

Essex Fire Authority

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service



MEETING

AGENDA ITEM

Essex Fire Authority

10

MEETING DATE

28/06/2017

REPORT NUMBER

EFA/082/17

SUBJECT

Local Business Case for Joint Governance of Police and Fire & Rescue in Essex – Update

REPORT BY

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

PRESENTED BY

Acting Chief Fire Officer – Adam Eckley

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This paper updates the Essex Fire Authority on progress made in relation to the local business case for joint governance of Police and Fire & Rescue Services in Essex.

2. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Essex Fire Authority members:

- Note the results of the Police and Crime Commissioner's public consultation in relation to joint governance of Police and Fire & Rescue Services in Essex;
- Note the final version of Local Business Case for Joint Governance of Police and Fire & Rescue in Essex which was submitted to the Home Office on the 19th May 2017; and
- Note the proposed transition activities which will need to be undertaken prior to the 1st October 2017.

3. RESULTS OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The Policing and Crime Act 2017 stipulates that the Police and Crime Commissioner must consult the top tier local authorities and the public on the Local Business Case before submission to the Home Secretary for a decision. The Local Business Case assesses the options, as set out in the Act, for changes to governance of the Fire Service.

The Police and Crime Commissioner undertook a 12 week consultation with the public, top tier local authorities, police and fire & rescue staff and wider stakeholders from the 16th February to the 10th May 2017. During this consultation period a large range of engagement activities took place to obtain the views of as many stakeholders and

members of the public as possible. The highlights of the results of public consultation are as follows:

- A letter was received from Thurrock Council in support of the Joint Governance option.
- A letter was received from Southend-on-Sea Borough Council in support of the Joint Governance option.
- A letter was received from Essex County Council in support of the Joint Governance option.
- Three letters were received signed by 17 MPs of Essex in support for the joint Governance option.
- There were 1,708 individual responses received from members of the public through the consultation survey.
- The consultation results show that the joint governance option scored the highest in terms of potential benefits and ease of delivery.
- The Police and Crime Commissioner engaged the services of the Consultation Institute who provided independent expertise, advice and quality assurance on the consultation process, ensuring that it was equitable, accessible and delivered to a high standard. The Institute has confirmed that the consultation is consistent with industry good practice standards.

Further details of the results of the consultation can be found in Appendix F of the Local Business Case.

4. LOCAL BUSINESS CASE

The Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner has reviewed all feedback gathered during the consultation phase and collated it into the final version of the Local Business case, which was submitted to the Home Secretary on the 19th May 2017. The final documentation is available to on the Police and Crime Commissioner's website:

<http://www.essex.pcc.police.uk/localcaseforchange>

The Home Office had advised that if they received the final Local Business Case by the 19th May, they would be able to review it and, subject to agreement by the Home Secretary, produce the necessary Statutory Instruments for a 1st October 2017 commencement date. This is subject to the outcome of the forthcoming General Election.

5. TRANSITION ACTIVITY

In advance of a decision by the Home Office, the Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner has commenced initial work in planning for the transition. This work reports into the Emergency Services Strategic Governance Board which is chaired by the Police and Crime Commissioner and includes the Chair of the Fire Authority, the Acting Chief Fire Officer and the Chief Constable. The transition planning is being undertaken in close discussion and liaison with senior officers from the Essex Fire Authority and Essex Police. A Transition Working Group has been established to take this work forward.

The aim of the transition programme (assuming the Home Office approve the decision) is to ensure a smooth as possible transfer to the new Police and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority. A detailed project plan is currently being developed, setting out what will need to be undertaken to enable these priorities to be achieved.

Key activities identified in the project plan include:

- Constitution - Develop a revised constitution to reflect the new legislation and statutory order.
- Governance Structure - Review existing senior management structure and identify the appropriate board structure to support the change in governance. This will need to be fed into the new constitution.
- Statutory Roles - Review the role of the Statutory Chief Officers under a revised governance model. This will need to be fed into the new constitution.
- Scheme of Delegation - Develop an amended Scheme of Delegation to the senior officers of the Fire and Rescue Service.
- Governance Meetings - Review the existing planned business of the Fire Authority, and realign it to the new governance structure including setting a series of meeting dates for the new boards which will support the Police and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority.
- Formation of Police, Fire and Crime Panel - Liaison with Essex County Council's Secretariat team regarding the development of the revised Terms of Reference for the new Police Crime and Fire Panel.
- Staff Formal Consultation - Undertake a formal consultation of all staff on the transfer of their employment to the new Police and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority.
- Communication Plan - Develop an internal communication plan for activity supporting the roll out of the new governance model.

The transition plan will continue to be developed by officers, with progress reported into the Emergency Services Strategic Governance Board.

6. NEXT STEPS

The Local Business Case has now been submitted to the Home Office. The Home Office will review the case and the Home Secretary will make a decision.

The Police and Crime Commissioner will advise the Essex Fire Authority of the Home Secretary's decision at the earliest opportunity, once he has received confirmation of the decision.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

A detailed risk register is included the Local Business Case.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The costs for the preparation of the Local Business Case and any preparation for transition have been met by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Local Business Case has been prepared under enabling provisions included with the Policing and Crime Act 2017.

10. USE OF RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

Costs in preparing the local business case have been met by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Officers and staff from the Fire Authority, Essex Police and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner have contributed information, data, advice and input to the development of the Local Business Case.

11. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

A full equality impact assessment (EIA) of the proposals contained in the Local Business Case has been carried out. The proposals were not assessed as impacting differently or negatively on any specific groups. As a part of the consultation process, focus engagement was undertaken to ensure views are sought from harder to reach groups.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985	
List of appendices attached to this paper:	
List of background documents (not attached):	
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