

Strand title	Emergency Service Collaboration
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Introduction

This work forms part of the Surrey Public Service Transformation Network (PSTN) proposal. There are six strands of this work: Emergency Service Collaboration; Family Support; Health and Social Care Collaboration; Better use of Public Sector Assets; Young People’s Participation and Skills for Employment; and Transforming Justice. This Outline Business Case for Emergency Services Collaboration sets out the aims of the work, case for change and proposed delivery models. It is outline at this stage. A full business case is expected to be complete in March 2014 which will contain a detailed cost, benefit analysis. Discussions have also been held with West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (WSFRS) and East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (ESFRS) with regard to exploring their future involvement.

Surrey Chief Officers are resourcing the project with three full time operational specialist officers from Fire, Police and Ambulance, with a project officer and some time from a senior manager from each Service in support. These posts have been funded by each of the blue light services to scope out and develop the outline business cases and, moving forward, to develop the full business cases. There is also support available from each of the three services to gather the data required. Sussex Police and East and West Sussex Fire and Rescue Services are also providing officer time to develop this work. A bid has been submitted to the Government’s Transformation Challenge Award for funding to enable effective Programme Management arrangements to be put in place. This is essential to the successful delivery of the business cases and to realise the anticipated benefits of these projects. Furthermore, policy officer support from Whitehall has been agreed from the Public Service Transformation Network. This central Government support will be essential to enable the successful delivery of this work within the timescales allocated.

Effective governance and scrutiny of this programme is also required within all the organisations participating to ensure that transformation is achieved and the aims and objectives are delivered.

<p>1. Aims and objectives</p> <p>The emergency services respond to an extraordinary range of incidents and provide a very good service to local residents. Yet they do so with limited collaboration between the services, which results in a certain level of duplication and overlap. At a time when money is tight, demand is rising, public expectations are increasing, and incident types are becoming more complex, improved collaboration and co-ordination between Services will provide a quicker, more tailored and more efficient service to local communities.</p> <p>Chief Officers in Surrey Police, Surrey Fire & Rescue, South East Coast Ambulance Service, and Surrey County Council have agreed that they will work in partnership to transform the way the Emergency Services work together, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve performance and respond to the changing pattern of demand; and • reduce costs by removing overlaps between the services. <p>Sussex police and East and West Sussex fire and rescue services have also agreed to work as part of the project team to investigate the potential to expand this approach across both Surrey and Sussex.</p>
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2. Case for change

The emergency services currently operate effectively, but largely independently of each other. There is scope to transform the way they work through greater collaboration in a number of areas, as set out below. This does not indicate dissatisfaction with current outcomes, rather a recognition that there is much more that could be achieved through collaboration rather than separation. This work also does not preclude other collaborations, for example with other fire or police services.

The case for change for each specific proposed area of work is set out below.

In addition, there are a number of generic issues which contribute to the case for change:

Demand for services – demand for the services is changing and each service aims to plan not just around demand, but also risk. Greater collaboration has the potential to enable a combined view to be taken of risks and demand profiles to provide the most appropriate service:

- SECAMB are experiencing a 5-8% annual increase in demand year on year. For Surrey and Sussex, SECAMB receive about 500,000 999 calls and 1 million 111 calls, of which 454,824 required resource deployment last year;
- Surrey Police experienced a 3% increase in 999 calls last year¹. This equates to about 120,000 999 calls and 430,000 101 calls last year, of which 118,444 required resource deployment.
- Surrey Fire & Rescue has achieved an average reduction in demand of 6%² year on year over the past 10 years (similar to the national trend). This equates to about 22,500 999 calls last year, of which 9,851 required resource deployment.

Population change - demographic change is predicted to result in an ageing and growing population locally, which will place additional and more complex demands upon the emergency services. There is therefore an opportunity to develop a collaborative emergency response to these issues.

Global strategic trends – national evidence indicates that incident types may become more complex, particularly in relation to major climatic or security events, which require a more integrated emergency response.

National imperative – the emergency services have been asked to consider how they could best collaborate with key strategic partners, with the Chancellor stating in the last spending round that the government intends to drive greater integration of local emergency services.

Proposed areas of focus

1: Operational response

Within each emergency service, operational response and tasking is undertaken separately. This results in separation of:

- information and data collected at the time of an emergency call;
- responses mobilised to the scene;
- positioning of assets – there is some sharing of sites for the purposes of providing places for personnel to rest, however the 3 services' assets are deployed independently of each other; and
- operational policies and procedures for joint incident types, which are developed separately for each service.

There is therefore opportunity through collaboration to:

- respond more effectively to joint incidents;
- use scarce response resources more effectively across the organisations;
- align resources to better reflect risk and demand;
- breakdown silo working between partners; and
- develop a greater understanding of each other's work.

¹ Surrey Police. Call Demand Data. Accessed on the 7th August 2013.

² Based on Surrey Fire and Rescue Service annual operational incidents attended 2003/2 – 2012/13

2: Contact, control and dispatch

All three emergency services have separate technical systems and processes in place for managing emergency (999) and non-emergency telephone contact. The current systems also rely upon the individual dialling 999, to select the emergency service they require. Should they need to be redirected this can build in delay. Furthermore, information cannot easily be transferred between services, and for joint incidents call handlers must pass information verbally between the different control centres, again building in delay and potential for confusion. There are some areas of consistency within the technology used, but there are also many differences, including IT suppliers, functionality and contract terms.

Collectively across Surrey and Sussex, the three blue light services spend approximately £45million³ a year, across 13⁴ sites, using over 1,000 staff, to deliver contact, control and dispatch. There is scope to transform this, bringing these functions together to reap both operational benefits and significant cost savings. This would also enable wider transformation of the emergency services by enabling a shift in the way incidents are managed.

3: Prevention

There is some coordinated work across the emergency services on prevention, including very successful multi-agency programmes, such as the award winning Safe Drive, Stay Alive road safety campaign aimed at young drivers. There are also other public and third sector organisations undertaking community safety work within the county, who have varying degrees of integration with fire, police and ambulance – for example, Community Safety Partnerships - established in the boroughs and districts within Surrey, designed to work with all agencies on community safety, crime and disorder reduction and domestic abuse. However, on the whole work undertaken on prevention is contained within each service.

The need to target further effort on preventative activities is highlighted by the growing pressures of demand on police and ambulance services. For all 3 emergency services, the target audiences for prevention tend to be similar, predominantly focussed on vulnerable adults, and other vulnerable individuals. Collective effort, alongside other key partners, therefore has the potential to maximise the impact made.

4: Civil Contingencies

The County Council, Borough and District Councils and the emergency services all maintain separate teams for work on civil contingencies. In Surrey this is estimated to cost £1.4m a year, based on staffing of 20 FTE. These teams do work collaboratively, and the business case in this area will examine the costs and benefits of further integration. It should be noted that the estimated costs of the collaborative work for the blue light services and the Council is seen as approximately £300k a year, for work such as preparation of multi agency plans and joint training exercises.

³ Headline data supplied by each organisation

⁴ Includes Kent (SECAmb) property, as Surrey and Sussex 999 calls taken as well

5: Operational support

The emergency services all have requirements for the provision of support functions for their operational activity. There is currently little coordination of these functions between Services and they are disparately located. The shared geography offers an opportunity to rationalise and remove duplication between these teams, thereby reducing costs and improving operations in the following areas:

- a. *Joint Learning and Development* - each service has very specific technical training needs, but there are a range of common training requirements that could be delivered on a collaborative basis.
- b. *Collaborative Fleet and Equipment Management* – currently this is handled separately in each service.
- c. *Use of bunkered fuel* - currently separately maintained.
- d. *Occupational Health* – the three Services provide very similar support - ranging from fitness for work, rehabilitation plans, and advice to managers and employees regarding work and health. Fire and Police have in-house teams; SECAmb currently outsource this provision.
- e. *Data gathering and reporting* – currently there is minimal data sharing.
- f. *Stores and Supplies function* – handled separately at present.
- g. *Health and Safety teams* – individual teams provide similar advice.
- h. *Estates and Facilities Management* – there are significant opportunities for efficiency in relation to cleaning contracts, building maintenance and repair, legislative compliance, energy and environmental considerations, as well as the systems and teams that administer the process:
 - Surrey Police currently have 22 owned sites / properties, 7 of which are not in use. They have 33 leased premises (likely to increase to 37), 64 police houses, 46 mast sites and a range of garages / land parcels.
 - Surrey Fire has 25 sites, 2 of which are currently leased and the remainder are owned and operated by the County Council.
 - SECAmb operate from 21 sites in Surrey; including one make ready centre, headquarters and an Emergency Operations Centre.

6: Support Services

This covers the more general support all organisations need, such as ICT systems, human resources functions, procurement and legal advice, etc. The emergency services have a mixed pattern of support service provision, with some collaboration already in place:

- Surrey County Council collaborates with East Sussex County Council to deliver transactional services and some IT support services). SFRS and ESFRS receive support services in this way.
- Surrey and Sussex Police are actively exploring collaborating on all Support Service functions and already have in place joint services on transport, procurement and insurance & risk. They will be exploring opportunities to deliver transactional HR and Finance services, so there is a possibility of extending the arrangement described above.
- West Sussex FRS is part of West Sussex County Council and hence receives support services through the county council.
- SECAmb currently provides its own support services.

There is potential to link up elements of support services, which may provide some cost savings to the organisations involved. This would have limited operational benefit.

3. Proposed new delivery models, costs and benefits

Overall benefits to the Community

A more joined up approach would reduce the current overlaps between Services; delivering a better combined response to incidents and reducing wider disruption to the public. The proposals outlined below provide opportunities to reduce costs, by rationalising estates; I.T and staff for example, whilst increasing the quality of service the public receive via more harmonised arrangements.

Working closer across Services from initial contact with the public would also enable better information sharing and more effective risk management; a shared preventative approach would assist in reducing risk to the public, keeping Surrey and Sussex safer.

Proposal 1: Joint Operational Response

There are a number of options to transform the way operational response is delivered, utilising a more collaborative approach.

- a. Develop a common approach to recording incidents – this would enable basic information to be shared across the Services, improving understanding of the areas of overlap and developing a common perception of risk.
Benefits – key enabler to joint operational response, which in turn will deliver productivity gains.
Issues - this would have one-off set up costs.
- b. Combine operational policies/guidance for jointly attended incidents - this would provide clarity between Services about the collective emergency response for joint incidents
Benefits – improved handling of combined incidents and a key enabler for joint training in these areas which in turn should improve productivity and performance.
Issues - this would have costs in development and maintenance of combined guidance and would be greatly facilitated by national level agreement to this point. The percentage of workload proportion will vary by organisation due to the demand level, for example this is relatively small for SECamb.
- c. Coordinated use of assets in rural areas – communities within some rural areas of Surrey have expressed concern about the lack of a uniformed presence. Given the need to deploy scarce resources on the basis of risk, it is not possible to deploy high numbers of staff to these communities. Instead it may be possible to use the various resources as a combined emergency service presence - this could include giving fire fighters, ambulance clinicians and neighbourhood constables a much wider remit to act as the first response to an emergency in their community.
Benefits - this would provide improved response times to communities and improve the visibility of the emergency services, providing reassurance to the public.
Issues - the key costs would be around the level of basic training which may be required by service personnel. This will also require consideration of differential terms and conditions.
- d. Coordinated use of assets to respond to certain incident types:
 - i. Provision of defibrillators and training to enable police and fire and rescue to respond to cardiac arrest calls
Benefits - this will have clear community benefits through improving SECamb's ability to respond quickly and effectively.
Issues – costs associated with initial and ongoing training, and the provision and maintenance of equipment to fire and police will need to be met.
 - ii. Increased medical competence and clinical governance for fire crews and some specialist police units
- training a member of each fire crew, police public order teams and firearms medics to the standard of Emergency Care Support Worker would enable them to act as first responders to emergency health calls supported by an integrated clinical governance process.
Benefits – improved patient care through increasing response capacity.
Issues - this will have clear costs in terms of training and equipment provision. This would also be a shift from the roles traditionally provided by Police and Fire crews and may create concerns from staff groups.

- iii. Fire Crews dispatched to an injury road traffic collision to take details to report to police and to update the SECamb control on the condition of any casualties
Benefits – rationalised use of police and SECamb resources, freeing up these assets to be used elsewhere.
Issues – opportunity cost of additional usage of fire crews.
- iv. Joint police and FRS fire investigation teams - enables investigative skills transfer from Police to Fire, who are increasingly expected to present evidence in court.
Benefits – enhanced investigative competence, improving service delivery and small financial savings.

Proposal 2: Joint Contact, Control and Dispatch

A joint function would be based around:

- shared accommodation – this would be a key facilitator to joint working and where possible greater integration;
- shared ICT - the options here range from commissioning a new single Emergency Service system, to developing some form of ICT linkages which would enable existing systems to communicate effectively;
- multi-skilled staff – police and fire and rescue are keen to consider whether it is possible to have a single operator handling both sets of calls, as this would maximise the advantage of being able to fully coordinate dispatch. SECamb do not see that this option would be feasible given the level of medical advice their operators give to the caller and their desire to increase this interaction through the development of the medical out of hours service and as facilitators of the directory of services. SECamb fundamentally undertake a different job as a healthcare organisation and view this as a key reason for not having multi-skilled staff.

Benefits

- Improved service to the public through:
 - a combined platform at the point of report, enabling much wider joint working;
 - shared understanding of customer needs, service delivery/process and risk;
 - shared oversight of available assets enabling nearest most appropriate asset to be dispatched.
- Reduced on-going costs through rationalising estate, technology and staffing.
- Improvements to the resilience and effectiveness of emergency call management.

Issues

- Sourcing a suitable site will involve a initial capital spend – this could be included within the SCC estates strategy.
- ICT solutions would involve initial setup costs for all organisations and a level of risk associated with previous experience of similar projects.
- Governance around data protection and patient confidentiality as well as Care Quality Commission (CQC) governance requirements.

Proposal 3: Joint Preventative Actions

There are strong synergies with other Public Service Transformation strands in this area, particularly Health and Social Care Collaboration and the Family Support Programme. We will work with these strands to develop a clear understanding of where collaborative work may be most beneficial.

In addition a range of potential delivery models to improve joint preventative working will be considered:

- a. Combined education programmes - to reduce the demand on emergency services by preventing incidents occurring or raising awareness of the right source of support prior to calling 999. This could include, a multi-agency focus on a specific issue where risk to life may be on the increase in Surrey
Benefits – minimising demand frees up capacity to provide a service when needed.
- b. Coordinated positioning of assets – for example, overlapping SECamb's positioning data related to historical incident data, with the police predicted crime and traffic collision hotspots could act as a crime deterrent tool, also slowing passing traffic which may reduce collisions.
Benefits - tangible community benefits in reduced crime and accidents.

- c. Joint community safety assessments – implementing a common assessment framework (CAF), similar to the social care approach, would enable one agency to attend a property and provide advice on behalf of all,
Benefits - improved customer experience; enable sharing of concerns in fast time to other agencies to provide an effective response; and delivers savings for all agencies.
Issues – small start up costs associated with the CAF development.
- d. Joint use of the Third Sector / volunteer coordination - fire and police have separate arrangements for the use of volunteers which could be reviewed to identify any potential overlaps or other opportunities for service delivery improvement. SECAmb use volunteers to support their operational response, both to provide a community response to patients with potentially life threatening conditions and using third sector support to provide backfill during major and business continuity incidents.
Benefits – increased productivity by maximising the impact of who have chosen to donate their time.

Proposal 4: Joint Civil Contingencies

Creation of a combined civil contingencies unit could involve combining the contingency planning elements of Category One responders across all Local Resilience Forum partners or a sub-set thereof. An alternative to full integration may be to combine the relevant Emergency Services teams in a single location with officers working closely on contingency planning work on a day to day basis. Specialist assets such as the Hazardous Area Response Team (HART); Chemical, Biological, Radiation and Nuclear (CBRN) teams; and, the New Dimension resources could be integrated into this unit as they form part of the blue light major and significant incident response.

Benefits – the key benefits are increased productivity and improved joint operational response in the case of significant emergencies.

Proposal 5: Joint Operational Support

The overarching proposal is to assess the existing functions in the areas suggested in section 2 and deliver on a collaborative basis.

Benefits - All areas would benefit from reduced costs overall through team and estate rationalisation, and increased resilience as well as performance improvements related to shared information and learning.

Issues - There are likely to be transition costs associated with implementation of the proposals.

Proposal 6: Joint Support Services Functions

There is no proposal for the fire services to come out of their arrangements with the wider county council led back office support services (such as HR, procurement, etc). The proposal would therefore be for the police or SECAmb to join either of these arrangements. This is a different issue to others raised within this business case and hence the proposal is that this is pursued separately.

4. Changes required

All of these changes will require a certain level of organisational and cultural change to make them successful. This may include the need for partnering agreements, Memoranda of Understanding and other arrangements for joint governance. These will be considered as each proposal is developed.

There are a number of specific national changes which may be required to enable these proposals to go ahead.

1. Changes to terms and conditions of employment are likely to be required to achieve transformation within the emergency services. These may create barriers to implementation and, where they differ between organisations, have the potential to impact on effective delivery of joint services.
2. SECAMB's Foundation Trust status adds a clear commercial imperative to their business model. Their future business model is therefore predicated around increasing their market share of out of hospital health activities. This therefore acts as a different driver to police and fire when considering future business models and strategic partnering. Ambulance services were merged across Sussex, Surrey and Kent in 2006 and have been progressively driving down costs since then, therefore any proposals for change will need to be considered in the context of the whole SECAMB area.
3. The ambition to link the three sets of operational policies/guidance would require agreement by the relevant national bodies if it is to be done at national level. This does not preclude a local agreement to join up but this would not optimise the potential benefits.
4. There are particular legislative issues in relation to emergency services, such as the fact that Police officers are currently automatically investigated should a death in their care occur – this is a potential barrier to them undertaking additional health related activities. This is likely to require policy and legislative changes. It may also lead to changes to the way funding is provided, with the potential for a joint precepting arrangement.
5. If it were decided that a single ICT solution would be most beneficial in enabling combined contact, control and dispatch then all technical barriers would need to be established. We would want to link into the various central government sponsored initiatives for the development of combined ICT systems. This Government endorsement would need to be clear and unambiguous, with cross-party support, to ensure long term support regardless of the outcomes of future political elections.

5. Financial case

The principal aim of these projects is to improve the delivery of emergency services to the communities of Surrey (1.1 million residents) and Sussex (1.6 million residents). The current spend on emergency services across the two counties is outlined below:

- Surrey Police - annual budget of £208m, 4,750 employees;
- Surrey Fire & Rescue Service - annual revenue budget of £37m, 700 employees; and
- South East Coast Ambulance Service (SECAmb) - annual budget across Surrey, Kent and Sussex of £181m, 3,500 employees.
- Sussex Police – annual budget of £256m, 5400 employees
- West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service – annual revenue budget of £32m, 709 employees
- East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service – annual revenue budget of £39m, 830 employees

The combined budgets in the areas considered for collaborative working are estimated to be in excess of £100m across Surrey and Sussex. The single largest potential area of savings is in joint contact, control and dispatch, with an estimated current cost of £45 million per year across the six organisations. Bringing these functions together is likely to be a lengthy and complex process but the long term operational and financial benefits should be significant.

The sections above describe a significant number of measures which could achieve savings through greater integration and reducing the level of demand on emergency services. The next phase of work will develop a cost-benefit analysis of the key options to be pursued, which will include an assessment of the benefits to communities and the productivity gains to the system as a whole.

The apportionment of savings between the six organisations is still to be determined and will be considered as the project progresses.

6. Implementation plan

All of the options identified above are being progressed with the aim of developing the options for the full business case by March 2014. Implementation of proposals will start thereafter. The business cases will include implementation plans.

The key next steps include:

- Decision on the outcome of the Transformation Challenge Award funding bid to support the recruitment of a full time Programme Manager
- Appointment of a full time Policy Advisor
- October 2013 - Joint Sussex & Surrey Chiefs meeting
- Quarterly Joint Chiefs meetings thereafter
- Development of stakeholder management and communications plans, including early staff and public engagement on some options to facilitate a co-designed approach.
- Development of Equalities Impact Assessments to identify the potential impacts on the communities, especially in regard to the protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010.
- Once the options are developed, it is likely that formal consultation will be required for some proposals and this will be co-designed and delivered with partners to ensure that key stakeholders have the ability to influence the emergency services transformation.

A risk management process is in place and current key risks include:

- Technology compatibility issues between the wide range of systems currently in use.
- Acceptability of transformation proposals by staff and representative bodies.
- Adequate resources available, especially Government support, to achieve the project timelines.
- Differing governance structures between organisations affecting ability to achieve project timelines.

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