



Police and fire mergers and collaboration

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A twin-track approach from police and fire

Neil Amos says that working together to find the best fit for both services and assessing how to reap the benefits without compromising each's individual strength is the key to successful collaboration

When we really need them, we expect emergency services to be there, working effectively together. The work of the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP) has helped to underpin effective multi-agency response, initially to major incidents and increasingly to preventative activity.

To be at their best, emergency services need to work together, whether within a service to maximise availability of specialist teams or economies of scale, or within an area to provide a joined-up service to communities. But the research consistently shows that this does not happen as often as it should – collaboration has been described as a 'house of cards', taking a long time to build and often fragile.

The Policing and Crime Bill will encourage a step-change in the levels of collaboration, as it places a duty on police, fire and ambulance services to work together. It will also enable new forms of governance for police and fire, including the option for PCCs to take on responsibility for fire and rescue services where a local business case is made.

In our view, taking forward the opportunities presented by the Bill requires a twin-track approach from police and fire:

- To work together to understand where further police and fire collaboration could best fit within the existing, and often complex, collaboration picture, and to assess the potential scale of opportunity in all areas of activity – operational through to support services –

in improving public safety and value for money

- To assess how changes in governance could accelerate or hinder achieving that joint prize, recognising the potential benefits of single accountability and faster decision making, while maintaining the individual strengths of each organisation.

PA is delighted to sponsor this CoPaCC thematic report on the next phase of police and fire collaboration, and we welcome its important contribution to the debate. ❖



About the author

Neil Amos is PA's policing and justice lead. He has over 20 years' experience of delivering change successfully within the public sector in the UK and abroad, both at PA Consulting Group

and as a Government official. Neil has worked with most police forces in the UK and his consulting career demonstrates sustained high performance for clients that has been recognised three times for industry awards. He has regularly provided advice to boards and ministers on politically sensitive programmes. Before joining PA, Neil held project management, policy and private office roles in the UK Home Office and Lord Chancellor's Department, including successful introduction of the largest electronic tagging scheme in the world.

Police and fire: Mergers and collaboration

Bernard Rix presents this report to survey OPCC intentions for mergers and collaboration and to collate the views of key stakeholders

Since its establishment in late 2012, CoPaCC has published a number of Thematic reports focusing on the work of Police and Crime Commissioners. These Thematics - on transparency, innovation, public engagement and partnership - have contributed significantly to the understanding of what works best in policing governance. Indeed, following the publication of one of our first Thematic reports, I was invited as CoPaCC's Chief Executive to give evidence to the House of Commons' Home Affairs Select Committee inquiry into the work of PCCs.

Subsequent CoPaCC Thematics have been similarly influential. For example, last month, we published our latest Thematic on "Brexit: Implications for policing and security", following a CoPaCC conference hosted for us on this topic by leading law firm Fieldfisher: this was distributed to our CoPaCC and Policing Insight Subscriber network. Within a week, we were approached by three of the Houses of Parliament Select Committees with a particular interest in the implications Brexit, each seeking to obtain a copy. In addition, our Brexit Thematic has been downloaded via PolicingInsight.com several hundred times.

This document, our latest Thematic report, focuses on police and fire collaboration. The Policing and Crime Bill is currently making progress through Parliament. It "makes provision for collaboration between the emergency services", and - in Chapter 2 of the Bill - makes "provision for police and crime commissioner to be fire and rescue authority". This would represent a substantial increase in the governance responsibilities of any PCC wishing to take these on. It means, amongst other matters, that PCCs could

potentially create a single employer for both police and fire personnel if they are able to demonstrate a clear business case for doing so.

This CoPaCC Thematic brings together expert views and insights on these potential changes, from representatives of a range of stakeholder groups, each providing a unique perspective. I am most grateful to each and every contributor for the input that they have provided. The following extracts and quotations illustrate the contributions that have been made...

In addition to this unique collection of expert insights and analyses on the topic, our Thematic report also contains details of research the CoPaCC team undertook with OPCCs (Offices of Police and Crime Commissioners). The vast majority of OPCCs participated: I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their assistance, which has made a significant contribution to the insights this Thematic report provides. I am also very grateful to CoPaCC's Sandra Andrews and Ian Barrett for their excellent work on this research. ❖



About the author

Bernard Rix is CoPaCC's Chief Executive and Publisher of *Policing Insight*. Prior to establishing CoPaCC in 2012, he worked for over 20 years as a management consultant. During this time, he led over fifty high profile and sensitive assignments, providing specialist independent advice to police forces, criminal justice agencies, government departments and private sector across the UK, Europe and Middle East.

Contributor quotes

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'Shared governance could be a distraction that is unlikely to achieve much in the way of cost savings'

Ian Wiggett is a CoPaCC Director and former ACC in Greater Manchester Police

'Bringing the two organisations more closely together would allow us to work to a single vision and strategic plan'

Stephen Mold, Police and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire

'Our missions have significant crossover – we are all trying to find the best ways to serve and protect our communities'

Chief Constable Alec Wood, NPCC

'Emergency services are facing changing demands and greater collaboration will enable them to ... better protect the public'

Brandon Lewis MP, Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service

'The police service would control the day-to-day running of fire and rescue services ... would be swallowed up'

Dave Green, national officer, Fire Brigades Union

'There is no reason to object to the PCC taking on the powers of the Fire and Rescue Authority as a point of principle'

Roy Wilsher, Chief Fire Officer Hertfordshire Fire Service

'Will the Government promise extra administrative resources for any Commissioner who goes down the merger route?'

Lord Willy Bach, Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicestershire.

'We will support PCCs taking responsibility for fire; but we would want to see a robust local business case made for such a move'

CFO David Etheridge OBE, President of the Chief Fire Officers' Association

'The initial financial driver for efficiency also now provided a legitimate space for change to also include areas of wider effectiveness and reform'

Darran Gunter Chief Fire Officer of Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service

'Operational overlap between police and fire is so tangential as to make full mergers illogical'

Nick Gargan, CoPaCC Associate and former Chief Constable at Avon and Somerset

OPCCs reveal their intentions

A CoPaCC survey of Offices of Police and Crime Commissioners (OPCCs) has uncovered the current intentions for police and fire mergers and collaboration, writes **Bernard Rix**

There has been debate and controversy about the provision of the Policing and Crime Bill (see box below) for a police and crime commissioner of an area to be the fire authority for that area.

Some Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) have been vocal in the media over last year in declaring their intentions to take advantage of the provision. Other PCCs have been greatly opposed to this ambitious reform of governance when there are sufficient opportunities through deeper collaboration with the emergency services.

A cautious response from the fire service and political opposition to the reform has further muddled the picture of the potential outcomes of this reform.

This survey was conceived by CoPaCC to provide some clarity on the intentions of OPCCs; whether they will embrace the responsibility of fire governance or just continue developing collaboration with the fire service.

The survey was conducted in July 2016 and was sent to all 40 OPCCs in England and Wales – Wales was included despite fire powers being devolved so that we could collect feedback on police and fire collaboration. We excluded Greater Manchester as the OPCC is in transition ahead of Mayoral elections in May 2017.

CoPaCC received responses from 38 of the OPCCs with North Yorkshire and Northumbria declining to take part. North Yorkshire OPCC explained that commercial sensitivities precluded its participation at the time of our research. The survey asked six simple

questions to explore the OPCC's appetite for mergers and collaboration with the fire service.

Q1: Is the PCC looking to take forward the provision of the Policing and Crime Bill (part 1, chapter 2, section 6) for the PCC of an area to be the Fire and Rescue Authority for that area?

Q2: Has the PCC announced any plans for the fire and rescue service?

Q3: What specific collaboration outcomes does the PCC support?

Q4: Does the PCC have a seat on the Fire and Rescue Authority?

Q5: Does the PCC invite the Chair or other member of the Fire and Rescue Authority to sit on the Police and Crime Panel? With hindsight, we recognise this was not well phrased, as PCCs do not have the power to invite a FRA representative to sit on a Police and Crime Panel.

Q6: Has the PCC discussed governance proposals contained in the Policing and Crime Bill with the Chief Fire Officer or the Fire and Rescue Authority?

We present the results of the survey in the three following articles. First Catherine Levin, a well known journalist and commentator in the fire sector, gives her take on the survey outcomes.

Then Sandra Andrews the CoPaCC research analyst who collated the survey, provides a detailed analysis of the responses to our questions on governance and collaboration. ❖

Policing and Crime Bill

Part 1 – Emergency services collaboration

Chapter 2 police and crime commissioners etc.: Fire and rescue functions

6. Provision for police and crime commissioner to be fire and rescue authority

Schedule 1 makes provision for a person who is the police and crime commissioner for an area to be the fire and rescue authority for that area.

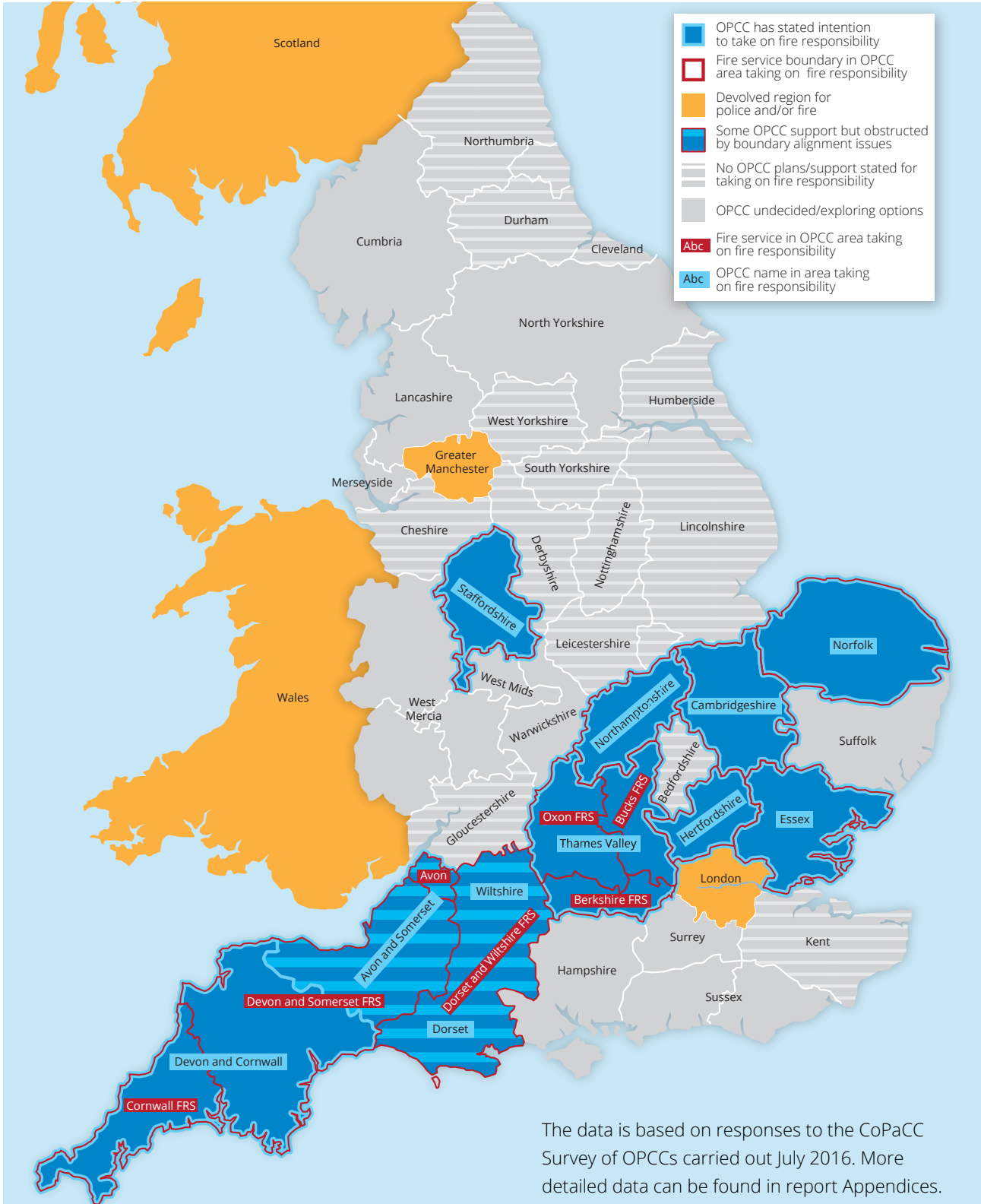
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Office of Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) intentions for Police and Fire mergers

Map highlighting the intentions of OPCCs in relation to taking on fire governance responsibility for their area. In regions where the OPCC intends to take on fire, the map shows how the fire service boundaries align with the OPCC's.



Forging a new relationship: A look at police and fire collaboration

Catherine Levin looks at the results of the CoPaCC survey of police and fire collaboration among the 40 PCCs in England and Wales and shares an early insight into the evolution in this area

It is a fascinating time to be involved in the fire and rescue service. Left alone by Government since 2004 after a generational shift of expectations, fire and rescue services find themselves under the spotlight once more. This time it's about how they're run and scrutinised.

The Policing and Crime Bill is currently in committee stage in the House of Lords. It contains provisions that will allow Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) to take on governance functions of fire and rescue authorities. There is no compulsion, but where a business case is agreed, ultimately the PCC could become a single employer of both fire and police in his/her area.

Curious about how this is going, CoPaCC surveyed 40 PCCs in England and Wales and asked six questions about their work with the fire and rescue service. With an impressive return of around 95 per cent, the survey responses offer an early insight into the evolution of PCCs in this area.

Varying commitment

It is interesting to see how few of the respondents said that they were definitely looking at taking on fire functions. The eight Conservative PCCs listed here varied from saying they would be doing it as soon as possible to a more vague commitment based on discussion and evidence still being gathered.

- Essex
- Northamptonshire
- Cambridgeshire
- Hertfordshire
- Thames Valley
- Norfolk
- Staffordshire
- Devon and Cornwall

Only two PCCs said they wanted to use the provisions in the Policing and Crime Bill to take on the fire functions in the first half of 2017: Essex and Northamptonshire.

Essex Police and Crime Panel met on 26 July to discuss police and fire collaboration. The paper to the Panel said "Our expectation is that an outline business case will be ready by the end of September, with a full business case in place for the end of December".

It went on to set out a timetable that would, subject to agreement by the Panel and Royal Assent for the enabling legislation, see the business case presented to the Home Secretary by the end of March 2017.

'Northamptonshire has been leading the way in integrating the police force and the fire and rescue service'

The case for making this change is not detailed in this Panel paper.

Over in Northamptonshire, the PCC is more bullish and the website notes that it "has been leading the way in integrating the police force and the fire and rescue service, and has made significant progress in its journey to bring the two organisations into a single governance structure".

For the newly installed PCC of Northamptonshire, there is also the county problem. Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service, along with 13 other English fire and rescue services, is a department of the county council, just like planning or housing. Hertfordshire and Norfolk will be watching closely to see how this

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works out as they too are county fire and rescue services.

For Thames Valley and for Devon and Cornwall things get a bit trickier. The Thames Valley PCC area covers three fire and rescue services: Oxfordshire, Royal Berkshire and Buckinghamshire. Adding to the complexity, Oxfordshire is also part of the county council. A single fire and rescue service under the Thames Valley PCC would be enormous.

Boundary problems

However these difficulties pale into insignificance compared with the fire and rescue authorities whose boundaries do not match with the PCC.

Take a look at the south west region to see the problem. The PCC covers Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. The corresponding fire and rescue services are Cornwall (a county), the Isles of Scilly (a county) and Devon and Somerset a combined authority. The county of Somerset is teamed up with Avon for the purposes of the PCC. It is not that long since Devon and Somerset went through its merger; it is unlikely to want to go through another major change in a hurry.

Of course these problems can be overcome, but they don't make governance changes easy and those PCCs watching from afar but with similar geography or organizational issues will do well to learn what works before moving ahead.

While this survey indicated eight front-runners, that doesn't equate to everyone else saying no. It's just too early for some to know what the answer is right now, particularly the newly elected PCCs.

One way in which PCCs could have input into fire and rescue service governance without making changes under the Bill is to be a member of the fire and rescue authority. Four respondents to the CoPaCC survey indicated that the PCC did have a seat. However, on closer inspection, no PCC has voting rights on a fire and rescue authority. PCCs are not clamouring to join fire and rescue authorities, but given that some have more than 30 members, many are large enough already. Hampshire however, has taken a different path and one that others may decide to follow in due course.

Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority met in September 2016 and considered the outcome of a review into the size and governance structure of the Authority. One of the recommendations in the review was to make "an application to the Secretary of State for an amendment to the current combination order to add the Hampshire Police and Crime Commissioner as a full member of Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority, from the annual meeting of the Authority in 2017". It was agreed unanimously.

The PCC however has no authority to invite members of the fire and rescue authority to join the Police and Crime Panel as the PCC is not a member. The Police and Crime Panel exists to scrutinise the Police and Crime Commissioner and comprises elected local authority members drawn from the police force area.

'The PCC for Bedfordshire does not intend to take responsibility for fire until it becomes a statutory duty'

However, it is possible for an elected member from a local authority in a police force area to be a member of the Police and Crime Panel and also be a member of a fire and rescue authority for the same area. For example, Cllr Fiona Chapman MBE is the Chairman of Bedfordshire Police and Crime Panel and is also a member of Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority.

No need for function creep

The newly elected PCC for Bedfordshire, Kathryn Holloway, has been quite clear that she has no interest in taking on the functions of Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority. Indeed her office responded to the CoPaCC survey, "The PCC for Bedfordshire does not intend to take responsibility for fire until or unless it becomes a statutory duty as she has just agreed one of the most advanced collaboration plans in the country without the need to do so".

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These examples show that it is possible for changes to governance to take place to allow closer working between police and fire without recourse to the provisions in the Policing and Crime Bill. It will be interesting to monitor how many other fire and rescue authorities make similar changes along the lines of Hampshire and Bedfordshire.

The CoPaCC survey asked PCCs about collaboration. It said, "What specific collaboration outcomes does the PCC support?" Nearly all respondents indicated that they were already or in the process of sharing estate between police and fire. Shared procurement was almost as popular. Shared control rooms, shared staff and shared ICT were cited by around half of all respondents to this question.

Statutory duty

The duty to collaborate is in the Policing and Crime Bill. "A collaboration agreement is an agreement in writing that sets out how the parties to the agreement will work together in discharging their functions." (Part 1, Ch. 1, 1(3)) The Bill goes on to set out the requirement for collaboration to be in the interest of efficiency or effectiveness.

Respondents to the CoPaCC survey provided scant detail about the nature of the collaboration between police and fire. The only one to elaborate was Cheshire. In its response, Cheshire noted, "Work is now well underway to deliver a ground breaking collaboration programme to protect front line emergency services in Cheshire". Cheshire plans to achieve "combined annual savings of over £1.5 million" as a result of a shared HQ, "single integrated transactional and professional support functions to both services".

Exciting times but it is likely others are doing similar things as well: whether Cheshire's approach is innovative is not clear from this survey, because others did not provide such a detailed response.

The survey proved to be a valuable exercise, providing a benchmark by which future progress can be measured. It demonstrates that PCCs are not all responding in the same way to the Government's policy to increase their responsibilities through the provisions in the Policing and Crime Bill.

The consequence of the Government's policy will see fire and rescue services removed from the scrutiny of locally elected members who were not explicitly elected to serve on a fire and rescue authority. It is a nuance but an important point nonetheless.

It's hard to know quite what the imperative is here. Is it really about democracy or is it about the need to give the PCC more to do? If that's the case, then those who have said they have quite enough to do already would hardly agree. With ambulance trusts left quietly to one side and yet covered by the duty to collaboration set out in the Policing and Crime Bill, at what point will the Government return to this debate and start to eye them up as potential fodder for the PCC as well?

Essex and Northamptonshire PCCs have both made bold moves and will be watched with great interest as they compete to be first to take on the functions of their respective fire and rescue services. Learning from them and those that follow close behind, PCCs elsewhere will be well advised to have good reasons for not taking on fire functions as the pressure to do so may well increase over time. Maybe another survey this time next year will be even more revealing than this one. ❖



About the author

Catherine Levin is a freelance journalist who writes for magazines focused on the fire and rescue service. She has worked in the fire sector in the UK since 2003. Catherine spent many years as a UK policy civil servant focused on fire policy around resilience and fire safety. She also spent a few years at the London Fire Brigade where she was Deputy Head of Community Safety. After this she lived in New York City for a couple of years and spent time with various US fire departments, getting some useful US perspective. Catherine has interest in policy issues, governance, fire safety and the impact technology, such as the smart home, is having on the delivery of fire and rescue service in times of austerity.

Progress on shared governance

Sandra Andrews analyses the current state of collaboration between the services and discovers the intentions of the Offices of Police and Crime Commissioners (OPCCs) to take on responsibility for fire service

CoPaCC set out to capture an overview of how far the collaboration between Police Crime Commissioners and Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRA) had progressed, following the provision for emergency services collaboration in the [Police and Crime Bill \(2016\)](#).

The aim of this analysis is help inform decisions and judgments based on shared values and experience. It is our intention that access to well grounded information will benefit OPCCs and serve rather than threaten their interests.

We approached every Office of Police Crime Commissioner across England and Wales (with the exception of MOPAC and GMPCC) and asked them to complete a short on-line questionnaire consisting of 6 questions on their collaboration and future intentions with the Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRA).

We had a terrific response with 95% of the 40 OPCCs we approached completing it, many supplying further comments and additional information, which we welcomed. However, two OPCCs chose not to provide answers to our questions, one due to the sensitive nature of their on-going discussions.

OPCCs indicating intention to take on responsibility for fire governance

- Cambridgeshire
- Devon & Cornwall
- Essex
- Hertfordshire
- Norfolk
- Northamptonshire
- Staffordshire
- Thames Valley

We asked whether the PCCs were looking to take forward the provision, to become the Fire and Rescue Authority for that area. This analysis is written in full acknowledgement that this particular question could not be answered with simply a yes or no. However, the comments provided have highlighted the complexity of governance and have helped us to identify some widely held views and pinpoint the factors, which obstruct this process.

'The results show that the overall majority of PCCs have no intention of pursuing governance'

The results show that the overall majority of PCCs have no intention of pursuing governance, 52% of respondents made a clear indication that this was not an option being explored at this point. It is worth noting that this figure includes 4 OPCCs from Wales who all gave negative responses due to the FRA being a devolved service in Wales, and therefore the PCC has no authority to take the provision in the act any further.

However, even when this factor is taken into consideration, that still leaves the majority of 42% of PCCs who have expressed no appetite for a change in governance arrangements.

21% of PCCs indicated a clear intention to pursue a transfer of governance. Of those who intend transferring governance, 3 were early adopters and 2 were late adopters. 26% of PCCs, had not made a decision, either way on the question of governance.

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No tangible benefits

When we look at the comments from those who are not actively pursuing a change in governance, it's interesting to note a sense that many could see no tangible benefit in taking on the role of governance. It was not seen as an essential move to improve service outcomes. This was particularly true for most of the OPCCs who have already made tremendous headway in terms of collaboration. Bedfordshire, Derbyshire, Gloucestershire and Cheshire are all good examples of this. Kathryn Holloway, the PCC for Bedfordshire made it clear that she has no intention of taking responsibility for the FRA unless it becomes a statutory duty.

The Bedfordshire OPCC commented that the PCC "has just agreed one of the most advanced collaboration plans in the country without the need to take on governance.

Unique structures

Gloucestershire is another example of where the PCC, Martin Surl has stated there is no intention of taking on governance as they already have a well-established relationship with the FRA, which is strong both operationally and strategically. Gloucestershire is one of 13 others who are in a unique position, in that the FRA sits within the county council structure, therefore there is no separate Fire Authority.

Although Derbyshire's PCC Hardyal Dhindsa, has openly declared he "Is not in the business of taking over governance of fire", they have developed a strong successful relationship with the FRA. Hardyal Dhindsa, sits on the Fire Authority in a non-voting capacity, and they are in the final stages of completing an ambitious joint police/fire HQ.

No interest

David Keane, PCC for Cheshire has also declared no interest in pursuing a transfer of governance, but they have achieved an excellent partnership with their FRA and work is well underway to deliver a "groundbreaking collaboration programme". We will explore Cheshire's plans and ambitions further when we analyse the results to our question on collaboration. It certainly

appears that in cases where current collaboration arrangements are working well and successful working relationships exist, there is little incentive to extend this collaboration to include governance. At least one OPCC commented that governance would only be considered if collaboration didn't evolve as intended. The primary focus from those with no intention to take on governance appeared to be a drive for ever closer and deeper collaboration.

For some OPCCs such as Dorset and Wiltshire, who have a combined fire authority, there were logistical considerations to overcome, as police and fire boundaries don't naturally align. Dorset have no plans for governance on those grounds, however, Wiltshire are still undecided and are currently in discussions.

PCCs who indicated 'No' to transfer of governance by their political parties

Conservative	Labour	Independent	Plaid Cymru
4	11	3	2

There were 8 PCCs who indicated to us that it was their intention to transfer governance from the FRA to the PCC.

PCCs who indicated 'Yes' to transfer of governance by their political parties

Conservative	Labour	Independent	Plaid Cymru
8	0	0	0

An interesting point worth noting is that all of those who are pursuing a change in governance are Conservative, and 5 of the 8 are newly appointed PCCs.

Both Northamptonshire, and Essex declared themselves as early adopters; Northamptonshire intend to have a business case before the Home Secretary before April 2017. Depending on the outcome, they may seek to implement in shadow form in 2017/18 with full governance transfer taking place in April 2018.

Essex has not committed to any timescale but has indicated a date of April 2017. There were two late adopters; Devon and Cornwall who are committed to

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closer integration but have ruled out extending governance for at least 2 years. Norfolk, has not committed to any timescale for transfer of governance yet, and are in the early stages of collaboration and

'While only 21% of PCCs are committed to a transfer of Governance at this stage, there are many others keeping a watchful eye... particular attention will be paid to the early adopters'

developing further opportunities.

26% of PCCs indicated in the survey that no decision had been taken either way on pursuing a change in governance at this point. This was largely due to on going discussions and consultations, with many still in the throes of exploring their options with the FRA.

Business cases are being commissioned to determine both the need and the practicalities of a change in governance. An example of this is Sussex, who are establishing whether there is a case for the responsibility of two Sussex FRA, to be moved under the PCC.

Time for reflection

Lancashire has indicated that they wanted to wait, and reflect on the lessons from early adopters before any decision is taken. For some newly elected PCCs it was too early to form an opinion on the future of governance, and for at least one OPCC progress beyond collaboration had not been formally considered. For others who have a combined FRA such as Dorset and Wiltshire, a joint approach is being considered.

So what does the data on the question of transfer of governance actually tell us? Firstly, it shows us that every PCC is approaching the proposal in the Bill in their own way. There is no formula that can

be followed, however those in similar geographical and logistical situations can certainly benefit from an insight into the progress taking place.

We can see that collaboration has overshadowed the question of governance across the board with 89% of OPCCs actively collaborating with the FRA, and the rest are considering their options. Although more than half of the OPCCs expressed no interest in taking on governance, this was not seen as a bar to successful collaboration.

While only 21% of PCCs are committed to a transfer of governance at this stage, there are many others keeping a watchful eye. I feel sure particular attention will be paid to the early adopters, Essex and Northampton to see how they progress.

What next?

In our next article we will be examining the data from our question on "What specific collaboration outcomes does the PCC support?" We will be looking at the successes and extent of collaboration across the OPCCs, providing an insight into the innovative ideas and clever partnerships that are going on. ❖



About the author

Sandra Andrews is a CoPaCC Research Analyst. She is a former police officer who initially worked in the Metropolitan Police Service, before moving to Hampshire Constabulary. She spent a considerable time dedicated to Public Protection, concentrating on domestic abuse, child abuse and vulnerable adults. She has a keen interest in evidence-based research, and has contributed to the work of a National Research Ethics Committee for many years. She has extensive experience of training within the Criminal Justice sector, and also contributes as a freelance researcher analyst to Policing Insight. She studied at the London School of Economics gaining a degree in social psychology and an MSc in Criminal Justice Policy.

Progress on collaboration

Sandra Andrews finds that many fire and police services are already collaborating regularly and finds firm evidence to build upon for those PCCs wishing to explore potential opportunities in the future

Following the provisions in the Police and Crime Bill, CoPaCC asked 40 OPCCs across England and Wales to answer a short survey on the collaborative work going on between their PCC and the Fire and Rescue Service. In our first article we examined their progress on governance, and saw 8 PCCs leading the way with a firm commitment to sharing governance, with 2 looking to achieve this as early as 2017/18. Whilst many PCCs were unclear about their intentions when it came to the question of governance, and seemed uncertain about making such a bold move, our analysis shows that this is certainly not the case when it comes to collaboration.

We hope this analysis will provide firm evidence for those PCCs wishing to explore potential opportunities for collaboration, and to aid those who are already committed to an integrated approach but want to build on their success. A total of 38 OPCCs responded to our request, with an impressive 95% response rate.

Current collaboration

We asked 'what specific collaboration outcomes does the PCC support? A huge 73% said they were already collaborating with their Fire and Rescue Authority, with shared estates and procurement being the most popular form of partnership. Five distinct areas currently dominate the collaborative work; it's interesting to see how these areas are being married up. However, it's the creative use of resources and innovative approaches that are being adopted that make this such an exciting time. Positive examples of this include the likes of Hertfordshire OPCC where the Chief Fire Officer is employed as the PCC's Chief Executive, and has been since 2013. This is the first time that a Chief Fire Officer has worked for a PCC and the County Council (which oversees the

fire service). It is estimated that this dual role will save in excess of £100,000 as the PCC has not had to employ a chief executive. Hertfordshire indicated to us that they would be looking to share governance arrangements with their Fire and Rescue Authority, if the results of their business case suggest it makes economic sense.

Similarly in Gloucestershire, where the Chief Fire Officer is also appointed by the PCC as the Priority Lead for Safe and Social Driving, which has transformed the approach to road safety across the services in the region. Other examples include the development of a multi-agency Road Safety Team, and joint training, which was popular with a number of other PCCs. We saw examples of shared estates incorporating Fire and Rescue Service

'Five distinct areas are currently dominating collaborative work'

workshops with senior management teams working from the Constabulary's Headquarters

Another proposal under consideration by Peter McCall, Cumbria's PCC is the introduction of hybrid PCSOs, they also told us that they would be looking for their PCC to sit on the Fire and Rescue Authority once the Act comes into force. Interestingly, only 4 PCCs sit on their Fire and Rescue Authority, with a further 4 currently in discussions. In Gloucestershire, they would argue that at the very least the PCC should become a permanent member, or even chair of the Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

We will be taking an in-depth look at Cheshire where they believe their groundbreaking collaboration programme offers opportunities for other OPCCs and

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will provide a workable model that could be replicated elsewhere. Although there are undoubtedly many other OPCCs breaking new ground and identifying exciting opportunities, unfortunately not all respondents provided us with that information.

OPCC support for fire collaboration

Type of Collaboration	Percentage
Estates including HQ	96
Estates & Procurement	78
Estates, Procurement & ICT	57
Estates, Procurement, ICT & Staff	53
Estates, Procurement, ICT, Staff & Control Room	39

The 5 most dominant forms of collaboration were:

- Shared Control Room
- Procurement
- Shared Staff
- ICT
- Shared Estates

Although 27% of PCCs are not collaborating at this point nearly all of them were committed to exploring and identifying opportunities for further collaboration, with one involved in sensitive negotiations who therefore couldn't comment, and others such as the newly elected PCC for Surrey who felt it was too early to comment. However, it was clearly evident that the majority of PCCs were seeking opportunities to work collaboratively to improve quality and efficiency and realise significant savings.

A closer look

We decided to take a closer look at what David Keane PCC for Cheshire is doing, alongside Cheshire Fire Authority and how their groundbreaking collaboration programme can offer opportunities for other OPCCs. Although they have no plans to share governance with their Fire and Rescue Authority, they have been working hard to deliver a programme that they claim will protect front line emergency services and produce combined annual savings in the region of £1.64 million. The programme will establish a single shared HQ by

2018, and create a single integrated transactional and support function to both services, under the employment of the Chief Constable. It is their intention that transactional HR and Finance services for the Fire and Rescue Services and the Constabulary will be provided from October 2017. This will be provided through the Constabulary's existing Multi Force Shared Service, which already supports a number of police services.

An interesting point that might be of interest to other OPCCs is that there will be scope for other police forces and Fire and Rescue Authorities to join the Multi Force Shared Service thereby benefitting from efficiencies and cost savings. Other joint services will include ICT, Finance, HR, facilities, corporate communications, legal, performance and planning, all of which are due to be operating from the site by October 2017.

Both organisations have stressed that there will be no merger of frontline services, with each keeping their separate brand, identity and management arrangements. A programme and transition plan is in place, along with a people strategy, to ensure the recruitment to the new joint services structure is consistent and the impact on staff during the transition is minimized. It is expected that the joint teams will provide greater resilience and job opportunities.

In parallel with the police and fire collaboration, a strategic review of premises owned and operated across Cheshire by all three emergency services is already underway to identify further opportunities to improve the efficiency and delivery of services to local communities. An Executive Board has been meeting for

OPCCs exploring potential further collaboration

- Bedfordshire
- Cumbria
- Essex
- Lancashire
- Leicestershire
- South Yorkshire
- West Midlands
- Wiltshire
- West Yorkshire
- Surrey

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over two years to set and drive the overall vision for a better integrated emergency service across Cheshire. It comprises two members from each of the blue light services – the PCC and the Chief Constable, the Chair of the Fire Authority and the Chief Fire Officer and the Chair and Chief Executive of North West Ambulance Service Trust. The Board provides political and strategic oversight and works to remove barriers and achieve consensus around new ways of working.

'The programme will protect frontline emergency services and produce annual savings in the region of £1.64 million'

Key objectives include:

- Maintaining and prioritising front line emergency services through the most efficient use of combined resources
 - Improving the outcomes for communities by working to tackle shared issues at the earliest opportunity
- Programme deliverables include:
- Combined corporate services departments delivering functions to both organisations including; Finance, HR, Estates, Procurement, ICT and professional support services such as Legal, Communications, Planning etc.
 - CFRS joining the MFSS (to provide transactional HR, finance, procurement services).
 - Creation of a joint vehicles workshop and associated parking.
 - Relocation of CFRS HQ functions to create a joint HQ.
 - The identification and agreement of opportunities for co-location across the operational estate.
 - Decommission appropriate organisation systems.

In contrast to Cheshire, Northamptonshire's PCC Stephen Mold is seeking to implement full transfer of governance of the Fire and Rescue Authority by April 2018, as an early adopter. He gave us his opinion on why it make sense for Northamptonshire to share governance with the Fire and Rescue Authority and what benefits this would bring over and above those already gained through a successful collaborative partnership.

Collaboration can clearly deliver a whole host of positive outcomes and create significant savings quite rapidly, without the need for any elaborate structural change. This certainly seems to make sense when the geographical coverage of the two services differs considerably, or where the Fire and Rescue Service are already integrated within the county council.

We saw an impressive 96% of OPCCs already sharing estates, and we've heard about ambitious projects that are part of long term collaborative plans. Whilst the Bill increases the duty on emergency services to collaborate, it was clear that collaboration has been going on in many areas between the Fire and Rescue Authority and the Police long before it hit the national agenda. Perhaps this explains why some OPCCs are so much more advanced than others.

Looking ahead, I imagine we will hear more about how collaboration can include the Ambulance Service; with one OPCC welcoming a discussion on bringing the three services under one elected representative. The results of our survey captured an extremely interesting time in the evolution of governance and collaboration, which we might benefit from examining again in the future. ❖



About the author

Sandra Andrews is a CoPaCC Research Analyst. She is a former police officer who initially worked in the Metropolitan Police Service, before moving to Hampshire Constabulary. She spent a considerable time dedicated to Public Protection, concentrating on domestic abuse, child abuse and vulnerable adults. She has a keen interest in evidence-based research, and has contributed to the work of a National Research Ethics Committee for many years. She has extensive experience of training within the Criminal Justice sector, and also contributes as a freelance researcher analyst to Policing Insight. She studied at the London School of Economics gaining a degree in social psychology and an MSc in Criminal Justice Policy.

Maximising the opportunities for innovative collaboration

Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service **Brandon Lewis** says the government is committed to enabling fire and police services to work more closely together and develop the role of elected and accountable PCCs

We are lucky in that we have some of the best emergency services in the world who are committed to serving our communities, keeping us safe and protecting the vulnerable.

And across England and Wales, we are seeing great examples of the emergency services working together to deliver significant savings and benefits for the public.

An innovative joint prevention operation between the police and fire services in Essex has helped reduce the number of burglaries across the county by 29%, while in Durham, Police Innovation Fund support has seen the training of Community Safety Responders who can act in a range of roles as Police Community Support Officers, retained fire-fighters or community first responders.

However, despite many good examples locally, collaboration is inconsistent across the country and more needs to be done to ensure that all services are benefitting from closer working.

Manifesto commitment

This Government's manifesto commitment on this is clear - we will enable fire and police services to work more closely together and develop the role of our elected and accountable Police and Crime Commissioners.

We want to see emergency services collaborate more closely, to strengthen the services and to deliver significant savings and benefits for the public. Emergency services are facing changing demands and greater collaboration will enable them to respond more coherently and better protect the public.

This is why this Government is introducing, through the Policing and Crime Bill, a range of provisions to enable collaboration to go further and faster at a local level. This includes a new statutory duty to collaborate which will require each emergency service to collaborate with one another where it is in the interests of their efficiency or effectiveness.

Further, the Bill will also enable police and crime commissioners (PCCs) to maximise the benefits of collaboration between police and fire by taking responsibility for the governance of fire and rescue services where a local case is made.

Directly accountable PCCs have a critical role to

'Emergency services are facing changing demands and greater collaboration will enable them to respond more coherently and better protect the public'

play in this. By overseeing both services, a PCC can maximise the opportunities for innovative collaboration and ensure that best practice is shared. By delegating fire and rescue functions to a single chief officer for police and fire, PCCs can also secure greater back office integration and remove barriers that hinder collaboration between the services, such as the need for separate contracts and Memorandum of Understandings for shared functions.

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Government viewpoint

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This is not a merger

It has been said many times before, but I will stress again that this is not a merger, nor is it a police takeover of fire. The important distinction between operational policing and firefighting, as well as the distinct identity of the fire and rescue service, will be maintained.

The police and fire budgets will continue to remain distinct. And importantly, where a single employer is in place, career pathways for police and fire will run throughout the organisation to encourage the sharing of expertise and best practice at all levels.

The provisions of the Policing and Crime Bill are locally enabling and offer a menu of choices to local leaders.

There are a range of opportunities for further collaboration outside a formal governance change, including in areas such as estates, procurement,

'Where a single employer is in place, career pathways for police and fire will run throughout the organisation to encourage the sharing of expertise and best practice at all levels'

back office, prevention and co-responding. The Bill provides for PCCs to seek representation on their local fire and rescue authority to maximise such opportunities, and the Government is also working with the Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group to identify and sharing best practice in this area and to build an evidence base really demonstrating what works.

While we are seeing an encouraging direction of travel, I want to see greater progress in the next few years, particularly in terms of sharing of back office functions and delivering smarter working. It often makes no sense for the emergency services to have

IT and HR systems which are not interoperable and to have separate estates when their work is so closely related.

Local engagement

We are engaging with local PCCs and fire and rescue authorities to support the development of local business cases, and I have met with local PCCs to discuss the benefits of fire reform and greater collaboration. A number have come forward with an intention to pursue a local business case, and I know many more are still exploring the local options.

We are doing our part, providing the legislation to make this happen. I now want to see the emergency services step up and take on the challenge to make it a reality, so that we can deliver the best possible service to local communities and drive greater efficiencies. ❖



About the author

Brandon Lewis MP is Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service. He was appointed Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service at the Home Office on

15 July 2016. He was elected Conservative MP for Great Yarmouth in 2010. Brandon was Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Communities and Local Government from September 2012 until July 2014. He served as Minister of State for Housing and Planning at the Department for Communities and Local Government from July 2014 until July 2016. Brandon is a qualified barrister and a company director. Before joining the government, Brandon was an active member of a number of all-party parliamentary groups, including those for enterprise zones and local growth as well as local government. He was co-chair of a group on coastal erosion and continues to work with colleagues who represent other coastal towns to highlight common issues in their constituencies. Brandon served on Brentwood Borough Council for more than 10 years, with 5 as leader.

Mixed support and practical challenges point to a disjointed future

Nick Gargan reviews the contributions to the CoPaCC Police and Fire Mergers and Collaboration Report and gives his view on the outlook for mergers and collaboration

Back in the autumn of 1998, an ambitious Assistant Chief Constable in a midlands police force called a young chief inspector from the Operations Department into his office and gave him the task of generating options for collaboration with the fire service. A few ideas were explored for sharing buildings, control rooms and specialist fleet, but the plans made little progress and were quietly dropped within 12 months. I remember the events well as I was the chief inspector. The Assistant Chief (later chief of another midlands force) is now long-retired and the collaborative vision has not advanced greatly in the intervening 18 years.

Reviewing contributions to the CoPaCC thematic report into Police and Fire mergers leaves me with many of the same feelings that influenced our decision-making in the late 1990s. Yes, there are some benefits to collaboration, but operational overlap between police and fire is so tangential as to make full mergers illogical: you might as well merge the fire service with a haulage company. Of course the financial situation has changed immeasurably since the late 90s and we can no longer afford to ignore savings that run into millions of pounds (nor should we ever have felt empowered to do so), but the logic of mergers – as opposed to the other structural alternatives – is unclear. Let's look at the arguments.

Pro-merger

Brandon Lewis, Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service emphasises that the government's policy objective is to promote closer collaboration – and he expressly rejects the 'merger' label. Nevertheless, he describes the career opportunities that will open up "where a single employer is in place, career pathways for police and fire will run throughout the organization" and envisages a single

chief officer for police and fire. The extent of organisational fusion is just one of the dilemmas that ministers face, particularly when they preach a policy of localism. On the one hand, the minister says that 'more needs to be done to ensure that all services are benefitting from closer working' – but on the other hand it offends against localist doctrine to do any more than offer a minor incentivisation or nudge in the approved direction.

For Stephen Mold, Police & Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire, the position is simple: the closer you work, the more lives you save. He is in favour of proposals for PCCs to take over governance of their local Fire and Rescue service: anticipating economies

'There are some benefits to collaboration, but operational overlap between police and fire is so tangential as to make full mergers illogical'

through sharing premises, knowledge and interventions. He anticipates that there will be benefits from interchangeability between service providers and believes that a single corporate vision and strategic plan will remove the potential for contradiction and enable quicker decision-making. Additional benefits will include more transparency on funding and more power to the public - who will have a greater voice.

His enthusiasm is shared by few other contributors. Roy Wilsher must be a rarity, having combined experience at the highest levels of the Fire Service – including 11 as a chief officer – with a senior role in policing. It's

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indicative of the lukewarm support for this proposal that Wilsher counts on my list as a 'supporter' of mergers, on the back of his assertion that there is "no reason to object". He nevertheless reminds us of the seemingly unanimous view of senior practitioners that the services are "interoperable not interchangeable". He then lists a number of considerations that would make collaboration or even merger difficult to achieve, not least of which are the extent of existing formal collaborative arrangements. His own area of Hertfordshire is a prime example of the complex landscape, with deep collaboration between police forces and where the fire service is embedded in the county council. In the end he indicates greater enthusiasm for closer collaboration, but that doesn't require the legislation that is currently scheduled to be enacted in the spring.

Anti-merger

The anti-merger lobby is more densely populated. And I'm not surprised to see some of the people who are in it. Indeed, I'm sure the Prime Minister, who set out her rationale for Fire Service Reform on 24 May 2016 when still Home Secretary, would say "they would say that, wouldn't they?"

For the Fire Brigade Union's national officer, Dave Green, the message is simple: If it ain't broke, don't fix it. The police and fire services simply do different jobs. He believes the issue we should be concerned about is the impact of cuts, which have had a huge impact on service. He's concerned that the number of fires is now heading up (although 90% of rescues have nothing to do with fires) and PCCs are not the answer. In common with many from the fire service, he believes it's inevitable that fire services would be swallowed up. Police leaders would impose solutions in areas they simply didn't understand and would divert resources away from fire. The FBU is suspicious of government which, it believes, ultimately aims to privatise services. This is all about money. He also makes the cultural point that firefighters are well-liked out in communities, whereas police often aren't. Mergers run the risk of undermining the way in which firefighters are perceived.

Although Steve White, Chairman of the Police Federation, may not agree with Green's last point, the remain-

der of his argument seems to resonate with the ideas in the FBU submission. In common with others, he questions why this particular flavour of alliance is being championed when police collaborate so much more with other partners - probation, mental health, education, social services - than they do with fire. He seems a little exasperated - citing falling officer numbers, increasing crime and more assaults on the police as evidence of things the service should be talking about.

Lord Bach, the newly-elected Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicestershire doesn't share his Northamptonshire neighbour's enthusiasm for the

'Police leaders would impose solutions in areas they simply didn't understand and divert resources away from fire'

proposals. In his view, PCCs have quite enough on their plates already and merger with the Fire and Rescue Service would be a step too far. Lord Bach agrees with the point made by both the FBU and the Police Federation - that the services have already been cut too far, and fears further cuts are likely, which would fall disproportionately on fire. Closer to home, he also fears that insufficient resources would be given to PCCs to manage the new responsibilities. He concludes that the case that merger would improve matters hasn't been made: the services should be trusted to continue to collaborate in the way that the police and PCCs have already shown they can.

Ian Wigggett, a former member of the Greater Manchester Police chief officer team, lists several of the logistical, practical and political hurdles that stand in the way of merger. He can see how shared governance might allow for speedier decision-making but otherwise describes the proposal as a distraction (unlikely to deliver much benefit) from a police perspective and a threat (likely to lead to reduced influence and priority) when viewed from the perspective of fire. Like other contributors, he sees opportunities to collaborate - across estates, technology and operational support:

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but he wonders if that type of collaboration will be superficial - and will remain so until processes and cultures are merged. The sting in the tail of Wiggett's argument relates to the "size of the prize". He observes that there is greater crossover between police and ambulance or between fire and ambulance than there is between police and fire. Like other contributors, he seems to be struggling to see the benefit likely to accrue from the proposal. Health is where the big wins are to be had - and that's the domain of mayors, not PCCs.

Pro-collaborators

The 'halfway house' that might deliver some of the benefits of merger whilst avoiding many of the inherent headaches is collaboration. It appeals to several contributors, who don't come out strongly in favour or against the merger concept. Dave Etheridge, for example, as President of the Chief Fire Officers Association, says the Association will support PCCs taking responsibility for fire but goes on to make it clear that the support is laden with caveats. These range from an insistence that mergers must be supported by a robust business case setting out the benefits, to the requirement that the services should remain operationally distinct. CFOA highlights the collaboration that has gone on already - and puts the proposals in the context of the wider collaboration agenda for fire - especially with health.

Chief Constable Alec Wood, speaking for the National Police Chiefs' Council doesn't come down strongly one way or the other, but does highlight the existing collaborative effort that's ongoing around emergency mobilisation, procurement, HQ functions, operational co-ordination and professional development. He also highlights the need for local change to take account of national operational delivery.

Police Superintendents' Association President, Gavin Thomas reflects on the differing recent histories of the two services: the police facing ever growing and changing demand whereas the fire service has evolved to deal with the consequences of its own success in improving fire safety. He fears that the proposals may 'muddy the waters' and goes on to argue for wider

change: asking government to take a "pan-public service" approach and a long term view. His ideas don't give detail about what that might actually look like: but it doesn't seem to include police and fire mergers.

A collaborative future?

There are several types of reorganisation of public bodies. Some represent stages in the perpetual pendulum swing that sees power shift between the local level (with the inherent lack of scale, parochialism and problems of co-ordination) and the national (which carries

'Theresa May's speech.. suggests the policy is to give the fire service a taste of the medicine that the police have been taking for over six years'

the risk of unresponsiveness and remoteness from the real world). Other changes feel a little like the political equivalent of moving the TV to a different corner of the living room, or swapping cupboards around in the kitchen - moving the tinned food to where the cups and saucers used to be and vice versa: superficially satisfying, and immediately impactful but hardly fundamental. Some change represents an effort to catch up with improvements in other sectors that have altered the "industry standard" and some represents a prosaic response to changing, straitened, financial circumstances.

This policy comes out of the localist toolkit - and Theresa May's speech in May suggests that the policy is to give the fire service a taste of the medicine that the police have been taking for over six years - but in my view it has elements of TV-shifting, money-saving and catching up with the industry standard, too.

I agree with those contributors that highlight the lack of synergy between policing and fire. The world of fire is smaller - much smaller - and contributors are right to fear that it would become neglected. Policing has only become a political issue in the last 40 years and there is good evidence that it has slipped back down the agen-

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da. Fire has never had the same political profile and the idea that the public will show much enthusiasm for increased accountability through the ballot box is an optimistic one.

Collaboration has obvious promise – but as Ian Wiggett points out: “I wouldn’t start from here”. A localist free-for-all has seen collaboration take off in many forms over the last few years, leaving a policing landscape that resembles a patchwork quilt. Regional,

‘True mergers will be complicated, time consuming and expensive – probably requiring effort out of all proportion to the benefit’

sub-regional, cross-regional, national, cross-functional, virtual and other collaboration initiatives have left us with a map that is confusing and disjointed. Most fire authority areas map against all or part of a police force area, but some don’t. Some fire authorities are effectively absorbed into local authorities, some aren’t. Some police forces have effectively merged: many haven’t. While the survey indicates that a relatively small number of loyal conservative PCCs will pursue the merger course, the evidence of this thematic is that even if they do know what problem they are trying to solve, they haven’t demonstrated that this is the best way of solving it. This is policy based on opinion, not proper evidence.

The dilemma for those advocating this change is that true mergers will be complicated, time consuming and expensive to achieve – quite probably requiring effort out of all proportion to the benefit. They will undoubtedly open the door to a host of harmonisation issues – workforce, precept, culture to name but a few - that will bring with them hidden costs. These will be difficult to justify when so much can be – and has been – achieved by collaboration. The final paper in the thematic, from Darran Gunter of the combined Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service, spells out the benefits of an

alternative approach. Instead of merging with the local police, two small fire departments took the decision to merge. They clearly found a way to overcome what the former Home Secretary referred to as the ‘Narcissism of Small Difference’ and followed the easier path of combining similar fleet, similar building stock, comparable technology and two workforces with comparable cultures, traditions, working practices and terms and conditions. And, to answer those voices who believe that the fire service is in need of radical reform, they appear to have achieved a degree of culture change, too.

I have little doubt that in ten years’ time we will be able to point to a handful of local areas where the PCC owns both policing and fire. They won’t be in the big cities – where an emergency services Commissioner could really do some damage by locking horns with an elected mayor. Instead they’ll be in areas where the strategic national impact will be limited. I anticipate that, rather like the Assistant Chief Constable I mentioned from 1998, those PCCs that embrace fire will toy with the idea of integration, before deciding the effort required would be disproportionate to any benefit. The public will see little difference and the worst predictions of the unions and staff associations will prove to have been exaggerated. Indeed, I expect the lasting impact of the change will be a handful of very British, quirky, local arrangements: largely harmless – but part of an incoherent national landscape that will be extremely complex and expensive to disentangle when the political pendulum next swings back towards greater centralised political control of critical services. ❖



About the author

Nick Gargan QPM is a CoPaCC Associate and former Chief Constable at Avon and Somerset. Nick is an independent consultant helping organisations large and small with strategy and providing market insight into policing. He previously held two chief constable positions: at the National Policing Improvement Agency and subsequently at Avon and Somerset police. He was previously national police spokesman on Finance and, before that, Intelligence.

Making sense of police and fire mergers and collaboration

Ian Wiggett explains how the economics and operational demands of local regions will determine the success or failure of collaboration between the police and fire services in the UK

There is an old joke about a man driving in the countryside and getting lost. He stops to ask a local for directions. After a long pause, the local says, 'Well, if I were you, I wouldn't start from here'.

That sums up much of the situation with police and fire collaboration. There are opportunities to collaborate, but whether it makes sense economically and operationally depends on each agency's particular circumstances. A solution that saves money in one area could end up costing money if applied in another area.

Politics and personalities undoubtedly play a part, but ultimately the money counts. Fire and police services are always looking to save money and improve service. It is difficult to defend positions out of self-interest or just because things have always been done that way. But services can also not afford to run 'token' collaboration schemes if there are no savings or improvements on offer.

In the beginning

The first step is the decision on shared governance. This brings a single view of assets and expenditure, which will undoubtedly help identify opportunities, and reduce the unnecessary duplicate spending. Maybe not straight away, but as strategic decisions arise, there will be obvious opportunities. If governance stays separate, then despite an undoubted commitment to collaborate, the practicality of getting

a decision through two separate processes keeps things unnecessarily complex - particularly as it will be a PCC making decisions alone, with a Fire Authority working as a committee. Neither is 'better' - it's just that the style and speed will be different.

From a police perspective, there is a general sense that shared governance could be a distraction that is unlikely to achieve much in the way of cost savings

'Shared governance could be a distraction that is unlikely to achieve much in the way of cost savings'

(Fire Service budgets are that much smaller than Police). From a Fire Service perspective, there is a real fear that they will lose influence and priority. The job title 'PCC' gives little reassurance that fire and rescue is core business. If a choice has to be made between investment in new firefighting equipment or resources for child protection, which option will the PCC favour?

The unknown factor here is politics. The political hue of a PCC may/may not coincide with their fire authority (or authorities, where police force areas span more than one fire service). Is this seen as a "Conservative Party" policy, or as a diversion from budget cuts? How much interest is there locally in something

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which could easily be portrayed as 'upsetting the apple cart'? If difficult decisions (for example closure of fire stations) are due, will a PCC want to take a political hit?

In several areas, of course, the focus has moved on to devolution - which will put it all together anyway.

In the meantime, collaboration continues to gather speed. Across the country, operational buildings are being shared by police, fire, ambulance and other local services. Not so long ago, each service used to claim special reasons why a bespoke building was required - and there was often nervousness about police officers working from a fire or ambulance station. I remember having to spend time reassuring local council staff that they would not be at personal risk when officers moved to a base in a town hall.

But there are not always such opportunities available within the current estates. While HQ establishments have reduced, it may still not be feasible to fit two into one site. But other areas may see this as an obvious move. The same applies to training facilities. Fire and police have different training needs. And while there may be opportunities in some areas to rationalise sites and save money, in other areas this would only be practicable by spending a lot of money.

Back office services such as IT, HR, Finance may also provide some opportunities for rationalisation - depending on the local circumstances. Merging different functions and IT systems could prove tricky and expensive.

Merger and rationalisation

Control rooms have also been proposed for merger and rationalisation. Wiltshire tried this many years ago, and Merseyside currently have police and fire co-located, and are working towards ambulance also. Some fire services have already invested heavily in regional control centres, though. Reversing out of those structures will require a strong financial argument. It's likely that different IT systems will be in use - from a practical perspective, maintaining dual systems costs money and limits efficiency opportunities. But moving to a single system also costs money

and brings risk. Assuming there is suitable building space available, of course.

Police and fire control rooms may look similar, but they work in different ways. The mix of calls to each service varies in nature. There is a higher percentage

'Fire services have developed sophisticated protocols for the risks in their areas, with the focus for the call handler gathering as much information as possible, as quickly as possible'

of emergency calls to fire than to police. Most fire services work on 'silent dispatch', ie details of the incident are passed electronically to the station and vehicle, with less reliance on voice communications than police. Fire services have developed sophisticated protocols for the risks in their areas, with the focus for the call handler being on gathering as much information as possible, as quickly as possible, to allow commanders to ensure the right response is sent. In the main, it is better to despatch first as every second counts.

While police call handlers also face such challenges, they also have to deal with a broad range of non-emergency calls. Most 999 calls to police do not actually require an emergency response. It may not be clear what the emergency is, or indeed whether it requires a response. Moving to 'multi-hat' call handlers/dispatchers is far from straightforward, and would need very careful consideration.

Other countries have multi-agency control rooms, of course. Typically there are two reasons for this. The first is that they have always had merged control rooms - in some countries with smaller populations and more sparsely populated regions, ambulance and/or fire have always been closely integrated with police.

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Crisis response

The second reason usually follows a major crisis, made worse by a breakdown in communication between the emergency services. This then leads governments to invest in new shared facilities and operating systems. However, it's not unusual to go into these new shared control rooms and see police

'It's not unusual to go into these new shared control rooms and see police operators sitting in one corner, fire in another, and ambulance in another'

operators sitting in one corner, fire in another, and ambulance in another. They may be co-located, but they still work as separate teams. The much harder challenge is merging operational processes and organisational cultures.

Incident response

This moves us on to the actual incident response. New 'models' have been emerging around the country. Some rural areas have multi-hatted responders, which may well be a good solution in those particular communities.

In Greater Manchester, fire units are first responders to cardiac arrests for the ambulance service, and to certain reports of collapsed persons for the police. Several other areas have similar models.

There is no doubt that these extra response options help improve service to the public and offer some efficiencies. But extending them further depends on local demand and risk factors. A 'multi-hat responder' will only be able to deal with simple incidents – anything more complex will need more advanced skills.

The key is to understand the demand, to know how typical 'simple' incidents are. If specialist support has to be brought in too often, than service im-

provement will be unlikely – in fact, it may even make things worse.

Operational overlaps

The main overlaps operationally are between police and ambulance, and between fire and ambulance. There are not that many incidents that require both police and fire to attend together, and when they do occur, the roles are quite distinct.

For those areas seeking more devolved powers, bringing ambulance into the equation offers the potential to provide new options and 'pathways'. The fire service has made huge reductions in demand through prevention and safety initiatives.

The crippling spend for local government is in health and social care. If some of that success can be mirrored via the ambulance and 111 service, then there is the prospect of major financial savings. But while elected mayors of devolved areas will be eyeing that prize, such ambition will be beyond the remit of most PCCs. ❖



About the author

Ian Wiggett is a CoPaCC Director and former ACC in Greater Manchester Police, with responsibility for Serious Crime and Counter Terrorism. He was the national lead for

systems thinking and for casualty bureau, and was chair of the NPAS Assurance Group. Ian previously had responsibility for specialist operations within GMP. He has led work in GMP to improve responses to missing persons and mental health, and in applying systems thinking approaches across local and specialist policing. Ian began his service in the Metropolitan Police, and gained extensive experience of public order and crime investigation. After being head of CID in three London divisions, he headed the Intelligence and Performance portfolio within Territorial Policing. Following transfer to Cheshire Constabulary, he became Director of Intelligence, held commands in local policing and specialist operations, and led several forcewide change programmes.

A single vision and strategy: The case for moving beyond collaboration

PCC **Stephen Mold** on the future of joint police and fire initiatives in Northamptonshire and his plans for improving services to the public

I believe that bringing together the emergency services to work as closely as possible together is the right thing to do – quite simply, it will save lives. The efficiencies created by sharing premises, knowledge and delivering shared interventions will allow us to be substantially more effective in preventing crime and harm of all types.

Much good work has already taken place in Northamptonshire with the Chief Fire Officer and team sharing a headquarters with the Police and I. We have merged teams, such as our Joint Prevention and Community Protection department as well as three shared stations across the county, with more being considered. We have procured a Joint Command Unit to enable commanders at major events from both Police and Fire to have greater information at their fingertips than ever before.

There is more we can do to make the county safer. It doesn't matter whether a person is a police officer or a firefighter when delivering interventions that keep people safe. I want to see more work of this nature. I am keen to take advantage of legislation the Government is bringing forward to consider a change in governance for the Fire and Rescue Service, with the responsibilities of the Fire and Rescue Authority moving to Police and Crime Commissioners. There will always be specialisms in both organisations that require specialist police officers and specialist fire fighters, but as we look to get upstream to prevent issues rather than simply react, there are many areas where either service can provide advice, guidance and support to keep people safe.

The changes in Northamptonshire so far are powerful and have had huge benefits, but if we were to stop now, we would miss out on further collaboration that would directly benefit the public and the services we are able to provide. Bringing the two organisations more closely together would allow us to work to a single corporate vision and strategic plan, ensuring that everything both organisations do will be aligned towards a single strategy - the current situation allows for the two organisations

to be potentially divergent and at times contradictory to each other. Single decision making and governance will also speed up opportunities to deliver benefits to the public quicker without having two separate democratic processes. In addition to this, greater transparency on budget and Council Tax precepts will be brought by changing governance to PCCs and therefore the public will be better able to see what their money is being used for in the Fire and Rescue Service.

Ultimately, I believe that the public will have the greater power if they are able to hold me as PCC to account for both police and fire services, and therefore they will have a greater say in the way their fire and rescue service is run under a changed governance model.

I am pleased that in Northamptonshire there is currently collaboration on developing the appraisal of future options. The County Council (as Fire and Rescue Authority), Police and Fire and Rescue Service are all engaged in developing the very best information to make informed decisions. There is strong support to explore ways to deliver the very best services to our communities.

Once the Policing and Crime Bill before Parliament receives Royal Assent (in 2017) I intend to be in a position, subject to the options appraisal proving the case for change to all stakeholders, to take forward a business case in 2017 to the Home Secretary. ❖



About the author

Stephen Mold is Police and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire. He has recently launched a public consultation on his draft Police and Crime Plan (YourPCC.co.uk), which focuses on keeping young people safe; community partnerships; protecting people from harm; and putting victims at the heart of justice system.

Common sense collaboration: No mergers required

PCC **Lord Willy Bach** calls for common sense collaboration between services and argues that giving PCCs the power to take over the running of Fire and Rescue Authorities is a step too far

It has taken some time for the post of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) to resonate with a sceptical electorate who, because of the way the Government chose to introduce PCCs, knew very little about the role they were being asked to vote upon.

Thankfully, that's now beginning to change as the public begin to understand what it is that we do. In my own area of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, my predecessor and I have done as much as we can to raise the profile of our office and I know that's the case up and down the country.

Of course there are many people who remain sceptical or unaware but for me, the fundamental reason why Commissioners exist is simple. We are there to

'The fundamental reason why Commissioners exist is simple. We are there to give the public a voice in the way their area is policed'

give the public a voice in the way their area is policed.

Yes, we also have a statutory duty in holding the Chief Constable to account and taking responsibility for police finances and it is usually when I explain this to people, that they begin to see the need for PCCs. These are big responsibilities and ones which rightly demand real focus from Commissioners who have all learned that it takes a great deal of time and energy to carry out their duties effectively.

So, I believe the public would be rightly sceptical and reluctant if PCCs now morphed into 'Emergency Services Supremos' as the Government seems to want us to do. Giving PCCs the power to take over the running of Fire and Rescue Authorities is, I believe, a step too far. Of course, this is not a compulsory step. Rather, the Government's Police and Crime Bill puts the onus on the PCC to make the case for the options that are open, ranging from a full merger to an automatic seat on the fire authority. The Home Secretary can make the order if satisfied.

The power is there to use

But the very fact that they want to give Commissioners this power seems to me a very strong indication that they would then want PCCs to use it.

I am deeply sceptical about such an arrangement and have real concerns about the impact it would have on services.

Firstly, following a merger, the poor relation of this event will nearly always be the fire and rescue service. The public spending landscape has changed dramatically in the last six years and, with the uncertainty caused by Brexit, it is certainly possible that there could be further cuts in the future.

The budgets of Police and Crime Commissioners would then almost certainly be affected. Both the police and fire services have, in my view, already been unfairly treated by excessive cuts in funding.

So, what is a PCC to do in the future when faced with further reductions in budgets? Will he or she choose the police who will, with good cause, complain that they have taken enough pain, or will the

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Commissioner pick on the fire and rescue service — a hugely popular service, but tiny in comparison with the police, whose own coffers have already begun to be emptied?

In my view, it will often, if not always, be the fire

'Will the Government promise extra administrative resources for any Commissioner who goes down the merger route?'

and rescue service which will be the loser. Secondly, will the Government promise extra administrative resources for any Commissioner who goes down the merger route? I'm not sure that they would. Thirdly, does the Government intend to apply financial and/or other pressures to a PCC who does not want to go down this route? Will it be optional only in name and mandatory in effect?

These are questions the Government needs to answer and I have not yet heard the assurances that I'm looking for.

Evidence-based decisions

I agree with the Local Government Association that any transfer of governance must be supported by a comprehensive, evidence-based and well-tested business case that demonstrates how the change in governance improves the fire and rescue service and increases public safety. In addition, it should be subject to independent assessment.

Another part of the Bill calls for the police and fire services to 'work more closely together and develop the role of our elected and accountable PCCs' and 'introduce a duty to collaborate' to improve efficiency or effectiveness.

I don't disagree with this with at all. Collaboration between police forces and the fire and rescue service and with the ambulance service is often just plain common sense.

Yet, much of this happens already, especially in an operational capacity. Of course there is more we can do in sharing back office and support services but again, that is something that the police have become accustomed to in recent years. The way policing is delivered has changed irrevocably as the service has adapted to changes in its funding by seeking out new partnerships and closer, collaborative working with their strategic partners.

My relatively new experience running policing in Leicestershire convinces me that the Government should trust its elected Commissioners to work together with the police in pursuing further collaborative opportunities.

We have already demonstrated tangible success in this area and I firmly believe that if there is a financial or operational rationale for the police and fire service to work together, in my view this can be achieved without legislation that forces this arrangement.❖



About the author

Lord Willy Bach is the Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicestershire. A high profile career in both criminal justice and public service, he brings valuable experience to his

new role as PCC for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. He was a criminal law barrister, prosecuting and defending at the Leicester Bar for 25 years. He was an elected Councillor on both Leicester City and Harborough District Councils. During this time he served a term as Mayor of Lutterworth. Created a Labour life peer in 1998, he has served as a Justice Minister and more recently as Shadow Attorney General and Shadow Legal Aid Minister, a role he resigned upon his election as PCC. Other Parliamentary appointments include Parliamentary Under-Secretary at DEFRA and the Ministry of Defence, where he was involved in the Joint Strike Fighter project with the US Department of Defense, resulting in Lockheed Martin's contract award.

Ground-up improvements, not change from above

Jeremy Hilton says that the Local Government Association would only support changes to fire and rescue governance if the service chiefs agree to it and there is a watertight business case for a merger

Local councillors who sit on fire and rescue authorities do a tremendous job. We believe there is no pressing need to change this status. The fire and rescue service is one of the best public services that we have, and we should cherish it.

The Government should not impose change for change's sake. We would only support changes to the governance of fire and rescue authorities if there is an agreement between the Police and Crime Commissioner and the local fire and rescue authority, underwritten by a watertight business plan that clearly sets out the advantages over other ways of strengthening collaboration at a local level.

Wider collaboration

The fire and rescue service already works closely with the other emergency services on a daily basis, and has been at the forefront of driving a range of local initiatives and innovation to increase cooperation and collaboration. The ability to enter collaboration agreements will assist in building on the arrange-

ments already in place, but must be implemented in a way that allows fire and rescue services to collaborate more widely, such as with the health service. ❖

'The fire and rescue service already works closely with the other emergency services on a daily basis'



About the author

Cllr **Jeremy Hilton** is Chair of the Local Government Association's Fire Services Management Committee, a Liberal Democrat Councillor on Gloucestershire County Council and Leader of Liberal Democrats Gloucester.

The single employer model: A challenging aspect of collaboration

Chief Constable **Alec Wood**, Chair of the NPCC Operations Co-ordination Committee, says that complex discussions, with competing demands, complex legal frameworks and varying governance environments across emergency services will be a huge challenge

Collaboration has been a key theme in policing for years. As a service we have long seen the benefits of working in close partnership both internally within the service between forces, and externally with our public sector and third sector partners. In recent years the austerity climate has increased the urgency that public services pursue interesting and innovative collaboration, designed to deliver smarter efficiencies and tangible boosts in effectiveness. Police and Fire service collaboration is one such strategy to deliver these results that we at the NPCC have been exploring.

'In the event of a single employer model, it will be for PCCs to make decisions in a local context'

These are detailed and complex discussions, with competing demands, complex legal frameworks and varying governance environments across emergency services. It is also important to highlight that despite the current national focus on police and fire collaboration, this needs to be explored across wider services in order to significantly improve emergency service delivery at local and national levels.

We view the entire agenda as having three distinct but overlapping areas: locally-driven collaboration

across police services, fire and rescue, and ambulance services; changes in governance enabled by changes to legislation; and collaboration or alignment of strategic functions.

We have seen some significant areas of success already particularly on the first area of locally driven collaboration.

New legislation – particularly the Police and Crime Bill currently before parliament – reinforces the role of collaboration on the national agenda. This legislation could have wide ranging implications: it could enable Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) to assume strategic governance for local Fire and Rescue Services through the functions of the Fire and Rescue Authorities, and potentially also enable PCCs to create a single employer model encompassing both policing and fire. This is a particularly challenging aspect of collaboration.

Local decisions

It is clear that in the event of a single employer model, it will be for PCCs to make decisions in a local context – for example, how best to integrate the service delivery in a particular force area. However, the NPCC will certainly have to weigh in to this discussion in terms of national operational delivery.

We would have to input into this process to assess and develop appropriate operational leadership across the services. We also have to ensure that collaboration does not affect the ongoing delivery of

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effective emergency service for communities across the UK. To this end, it is incumbent on the NPCC to engage with all stakeholders during this period of review and change in emergency service delivery.

Chief officers who work on the NPCC Operations Coordination Committee are working with our Fire and Rescue partners to explore nationally driven strategic support opportunities. Upon review of the future visions and strategic objectives of both the Police and Fire services it was unsurprising that we are facing similar challenges in terms of funding pressures, governance changes and changes in the nature of demand.

'Our missions have significant crossover – we are all trying to find the best ways to serve and protect our communities'

Furthermore, our similar missions have significant crossover – we are all trying to find the best ways to serve and protect our communities. Our approach involves working as a team in partnership with key stakeholders, including the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) to identify and explore strategic enablers to support local partnerships between the Police and Fire.

Five work streams

At present, the programme consists of five work streams:

- Mobilisation and Crisis Management – reviewing how to develop the National Police Co-ordination Centre (NPoCC) to enable a single centre for capturing and mobilising national assets, responding quickly to crises and aid requests, and providing support to COBRA.
- Procurement – identify opportunities for joint procurement between the two services to facilitate efficiencies.
- Headquarters support – NPCC and the Chief Fire

Officers' Association (CFOA) working to establish how they can support each other to align and share services and facilities to enable efficiencies and closer working.

- Review of co-ordinating committees between the NPCC and CFOA – map the committees with one another to identify synergies that will enable, where appropriate, shared committees or cross-sector working.
- Colleges, leadership and professional development – identify what is needed from the leadership of Police and Fire in the future, consider what skills and attributes would be needed to lead the organisation under a single employer model

Challenging and complex

It is without question that collaboration and mergers are challenging and complex. They need to be very carefully thought through, planned and executed and if undertaken properly are time and resource intensive. However, this is an important undertaking in the pursuit of a more effective, flexible, efficient and collaborative service to the public, and we at the NPCC take very seriously our duty to explore the potential with our colleagues and counterparts. ❖



About the author

Alec Wood joined Cambridgeshire Constabulary in 2013, and became Chief Constable in September 2015. He was appointed Chair of the National Police Chiefs' Council Operations Co-ordination Committee in December 2015. This role sees Alec working with other police chiefs and leaders from governmental and non-governmental organisations from across the country to drive forward operational policing and community safety issues and developing best practice. Alec attained an M.A. in Criminology from the University of Keele which focused on the ethics of policing and criminal justice.

Support contingent on a robust local case for enhanced public safety

Dave Etheridge says the Chief Fire Officers' Association will support Police and Crime Commissioners taking responsibility for fire; but there must be a robust local business case made that enhances public safety

Since the publication of the Government's consultation 'enabling closer working between emergency services' at the start of the year, CFOA has been working closely with other blue light services, the Home Office, the National Police Chief Council (NPCC) and other key stakeholders and organisations.

CFOA has welcomed the duty to collaborate - which is also referenced within the Policing and Crime Bill, currently going through Parliament and due for Royal Assent later this year or early 2017.

This latest survey from CoPaCC gives an interesting insight into how Police and Crime Commissioners are looking to progress collaboration further. It appears the majority of PCCs are looking towards sharing services, facilities and procurement, rather than looking to take on the running of fire and rescue services. Clearly it is easier for considerations around taking on the responsibility of fire and rescue services by PCC's, where both police and fire services are co-terminus.

We have said that we will support Police and Crime Commissioners taking responsibility for fire; but we would want to see a robust local business case made for such a move including the added benefits to the citizen through enhanced levels of public safety.

Part of CFOA's offer to the Home Office includes guidance and input to ensure plans for collaboration consider the full range of issues. This will help to produce the right outcomes for services and - very importantly - the communities they serve. Effective collaboration should take place regardless of discussions around governance and the future roles of PCC's.

We are pleased that the government has reiterated that police and fire services will remain operationally distinct which is very important to CFOA, as we do not want to lose the unique and publically trusted repu-

tation the service enjoys. It is important to point out that Blue Light Collaboration is not a new concept; fire and rescue services are already working closely with colleagues from all emergency services and indeed have done so for many years.

Wider collaboration

For some time fire and rescue services have worked closely with other organisations such as Public Health England and the NHS to driving the prevention agenda forward. This has included using our 670,000 home safety visits to reduce pressures on the health service.

CFOA had made it clear that it is essential fire and rescue services continue to have the freedom and flexibility to build these partnerships to ensure a true multi-agency approach and to enhance benefits for the community. We are encouraged to see the government has said: "We will encourage wider involvement in collaboration by other bodies such as local government, health bodies or the voluntary sector."

More than a third of UK FRSs are already co-responding with ambulance colleagues - and we will take steps to ensure this best practice is recognised, shared and replicated where possible. Shared control centres already exist in many parts of the country, both with other police and ambulance colleagues and between fire and rescue services, which has already made significant efficiencies.

- Hampshire: Fire, police and the council are joining back office services. Expected savings up to £4m a year
- Merseyside: fire and police are working together to create a new, combined command and control centre, saving them £3.5m. Allowing them to share information and expertise.
- Devon and Somerset: Ambulance and fire services are running a joint response system to emergencies,

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delivering value for money and improving response to critical incidents

Since fire has moved to the Home Office, two of the three emergency services are now under one government department: facilitating closer working at a central government level. There is scope for further collaboration between emergency services; such as building on existing good work through the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP) and elsewhere.

CFOA strongly believes that fire and rescue services can share their strong and proven record in prevention and enviable public support to deliver a wide range of better social outcomes.

However, the government will have to consider the impact of ongoing funding cuts on fire service capacity

'We will support PCCs taking responsibility for fire; but we would want to see a robust local business case made for such a move'

to deliver local and national resilience, especially at a time when both Police and Ambulance have seen their budgets protected.

Since moving to the Home Office, the Fire Reform agenda has been announced and we are working closely with government on this, to ensure we are leading this programme. Key points of reform included: Developing the prevention agenda; partnership working to increase protection to communities; efficiencies; unifying research, and closer working between the emergency services.

It is very clear that Blue Light Collaboration will become increasingly important in the coming months and years; therefore it is essential – where possible – we work together to realise its ambitions, while ensuring the communities all blue light services serve are at the heart of what we do and their safety and needs put first.

Part of our commitment to Blue Light Collaboration and the Fire Reform Agenda is the changes we are making to CFOA. This includes the introduction of the Nation-

al Fire Chiefs Council and a longer serving full time Chair. This will be incredibly valuable to the sector and also to drive forward Blue Light Collaboration and other changes to ensure we are creating a fire service for the future.

Summary

CFOA is working with the Home Office to implement the Fire Reform agenda to ensure it produces the most benefit for the fire and rescue service and the public we serve. The UK Fire and Rescue Service is a world class emergency service with a distinct brand and reputation, but there are opportunities for closer working with colleagues in the police, ambulance and beyond.

CFOA remain committed to a locally determined approach to the future of the fire and rescue service, and believe that local people and partners should support any proposed collaboration. It will also be important to consider how ongoing funding reductions might impact on services and their capacity to deliver an ambitious reform agenda.

We will continue to promote closer collaboration between police and fire where appropriate and for the benefit of the communities we serve. However, it is equally important that we continue to promote closer collaboration between fire and rescue services and partners in other emergency services, health, local government and the third sector where that provides positive outcomes and opportunities to improve the safety, health and well-being of the communities we serve. ❖



About the author

CFO **David Etheridge** OBE, is President of the Chief Fire Officers' Association. As a corporate member of Oxfordshire County Council's Management Team, David also has

broader responsibility for countywide Emergency Planning, Business Continuity, Trading Standards and Community Safety. Additionally, in 2011, he became responsible for the Road Safety Team of Oxfordshire County Council through their integration with the Fire and Rescue Service.

The times they are a-changing: Reform needed beyond just police and fire

Gavin Thomas says that wider reforms are needed beyond just police and fire to cope with the new demands placed on services by mental health issues, non-fire related incidents, floods and road traffic accidents

The College of Policing estimates that between 20 and 40% of police time is spent dealing with mental health issues. Officers are also finding themselves having to check on the welfare of the elderly; waiting with patients at hospital; returning children who have run away from care; and multitude of other things – all of which need to be done – that used to be activities undertaken by others.

Our colleagues in the fire service now spend 29% of their time dealing with non-fire related incidents, the highest proportion this has ever been. Non-fire related work includes road traffic collisions, helping during flooding, releasing people trapped in lifts, as well as co-responding to certain medical incidents.

A completely different era

The Knight Review, published in 2013, is arguably the architect of the current reforms in the fire service. It identified that deaths from fires in the home were at an all-time low, down by some 40% in the last decade. Whilst the role of the fire service in bringing down demand was acknowledged, the report also identified inefficiencies similar to those in policing perhaps a decade ago.

The service has successfully transformed itself to absorb preventative and wider rescue work, but the review was clear for the need for them to "transform themselves again to reflect the completely different era of risk and demand".

There has been no reduction in demand upon policing and, in many cases, we are now picking up tasks previously carried out by others. I worry about the health and well-being of officers who are being required to do more with less.

Significant reductions in police funding over the last

six years have led to massive change in the way that policing is delivered across England and Wales. A lot of the changes have been driven by the need to reduce costs, but there has also been a desire to drive out inefficiencies and to do things more effectively.

However, such changes have not been introduced consistently across the country resulting in something of a patchwork quilt of policing developing, with individual police forces of varying sizes and viability; strategic alliances; collaborative working arrangements; regional collectives of forces; regional and national capabilities.

'Reductions in police funding over the last six years have led to massive change in the way that policing is delivered across England and Wales'

Whilst these 'solutions' are about trying to do the either same, or more, for less money, my Association has long argued that such an approach is sub-optimal. During my speech at our National Conference in September, I made the case for a clear vision for policing that extends beyond just the next few years.

The enactment of the Policing and Crime Bill will enable much closer working between the police and fire services, both of which now sit under the same Minister. Whilst this will have the potential to deliver considerable benefits, I urge a note of caution.

Taking an ad-hoc approach to closer working between these two emergency services is likely to

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muddy the waters further, rather than adding greater clarity or a unified sense of purpose. It needs to be properly thought through to determine how benefit can be maximised.

Let me extend this thinking to encompass the wider public sector - because we need to start thinking beyond simple binary arrangements as they are now inadequate for tackling the complex societal challenges with which public services are having to deal.

'We need to start thinking beyond simple binary arrangements as they are now inadequate for tackling the complex societal challenges'

I started this article by talking about activities that police and fire personnel are now undertaking that traditionally they did not. Austerity-driven reforms have taken place, and continue to take place, across the public sector. Agencies are taking a close look at what it is that they do and, in many cases, whether consciously or not, they are dropping off some of the things that they used to do but which they can no longer afford.

That would be alright if it was not the case that some of these things really must be done by someone.

Instead of being discontinued, out of necessity they have been picked up by other agencies – even if such activities are not really their core business. The law of unintended consequences has come into play.

Those of us involved in the public sector are only too aware of the interdependencies and cross-overs that exist between policing, health, education, social services, probation, housing and the emergency services to name but a few. We do not, cannot, and should not operate in silos.

Undoubtedly, reductions in funding are a threat to service delivery. However, where there are threats

there are also opportunities. I would argue that a great opportunity to develop a world-class public service has been presented to us.

Instead of each agency embarking upon its own programme of reform unilaterally, it is time to take a good hard look at what the need is across the public service; what the priorities are; and to develop a clear vision and supporting strategies for each agency to deliver against; recognising the interdependencies and cross-overs and identifying those organisations whose responsibility it is, either individually or collectively, to deliver on them.

Only if we do this can we make best use of scarce resources at the same as improving the service we all give to the public, which obviously includes the most vulnerable members of society.

What I am proposing here is not easy. It will require energy, enthusiasm, commitment, vision and, most of all, co-ordination.

It will also require the political will for it to succeed, as such a complex piece of work will undoubtedly take longer to deliver than one parliamentary term.

The alternative, however, is to continue to meet 21st century demands and expectations and expectations with 20th century structures, approaches and working cultures.

It is time to change ... ❖



About the author

Chief Superintendent

Gavin Thomas is president of the Police Superintendents' Association of England and Wales.

A Gloucestershire Constabulary officer, Gavin has served as a detective at every rank. His roles have included Head of Crime and Protective Services and in areas including specialist crime, Counter Terrorism, Professional Standards and as a Senior Investigating Officer. In 2006 he attended the FBI programme at Quantico, Virginia. He was elected President of the PSAEW in January 2016, having served as Vice President for three years.

Focus on economy, efficiency, effectiveness and public safety

As the scope and speed of change accelerates, CFO **Roy Wilsher** says there are a number of areas to consider when analysing the aspects of any change in governance or operating models

Change is the only constant. I am not sure whether that is an original quote, probably not, but is something my peers, managers and staff hear me say quite often. I have spent almost 35 years in the Fire and Rescue Service, over eleven as a Chief Fire Officer and I have been the Chief Executive for Hertfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner for the last three years; it appears to me that the scope and speed of change continues to accelerate.

Police and Crime Commissioners are now well established and working at full speed in their second term. From my perspective, in terms of representing the public, holding Chief Constables to account and working on the wider community safety agenda there has been some measurable successes. A key feature for this second term for PCCs is the Policing and Crime Bill, due to be enacted in spring 2017. The Bill covers a number of issues, but pertinent to this piece are the first two chapters on Emergency Service collaboration and the ability for the Police and Crime Commissioner to become the Fire and Rescue Authority for an area.

A local business case

Pertinent to the Bill and future Act has always been the need for a local business case to be made for the PCC to become the Fire Authority, in an ideal world this would be a joint business case supported by local interested parties. The wording of the Bill is that the Home Secretary will agree to a proposed business case if -

- (a) it is in the interests of economy, efficiency and effectiveness for the order to be made, or
- (b) it is in the interests of public safety for the order to be made.

It is clear, however, that the PCC can make a proposal to the Home Secretary for such a case and it appears

that this provision would be viewed favourably. This being the case, it is interesting to observe the workings around the progress of the Bill, where centrally drafted speeches will emphasise the importance of a local business case whilst a Home Office unit has been established to support and, encourage early adopters.

In my view there is no reason to object to the PCC taking on the powers of the Fire and Rescue Authority as a point of principle, if any proposal meets the criteria above and also provides a better service to the people, communities and businesses of a local area then why would one object?

'There is no reason to object to the PCC taking on the powers of the Fire and Rescue Authority as a point of principle'

Personally, as a fire officer who has worked at what Police colleagues would recognise as a chief officer level and Fire colleagues recognise as principal officer for fourteen years I am very used to working with and for local politicians that set local strategic direction and policy, based on professional advice.

In fact, through my role as Chief Executive I know that working for a Police and Crime Commissioner, although a corporation sole, would feel familiar for chief fire officers. I also believe that recent developments in local collaboration with a range of partners and with initiatives like JESIP, Fire has never worked closer with Police colleagues and this can only benefit all involved.

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There are, however, in my view, a number of areas that need to be considered when analysing the economy, efficiency and effectiveness or public safety aspects of any change in governance or operating models. I would always look at any proposals from a purely professional point of view, but if the overriding political strategic direction is for the local PCC to also be the Fire and Rescue Authority then I will help lead the change to the best of my ability. The first issue I think needs to be carefully considered is the continued professionalism of Police and Fire.

My three years as Chief Executive for a PCC has taken me much further into the Police world than I have ever been before. This has shown me that although there are significant areas of overlap between Fire and Police, such as major incidents and other operational matters as exemplified by JESIP and in community safety, particularly dealing with vulnerable people and issues such as anti-social behaviour, but there is also much that specific, Police Firearms, Child Sexual Exploitation, Cyber Crime, Urban Search and Rescue, flood rescue and compartment fires.

Interoperable, not interchangeable

This is the reason strategic Police and Fire leads stated in their first letter to the Home Secretary concerning JESIP, the services are interoperable, not interchangeable. Therefore maintaining specific professionalism where appropriate is vital. I have been encouraged by recent government level speeches that say the same thing and the Fire reform agenda being pushed by the Home Office is a manifestation of this drive for professionalism.

Although, for Fire, Home Office policy only directly applies to English Fire and Rescue Authorities, Fire being a Devolved responsibility in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. But nevertheless the principles of that reform hold true, professional standards, independent inspection, transparency, collaboration and workforce reform.

It is interesting to note that until the revised Fire Services Act and associated reform in 2004, Fire had promotion and discipline regulations and an independent inspectorate. The reintroduction of some of these

entities is a welcome step for the continued professionalism of Fire and Rescue.

Although I believe there is a need to maintain some distinct professional areas, collaboration or even merger in some professions that are colloquially known as 'back office' or 'support' could bring benefits in terms of economy and efficiency, but this must not be at the cost of effectiveness. Similarly, when considering the possible outcomes of a new Act, there are existing arrangements that must be analysed to ensure the consequences are fully understood. For instance, in Hertfordshire professional areas like Human Resources and ICT are closely collaborated across Hertfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire Constabularies whereas non Fire specific IT is integral with the County Council for Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service. The Fire Service in Hertfordshire is a part of the County Council Community Protection Directorate which includes Trading Standards, Resilience (Emergency Planning) and a share of the County Community Safety unit. Hertfordshire Fire is also embedded in a control room project that involves Norfolk, Lincolnshire and Humberside Fire and Rescue Services, all issues to be fully explored and understood when developing any proposals.

Looking further into the Bill, an issue that has been raised by the Chief Fire Officers Association is that the duty to collaborate as outlined is too narrow. Collaboration for both Police and Fire looks way beyond emergency services and into local councils, public health, social care, mental health and many more, all seeking to do the best for local communities. In particular, Fire as a Health Asset is an important initiative taken forward by all Fire and Rescue Services in one form or other. There are common underlying risk factors which increase demands on both fire and health services, such as the number of long-term conditions, cognitive impairment, smoking, drugs or substance misuse, physical inactivity, poor diet, obesity, loneliness and/or social isolation, cold homes and frailty. By identifying people with these risk factors and taking a whole system approach to interventions which are centred on peoples' needs, the fire service and partners intend to make every contact count, irrespective of which service makes contact.

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An integrated approach

Working with Health, Fire can offer an integrated approach to targeting through the better co-ordination, prevention and early intervention that has been demonstrated to increase the reach and impact of all services. For instance, in areas of best practice, health services have commissioned the fire and rescue service in collaboration with Age UK (and other voluntary sector organisations) to make interventions in people's homes that have resulted in improved health and reduced risk.

Early results have been positive, with a measurable significant impact on improving outcomes. This work could be expanded with the fire and rescue service working with a number of local commissioners. In Hertfordshire the newly introduced safe and well visits see fire service staff visit people's homes to not only look at fire safety, they also consider slips, trips and falls, social isolation, nutrition, proper heating and general life improvements.

These initiatives are developed with Public Health and Adult Social Care and the added value to society should not be lost in any reforms. Similarly Fire and Rescue Services are responding more and more to co-responder incidents in partnership with the ambulance service so dealing with more heart and cardiac attack victims, an initiative that is saving more lives.

When looking into any feasibility study there are other matters that also need to be considered, for instance co-terminosity. Take the south west for example; the complexity of a Unitary County Council with a Fire Service in Cornwall, Devon & Cornwall Police plus Devon & Somerset Fire and Rescue makes the mind boggle at any thought of re-organisation.

Then there is the matter of Devolution, with Greater Manchester being the prime example, they will have Mayoral elections in May 2017 and the position and governance of Police and Fire in that area is still being finalised. Whatever path people take it appears clear that we will have more Fire Authority models at the end of this parliament than we did at the beginning.

There is much Police and Fire can learn from each other and there is much that can be collaborated and improved. National changes are seeing CFOA work

closely with the National Police Chiefs Council on issues such as national resilience and procurement. CFOA reforms will soon see the introduction of a National Fire Chiefs Council and this Fire Police collaboration, which is the best I have known, will continue to strengthen.

I also believe the collaboration work between the three emergency services will continue to gain momentum as will be demonstrated in the second edition of

'There is much Police and Fire can learn from each other and there is much that can be collaborated and improved'

the Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group directory which will highlight the fantastic work going on across the country. Similarly, partnership and collaborated work across the public sector, the third and sector and, in some cases, the private sector also appears to be going from strength to strength.

This has been driven at a national level, and in a number of cases such as JESIP, with very strong ministerial support. I can only see us looking for more opportunities with economy, efficiency, effectiveness and public safety at the forefront of our minds. Things that should not be lost no matter what the political governance looks like. ❖



About the author

Roy Wilsher, is Chief Fire Officer Hertfordshire Fire Service and Chief Executive Hertfordshire OPCC. In April 2011, Roy took up the role of

Director for Community Protection and Chief Fire Officer for Hertfordshire, taking responsibility for Trading Standards, Emergency Planning and the County Community Safety Unit. In April 2013 Roy was also appointed Chief Executive of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Recognising the unique roles of police and fire officers

With officer numbers down and crime on the rise, Police Federation Chair **Steve White** says the police service has no capacity to take on additional responsibilities

The roles of police officers and fire fighters are very different, and any attempts at collaboration must take that into account. The job of a police officer is unique, and in all honesty I think we have more in common with other parts of the public service, such as the probation service, social services, mental health and education. There is as much logic collaborating with them as there is in saying we should collaborate with any service that actually carries a blue light.

The Police and Fire Minister Brandon Lewis spoke about collaboration at the annual Superintendents' Association conference in September but I feel he is yet to grasp the inconsistent picture of collaboration across the service. This is resulting in our members being pulled from pillar to post, never knowing when they are next on duty because they answer to three different bosses in three different forces.

It's a very confusing and demoralising picture for our members. The Home Office cannot continue to say it has absolved its responsibility to police in this country. As a police service, we are at breaking point – officer numbers are down, yet crime is on the up and we certainly have no capacity for additional responsibilities. We have seen a rise in single-crewing, increased officer assaults, on average one every 22 minutes, and officers tell us they are run ragged. Speaking directly with our members across the country in recent weeks it's abundantly clear that they don't feel adequately supported to do that already expected of them. How they could be expected to take on additional tasks is beyond me.

I do think there are perhaps ways in which the police service and the fire service could work together and this is already happening in a number of forces. Ultimately we never want to be in a situation where police officers are putting out fires and fire fighters are mak-

ing arrests. While that may not be the current intention, what would stop such moves in the future?

Higher up, I don't think you can say that a chief fire officer could be a chief constable or vice versa. It's one thing if you have a Police and Crime Commissioner who looks at budgets as a priority potentially performing a dual role, but government must not lose sight that being a Police and Crime Commissioner just for the police is a big job in itself. We can undoubtedly share capacity in supporting functions such as HR and IT or even control rooms, we have already seen examples of this. But if you've got a single, accountable person for both the fire and police service, in some ways it counters the argument the Government put forward for PCCs. The important thing is that the governance and accountability of the police service does not diminish. I am sure colleagues in the fire service would say the same goes for them.

Just because you've got a commissioner in charge of the fire service and the police service, that doesn't mean that the abilities and the specialisms of the two disciplines should not be recognised, and it's absolutely vital that is maintained. ❖



About the author

Steve White is chair of the Police Federation of England and Wales.

Prior to joining the Joint Central Committee or JCC (now known as the Interim National Board since

June 2014), he served as a representative at both sergeant rank, serving as secretary of the Sergeants Branch Board and inspector rank, serving as chair of the Inspectors Branch Board and vice chair of the Joint Branch Board for more than a decade.

An erosion of trust, resources and autonomy

FBU national officer **Dave Green** says there are no merger benefits for fire service and that merging governance with the police service could actually undermine the fire prevention and safety work that goes on in our communities

The fire and rescue service (FRS) has a long history of working with police and ambulance services – attending the scenes of incidents from fires to road traffic accidents, floods and medical emergencies to terrorism. This has worked well. One reason is that the roles of these services, when our paths cross, have been distinct, clear and separate.

The fire service operational response is about effecting rescue and protecting communities – the police remit at these types of incidents is, in the main, to keep the public safe and ensure that the ambulance and fire service are able to extricate and treat casualties.

All emergency services have been placed under tremendous financial pressure since 2010 by austerity measures imposed by the Westminster government.

Frontline jobs cut

Fire and rescue services have suffered a savage cut in frontline firefighters of more than 10,000 – nearly a fifth of the workforce. The government has cited the long term decline in fires and fire deaths as justification for reducing jobs.

However, two worrying sets of data from the government show that we are slipping into reverse. Last year, 303 people were killed at fires – an increase of 15% from the previous year. It was also revealed that emergency response times to fires were at their slowest in 20 years.

The fire service is taking a major step backwards and it's a trend which will not be solved by PCC's. The government also conveniently forget the increased

workload for the FRS in non-fire emergencies. Of the 40,000 people rescued by the FRS, only 10% were from fires - 36,000 people were rescued by the FRS from other types of incidents.

The government's plans for the PCCs would mean that the police service, with its substantially bigger budget, employing far more people, would control the day-to-day running of fire and rescue services. There is no doubt that the fire service would be swallowed up.

'The police service would control the day-to-day running of fire and rescue services ... There is no doubt that the fire service would be swallowed up'

Police services will impose their will, values and beliefs – despite having no experience, training or understanding of the FRS culture and how we work. They would always be looking to skim from the FRS budget to compensate for their own funding shortfalls. The FRS would will continue to be dismantled before the government eventually succeeds in its ultimate aim of having the service off to its friends in the private sector.

While the government and PCCs may suggest other reasons for the proposed changes, the issue, in

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reality, is about budgets and cutting costs – neither service can continue to be treated so shoddily.

Different perceptions

Such a “collaboration” could undermine the invaluable fire prevention and safety work that goes on in our communities. Whether we like it or not the two services are perceived very differently – our members enjoy the neutrality of the fire service. Put simply, firefighters are well liked and, in some areas, the police are not.

‘Like it or not the two services are perceived very differently ... Put simply, firefighters are well liked and, in some areas, the police are not’

The role of the police is law enforcement and their educational work is about preventing law-breaking. By undertaking this role the police service becomes an agent of the establishment (the lawmakers) and will therefore naturally attract criticism from some quarters.

The FRS advises communities, across all ages and social classes, to alert them to the dangers of fire. We generally have no enforcement rights, neither would we wish to have them. So we have no powers to detain those we believe have transgressed. A crucial difference between our roles in society and how we are perceived. It would be to the detriment of all if that changed.

Erosion of public trust

This distinction is something our communities understand, and this difference needs to remain. To remove it could lead to conflict.

We will, without doubt, see the erosion of the public trust that firefighters rely upon daily when we need access to peoples’ homes if PCCs take over the fire service. Firefighters have enjoyed a higher profile in

their communities in recent years, leading to fewer attacks on firefighters – investigations by the FBU have shown that there were around 1,500 such incidents in England and Wales ten years ago. This figure has been cut in half largely, we believe, because of the increased presence of firefighters in their local communities.

A further worry for the FRS are the PCCs themselves. They are not obliged to display any competence for their role.

The Labour manifesto for the last election committed the party to abolishing PCCs as it saw no value in them and, aside from the Conservative Party, no other organisation defended PCCs when they were threatened with extinction.

Seeking credibility

The government, who have played fast and loose with the emergency services over the past six years, aims to give credibility to PCCs by handing over a popular, effective and well liked institution for them to “run”. They may well be looking forward to the adulation they hope will be heaped on them by their association with firefighters and the FRS.

Society needs law enforcement, a medical and a fire and emergency response, and these functions are carried out admirably by the three services working in collaboration, all facing distinct, but different pressing issues.

Instead of hawking half-baked ideas with money saving at their core, the government would do better to figure out how our emergency services can work together more effectively to defend our communities and keep everyone safe. ❖



About the author

Dave Green is the national officer for the Fire Brigades Union. Dave Green was a firefighter for more than 20 years with Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service. In 2010, he was elected to the position of national officer for the Fire Brigades Union.

The pillars of transformation in Dorset and Wiltshire

Vision, evidence and governance are vital to a successful transition when merging services. CFO **Darran Gunter** shares his experience of the recent Dorset and Wiltshire fire authority merger

On 1 April 2016 the two former Fire Authorities of Dorset and Wiltshire & Swindon Combined were dissolved and a new Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority was formed in their place. The decision to form a new Combined Fire Authority was made following full consideration of available transformation options and full diligence which began in 2012.

The two previous Fire and Rescue Services of Dorset and Wiltshire were very similar in terms of the number of stations (26 and 24), the rural geographical area and the high reliance on retained firefighters which on a 'pay as you go' system provided the most cost effective way of crewing over 85% of their respective front line fire engines.

Both services suffered from being within the lowest recipients of government grant per head of population and both had fire precept levels for a band D property below £65 pa and below the average for combined fire authorities.

A history of efficiency measures

During the period 2010-2014 both services had undertaken a range of efficiency measures to absorb grant reductions of over 22% whilst also protecting front line services.

With the forecast for future budget reductions and an anticipated annual budget deficit by 2019 of a further £3-4 million it was apparent that something significant, transformational and evidenced based

was required to protect already stretched and efficient frontline services.

In December 2013 both separate Fire Authorities agreed to explore a range of transformational options including a potential combination and new Fire and Rescue Authority.

'With an anticipated annual budget deficit by 2019 of £3-4m, it was apparent something transformational was required'

Subsequently a strategic options analysis was undertaken of available collaboration, integration and combination alternatives with a full range of public and emergency services. These included:

- Local Authority integration - Some Corporate functions could be joined up, but as both Services had already reduced most of them, the amount of savings that this option would make were savings of 930k and leave a remaining deficit of £1.37 million to £2.27 million for each Service. Not to be dismissed and is explored, but this would not deliver savings fast enough to ensure financial solvency and could mean reductions to front-line services.
- Police - It was estimated that this option would

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make savings of 915k and leave a remaining deficit of £1.385 million to £2.285 million for each Service. At the time this would have required changes in legislation and would not deliver savings fast enough to ensure financial solvency and again would mean reductions to front-line services.

- Ambulance service - As the Ambulance service is regional there would be very limited savings and leave a deficit of £2.3 million to £3.2 million and mean significant cuts to front-line services.
- Share FRS management teams – estimated savings of £930K and leave a deficit of £1.37 million to £2.27 million for each Service.

Independent consultation

In 2014 an 18 week independent consultation exercise was carried out, with the results indicating an overwhelming majority support for a combination of the two Authorities, and therefore services.

Whilst the analysis, consultation and decision making process preceded the current discussion associated to the Policing and Crime Bill, there is on reflection significant learning lessons as we move forward.

The starting point on any journey, particularly one so challenging and critical is an agreement about the destination or indeed importantly for the communities involved, the outcomes required from the journey. The eventual preference and decision on a new Governance arrangement in the form of a new Fire and Rescue Authority originated from a clearly agreed vision and key success metrics.

Financial pressures

The initial financial driver for greater efficiency also now provided a legitimate space for change to also include areas of wider effectiveness and reform. Our vision has broadened the role of the fire and rescue service and was underpinned by three pillars with criterion based measures associated to being safer, stronger and more sustainable. Being safer, stronger and more sustainable was an ambition and a measurement we defined both in terms of the service we provide to our communities, but more importantly

starting with the environment we provide to our staff. We were fortunate that this vision resonated with the award of one of the highest levels of transformation grant aimed at assisting our combination and providing a new state of the art multi agency safety centre. It is important to note that the recently published Thomas Review highlights both the im-

'The initial financial driver for efficiency also now provided a legitimate space for change to also include areas of wider effectiveness and reform'

portance of prevention (noting the Dorset Safewise centres as best practice) and the encouragement of service combination, promoting economies of scale from Fire/Fire combinations which do not exclude collaboration with others, but form a sound basis for efficiency.

Of course the requirement to consult in this type of decision is a given, particularly when communities in our constituent Authorities (Bournemouth, Dorset, Poole, Swindon and Wiltshire) were the key recipients of our Services and indeed these Authorities nominated elected members that provide a truly representative Fire and Rescue Authority. During early communication it became apparent of a flaw in the presentation of our options and that was the notion of binary distinct options. The strategic analysis, largely for reference and comparison had treated each option as separate, when in fact it is possible, desirable and proven in both previous Services that whilst the Combination provided the most efficient outcome, the new Service will continue to work with partners and emergency services. Early consideration of the perception and positioning of options is paramount both to staff and wider stakeholders. And of course the reference to the agreed success measures and vision will determine the best routes and partners for improved efficiency and effectiveness.

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Following the development and agreement of our vision, a better understanding of our options and public consultation, we then began to develop the most appropriate governance arrangements to support the new Fire and Rescue Service. Whilst there is myriad of

'Localising the scrutiny of delivery arrangements was driven by the diversity in demographics between rural Wiltshire and Swindon'

statutory requirements that shape governance functions, a key requirement for us was and continues to be a local focus on reducing community risk and partnership working. The issue of localising the scrutiny of local delivery arrangements was further driven by the significant diversity in demographics between rural Wiltshire and Swindon and similarly in the previous Dorset Fire and Rescue Service between Dorset and the conurbation of Bournemouth and Poole.

The development of 4 Local Performance and Scrutiny Committees now provides a more intense scrutiny of performance, provides alignment to local political and community boundaries and through the process of public meetings provides accountability and assurance to our communities. It is also an example of how whether by sector or geography it is possible to avoid any perception of performance drift.

Local focus

It is important to note that though the governance structure was a requirement to change, the outcomes of the service delivery to communities, working with other public service partners were the driver and the governance was developed as a result of what was needed – it is that focus which needs to come first, locally driven to be formed from evidence based demand and in the case of the Fire & Rescue services, it is not response demand alone, prevention need is where one starts and that is why the FRS

is highlighted as a public service with a recognised success performance – addressing early prevention across many other public service objectives.

Though a combined, truly combined Fire & Rescue Service, with a truly combined Governance structure resulted legally on 1 April 2016 when we became Dorset & Wiltshire Fire & Rescue, is significant, this is a marker of that success which is now enabling a rolling programme of reform and collaboration as other opportunities become increasingly achievable and others emerge. The combination of two similar services enable collaboration and create a longer term vision. ❖



About the author

Darran Gunter QFSM is the Chief Fire Officer of Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service. Darran was born in Blaina, South Wales and, at the age of 17, joined Gwent Fire Brigade in 1983 as a junior firefighter, becoming a fully operational member of the Brigade a year later. He remained at Gwent until 1989, leaving as a Crew Manager to join West Midlands Fire Service, where he went on to attain the rank of Station Manager.

In 1993, Darran went to the Fire Service College, firstly as an instructor in management and command and then as a programme manager responsible for a team developing new courses for incident management.

After three years at the College, Darran joined Devon Fire & Rescue Service as an Assistant Divisional Officer, initially in charge of their training department and later as Head of Strategic Planning.

In 2001, he moved to Dorset Fire and Rescue Service as Assistant Chief Fire Officer and was made Chief Fire Officer in September 2006.

Following the decision to combine with Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service in 2014, Darran was appointed as Chief Fire Officer (Designate) of the new Service.

He was awarded with the Queen's Fire Service Medal in June 2015.

A route to merger and deeper collaboration

Northamptonshire OPCC provides a checklist of the next steps on their journey to becoming the county's fire and rescue authority

History of collaboration

Police and Fire and Rescue in Northamptonshire have been working together since 2011, with further impetus added following the election for the first Police and Crime Commissioner in 2012. Areas of collaboration to date include:

- Shared headquarters – the Chief Fire Officer and team are based in Wootton Hall alongside the Police and Office of Police and Crime Commissioner
- Shared fuel supply and vehicle maintenance
- Shared training facilities and resources
- Shared stations – three to date in both retained and full-time fire stations in the county
- Combined emergency services cadet scheme
- Joint teams including Prevention and Community Protection Department and Joint Operations Team
- Shared vehicles – jointly crewed

Key Points on the Journey

- A shared vision for the future of the services across all partners (County Council, Police, Fire and Rescue and PCC)
- Regular and early engagement between partners
- Engagement with staff to help to prove the concept in key areas
- Bringing together staff in buildings and enabling

staff to develop areas of integration for themselves without mandating

Next Steps

- Development of an options appraisal on the options that the Government are bringing forward in the Policing and Crime Bill through to the end of 2016.
- If the options appraisal proves a case for change, develop a business case for consultation with key stakeholders and ultimately for submission to the Home Secretary in 2017.
- Develop the next stages of inter-operability within existing legislation including a focus on the next stages of a shared estate.

Benefits from integration

- More efficient and effective services to deliver a better quality of service to the public.
- Opportunities for learning from each organisation to the other and potential for a focus upstream on prevention rather than cure.
- Potentially a benefit from the joining up of strategic planning to ensure that both organisations are working to a common corporate vision
- Greater public transparency of fire and rescue costs and service delivery. ❖

Police and fire mergers and collaboration media links

Selected links to news, opinion, analysis and reports from mainstream and specialist media to provide context and insight

Links exported from Policing Insight's [Media Monitoring service](#)

Analysis

[The future of fire](#)

Reform Think Tank, 25/5/2016

[If PCCs are to take over the fire service, they need to prove these six things](#)

The Guardian, 19/5/2016

[A trip to the future? On patrol in a joint police and fire response car](#)

Ian Weinfass looked at what Northamptonshire's shared rural intervention vehicle does. *Police Oracle - Subscription at source, 1/9/2016*

Opinion

[Delivering locally and influencing nationally: how PCCs are shaping the criminal justice system](#)

Reform Think Tank, 5/10/2016

[Alarm bells should be ringing for firefighters Royston Martis says Home Secretary's 'appalling' speech picked on policing yet again](#)

Police Oracle - Subscription at source, 27/5/2016

[Adam Simmonds: Northamptonshire has shown the way with collaboration of the emergency services](#)

Conservative Home, 2/3/2016

[Police takeover would become an attack on pay and conditions](#)

Fire Brigades Union, 22/2/2016

[Are the emergency services better together or happier apart?](#)

The Independent, 11/1/2016

[Closer collaboration between emergency services](#)

Blog by Essex PCC Nick Alston, Essex OPCC, 12/10/2015

[By extending the remit of PCCs, the government is playing with fire](#)

The Conversation, 24/9/2015

[The real reason the Tories want to scrap fire and rescue authorities](#)

The government has embarked on a scorched earth strategy in its attempt to impose cuts: if you can't beat them, abolish them *The Guardian, 16/9/2015*

[In Cornwall, we refuse to give up our fire service to the PCC](#)

The council is in a much better position to control fire and rescue than the cash-strapped and less popular police and crime commissioner - Geoff Brown Cabinet member for communities, Cornwall council. *The Guardian, 15/9/2015*

[Fire service can "complement" the police](#)

The Government is to bring forward legislation which will allow police and crime commissioners (PCCs) to take control of fire and rescue services in their area. *Police Professional, 24/8/2015*

Reports

[Update on Enhancing Collaboration between Durham Constabulary and Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service](#)

To update the Police and Crime Panel on work to enhance collaboration between the Police and Fire and Rescue Services. *Durham OPCC, 1/11/2016*

[Speech: Police and Fire Minister at CFOA conference](#)

Minister for Policing and the Fire Service, Brandon Lewis, addresses audience at the 2016 Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) conference. Includes "The government will be bringing forward an amendment to the Policing and Crime Bill at tomorrow's Lords Committee stage to change the name of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) who take on responsibility for fire and rescue to 'Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner' and change the name of the corresponding police and crime panel to 'Police, Fire and Crime Panel.'" *Home Office, 15/9/2016*

[Fire Minister Brandon Lewis speaks at Fire Sector Summit 2016](#)

Home Office, 19/10/2016

In the media

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Reports (continued)

[Amber Rudd, Home Secretary: Speech to Conservative Party Conference](#)

Conservatives.com, 5/10/2016

[Policing Minister's speech to PSAEW Conference 2016](#)

Policing Minister Brandon Lewis' speech to the Police Superintendents Association Conference 2016 *Police Superintendents' Association of England and Wales (PSAEW) 6/9/2016*

[Essex PCC's Police and Fire Collaboration Report](#)

In his election Manifesto, the PCC set out his ambition for greater collaboration between Essex Police and ECFRS. Now in post, he has committed to move at pace with the development of a local business case. *Essex OPCC, 22/7/2016*

[Policing and Crime Bill Emergency Services Collaboration: Overview of Part 1 of the Bill](#)

The Home Office, Department for Communities and Local Government and the Department of Health jointly launched a public consultation on 11 September 2015. The response is set out in this report. *Wiltshire OPCC, 12/6/2016*

[Policing and Crime Bill: Emergency Services Collaboration: Background](#)

There are ten regional ambulance trusts which provide ambulance services in England, five of which are currently foundation trusts. *Wiltshire OPCC, 12/6/2016*

[CFOA responds to Government's fire reform announcement](#)

Chief Fire Officers' Association (CFOA), 24/5/2016

[Home Secretary speech on fire reform](#)

Home Office, 24/5/2016

[Legislation to allow PCCs to take responsibility for their local fire service](#)

gov.uk, 26/1/2016

[The State of the State 2015-16: Recalibrating Government](#)

Includes relevant policing material relating to finances, and to merger and collaboration. *Deloitte, 15/10/2015*

[Integrating public services in Greater Manchester](#)

Presentation by ACC Rebekah Sutcliffe, Greater Manchester Police. *Excellence in Policing (EIP) 2015, 29/9/2015*

[Consultation: Enabling closer working between the Emergency Services](#)

Consultation on proposals to increase joint working between emergency services to improve effectiveness and deliver savings for the public. *Home Office, UK Government, 11/9/2015*

News

[Fire, police and ambulance now all under one roof in Rushden](#)

Officers from the three emergency services are all operating from the same premises for the first time in the county. *Northamptonshire Telegraph, 29/10/2016*

[£524k project to create new base for fire and police at Felixstowe under way](#)

Work has started on the latest joint police and fire service base in Suffolk following a "ground breaking" ceremony yesterday. *East Anglian Daily Times, 25/10/2016*

[Dual role for police and firefighters](#)

Fire Magazine, 22/10/2016

[Two Shropshire PCSOs become retained firefighters as part of new dual role initiative](#)

A "groundbreaking" initiative to train Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) as firefighters in more rural areas will help keep fire engines "on the run" says Shropshire's fire chief. *Shropshire Live, 20/10/2016*

[Police could share a base with other 999 crews at 22 sites around North Yorkshire](#)

Police chiefs in North Yorkshire are considering as many as 22 sites around the county where officers could share a base with fire service and ambulance crews as part of plans to save money and modernise the service. *The Yorkshire Post, 19/10/2016*

[Collaboration plans for police and fire service](#)

Hampshire and Isle of Wight fire authorities and Hampshire Constabulary, along with police and crime commissioner Michael Lane, are looking into emergency service collaboration. *Isle of Wight County Press, 19/10/2016*

[Construction begins on £23m Police and Fire Communications Centre](#)

Situated at the West Mercia Police Headquarters at Hindlip Hall, Worcester, the state-of-the-art Police and Fire Operations Communications Centre (OCC) will provide more effective responses to incidents for Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin. *Worcester Observer, 7/10/2016*

[Julia Mulligan says North Yorkshire Police and North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue](#)

Service could be jointly led North Yorkshire's Police and Crime Commissioner, Julia Mulligan, says she could oversee and direct Chief Constable Dave Jones and Chief Fire Officer Nigel Hutchinson, through what she called "one overarching strategy delivered and monitored through one governance mechanism. *The Press (York), 6/10/2016*

In the media

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News (continued)

Cheshire merger with fire and rescue is going ahead despite reports

After a lengthy review the plans for Cheshire Fire and Rescue to move into the Cheshire Police HQ will go ahead but firefighter training will remain at its current location.

Police Oracle - Subscription at source, 4/10/2016

Cheshire merger with fire and rescue scrapped

After a lengthy review the plans for Cheshire Fire and Rescue to move into the Cheshire Police HQ have been scrapped.

Police Oracle - Subscription at source, 3/10/2016

Cheshire police and fire HQ sell-off plan is shelved

Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service has shelved plans to sell off its base in Winsford and move into the county's police headquarters.

BBC, 29/9/2016

No bigger issue on my agenda than collaboration between emergency services, policing minister says

But Brandon Lewis still says it is up to PCCs whether or not they take over fire services

Police Oracle - Subscription at source, 16/9/2016

Police and Crime Commissioner gives his backing for Blue Light Collaboration Project

In a bid to improve frontline services and strengthen partnerships, Lincolnshire Police, Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue, East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS), the Police and Crime Commissioner and Lincolnshire County Council will all work together to deliver the Blue Light Collaboration project.

Louth Leader, 26/7/2016

Collaboration 'essential' to locally-driven reform, says Policing Minister

Policing Minister Brandon Lewis has used his first speech before the Police Superintendents' Association of England and Wales' conference to encourage further blue-light collaboration.

Police Professional, 6/9/2016

Why the West Midlands Mayor should not be impotent and weak

Government may withdraw devolution deal if we allow metro mayor to be smothered by council leaders and bureaucrats says police commissioner David Jamieson.

Birmingham Post, 4/8/2016

Avon Fire and Rescue Service set to relocate to police headquarters in Portishead

Following an agreement between fire and police services, Avon Fire and Rescue Service will be moving into police headquarters in Portishead.

Gazette (Yate and Sodbury), 2/8/2016

PCC takes first steps towards further police and fire cooperation

Essex may become the first area in England and Wales to bring police and fire services under the control of the police and crime commissioner.

Police Professional, 28/7/2016

New blue-light collaboration between Lincolnshire emergency services backed by police chief

Sleaford Standard, 27/7/2016

No fire service takeover here, pledges PCC

Police Oracle - Subscription at source, 20/7/2016

Elected police chief does not want power over fire service

Leicester Mercury, 20/7/2016

New police minister appointed

Former council leader takes on responsibility for two blue light services while Mike Penning gets MOD role.

Police Oracle - Subscription at source, 19/7/2016

New police minister named

The Prime Minister has begun replacing the entire ministerial team at the Home Office with the appointment of a barrister as Minister of State for Police and Fire.

Police Professional, 16/7/2016

Firefighters and police working closer together can offer 'real benefits to residents'

Essex's Police and Crime Commissioner hopes to explore how police officers and firefighters will work closer together to keep people safe.

Echo (Essex), 12/7/2016

Police and Crime Commissioner Jason Ablewhite pitches last-minute collaboration between fire and police service

The county's fire service could collaborate with Cambridgeshire Constabulary in a last minute move by newly-elected Police and Crime Commissioner, Jason Ablewhite.

Wisbech Standard, 4/7/2016

Joint vehicle maintenance centre to save police time and money

A new transport centre which will see police and fire vehicles repaired and serviced in the same location is set to save more than £700,000 a year, according to a police and crime commissioner.

Police Oracle - Subscription at source, 28/6/2016

The Fire Service needs 'radical' reform - Chief Fire and Rescue Advisor at FIREX 2016

Peter Holland CBE, the Home Office's Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser (CFRA) has pledged to improve transparency, diversity and value-for-money during an address at the FIRE exhibition in London.

IFSEC Global, 22/6/2016

In the media

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News (continued)

Capitals emergency services could share one control room

Sir Bernard Hogan Howe said it is better to have more working together than less. *Police Oracle - Subscription at source, 7/7/2016*

999 services to merge in cost-cutting bid

Under radical new plans being spearheaded by the government, police, paramedics and firefighters will work much more closely together to deal with emergencies. *Weekly News (Brentwood), 19/6/2016*

Avon and Somerset Police to end Southwest One contract

Avon and Somerset Police will not be renewing its contract with the joint venture company Southwest One, the BBC has learned. A 10-year-long deal is due to end in June 2018, and chief constable Andy Marsh confirmed he had "given notice" that the contract will not be renewed. Instead he said he wants to work with neighbouring police and fire services. Southwest One, which is 75% owned by IBM, carries out administrative, IT and human resources tasks for the force. *BBC, 16/6/2016*

State-of-the-art station for police and fire service officially opened

The chair of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority has officially opened the Tywyn Fire and Police Station this month. *Cambrian News, 13/6/2016*

Approval for £15m Lincolnshire emergency services plan

Plans for a £15m plan to increase collaboration between Lincolnshire's emergency services have been approved. The proposals are for a joint control centre and combined fire, police and ambulance stations - dubbed a "blue-light campus". *BBC, 8/6/2016*

Council approves plans for police, fire and ambulance joint HQ

County councillors have approved plans to radically re-organise emergency services in Lincoln by forming a joint headquarters for the police, fire and ambulance services. *Lincolnshire Echo, 7/6/2016*

Police and fire services to explore closer working and save £4m

Further exploration of closer working between police and fire services in North Yorkshire could save £4m. *The Press (York), 6/6/2016*

Sussex Police could take over Sussex fire service under new proposal

The woman in charge of running Sussex Police has outlined her plans to take over the East Sussex and West Sussex fire services. *Crawley News, 2/6/2016*

Major step forward for Blue Light Collaboration

Lincolnshire Police, 7/6/2016

Emergency services announce £7.5 million collaborative programme

A £7.5 million collaboration, which will see blue-light services centralised and shared more across the county has been announced. *Boston Standard, 1/6/2016*

Another step closer for emergency services collaboration in Lincolnshire

In a bid to improve frontline services and strengthen partnerships between the emergency services in the county, the partners, including Lincolnshire Police, Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue, East Midlands Ambulance Service, the Police and Crime Commissioner and Lincolnshire County Council, today put forward to the committee a collaboration programme *Lincolnshire Police, 1/6/2016*

Plans to put PCC in control of West Sussex fire service an 'unneeded distraction'

Plans to put Sussex's Police and Crime Commissioner in charge of fire and rescue services is a 'distraction we don't need', according to the leader of the county council. *Chichester Observer, 31/5/2016*

FBU leader questions Home Secretary's plans

The leader of the Fire Brigade's Union in North Yorkshire has spoken out against the Home Secretary's claims about the service. *The Press (York), 31/5/2016*

Home Secretary sets out radical fire and rescue reform programme

Home Office, 24/5/2016

Home Secretary points changing fire and rescue service to 'protect and save' mantra of police reform

The Home Secretary is ready to use her policing reform model to drive a culture of change through a radical shake-up of fire and rescue. *Police Professional, 26/5/2016*

'Historic' agreement between three forces and fire services

Police Oracle - Subscription at source, 25/5/2016

Theresa May: Fire chiefs are 'eroding public confidence' and undermining respect for their position

The Telegraph - Registration at source, 25/5/2016

Plans for Essex police and fire merger to be drawn up by new commissioner

Plans to bring the police and fire services in Essex together will be drawn up in the next 100 days under the new Police and Crime Commissioner. *East Anglian Daily Times, 9/5/2016*

In the media

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News (continued)

Steps taken to solve Hampshire police pay problems

Work to begin fixing Hampshire police's payroll service has been labelled a "light at the end of the tunnel" for officers. A string of damning errors have taken place since the police force, Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service and the county council combined their back office services to save money in 2014. *Basingstoke Observer*, 9/5/2016

Cambridgeshire's PCC candidates split over controlling the fire service

Cambridge News, 3/5/2016

Labour loses Commons votes as Burnham warns 'not time to throw fire in with police'

Labour failed in a House of Commons bid to block controversial Government plans to merge police and fire services. *Police Professional*, 26/4/2016

Labour to force Commons vote over plans to merge fire and police services

Labour will force a vote in the Commons today aimed at blocking controversial Government plans to merge fire and police services. The party said its move comes as new figures show a rise in fire deaths, warning that budget cuts to the Fire and Rescue Service have gone too far. *BT.com*, 26/4/2016

Fire deaths rise by 21% as chiefs issue cuts warning

Heads of six large city fire services worried by sharp rise in annual deaths amid political row over role of police commissioners. *The Guardian*, 26/4/2016

Minister backs fire role for Yorkshire PCCs

Yorkshire Post, 23/4/2016

Police and Fire Service Collaboration

National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC), 21/4/2016

Cambridgeshire PCC hopeful Jason Ablewhite wants joint police and fire HQ

Cambridge News, 21/4/2016

Row over fire and police mergers

There has been a call for a proposed merger between North Yorkshire and a neighbouring fire services to be abandoned in favour of more collaboration with police. *The Northern Echo*, 19/4/2016

HMIC: More work needed on emergency service cooperation

How the police, fire and ambulance services work together during major incidents is "highly inconsistent", according to a new report. *Police Professional*, 12/4/2016

Theresa May reveals 'radical reform' of fire services in England

BBC, 24/5/2016

PCC wants to merge police and fire services

Peterborough Telegraph, 28/5/2016

Hundreds of police staff jobs to go in South Yorkshire by 2020

More than 700 police staff jobs are to be lost in South Yorkshire in the next four years, a report has revealed. *The Star (Yorkshire)*, 5/4/2016

Fire chiefs could run police in 'dangerous move'

Sky News, 26/1/2016

Emergency services 'should share control rooms'

BBC, 26/1/2016

Vera Baird backs call to stop merging of police and fire services

Chronicle Live (North East), 15/1/2016

PCSOs being trained as firefighters will be paid annual retainers

Police Oracle - Subscription at source, 12/1/2016

Home Office takes control of fire and rescue services

BBC, 6/1/2016

Fire and rescue policy to move to the Home Office

gov.uk, 6/1/2016

Plans for PCCs to oversee fire services 'dangerous'

BBC, 19/12/2015

Theresa May announces major fire service shake up

The Telegraph - Registration at source, 19/12/2015

Cheshire police and fire HQs merger approved

BBC, 10/12/2015

Police make fire HQ switch

Basingstoke Observer, 21/11/2015

Police forces should work with fire brigades, MP says

Police Oracle - Subscription at source, 4/11/2015

Are Sussex Tories 'at war' over plans to transfer fire authorities to PCCs?

Worthing Herald, 14/10/2015

You aren't giving the PCC my job, says fire chief

Worcester News, 12/10/2015

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News (continued)

Cheshire police and fire HQs plan to merge

Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service has announced plans to sell off its base in Winsford and merge with the county's police headquarters. *BBC*, 21/9/2015

Derbyshire Alan Charles raised 'some concerns' over fire service plans

Concerns have been raised over the suggestion that police and crime commissioners could take over the running of the fire service. *Burton Mail*, 18/9/2015

PCC hits out over suggestions that fire chief could run police

Proposals that could see the chief fire officer running Thames Valley Police have been criticised by the police and crime commissioner (PCC). *Oxford Mail*, 17/9/2015

Police commissioner reluctant to take on powers from fire and rescue services

Warwickshire Police and Crime Commissioner Ron Ball says he has no desire to take on powers and responsibilities for fire and rescue services within the county. *Herald (Stratford-upon-Avon)*, 16/9/2015

Police commissioner backs elected mayor to drive region forward

Labour commissioner David Jamieson says he would hand over policing to a Boris Johnson-style mayor, but rules himself out of the job. *Birmingham Mail*, 15/9/2015

Plans to merge parts of Northamptonshire police and fire services

Plans to merge parts of the police and fire service have been welcomed by Northamptonshire's Police and Crime Commissioner Adam Simmonds. *ITV News*, 15/9/2015

PCC welcomes chance to consider taking over fire services

Sussex PCC Katy Bourne says emergency services are already working more closely together. *The Argus*, 15/9/2015

Blue light merger: Regional council asks about taking control of policing

A local authority is ready to take control of policing in a "reverse coup" against controversial Government reforms to bring in new laws for collaboration between emergency services. *Police Professional*, 14/9/2015

Norfolk police and crime commissioner welcomes government fire service proposals

Eastern Daily Press, 14/9/2015

Police and fire services set to merge in radical shake up of emergency services

Fire chiefs with no policing experience could run forces under Home Office proposals *The Telegraph*, 11/9/2015

PCCs could take control of England's fire services

BBC, 11/9/2015

Prime Minister: my vision for a 'smarter state'

PM speech including on "reforms that will enable police, fire, ambulance services to work more closely together to save money and improve effectiveness" *gov.uk*, 11/9/2015

Fire fighters could become chief constables

Raft of new ideas unveiled by government including statutory duty for more blue light collaboration. *Police Oracle - Subscription at source*, 11/9/2015

David Cameron promises fresh shakeup of public services

Will pledge to introduce legislation to allow the three emergency services – fire, police and ambulance services – to combine back office functions and IT. *The Guardian*, 11/9/2015

College response to Home Office consultation on blue light collaborations

College of Policing, 10/9/2015

Home Secretary warns over reduced police budgets

Theresa May to give chief constables much greater flexibility in redistributing tasks currently performed by police officers as forces prepare for new spending cuts. *The Guardian*, 9/9/2015

Home Secretary's Police Superintendents' 2015 speech: transcript

9/9/2015

Home Office plans for PCC fire powers face Cornish resistance

Strongest opposition in fiercely independent areas amid warning changes could harm 'excellence'. *Police Oracle - Subscription at source*, 2/9/2015

Police crime commissioner keen to take control of fire service

Kevin Hurley has written to the government asking for Surrey to be included in a pilot programme for the take-over of local fire services. *Get Surrey*, 1/9/2015

Dyfed-Powys Police Commissioner accused of craving further power by Fire

Authority chairman The Chairman of the Mid and West Wales Fire Authority has expressed 'surprise and alarm' at comments made by a police boss who said the work of the authority should fall under his control. *Western Telegraph*, 24/8/2015

In the media

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News (continued)

Plans for PCCs to take over fire services moving closer

Government confirms it will implement legislation to help leaders join up services. *Police Oracle - Subscription at source* 20/8/2015

Union anger at plans for police to 'take over' local fire brigades

PCCs to be given the right to take control under government plans to be announced next month *The Times - Subscription at source*, 20/8/2015

New combined police and fire bases

Police Oracle - Subscription at source, 3/8/2015

Police-Fire collaboration committee created in Merseyside

Merseyside OPCC, 18/7/2015

New joint centre on Portland for police and fire services to be unveiled

Dorset Echo, 3/6/2015

Joint police & fire station is opened in Woodbridge

East Anglian Daily Times, 20/5/2015

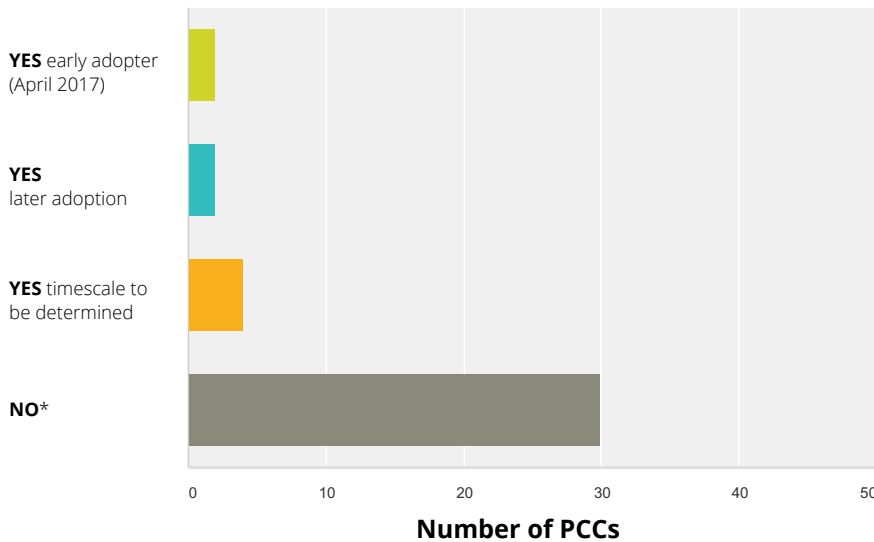
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Appendix I : CoPaCC Survey Responses

Q1: Is the PCC looking to take forward the provision of the Policing and Crime Bill (part 1, chapter 2, section 6) for the PCC of an area to be the Fire and Rescue Authority for that area?

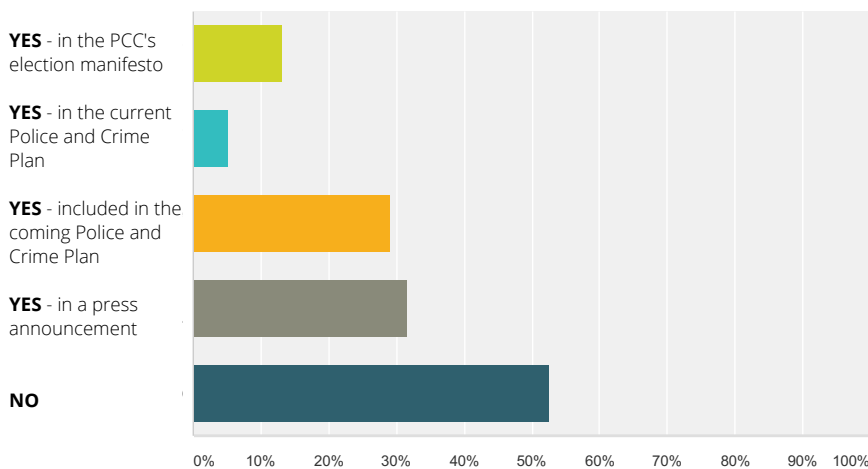


Answer	Responses
YES early adopter (April 2017)	5.26% 2
YES later adoption	5.26% 2
YES timescale to be determined	10.53% 4
NO*	78.95% 30
Total	38

*The 'NO' responses include those who are undecided. Further feedback from PCCs following the survey identified 11 who were 'undecided' and 15 who were 'NO'. The remaining 4 PCC's represent the Welsh forces where merger is not possible due to fire powers being devolved to the Welsh Assembly.

Two OPCCs, North Yorkshire and Northumbria did not respond to the survey. London and Greater Manchester were not approached due to their devolved powers.

Q2: Has the PCC announced any plans for the fire and rescue service?



Answer	Responses
YES - in the PCC's election manifesto	13.16% 5
YES - in the current Police and Crime Plan	5.26% 2
YES - to be included in the forthcoming Police and Crime Plan	28.95% 11
YES - in a press announcement	31.58% 12
NO	52.63% 20

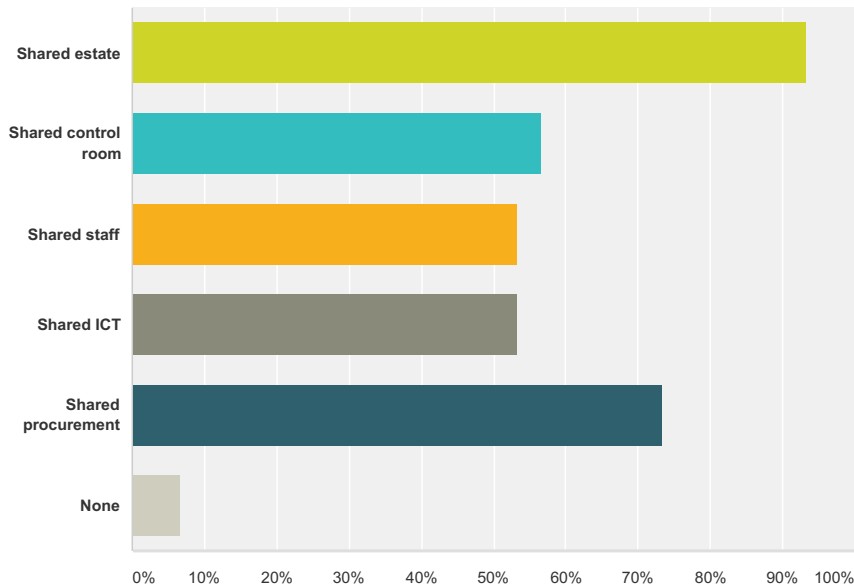
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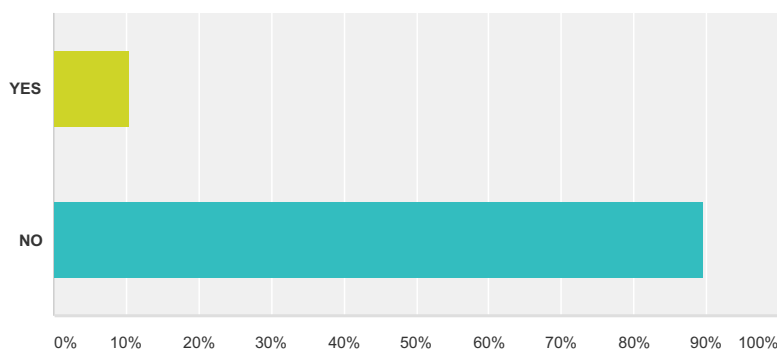
Appendix I : CoPaCC Survey Responses

Q3: What specific collaboration outcomes does the PCC support?



Answer	Responses
Shared estate	93.33% 28
Shared control room	56.67% 17
Shared staff	53.33% 16
Shared ICT	53.33% 16
Shared procurement	73.33% 22
None	6.67% 2

Q4: Does the PCC have a seat on the Fire and Rescue Authority?



Answer	Responses
Yes	10.53% 4
No	89.47% 34
Total	38

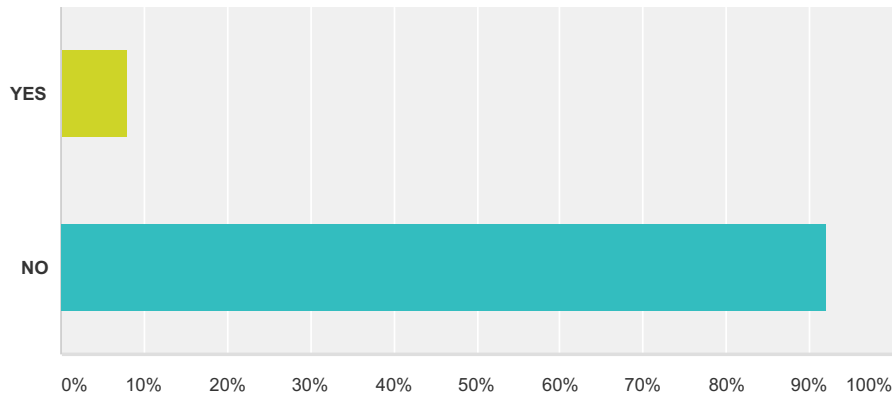
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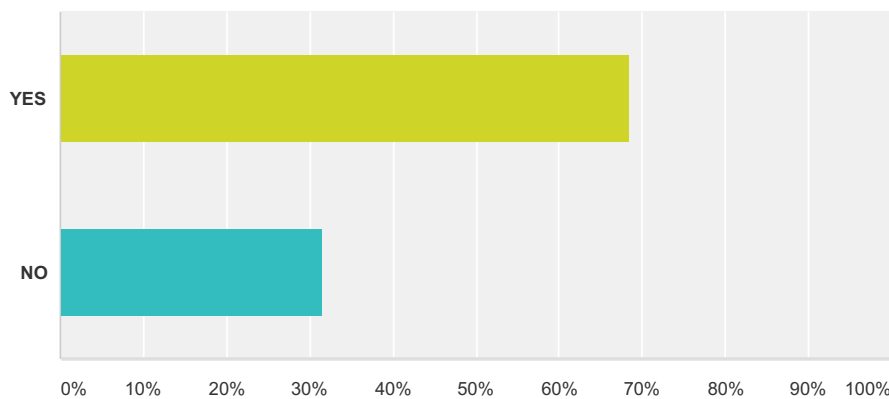
Appendix I : CoPaCC Survey Responses

Q5: Does the PCC invite the Chair or other member of the Fire and Rescue Authority to sit on the Police and Crime Panel?



Answer	Responses
Yes	10.53% 4
No	89.47% 34
Total	38

Q6: Has the PCC discussed governance proposals contained in the Policing and Crime Bill with the Chief Fire Officer or the Fire and Rescue Authority?



Answer	Responses
Yes	7.89% 3
No	92.11% 35
Total	38

Appendices

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Appendix II: Table showing OPCC intentions for merging Police and Fire governance

- Stated intention to merge
- Some support but also some barriers
- Devolved powers so not applicable
- No intention to merge

London

UK Fire services	Police forces	Current fire governance	OPCC Intentions (from CoPaCC Survey)	New PCC?	PCC Political Party
London Fire Brigade	Metropolitan Police	Greater London Authority	Devolved powers so not applicable		

East Midlands

Generally no appetite in the East Midlands for merging Police and Fire governance at this time with the notable exception of Northamptonshire OPCC who are stated early adopters

Derbyshire	Derbyshire Constabulary	Combined fire authority	No plans/support for mergers	NEW	Labour
Leicestershire	Leicestershire Police	Combined fire authority	No plans/support for mergers	NEW	Labour
Lincolnshire	Lincolnshire Police	FRS embedded in County Council	No plans/support for mergers	NEW	Conservative
Nottinghamshire	Nottinghamshire Police	Combined fire authority	No plans/support for mergers		Labour
Northamptonshire	Northamptonshire Police	FRS embedded in County Council	Yes - early adopter (April 2017)	NEW	Conservative

West Midlands

OPCCs are undecided in the West Midlands region with exception of Staffordshire who intend to merge Police and Fire in the future.

Hereford and Worcester	West Mercia Police	Combined fire authority	No plans but will explore if collaboration doesn't evolve		Conservative
Shropshire	West Mercia Police	Combined fire authority	No plans but will explore if collaboration doesn't evolve		Conservative
Staffordshire	Staffordshire Police	Combined fire authority	Yes - timescales tbc		Conservative
Warwickshire	Warwickshire Police	FRS embedded in County Council	No plans / undecided on support		Conservative
West Midlands	West Midlands Police	Joint fire authorities	Undecided - but part of future governance working group		Labour

Yorkshire & Humberside Region

Very little support for Police and Fire mergers in the Yorkshire and Humberside region.

Humberside	Humberside Police	Combined fire authority	No plans/support for mergers	NEW	Labour
North Yorkshire	North Yorkshire Police	Combined fire authority	NO RESPONSE but positive public statement by PCC (6th Oct)		Conservative
South Yorkshire	South Yorkshire Police	Joint fire authorities	No plans/support for mergers		Labour
West Yorkshire	West Yorkshire Police	Joint fire authorities	No plans/support for mergers		Labour

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Appendix II: Table showing OPCC intentions for merging Police and Fire governance

South Western Region

The region provides a challenge for any merger of Police and Fire governance with non-aligned boundaries a particular obstacle. Despite this Devon & Cornwall OPCC has made clear it's intention to take on fire powers.

UK Fire services	Police forces	Current fire governance	OPCC Intentions (from CoPaCC Survey)	New PCC?	PCC Political Party
Avon	Avon & Somerset	Combined fire authority	No plans - Supports mergers but only with FRS agreement		Independent
Cornwall	Devon & Cornwall	FRS part of Unitary authority	Yes - later adoption (2 years)	NEW	Conservative
Devon & Somerset	Avon & Somerset / Devon & Cornwall	Combined fire authority	See above		Independent/Conservative
Dorset & Wiltshire	Dorset Police / Wiltshire Police	Combined fire authority	Dorset PCC has no plans due to unaligned boundaries / Wiltshire PCC undecided		Independent/Conservative
Gloucestershire	Gloucestershire	FRS embedded in County Council	No plans/support for mergers		Independent

South Eastern Region

The main challenge in the South Eastern region is to combine 2 or more fire authorities under a single PCC. Thames Valley OPCC is keen to take this route.

Buckinghamshire	Thames Valley Police	Combined fire authority	Yes - timescales tbc		Conservative
Oxfordshire	Thames Valley Police	FRS embedded in County Council	Yes - timescales tbc		Conservative
Royal Berkshire	Thames Valley Police	Combined fire authority	Yes - timescales tbc		Conservative
Surrey	Surrey Police	FRS embedded in County Council	Undecided	NEW	Conservative
Hampshire	Hampshire Constabulary	Combined fire authority	Undecided - being explored	NEW	Conservative
Isle of Wight	Hampshire Constabulary	FRS part of Unitary authority	Undecided - being explored	NEW	Conservative
East Sussex	Sussex Police	Combined fire authority	Undecided - business case being explored - PCC positive in press		Conservative
West Sussex	Sussex Police	FRS embedded in County Council	Undecided - business case being explored - PCC positive in press		Conservative
Kent	Kent Police	Combined fire authority	No plans/support for mergers	NEW	Conservative

Eastern Region

Police and Fire service boundaries are aligned in the Eastern region and 4 OPCCs embracing mergers including Essex as an early adopter

Bedfordshire	Bedfordshire Police	Combined fire authority	No plans unless becomes a statutory duty	NEW	Conservative
Cambridgeshire	Cambridgeshire Police	Combined fire authority	Yes - timescale tbc but likely Oct 2017	NEW	Conservative
Essex	Essex Police	Combined fire authority	Yes - early adopter (April 2017)	NEW	Conservative
Hertfordshire	Hertfordshire Police	FRS embedded in County Council	Yes if business case right - timescales tbc		Conservative
Norfolk	Norfolk Police	FRS embedded in County Council	Yes - later adoption	NEW	Conservative
Suffolk	Suffolk Police	FRS embedded in County Council	Undecided - to be explored		Conservative

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Appendix II: Table showing OPCC intentions for merging Police and Fire governance

North Western region

OPCCs are generally undecided on Police and Fire mergers in the North West.

UK Fire services	Police forces	Current fire governance	OPCC Intentions (from CoPaCC Survey)	New PCC?	PCC Political Party
Cheshire	Cheshire Constabulary	Combined fire authority	No plans/support for mergers	NEW	Labour
Cumbria	Cumbria Police	FRS embedded in County Council	Undecided	NEW	Conservative
Merseyside	Merseyside Police	Joint fire authorities	Undecided - subject to business case		Labour
Lancashire	Lancashire Constabulary	Combined fire authority	Undecided		Labour
Greater Manchester	Greater Manchester Police	Joint fire authorities	Devolved powers so not applicable		
Isle of Man	Isle of Man Police	Isle of Man Government	Devolved powers so not applicable		
Northern Ireland	Police Service of Northern Ireland	Devolved fire powers to NI Executive	Devolved powers so not applicable		

North Eastern region

There is no support in the North Eastern region for Police and Fire mergers

Cleveland	Cleveland Police	Combined fire authority	No plans/support for mergers		Labour
Durham	Durham Constabulary	Combined fire authority	No plans/support for mergers		Labour
Northumberland	Northumbria Police	FRS part of Unitary authority	NO RESPONSE - but very negative public statements by PCC		Labour
Tyne and Wear	Northumbria Police	Joint fire authorities	NO RESPONSE - but very negative public statements by PCC		Labour

Wales and Scotland

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	Police Scotland	Devolved powers to Scottish Government	Devolved powers so not applicable		
Mid and West Wales	Gwent Police / Dyfed-Powys Police	Devolved fire powers to Welsh Assembly	Devolved powers so not applicable		
North Wales	North Wales Police	Devolved fire powers to Welsh Assembly	Devolved powers so not applicable		
South Wales	South Wales Police	Devolved fire powers to Welsh Assembly	Devolved powers so not applicable		

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Appendix III: Fire and Rescue Authority governance and location (March 2015)



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Appendix III: Governance structure for fire and rescue and geographical location (as of March 2015)

	Local Authority	Membership	Funding Route
County (11)	Fire and rescue services are part of the County Council.	One of the County Council members is portfolio holder for fire and rescue.	Funding to the county but not clearly identified and not ring-fenced, council sets the budget of the fire and rescue service. No separate fire precept.
Unitary (4)	Fire and rescue services are part of the Unitary authority	Various, set out in legislation.	
Combined (24)	A stand-alone authority covering pre-1992 county council areas, including a combination of residual county councils, district councils and unitary authorities.	Maximum 25 elected members nominated from constituent authorities.	
Metropolitan (6)	A stand-alone authority covering the area a number of Unitary Authorities within the Metropolitan Counties set out in 1974.	Membership is set out in Local Government Act 1985, which specifies numbers from each constituent council.	Funding direct from central government, plus precept across constituent authorities.
London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (1)	A stand-alone authority including emergency planning, covering 31 London Boroughs plus City Corporation.	17 elected representatives plus 2 Mayoral appointees.	Separately identified, but funding to the Greater London Assembly is non-ring fenced. The GLA then set the budget requirement for LFEPA. No separate fire precept.

Appendices

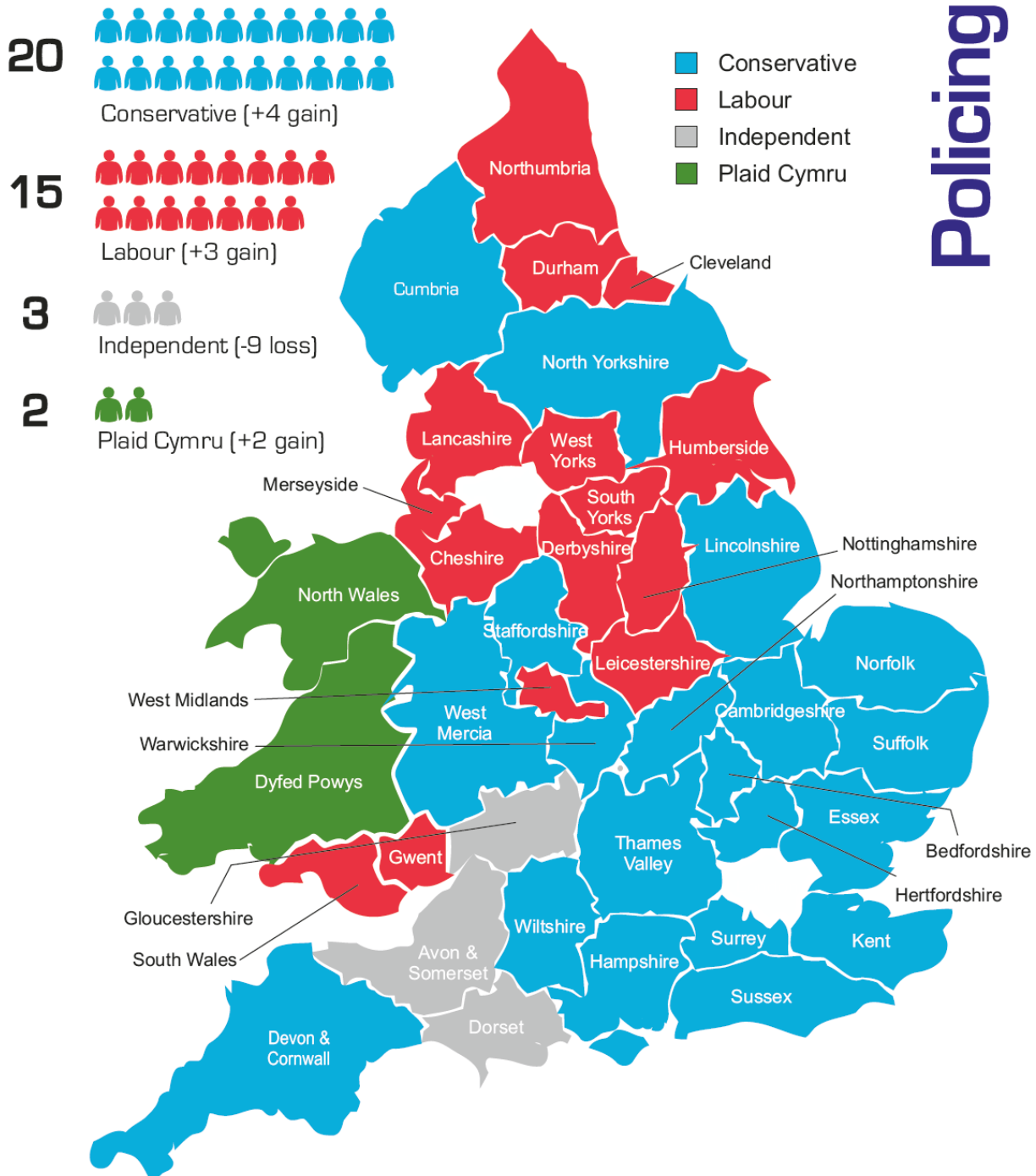
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Appendix III: Map of PCC political affiliation

Police and Crime Commissioner Election Results 2016

Note: PCC elections were not held in London or Greater Manchester, where elected Mayors (or an appointed deputy) also fulfil the role of PCC



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