commissioner for Police and Fire; in the best future interests of our emergency services and communities.

Our police and fire and rescue services both provide a vital safety net to our communities, who need to know those services are there when they need them; whether that's preventing emergencies, or handling them when they do occur. Both services help protect the most vulnerable people amongst us every day. Whilst their front line skills, training and equipment may differ, both services rely on hard-working officers who put themselves in harm's way to keep us safe.

These officers in both services also need the right structures, cultures and support services behind them in order to do their work to the best of their abilities. There are clear areas of common interest, but while we have seen a degree of service collaboration up to now, these areas of overlap are almost entirely unexplored when it comes to service integration.

As Commissioner for both policing and fire I would be uniquely positioned to build on the existing good work of our Fire and Rescue Authorities, going beyond our current limitations to make that integration happen in the best interests of our communities.

Integration and collaboration does not mean 'takeover'. I fully respect the unique skills and professionalism involved in the frontline services in each organisation and want to not only retain them, but develop the skills and capabilities in each service as much as possible, for the good of individual staff, the wider organisations and communities as well. Integration cannot and would not come at the expense of quality of service delivered, which I want to continue to improve.

“I stood to become West Mercia's Police and Crime Commissioner because I believed I could improve the service our communities get from their police force.”

Each organisation has good foundations from which to build, but faces further challenges ahead in how it works. The need to maximise potential around effectiveness and efficiency in our emergency services has never been greater, but it can be achieved.

Beyond my tenure as PCC, this change in governance would bring benefits long into the future. For policing, the transition from Police Authorities to PCCs has meant more public accountability and engagement, more transparency, improved partnership working, things getting done faster, clearer holding to account processes and a strong community voice into our emergency service.

These benefits can all be realised around our fire and rescue services too, if we move forward from our good foundations, and embrace a new way of delivering the very best for our communities.

From improved HMIC reports to new technology - I am delivering on my promises as Police and Crime Commissioner. In this document I am putting forward the additional pledges I would expect the public to hold me to as a joint Commissioner for fire and rescue services, as part of a single clear, consistent and integrated plan.

> Now is the opportunity to take collaboration to the next level and deliver for our communities.



John Campion
West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner

A safer West Mercia

Communities expect their fire and rescue services to be there when they need them, with the right skills and equipment to respond quickly to unpredictable circumstances. For me this is a fundamental requirement which cannot be compromised. I will keep our communities safe by ensuring this is always the case and build on that foundation, by improving collaboration and focusing on preventing emergency incidents from happening in the first place.



Visit to the new shared police and fire Operations Communications Centre, currently under construction at Hindlip

As Commissioner for fire and rescue services I would:

- Protect, and where possible improve the level of service our communities receive
- Ensure the right response to incidents is available at the right time, including incidents where multiple agencies are required.
- Ensure the best possible use of public money
- Reduce emergency demand, with a focus on education and prevention
- Back our officers with the resources they need to do their jobs effectively and efficiently
- Ensure our services work more closely with partners to improve community resilience
- Hold Chief Officers to account to ensure an effective, efficient service for our communities

A reformed West Mercia

Our fire and rescue services are hard-working, professional organisations that deliver a good service to our communities. However, their full potential for effectiveness and efficiency is harder to achieve within current governance and operational models. Limited collaboration with each other and the police force has gone on up to now, but this must be strengthened, deepened and accelerated if all our services are to deliver the best results they are capable of.

I want to build on the good foundations set by our Fire and Rescue Authorities to deliver modern, innovative fire and rescue services that lead the way nationally; whether that is in terms of emergency responses, back-office support functions or value to the taxpayer. However well these areas are performing now, it is only through proper and meaningful integration with each other that we can fully unlock the potential benefits.



As Commissioner for fire and rescue services I would:

- Maximise the potential benefits of integration between our police and fire and rescue services to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and resilience of services
- Ensure services are financially sustainable over the short, medium and long term
- Establish a formal alliance between Shropshire and Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Services, to retain local identities and services whilst realising the potential benefits of scale and service resilience
- Improve relevant sharing of data between police and fire and rescue services. This would improve everything from emergency responses through to future planning
- Ensure a collaborative approach to training between our police and fire and rescue services, integrating training wherever appropriate
- Integrate resources between police and fire and rescue services to provide better services in rural areas
- Ensure our front line officers are supported by a world class back-office function
- Ensure a geographic spread of skills and resources

A reassured West Mercia

It is vital that our communities not only are safe, but feel safe as well. This element of reassurance is as important in fire and rescue considerations, as it is for policing and crime.

Our emergency services have a crucial role to play in our communities, beyond responding when there's an emergency. They play a central role as a part of the communities they serve every day. I want to ensure that is the case where our fire and rescue services are concerned.

I want to build on their current education programmes to really involve and empower communities to play their pivotal roles in preventing emergencies in the first place; whether that is around road safety, water safety or simple fire precautions. Giving people the opportunities to learn, think and take positive action around these kind of issues can be hugely beneficial to our fire and rescue services, and can certainly help our communities rest a little easier at night.

I also want to provide reassurance as Commissioner, ensuring our communities can have faith in me, as well as the Chief Officers I would hold to account on their behalf. I would ensure proper transparency, giving communities and partners the opportunity to scrutinise my work.

I would build a visible presence, working with local authorities and other partners to engage with our communities and provide a strong voice on their behalf, making sure their priorities are understood and needs are being met.

As Commissioner for fire and rescue services I would:

- Maintain and build on effective education programmes to prevent emergencies and provide reassurance
- Provide a strong voice for our communities, to ensure their priorities are understood and acted upon
- Empower communities to take more action to stay safe and prevent emergencies
- Have a visible, accessible presence for both our communities and our fire services, ensuring public accountability and community reassurance
- Work with partners to ensure the best possible results
- Be open and transparent with my work and decisions, to allow proper scrutiny and ensure public confidence
- Invite our councils to nominate local fire representatives to work with me, to support and enhance my work as Commissioner

John Campion
Police and Crime Commissioner
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This document is available in other formats,
please contact 01905 331656 for further assistance.

Sustaining Resilience, Exploiting Information, Enhancing Service

Initial Business Case considering the governance of

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service

and

Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service

by the

West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner

BECKFORD CONSULTING

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Researchers and Authors:

Dr. John Beckford, Keith Elford, Professor Peter Kawalek

1: Executive Summary

1.1: Beckford Consulting was commissioned by the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia (PCCWM) to consider the initial business case for the governance, by PCCWM of Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) and Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS).

1.2: Consultation was undertaken with the PCC, Chairs of the two Fire Authorities and the Chief Officers of HWFRS, SFRS and West Mercia Police (WMP), their deputies and other nominated key officers and officials and consideration given to the substantial documentation provided by all three organisations. Workshops including the political and officer leadership of the affected organisations were held to provide the opportunity for collective engagement and debate about the ways forward.

1.3: The review work took into account the three principal options available to the organisations:

- Maintain the status quo;
- Joint governance;
- Single employer.

1.4: We consider that there is a business case for a change to joint governance of the three organisations. The business case can be summarised as follows.

1.4.1: Enhanced collaboration between police and fire services in West Mercia would create an opportunity to enhance Public Safety and Community Resilience across the three counties, within current resources, at a time when funding is more likely to be further squeezed than increased. The effect will be to strengthen the long-term resilience of police and fire services in a rural region where maintaining local services is challenging. It will create potential efficiency gains of £4m per year plus.

To achieve these outcomes, collaboration should include:

- Joint leadership and strategic planning, ensuring that collaborative activity is systematic, committed, and intentional;
- Shared enabling services, supporting and removing barriers to collaboration; allowing efficiency gains; tailored to the needs of the three services, distributed and integrated;
- Enhanced, front-line operational collaboration.

1.4.2: Features of operational collaboration would be likely to include (for example):

- A shared control room;
- Routine sharing of stations and other assets;
- Routine sharing of resources in the management of a variety of situations including RTCs and missing persons incidents,
- Intelligence sharing;
- An expansion of the PCSO/RDS scheme.

1.4.3: In our judgement, joint governance offers the best route to achieving these outcomes because, in contrast to maintaining the status quo, it simplifies decision-making. A single governance and decision-making forum creates a focus for ambition and drive, and makes it easier to create clarity of strategic direction. The appointment of a PFCC offers clear accountability to the public for the desired outcomes and makes it easier to remove barriers and bureaucracy:

- Whilst the current governance arrangements provide good ambition and solid foundations, maintaining the governance status quo (and its associated trajectory) would not deliver the available efficiency and economic gains and with continuing pressure on public finances it will become ever harder for the individual organisations to sustain resilient services;
- Attempting to bring the organisations together through a single entity, single employer model would offer only marginally greater benefits while introducing significant complexity, tension and organizational disruption with the potential to threaten public safety or community resilience and confidence in the services;

In contrast to the single employer model, joint governance achieves the required level of focus and purpose without the costly, complex, time-consuming, controversial and potentially distracting process that model would inevitably involve.

1.4.4: The joint governance model provides:

- Gains in Efficiency arising from joint governance will enable the three organisations to deliver and sustain their services at a lower Economic cost than is currently the case;
- Effectiveness and Resilience in ensuring Public Safety by all three organisations can be most readily enhanced across these three rural counties through shared governance and maximizing joint working and collaboration;
- Maintenance and promotion of established brand identities within the context of a FRS alliance;
- Greater synergies delivered through simpler, aligned decision making;
- Gains in Efficiency of processes and structures across the three organisations can be realized through a substantial increase in both the volume and nature of collaborative working, particularly in the areas of Prevention, Public Safety and Community Resilience. This can be further supported by consolidation of back office and enabling services provision. In each case a strong focus on enhancing value for money and rapid delivery of benefits will be important;
- Greater and accelerated collaboration;
- Geographically distributed, integrated and tailored shared services;

- New technology will offer potential for extending collaboration and many of the initiatives already in course of delivery will create potential for Police and Fire to function more flexibly and cohesively;
- Initial financial implications are potential savings in a full year of £4m. Implementation costs will be driven by the delivery strategy adopted by the PCC and the Chief Officers;
- Actions and decisions of the PFCC would be subject to public scrutiny by the local authorities' combined Police and Crime Panel.

It is important to note that any savings could be from across all three organisations. They would contribute to current savings requirements.

1.5: It is important to state that there is no criticism offered of the performance of the existing governance or organisations in their current form. We have not become aware of deficiencies in any dimension of their performance which would cause us to consider that there is a failure or risk of failure to overcome. The argument presented is rather that there is an opportunity for more to be achieved on the same resource base by working together under joint governance and a co-developed plan than by working separately.

1.6: An initial view of an implementation plan proposes that the organisations accelerate their rate of collaboration in the period leading up to a change in governance (subject to parliamentary approval) which would occur in April 2018. During this period critical projects currently in course (some of them joint) will be completed and working properly.

Thereafter, as governance changes take effect and deliver modest immediate savings, the PCCWM can work with WMP, HWFRS and SFRS to prepare a full implementation plan for delivery over the subsequent years which will need co-development with a transformation plan already in development by WMPCC, each influencing the content of the other.

2: Acknowledgements

We formally acknowledge the helpfulness and willingness of the political leaders of all three services, their Chief Officers, Deputies and other Officers and officials in preparing this work. Help and information were provided without hesitation or query enabling us to work rapidly and efficiently. Our thinking has been challenged and tested by these individuals and they contributed substantially to an open, transparent process.

We thank the staff of the PCCWM for their support and assistance throughout the process.

All parties have been friendly, open, supportive, prompt and efficient.

3: Preferred Option (Brief)

3.1: We consider that there is a business case to be made for the joint governance of West Mercia Police, Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service and Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service.

3.2: To deliver the option will require:

- Change of the PCC to PFCC for West Mercia;
- PCC becomes the Fire Authorities for HWFRS and SFRS;
- Maintenance of the Fire and Rescue Services as separate entities each under their own Chief Officer;
- Extension of the staffing and functions of the PCCWM to incorporate the statutory, reporting and administrative obligations and functions of the existing Fire Authorities;
- Adoption of an alliance command and leadership structure;
- Development of a shared/integrated Policing, Crime, Fire and Rescue Plan;
- Development of joint Police and Fire services for prevention and public safety activity;
- Exploitation of investment in information and related systems and technologies;
- Acceleration of collaborative working;
- Finalisation and realisation of the indicative costs and benefits identified herein.

3.3: We consider that this option has the potential to increase public safety through collaboration and efficient resource utilisation. It will thereby enhance community resilience while limiting the risk of organisational cultural barriers and resistance. We believe that joint governance can increase effectiveness by removing potential barriers to much higher levels of collaboration and reducing risk of resistance from some quarters. It offers the greatest potential for significant efficiency gains while the cost of implementation is expected to be low compared to the single employer model.

4: Research and Engagement Process

4.1: It was clear from the outset that if any change were to arise from the exploration of this business case then shared development of that change and engagement and collaboration by all parties throughout the process would best support its implementation.

We therefore undertook two processes in parallel:

- Collection and collation of organisational data concerned with structures, establishments, budgets, financial plans, information systems, core contracts and both ongoing and planned projects and changes;
- Semi-structured interviews with the PCC, the Chairs of the Fire Authorities, Chief Constable and Chief Fire Officers, their Deputies and Assistants and nominated officials. These particularly included understanding the process and impact of ongoing projects and the process and impact of existing collaboration activity (so that in neither case would financial benefits be double counted).

4.2: The purpose of these interviews was to provide maximum opportunity for the individuals concerned to express their views, ideas and concerns about the question under consideration. It served to allow them to be fully involved in the discussion about possible options, the rationale for those options and to raise any issues of particular concern.

4.3: Once completed, the outcome of this process was brought together with our interpretation of the strategic intentions of the three organisations, the organisational structures and financial data. The whole was then assessed by us against the three principal options.

4.4: Our initial findings were informally explored with the PCC and subsequently presented to a meeting of the leaders (political, officers and officials) of all three organisations. Essentially well received the leaders expressed concern that the business case should rest more heavily on the issue of sustainability, organisational resilience and the potential to improve the community outcomes of the three services and less on the potential for financial savings. It was considered that such savings could be achieved while there was debate about both timing and quantity.

4.5: A further round of discussions and interviews was undertaken as was a second ‘all organisations’ meeting to discuss the draft business case prior to its formal submission to the PCCWM.

5: Options Considered

5.1: Options

Consistent with the research proposal and with APACE[1] guidance provided we considered three options:

- Sustain Current Trajectory;
- Single Employer Model;
- Joint Governance.

5.1.1: These were all judged against the assessment requirements in relation to Effectiveness, Public Safety and Community Resilience, Efficiency and Economy and our considerations included political and cultural factors as well as the ease of implementation. We also considered the 'Treasury 5 case' analysis in reaching our recommendation.

5.1.2: It is important to reiterate that there is no criticism offered of the performance of the existing governance or organisations in their current form. We have not become aware of deficiencies in any dimension of their performance which would cause us to consider that there is a failure or risk of failure to overcome. The argument presented is rather that there is an opportunity for more to be achieved on the same resource base by working together under joint governance and a co-developed plan than by working separately.

5.2: Sustain Current Trajectory

5.2.1: Sustaining the current trajectory means proposing no change in the governance arrangements of the respective services. The three organisations would continue to pursue existing collaborative projects and to develop further such projects and activities in a manner consistent with their individual plans and strategies.

5.2.2: This is not a 'do nothing' strategy as while the three organisations would persist with their existing separate governance and command structures, there is collaborative and joint working in place or being established which will change the way they are. There is strong aspiration in respect of collaboration but we did not, from the information presented, identify specific, measurable financial or other benefits to be achieved nor expected delivery dates with the exception of the shared OCC at Hindlip. It is possible that these are reflected in project plans and budgets for individual areas.

5.2.3: Sustaining the current trajectory would not prevent enhancements to Public Safety and Community Resilience it would not necessarily enhance service outcomes beyond current plans and expectations. From an Effectiveness perspective it would neither enhance nor enable further and deeper collaboration and it would equally not stimulate either process Efficiency improvement or Economic gains.

5.2.4: The option would offer a number of apparent short term advantages. It would cause no disruption and incur no implementation costs nor would it be anticipated to have any employee relations impact. Plans currently on course to deliver savings would not be disrupted. Politically it would no doubt be viewed differently by different observers. The brands of the three organisations are well known and respected in their communities and these would be sustained under this option. Because the organisations do not need to integrate to collaborate, this option would avoid the, potentially disruptive, need to align differing organisational cultures, behaviours and disciplinary and employment structures. The approach would not inhibit interchangeability or sharing of appropriate resources but neither would it encourage or facilitate it.

5.2.5: A number of disadvantages would also arise. First of these is that the directness of accountability to the public would not be enhanced as it would be with a Police and Fire Crime Commissioner. Current collaboration, which is acknowledged by the organisations to be slow and limited in progress, would not be stimulated and it is thought unlikely that existing or envisaged services would be enhanced. There are a number of areas where potential collaboration opportunities are not currently being realised. These include each benefitting from the insight and expertise of the other in relation to service delivery around:

- Search;
- Rescue;
- Missing persons;
- Road traffic incidents;
- Prevention activity;
- Supporting the most vulnerable;
- Youth engagement;
- Community resilience.

5.2.6: Shared enabling and support services may realise significant performance and delivery cost gains. It is important that in working together the statutory responsibilities of each and particular expertise are brought together through a fully joined up understanding.

5.2.7: The success of the Fire and Rescue Services over many years in reducing incidents through the public safety and prevention campaigns means that the cost of sustaining the services and maintaining their effectiveness becomes harder to justify the scale of the organisation. There is a threat to their effectiveness, sustainability and resilience if opportunities for efficiency and economic gains are not actively pursued. Similarly, doing nothing would inhibit the realisation of potential from the collective investment in information and communications technologies. It will be essential to ensure first that the systems provided to Police and Fire are fit for the specialist purposes for which they are needed and second that they deliver increased value for money.

5.2.8: Although not a critical factor, it is worthy of note at this point that West Mercia Police already has an alliance with Warwickshire Police and it may be that

advantage can be gained through that for all parties. The existing alliance with Warwickshire Police will hamper neither this project nor the creation of shared services that would in the future support West Mercia Police and Fire Services. However, it is important to remember that the geographical and political boundaries around these services are not common with those of the fire and rescue services.

5.2.9: We cannot recommend this option.

5.3: Single Employer Model

5.3.1: Under the single employer model (SEM) the WMPCC would take over the governance of the Fire Authorities and, subsequently, West Mercia Police, HWFRS and SFRS would be merged into a single organisation. This would have a unified command structure with Police and Fire being divisions within that single organisation. A single Chief Officer, drawn from either a Police or Fire background would be appointed to lead the organisation.

5.3.2: The SEM would offer potential benefit to Public Safety and Effectiveness by enabling further collaboration and possibly better resource utilisation which could help to ensure the sustainability of police and fire services. It would remove institutional and legal barriers to maximising collaborative working and offer greatest potential for process efficiency and economic gains.

5.3.3: However, it is possible that staff and their representative bodies from all three organisations could be resistant to such a change and, as such, would be likely to delay and limit the realisation of, the benefits of such a change and might impart risk to public safety and service effectiveness. Effectiveness could be further inhibited through the need to overcome existing cultures and behaviours and build a single culture in a new organisation. The effort required to overcome such resistance to change might easily outweigh the advantages sought. We would anticipate that the overall economic cost of implementing this approach, both direct and visible and indirect and invisible would be greater than for the other two options.

5.3.4: The SEM would offer some potential advantages. The clear command and control structure would be simple and easy to understand (for employees and public alike), would be constitutionally very simple and would offer clear political and leadership accountability. The approach would potentially offer the greatest and fastest headline economic gains and maximisation of benefits. Seen by some as an ‘inevitable destination’ through flexibility in use of resources it would contribute to the resilience and sustainability of the services.

5.3.5: The disadvantages of the SEM approach seem to us to outweigh the advantages. The newly combined organisation would need to invest first of all in establishing a shared identity for both public and employees. It would require investment of substantial resources in establishing equality of work and pay, pensions and other employment benefits, and thereby impart risk to current

financial and business models. It would need to support this with full alignment of the financial models, equalisation of the precepts and balancing of liabilities. There would be a number of difficulties in the implementation process including cultural, behavioural and employee relations concerns, and potentially some lost work. These issues would certainly lead to negative impact on effectiveness in the short to medium term and inhibit the development of a new, single, shared identity for the organisation.

5.3.6: Compounding these aspects there are a number of other issues with which the SEM would have to contend including enforced ICT integration at pace. Failure of the business critical systems underpinning service delivery would risk unacceptable outcomes for public safety. Such failure potential becomes increased when systems are merged, renewed, updated or refreshed.

5.3.7: The WMP are currently delivering a number of significant projects (with Warwickshire Police) and have a transformation programme emerging. In parallel the HWFRS Control Room is co-locating in 2018 to share physical space with the WMP Control Room. This will be a useful test for both organisations.

5.3.8: There would be concern about the loss of the two FRS brands which are both respected and valued, and in particular that concern would be about the loss of local identity in the merged organisations. Similarly WMP have a well-established brand and a clear public understanding of their role. For all organisations this understanding might be threatened by full merger. This would at least appear to contradict the attempt to increase direct local accountability.

5.3.9: We cannot recommend this option.

5.4: Joint Governance

5.4.1: Joint governance would mean, as a minimum, that the PCCWM becomes the PFCCWM and the role of the existing Fire Authorities would cease. The PFCCWM would provide political leadership to all three services as well as fulfilling the role of employer for Fire and Rescue Services across Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin. The existing alliance with Warwickshire Police need not be affected by this change. There can be little doubt that establishing a new mechanism of governance across the three services will present challenges of organisation and compliance, though these will be less demanding than would be the case for a single employer approach.

5.4.2: Under this political leadership, all existing duties, responsibilities and obligations of the existing Fire Authorities would be absorbed into the PCCWM. The identities of the existing three delivery organisations would be sustained but would be brought together in an ‘alliance’ command structure with a Chief Constable and two Chief Fire Officers. Given the existing police alliance with

Warwickshire it may be that some further elaboration of the structures and more extensive collaboration would be achieved

5.4.3: We would suggest that operational efficiency would be enhanced by bringing delivery of all three West Mercia services together through the Control Room at Hindlip whilst resilience would be maintained by ensuring that there are adequate control facilities in each part of the WMPCC area as well as those in Warwickshire

5.4.4: While the PFCC would be responsible for developing an appropriate Police and Crime Plan and a Fire and Rescue Plan, we would suggest that the overall activities can be thought of in four major blocks: Policing; Fire and Rescue; Public Safety and Prevention; and Enabling Services. Community Resilience is integral to each of these four blocks. The first three of these would accelerate and increase joint working and collaboration, particularly around the Public Safety and Prevention thread through which much benefit might be derived. Enabling Services covers all those back office and support services essential to the operation of the other three. Joint working should produce gains in both effectiveness and efficiency with some economic benefit but perhaps that will be absorbed in sustaining resilience. Enabling services on the other hand should produce efficiency, effectiveness and economic gains through better use of shared systems, common approaches and joint procurement where that is appropriate.

5.4.5: We believe that this approach offers the potential to deliver gains in Public Safety and Effectiveness comparable with those of the SEM whilst reducing the risks of resistance and disruption that might arise from that approach. Joint command removes many of the organisational barriers to increasing collaboration while, again, minimising the risk of resistance. It offers as much potential for gains in effectiveness, efficiency and economy while having a lower cost of implementation and a lower risk profile than the single employer model.

5.4.6: The advantages of this option include supporting the sustainability and resilience of all services across West Mercia through fuller, faster collaboration and joint working together with additional interchangeability and sharing of some resources. These should translate to further and faster development of better services to the public. There will be fewer barriers to progress than with the SEM and the common command structure will enable a ‘best fit’ principle to be applied to the major strands of activity, allowing the deployment of the most appropriate or the nearest resource depending on the particular circumstances. While it might be argued that similar benefits are possible under either the existing arrangements or joint governance, the history and experience of such arrangements both within West Mercia and more broadly, shows that these are unlikely to be realised.

5.4.7: Sustaining the three separate organisations will cause a little extra work at PFCCWM level but that will be compensated for by maintaining the local connection with the level of spending and precept and thus the local accountability of services. Whilst the two FRAs have provided solid foundations

from which to build, expanding the work of the PCC to include Fire and Rescue will improve public visibility, accessibility and accountability of Fire and Rescue governance.

5.4.8: This option will also enable the greatest benefit to be derived from the adoption of ICT developments especially around prediction, planning and flexible working with the organisations able to blend specialist knowledge, systems and equipment where necessary with generic knowledge, systems and equipment where that is most appropriate.

5.4.9: The disadvantage will initially be the absence of a ‘single command’ at Chief Officer level and it may be that the economic gains are slightly less than they might otherwise be. Whilst over time a single Chief Fire Officer and command team for an alliance of two fire and rescue services may be desirable, additional strategic capability will be needed through the early period. We believe that the principal driver in this large, very rural area needs to be on sustaining the resilience and effectiveness of the services. The alliance working will need to develop a clear financial model so that costs and benefits are shared appropriately. The cost of doing that should be outweighed by the benefits.

5.4.10: The development of a shared enabling services function must be handled carefully. It must be recognised from the outset that the Chief Officers, working with the PFCC must take responsibility for creating an enabling services function that meets all of their needs. Explicitly that means it needs to be the most effective in providing support not simply the cheapest.

5.4.11: We recommend this option.

6: Joint Governance: 5 Case Analysis

6.1: Background

6.1.1: West Mercia Police is governed by the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia supported by a Deputy and a Chief Executive, Treasurer and other governance functions. West Mercia Police is led by a Chief Constable and Deputy and delivers its services through an alliance with Warwickshire Police which has a matching senior command structure. The senior alliance officers are Assistant Chief Constables, the officials are Directors. It should be noted that provision of fire and rescue services in Warwickshire is not a consideration of this business case. The alliance is included because of its implications for the change under consideration.

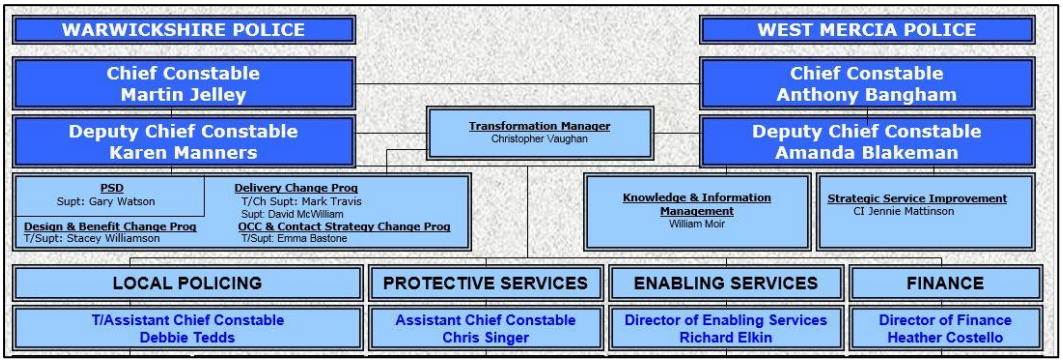


Figure 1

6.1.2: The police alliance extends to both Local and Protective Services policing which may have practical implications for collaboration between Police and Fire & Rescue Services in Herefordshire, Worcestershire in particular (having a shared boundary with Warwickshire Police) though less so for Shropshire.

The existence of the Police Alliance creates no substantive issue that we have identified

6.1.3: Of direct relevance to the change under consideration are three elements of the alliance structure. Warwickshire Police and West Mercia Police share a single Director of Finance and common Finance function and a single Director of Enabling Services (Procurement, Training, HR, ICT) and common support functions. This means that some of the benefits of shared services may have already been realised. In the event of a change in governance there will be a need to adapt those shared services to accommodate new approaches, behaviours and processes that might arise. There is also an alliance role of 'Transformation Manager' with responsibility for design and delivery of future policing. The existence of established integrated support functions may make the absorption of additional processing more straightforward (though it is recognised that there may be significant variation in some aspects). Similarly, it may be that the style of delivery and performance standards may need to be

reviewed. Along with WMP and Warwickshire Police, HWFRS outsources most of their property management functions to a contractor, PPL, in which it also plays a role in ownership and governance. WMP also outsources payroll operations.

6.1.4: The alliance has a number of significant projects in course and care will need to be taken not to disrupt them from, on time, to standard, delivery in this process of potential governance change. These projects include major ICT upgrades and a new control room in particular (shared with HWFRS).

6.1.5: West Mercia Police has an establishment of 2086 police officers, 2381 police staff and 403 specials. In the year to January 2017 WMP attended 142824 incidents of all types of which 81772 (57%) were related to Public Safety and Transport matters rather than reported crime. WMP Budget (2016/17) was £207.5m net with a savings target across the alliance for 2017/18 of £5m and a further £11m in 2018/19.

6.1.6: Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service is governed by Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority. The Authority is made up of 25 Councillors (6 from Herefordshire, 19 from Worcestershire) who conduct the political governance functions and are supported by 2 support staff plus legal services, monitoring and treasury. The Fire and Rescue Service retains its own finance, HR and other support functions. HWFRS is headed by a Chief Fire Officer supported by a Deputy CFO responsible for Service Support, Assistant CFO responsible for Service Delivery and a Director of Finance who is also Treasurer to the Fire Authority. There is an independent head of Legal Services who acts as Clerk and Monitoring Officer. With WMP it outsources most aspects of its property management to a contractor, Place Partnership Ltd (PPL), in which it also plays a role in ownership and governance.

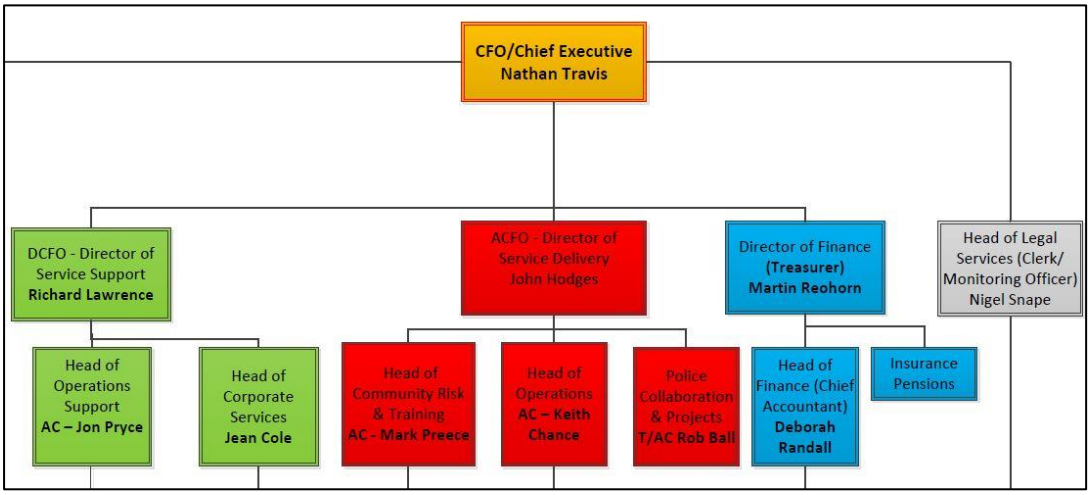


Figure 2

6.1.7: Around 80%[2] of the established, 757 person, HWFRS workforce are firefighters and of these 387 are retained firefighters, reflecting the rural nature of the location. HWFRS has 27 Fire Stations of which 8 have whole time crews available serving a population of around 750000. In 2015/16 HWFRS attended 6459 incidents (in relation to 9346 emergency calls) reflecting a 'continuing downward trend'[3] Of calls attended, 1920 were in relation to Fire, 3050 were false alarms for various reasons, 1489 were for special services including 648 road traffic collisions. HWFRS aims for a response time to life threatening incidents of 10 minutes.

6.1.8: HWFRS is undertaking a number of change and transformation projects. In addition to the development of the joint control room with WMP it is, like all emergency service organisations, working on the Emergency Services Network and Public Services Network projects, it has also transferred operation of its payroll to Warwickshire County Council. It has also commenced working on collaborative projects with Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service and on a 'blue light hub' in Wyre District. A project to renew Evesham Fire Station is now completed and work continues on a similar project in Hereford.

6.1.9: HWFRS has a budget of around £32m (2016/17) and is aware that it needs to generate further savings of £1.6m by 2019/20

6.1.10: Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service is governed by Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority. The Authority is made up of 17 Councillors who conduct the political governance functions and are supported by a treasurer and part time support staff with most functions outsourced to the Local Authority. The Fire and Rescue Service retains its own finance, ICT, HR and other support functions. SRS is headed by a Chief Fire Officer supported by a Deputy CFO responsible for Service Delivery and Training, Assistant CFO responsible for Corporate Service (HR, ICT, Planning and Performance), Head of Finance and Head of Resources.

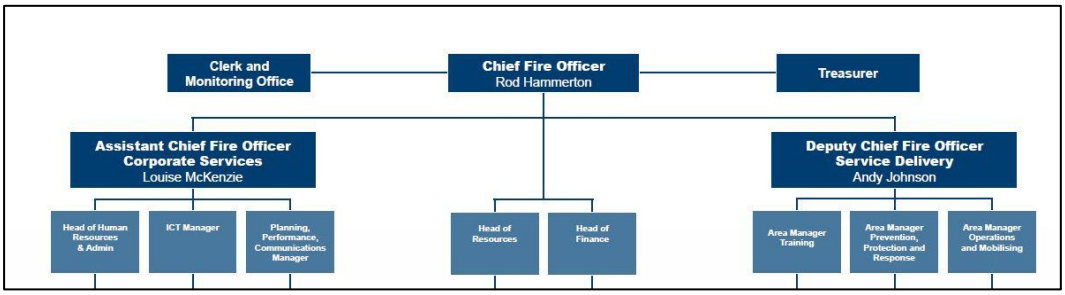


Figure 3

6.1.11: SFRS has an establishment of 640 of whom 79%[4] are firefighters (177 whole time and 332 retained. This proportion again reflects the very rural nature and widely distributed population of Shropshire. SFRS has 23 Fire Stations of which 3 are permanently staffed and serving a population of 473000 in England's

largest county. While SFRS[5] has a clear focus on prevention it attended 3956 incidents in 2015/16. Of these, 1234 were in relation to Fire, 1688 were false alarms for various reasons, 1034 were for various special services including 267 road traffic collisions. SFRS aims for a response time to life threatening incidents of 15 minutes.

6.1.12: SFRS has delivered service efficiency gains and reviewed its Telford site to improve its utility for SFRS and local resilience. A number of other operational improvements have been delivered in relation to people and systems in particular.

6.1.13: SFRS had a budget of £21.7m in the 2016/17 year and knows that continuing work will be required to deliver and maintain resilient services against future financial constraints.

6.2: Strategic

There are three major strategic opportunities that can be addressed through the proposed joint governance arrangement.

6.2.1: The first is that the organisations can accelerate collaborative working in the delivery of front-line services, in particular of the Public Safety and Prevention activities and tie these down to both process outcomes and financial objectives. The counties of Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Shropshire are large with significant rural areas and low population density. Travel across the area can be slow with limited motorways and dual carriageways and effective provision of services will always demand locally based capability. As pressure continues on the cost of service provision in the future collaborative working between services will be the most cost-effective way to sustain service resilience and effectiveness.

6.2.2: As all three organisations continue to deliver the same levels of service on lower budgets there will come a point where the existing business and service delivery models have been refined and reduced to their limits. At that point the services will need to consider reductions in service and/or variation in service response times. Joint working and collaboration will encourage the redesign of services and challenge the organisations to develop transformative ways of working to deliver the same services on a lower cost base and obviate the need for service reductions.

6.2.3: As well as front line services enabling services can similarly be transformed. Currently, WMP has its enabling services largely shared with Warwickshire Police with property management outsourced to PPL. SFRS buys in a variety of services from the local authority in Shropshire while retaining some of its own capability. HWFRS buys in some services from Warwickshire County Council and PPL while again retaining some internal capability. The proposed change to joint governance of the three organisations generates the opportunity for a rapid and rigorous reappraisal and redesign of the provision of all enabling

services embracing organisation, structures, processes, information and behaviours. These should be redesigned around the needs of the three organisations taking account not just of short term efficiency and economic gains but, particularly, the most effective ways in which such services can and should be delivered to three highly distributed organisations operating multiple shift systems throughout the week. Procurement and scale efficiencies can result. There is an opportunity to offer services which are locally distributed while retaining the benefits of centralised provision of the information, systems and technologies which underpin their delivery. Police Officers and Fire Fighters are on duty 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, enabling services can be provided in a manner that supports this demand with additional flexibility and efficiency.

6.2.4: It will be important to remember in undertaking such work that it will undoubtedly be possible to deliver economies through greater working at scale, consistency and homogenisation of certain aspects of, for example, training and equipment. It will be equally important to recognise and support those areas where specialist technical expertise or dedicated and specialised equipment is essential to the provision of an effective service. It will be one of the tasks of the Chief Officers to ensure that these are recognised and sustained.

6.2.5: The third major strategic opportunity rests in the potential to exploit investment in an information-enabled future. Substantial investment is already being made by WMP, Warwickshire Police and HWFRS in the new Hindlip control room together with a range of supporting investments in new infrastructure, hardware and software. While SFRS[6] has and is making investment in ICT, the opportunity exists for it to join with the joint control room facility and for all services to align around the most appropriate software and technologies. This will be consistent with the development of the Emergency Services Network (ESN) and Public Services Network (PSN) infrastructures. New Information and Communication Technology (ICT) allows for new ways of working both in operations and in supporting and enabling services. Examples, in which both the statutory responsibilities and management of delivery will also need to be aligned, include:

- prediction of service demand;
- utilisation of ‘big data’;
- more flexible despatch and control;
- utilization of drones and other robotics;
- deployment of staff on areas of new demand such as dementia care, missing persons preventative services and support for the most vulnerable.

6.2.6: The public value benefits of both efficiency and effectiveness will increasingly require that ICT is understood to provide a common public safety platform. Shared costs can be reduced and collaboration can be further enhanced. Public value, over time, will inevitably require, indeed rely on, the effective sharing of

data across organisational boundaries and that need on its own is sufficient to necessitate new governance arrangements.

6.2.7: Joint governance and the data sharing enabled by changing ICT provision will also enable the identification of points of acute public need and the use of shared resources to respond to them. This will ensure the delivery of benefits of collaboration particularly in rural areas where delivery resources are sparse.

6.2.8: All that said, the focus of ongoing investment in ICT needs to be focused very clearly on the 'I' rather than on the C and T. The systems exist to deliver information to those who need it to support the decisions they are charged with taking and for which they will be accountable, there is an obligation to ensure that they are fully informed. The starting point for consideration in this area is to ask 'what do we need to know to make the decisions we need to make?' The role of the C&T is to provide that information. Information-focused processes need to be designed which deliver that information, are enabled by the technology and support devolved decision making to largely, distant officers operating with high autonomy.

6.2.9: All that which has been said above is consistent with the existing direction of travel both of the organisations under consideration but also across the public sector as a whole. At present collaboration is inhibited, in particular, by the multiple governance bodies (albeit unintentionally) and by the organisational barriers those arrangements render necessary. The proposed changes will support and enable significant acceleration in the substance and rate of transformation in the direction currently considered by Chief Officers and the design and delivery of a more coherent, integrated public service over a shortened timescale.

6.3: Economic

There are three principal areas in which public value can be directly improved through the proposed change.

6.3.1: The first and most readily available is through **reduced governance costs**. The combined direct governance costs of the SFRS and HWFRS Fire Authorities amount to around £577k in the 2016/17 financial year. It is estimated that these costs can be reduced by not less than £250k per annum from April 2018 through elimination of the existing member costs, around £136k and redesign or integration of the processes and structures of supporting services with those already borne by the PCCWM where a further benefit of at least £110k is anticipated. There will be some transitional costs to bear for the whole programme which will depend on the implementation strategy adopted.

6.3.2: It is proposed that the PCCWM would invite a small number of representatives from across the counties to offer and assist in sustaining local understanding after the change.

6.3.3: The second, and potentially most significant area of economic gain is in the **provision of enabling services** to the constituent organisations. We consider that through consolidation of activity, process redesign and the elimination of non-value adding activity a gain in the order of 25% of current combined costs is achievable. The benefits case for the change will need to take account of any committed cost reductions deliverable before the proposed governance change in April 2018 to avoid double counting benefits.

6.3.4: Across the four organisations affected here (including Warwickshire Police through the alliance), some 628 employees, 11% of the combined total, are employed in these areas which cover Chief Officers and their Deputies, Transformation, Alliance Working, Business Support and Estates, HR, Training, Transport, ICT, Strategic and Operational Planning, Legal, and Internal Audit. 482 of these are employed in existing West Mercia and Warwickshire Police Alliance related roles. There may be an impact on some of these roles from the proposed change in governance which will need to be recognised in alliance arrangements. Adopting lean and other quality management approaches, through consolidation of structures, integration, transformational process redesign and more effective use of information, this can be reduced by around 25% to about 474 (8.5% of the combined total) over three years. The estimated reduction in annual cost is estimated at a potential £4m across the three organisations on completion. There is no impact on front line staffing from this element.

6.3.5: The cost of designing and implementation should be largely absorbable within the current cost base of the organisation (by redeploying existing staff) although it is likely that some facilitative external consultancy support will be appropriate. The PFCC will need to determine the pace of delivery of the change through natural wastage, non-replacement of leavers and, if necessary, redundancy and that will to a large extent determine the cost of reducing the headcount. The style and pace of transition plans will have a significant impact on any transition costs arising.

6.3.6: The third area in which economic gain can be made is in enhanced **collaboration and optimisation** at front line especially around Public Safety, Preventative activities and Community Resilience. We have not attempted to quantify the potential at this stage. Existing collaboration plans (beyond the shared control room at Hindlip) embrace a range of matters such as PCSOs cross-trained as firefighters (23 across the two FRSs), joint fire investigations, incident planning and training, some procurement, PPL (property management), sharing of buildings and co-location. The financial benefits of these are reported to be captured in local budgets. Future plans include joint Harm Hubs and Community Risk Teams, co-locations of commanders, shared training facilities, relocation of HWFRS to WMP HQ and some aspects of driver training, vehicle repair.

6.3.7: We believe that there is much scope to extend collaboration, particularly in relation to Public Safety (where FRSs have been particularly successful) and

Preventative activities and Community Resilience. Through that we would expect to see potential realised for elimination of duplication of action, for increased efficiency in the use of all forms of resources and gains in achievements of desired outcomes. To achieve this will require retention of substantial management and leadership capability at senior levels in all organisations. That leadership will need to identify and quantify barriers to collaboration and work out means by which they can be overcome

6.4: Commercial

The commercial case for this approach is closely tied in to three other cases, the strategic, economic and financial but two additional elements stand out from those.

6.4.1: The first element is that the strong brand identities of the constituent organisations will be retained. This will help to ensure that public recognition and appreciation is sustained, will maintain the local, distributed control that serves so well in these rural counties while delivering the shared support and enabling systems that deliver business efficiency in processes and financial management.

6.4.2: The second element is that direct political accountability is achieved while the local input is sustained through the adoption of advisory support to the PCC to ensure understanding of those things which matter to individuals and local communities.

6.5: Financial

6.5.1: The financial case needs to acknowledge the good work that has already been done and is in course of delivery by all three constituent organisations. While major projects are in course of delivery, WMP is working on its future transformation plan. HWFRS has identified the need to save a further £1.6m pa by 2019/20 and SFRS knows that similar proportionate savings must be achieved. All are rightly concerned to protect and preserve their front line services in Policing, Fire, Prevention and Public Safety. One of the means through which that might be achieved is by bringing together the governance as proposed herein and exploiting that for the business efficiencies and savings that might be generated.

6.5.2: This will not be an easy, trivial or comfortable task. Much work has already been undertaken and process efficiencies and economic savings delivered. The next stage will require courage and insight to draw on the latent capability of information systems to reduce costs through smarter working, eliminate non-value adding activity, reduce process cycle times, improve response times, reduce duplication and delay and promote greater autonomy in the administrative functions. Part of this may be achieved through extensions to ‘self-service’ capabilities in enabling services, part through more radical approaches.

6.5.3: Work so far has largely delivered improvement to existing systems, processes, procedures. Taking the next steps will require considering whether some processes are needed at all, whether greater decision discretion can be allowed to individuals within the organisational system, whether some systems, processes, activities and ways of working have run their course and can simply be stopped. This will require courageous, strong leadership at all levels.

6.5.4: We believe that the benefits profile (based on the outline implementation plan in section 6.6) is as follows:

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/2021
Governance	£0	£0.25k +	£0.25k +	£0.25k +
Organisational	£0	£0.5m	£2.0m	£4.0m
Cumulative	£0	£0.75m	£3.5m	£7.75m

The benefits stated and costs recognised are focused only on revenue matters. There are some capital programmes in course of delivery or in planning which are included in collaborative working, or are outside the scope of this work. Once a determination on the governance question has been made it is recommended that the WMPCC revisits the capital programme and identifies additional areas of potential gain.

6.6: Management

6.6.1: Delivery of the proposed plan will depend upon the hard work, determination and ambition of the Political leadership and Chief Officers of the three organisations. All have already demonstrated significant capability in this regard and it would be short-sighted when setting out on this task to reduce that capability at all. The task of delivering the change will be demanding and will rely on the engagement of the established leaders with their loyal workforces. Pursuit of this proposal will provide unity of energy and direction which will simplify the roles of the Chief Officers in meeting the expectations and demands of political leadership.

6.6.2: Although it may seem a luxury, our plan considers that each force should retain its own Chief Officer who will lead the change in the organisation and engage positively with the leaders of the other two. The proposed initial structure is set out in figure 4.

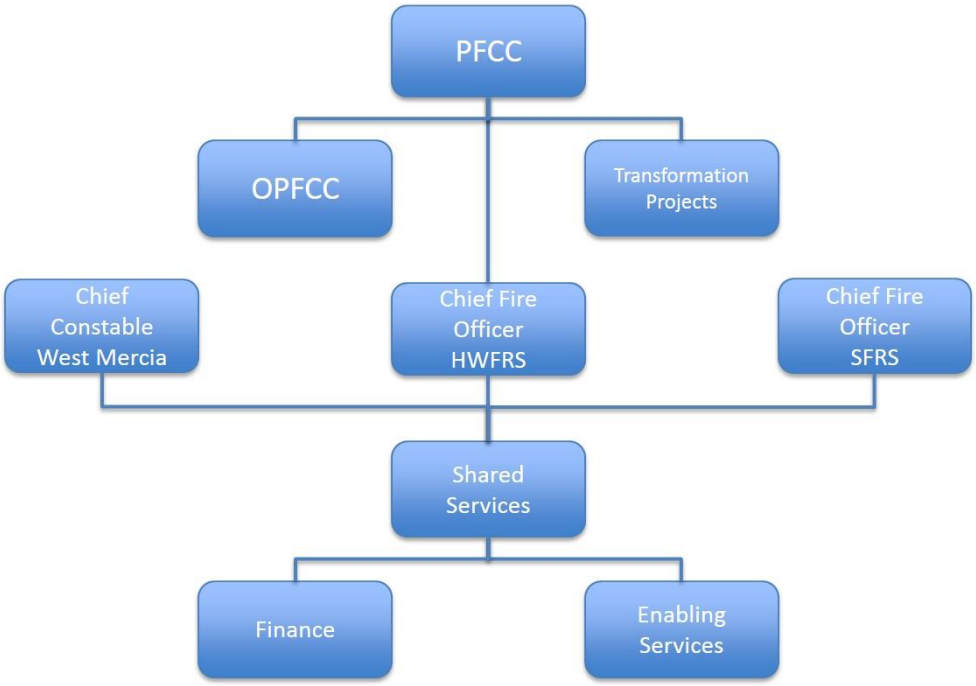


Figure 4

6.6.3: There will be key challenges for these leaders to deliver in the current year, particularly the shared control room at Hindlip and retaining leadership capacity will assist in not destabilising those challenges. For the future, the leaders will need to understand that transformation of their services is not an add-on to the daily duty, it is the daily duty. What they will be charged with delivering will be a different future and doing so will require them to exercise fully their skills in leadership, not managership or commandship. While there is no doubt that something would be achieved by giving instructions we believe that much more will be achieved by fully engaging every employee within the three services in the design and delivery of the change. They will need to build a share transformation team, to work out how that co-exists with the existing alliance activity and the collaboration and then work together to deliver a new way of working across process, people, information and technology.

6.7: Implementation

6.7.1: In the year to April 2018 the focus will remain on accelerating compliance with the statutory obligation to collaboration between the services and the development of alliances which do not rely on assumptions about any possible change in governance for their achievement.

6.7.2: In the period before April 2018 the three services can focus on the acceleration of existing collaborative activities and coupling them to achievement of performance and financial targets. None of that is affected by governance discussions.

6.7.3: WMP and HWFRS will be completing delivery of the major projects currently in course and, again, the governance conversation must not be allowed to distract the attention of the relevant people.

6.7.4 In the period before April 2018 the three services could focus on acceleration of Police and Fire Collaboration. If the proposed governance change is confirmed then from April 2018 what would be the PFCC would replace the two FRAs, establish the advisory panel and bring into being formal strategic command of the three services. The PFCC with the Chief Officers could then consider the most appropriate means of providing joint command and control across West Mercia and develop integrated plans for transformation, for integrated enabling services and commence delivering those plans.

6.7.5: Thereafter, from April 2019, the PFCC would be expected to review the senior command and leadership teams, to begin to release any redundant posts and deliver the transformation plan.

7: Collaboration

7.1: Sustainable success in the proposed joint governance model will be realised through maximising effective collaboration across the three organisations to ensure a resilient, cost effective approach to public safety and prevention. This will also support the development and delivery of an integrated prevention agenda.

There is collaboration already in course between the three services which extends to:

- Prevention and protection;
- Cross-trained PCSOs, FRS Search and Rescue Dogs;
- Joint fire investigations and incident planning;
- Joint command and control (SFRS/HWFRS);
- Joint operational and management training;
- PPL (premises management);
- Some elements of procurement;
- Some sharing of buildings.

7.2: Planned extensions to these existing collaborations include shared Harm Hub/Community Risk Teams, physical co-location of command teams, some shared training facilities and courses, some aspects of operational logistics around vehicle maintenance and driver training and the Public Services Network.

7.3: Documentation reviewed in relation to these aspects showed strong aspiration but was less clear on potential public service benefits, economic benefits and realisation dates. Some of these are believed to be in budgets and project plans, however this mainly highlights the potential for a sharper focus on this area and for the delivery of quantified benefits on all matters.

7.4: Meetings with Officers for all services and in the collective discussions provided the opportunity for consideration of additional areas for collaboration, the barriers that might exist and how they might be overcome. It was considered that a move to joint governance would enable joint strategic planning and enhance operational collaboration. Developing a shared enabling services model was also considered possible allowing efficiency gains while removing barriers. It was recognised that this would need to respect both the geography of the West Mercia area and be tailored to meet the needs of the services.

7.5: A number of operational areas were also identified as having potential. These included reconsidering how to more frequently deploy RDS resources in appropriate circumstances. This might include working together more closely on youth engagement, mental health issues, and meeting the needs of vulnerable people, all of which could be supported by an ethos in the control room of ‘doing the right thing’ to meet the need, especially in rural settings.

7.6: To achieve these ambitions will require connected thinking and action with a mutual understanding of the mechanisms for identifying and allocating all types

of resources. Of particular importance will be the sharing of information which will be particularly enabled through control room protocols.

References:

1: APACE Police and Fire Guidance Notes 13/2/2017

2 and 3: HWFRS Annual Report 2015/16

4 and 5: SFRS Annual Report 2015/16

John Campion
Police and Crime Commissioner
West Mercia



West Mercia Fire and Rescue Governance

Consultation Q&A

Will this mean I get a better or worse service when I need help from the police or fire crews?
In itself, a change in governance does not directly impact frontline services. It does not affect frontline firefighters or police officers and most things would stay exactly the same at first. One aim of bringing governance together is to make it easier for our police and fire services work together more to improve the service you get.

Will frontline officers be lost as a result of this?
No. If anything, this proposed change of governance would actually help protect frontline officers. Our police and fire services need to find efficiencies at the moment. Working together more would help them find those efficiencies in support functions, rather than on the frontline.

Will specialist equipment be lost from our police or fire services?
No. That would not be acceptable and is certainly not part of these proposals. Police and fire services would work more closely though on joint procurement and sharing best practice to improve resilience.

Would this mean a reduced presence or visibility from our police or fire services in local communities?
No. The PCC is already working to improve community visibility for police and would not compromise that for either service. In the future it could be that, for example, our police and fire services share more buildings, but they would still retain their community presence.

Would these changes mean a loss in local identity for our fire services?
No. Both fire services would still exist as individual organisations, as would West Mercia Police. The same local police and fire teams would be responding to incidents as we have now. Their names and branding etc. would not be affected and they would still serve the same communities they do now.

Will this mean that funding from one area, which currently goes to one service, could be used to prop up other services in different areas?
No – this could not happen. Each service would retain its own budget, income, expenditure and reserves. These would all be ring-fenced to each specific service and geographic area.

Would the fire services be merged together? Would they be merged with the police?
No, the services would work more closely together, but they would not be merged. This would help maximise the benefits of collaboration, without losing the identities, brands and public confidence of the organisations.

John Campion
Police and Crime Commissioner
West Mercia



Would I still pay separate council tax contributions for police and fire services? Will they still have separate budgets?
Yes, because the organisations are not merging and still have their own ring-fenced finances. You would still pay an amount towards policing and a separate amount towards your fire service. From a public perspective, nothing significant would change in terms of how services are paid for via council tax or financed more broadly speaking.

What are the benefits here in terms of finances or efficiencies?
A change in governance would enable a saving of around £4m to the taxpayer. This would be from the efficiencies that can be achieved by our two fire services and our police force working more closely together and sharing more support functions.

Do our police and fire services need to save money? Would this change help with that or not?
Both our fire services and our police force have been well governed up to now, but they haven't worked together as well as they can. All three organisations do need to find further efficiency savings in the coming years. In percentage terms, our two local fire services are facing the largest savings targets of any nationwide. West Mercia Police is implementing savings of £9.5m this year, with a further £21.9m projected by the end of 2020/21.

These proposed changes in governance will not single-handedly solve these challenges. However, they would save an estimated total of £4m per year and help ensure that each organisation is squeezing as much efficiency from its back-office function as possible, and therefore offering some increased protection to frontline services.

Does the PCC have the experience to run fire services?
Much like the Chief Constable runs the Police force, there would still be a vastly experienced and professional Chief Fire Officer who would run their fire service as well.

These proposals are about governance – providing a strong voice for communities, holding those chief officers to account, ensuring the public get an effective, efficient service and making sure services respond to community needs. This is a role the PCC already fulfils for policing and crime and would be expanding to cover the fire services as well in the best interests of public safety.

What if there are major objections to these proposals, will they go ahead regardless?
If there are objections from top tier councils or there is not a local appetite for these changes they don't have to go ahead. The proposals would be independently reviewed and the final decision would rest with government.

Who is driving these proposals? The government or the Police and Crime Commissioner?
The Police and Crime Commissioner is the person driving this forward. The PCC commissioned the piece of work to look into the possibilities here and has ultimately decided



there is a proposal which is worth exploring further in the best interests of public safety and services.

Is this just the Police and Crime Commissioner 'building an empire'?
This is purely and simply about what is best for our emergency services and our communities in the short, medium and long term. The recommendations for these changes have come from independent experts who have conducted an in-depth review of the current arrangements and what is possible going forward. If there was no prospect of improving effectiveness and efficiency then the PCC would not be pursuing these proposals.

How would this impact rural communities?
By getting the police and fire services to work together better we should be able to provide a better and more resilient service in our more remote areas.

What will happen to the Chief Officers who are currently in charge of the police and fire services?
These arrangements will not be affected by these proposals. Our police and fire services will continue to be run by experienced, professional officers who are experts in their fields.

If these changes make our emergency services more efficient, would that leave them vulnerable to the government reducing their budgets?
The PCC has lobbied the government for fairer funding for policing since his election and would continue that campaign if he was in charge of governing fire services as well. By being able to demonstrate to government that local police and fire services are as efficient as possible already, it would strengthen the case for fairer funding, with a particular focus on providing services in rural communities.

Is it less democratic to have a single person in charge of governance of our local fire services?
There are currently 40 local councillors who sit on the two fire authorities, who would be replaced by a single directly elected person if these proposals go ahead. Whilst these councillors are all elected, they are only elected to represent their wards. They are not elected to the fire authorities. Fire authority members are nominated by councils without consulting the public.

If these changes go ahead, in 2020 our communities would have the chance to directly elect a local Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. Every voter would have an equal say. This proposal will increase the democratic accountability of our fire and rescue services.

Could we get better collaboration and integration between our police and fire services without this change in governance?
In theory it is possible, but the reality is that it has not happened. Collaboration between our police and fire services does go on, but it is limited and does not go far enough to maximise the possible benefits to our communities. A change in governance to have a single body



overseeing all three organisations would help provide the catalyst to get this progress moving forward.

What are the alternatives to these proposals? Why aren't they possible?
There are a couple of alternatives.

1. Maintain the status quo of having a PCC and two fire authorities. This option would not realise any of the potential effectiveness and efficiency benefits of single governance.
2. Create a 'single employer', and have our police and fire services as part of one big organisation. This is not proposed as an option as it could blur the lines between policing and fire and could risk compromising the specific professional skills of each service.

Would our local councils still have a role to play in fire governance?
Yes, the Commissioner is proposing a system whereby each top-tier local authority would be asked to nominate fire representatives. These Councillors would help inform and support the PCC in his work.

How would this affect the police alliance between West Mercia Police and Warwickshire Police?
This would not have a direct impact on the policing alliance.

Are the ambulance services involved in this at all?
No, they aren't. They have indicated that they do not wish to be at this stage.

Communities have different relationships to their fire services than they do with their police. How would these changes impact on that?
This is acknowledged and these changes would not necessarily impact on that directly. The police will still be the police, fire services will still be fire services. This change in governance would not directly affect those community relationships, although with the Commissioner's responsibilities around community engagement, responding to community concerns and providing a strong voice for the public, if anything this change would hopefully improve relationships for both services and develop safer communities through effective, efficient collaborative working.

Who would hold the Commissioner to account if he were to take over governance of the fire services?
The electorate would still hold the Commissioner to account as at present. Currently the Commissioner is scrutinised by West Mercia's Police and Crime Panel. If these proposals go ahead, their role would also be expanded to become the Police, Fire and Crime Panel.

Will the PCC get paid any more for this?
The PCC's salary is fixed by Parliament. In time it could be that they review his pay, however this has not been discussed by any party at this point. This is not the driver for the proposed changes in governance, this is purely about the effectiveness and efficiency of our police and fire services.

John Campion
Police and Crime Commissioner
West Mercia



Who has made these recommendations? Can we trust that they know what they are talking about?

The PCC engaged independent business consultants to assess this issue. They included Doctors and Professors who are experts in their fields. The lead consultant has 30 years of experience working with businesses across the public, private and third sectors, reviewing their processes, organisational structures and operations in order to maximise their effectiveness and efficiency. The consultants gathered and analysed evidence, including from talking with senior police and fire officers, the local Fire Authorities and partner organisations, before presenting their conclusions.

John Campion
Police and Crime Commissioner
West Mercia

WEST MERCIA FIRE AND RESCUE GOVERNANCE

CONSULTATION

The Police and Crime Commissioner is proposing to take on governance of local fire services in Herefordshire, Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin and Worcestershire.

This would result in:

- Estimated £4 million annual savings through improved efficiencies.
- Closer collaboration between police and fire services.
- Improved resilience for ensuring public services.
- No changes to frontline officers or services
- A system of a directly elected Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.

Q1 Do you support these proposals?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Q2. What are the main reasons for your answer to question 1? (Please tick all that apply).

Financial considerations ☐

Service resilience ☐

Levels of collaboration ☐

Replacing the existing Fire and Rescue Authorities ☐

Other (Please Specify):

About You

Q3. In what capacity are you responding?

As an individual member of the community ☐ (**Please go to question 6**)

On behalf of a business ☐ **Please go to question 7**)

As an employee or volunteer of the police or fire service ☐ (**Please go to question 4**)

As a local councillor or on behalf of a local council ☐ **(Please go to question 5)**

Q4. Do you work for any of the following? (This can include in a voluntary capacity)

Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service ☐

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service ☐

West Mercia Police ☐

Q5. Are you any of the following?

Town or Parish Councillor ☐ Unitary Councillor ☐

District / Borough / City Councillor ☐ County Councillor ☐

Providing an official response on behalf of the following Council ☐

Q6. Please confirm your age

Under 18 ☐ 40 - 64 ☐

18 – 25 ☐ 65 and over ☐

26 – 39 ☐ Prefer not to say ☐

Q7 Please confirm which local policing area you live in (or are located in if you are responding on behalf of a business, organisation or a council)

Herefordshire ☐

Shropshire ☐

North Worcestershire: Bromsgrove, Redditch, Wyre Forest ☐

South Worcestershire: Malvern Hills, Worcester City, Wychavon ☐

Telford and Wrekin ☐

Other (Please specify) ☐

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO TAKE PART IN THIS CONSULTATION.

Please post your completed questionnaire to:

John Campion, West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner, Hindlip Hall, Worcester WR3 8SP

The closing date for the consultation is **Monday 11th September 2017**

Results will be published in due course on: www.westmerica-pcc.gov.uk