



Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

Title of function, policy / procedure, project or proposal (FPPP): Local Business Case for Joint Governance of Police and Fire & Rescue in Essex

Date of Assessment: 10th May 2017

Assessment Author: Adam Kendall

Date of previous Assessment: N/a

Stage 1 – About the FPPP:

What are the aims and purpose of FPPP?

This Local Business Case (LBC) assesses the scale of opportunity for closer working between police and fire (and potentially wider collaboration, such as with the ambulance service), and how future joint governance options for the police and fire and rescue services in Essex could best enable the achievement of these benefits.

This LBC will be submitted to the Home Office on the 19th May setting at the PCC's case for change.

What policies / procedures / guidance / legislation are relevant to this FPPP?

The Policing and Crime Act 2017 introduces measures which places a statutory obligation on emergency services to collaborate and also enable Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) to take on responsibilities for fire and rescue services in their area.

The LBC sets out the PCC's ambitions to utilise the powers in the Act. Subject to Home Office approval Essex is likely to be the first PCC in the county to enact this change

Outline the key points of the FPPP. Is there criteria to be followed? Describe how discretion may be applied:

While a number of future collaboration opportunities could be delivered through existing governance arrangements, collaboration between police and fire to date in Essex has not yet developed in a significant way. Research consistently shows fragmented governance acts as a barrier to effective collaboration. Delivering this ambitious programme for Essex would require a step-change in governance to enable greater accountability, accelerate collaboration, and enable an integrated approach to community safety and maximising the use of assets.

To improve emergency services and facilitate collaboration, the Act sets out three alternative options to the status quo (the “do nothing” option). These are:

The “representation option”, whereby PCCs would join the local Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) as a member with full voting rights.

The “governance option”, whereby PCCs would take on the role of the FRA but would maintain separate organisations of Fire and Rescue and Police.

The “single employer option”, which would go a step further by combining the Police and Fire and Rescue services under the leadership of a single Chief Officer.

Where the PCC wishes to change governance arrangements, the Act requires an assessment of why (i) it is in the interests of economy, efficiency and effectiveness, or (ii) it is in the interests of public safety for this to happen. This LBC sets out the case for change, and the PCC's preference to obtain approval from the Home Office to progress with the 'governance option'.

Stage 2 Consider the evidence

Who is / will be affected by this FPPP and how? e.g. staff, service users, wider public.

The proposed change set out in the LBC focuses on how the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service is governed, and the alternatives to the current arrangements.

The current arrangements for governing ECFRS are as follows

ECFRS is directly responsible to EFA. The Fire Authority was formed on 1 April 1998 by virtue of the Essex Fire Services (Combination Scheme) Order 1997 SI 2699/1997.

The 25 members of the Authority are elected members nominated by the three constituent first tier councils in Essex. Twenty members are nominated by Essex County Council, three by Southend-on-Sea Borough Council and two by Thurrock Council.

The Authority is the formal employer of fire staff. It prepares and approves an annual Strategic Plan and Integrated Risk Management Plan, and a council tax contribution to fire and rescue services through a precept. It approves the Annual Statement of Accounts, the Annual Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan, including the Capital Programme.

The LBC proposes three alternative options, each with differing benefits. In all of the options there is no direct impact upon staff, service users and the wider public. Although all staff would transfer to a new employer if the PCC's preferred option is approved, the PCC has confirmed that all staff will transfer on the same terms and conditions.

The individuals who would be directly effected by the change are the existing members of the EFA. Under the 'Governance' and 'Single Employer' option, all 25 members would cease to undertake this role, and would be replaced by the PCC.

The LBC also sets out a range of collaboration opportunities which could be implemented in the future. Many of these would have implications on the services which are provided to the public, staff and service users. All these collaboration opportunities would be subject to their own individual business case, and at the time of preparing this business case would be subject to a separate EIA.

As part of the new governance arrangements, the PCC also proposes to move his office to Kelvedon Park (ECFRS HQ). This would involve his staff team (the OPCC) moving from their current location in Chelmsford to Kelvedon Park. OPCC staff have been consulted on the proposed move.

What relevant quantitative data has been considered?

The LBC has been subject to a 12 week consultation where the public and stakeholders were asked to determine which of the 3 options would deliver the greatest benefit, and were given an opportunity to comment on the proposal. The results of the quantitative data are summarised in Appendix F of the LBC.

What relevant qualitative data has been considered? e.g. known under-reporting of hate crime;

Of the 1711 reponses to the consultation, 766 took the opportunity to provide additional comments. On reviewing all the qualitative feedback there was no indication that a specific group was going to effected by this change more than any other group. The results of the qualitative feedback are summarised in Appendix F of the LBC.

Who has been consulted (internally and externally) to assess the impact of this FPPP?
e.g. staff networks, Strategic Independent Advisory Group, Diversity Unit. **How they were consulted and give a summary of the responses:**

The LBC is not considered to adversely impact any specific group, therefore targeted engagement on equality and diversity was not sought. However there was significant engagement activity during the course of the consultation period, where the aim was to reach diverse groups across Essex. This activity included undertaking events at local universities, attending police cadet groups, publishing an advert in Primary Times (with a reach to parents of primary school children), copies of the leaflet and questionnaire were placed in all libraries, police and fire stations etc.

The responses that were received did not highlight any groups who felt that they would be effected more than any other group.

During the course of the consultation, the PCC with a range of officers, staff members, unions and representative bodies. He confirmed with them that terms and conditions would not be changed as a result of the governance change, He sought their views on the proposals. No specific equalities issues were raised during these engagement meetings.

The OPCC staff were consulted on the proposed move to Kelvedon Park and had the opportunity to input ideas. Flexible working location options have been offered to staff. Aside from one issue raised, OPCC staff were in agreement with the move.

Are there any information gaps? How will these be addressed? e.g. does any specific research need to be commissioned / undertaken to inform this assessment such as user surveys, focus groups. If yes, who will arrange and what is timescale?

There is no evidence to indicate that there are any information gaps which would required addressing.

Stage 3 Assessing the impact

Explain any actual / potential different impact (positive and negative) of this FPPP on people, as suggested by data / consultation / diversity unit, in respect of:

- a) **Age:** Older people, youth, children: On review of the contents of the LBC, and the outcomes of the engagement and consultation, there is no evidence that the proposed change in governance would have a different positive or negative impact on a specific age group.

b) **Disability** (consider impact on different disabilities, including physical, sensory and learning disabilities, mental ill health and Specific Learning Difficulties): On review of the contents of the LBC, and the outcomes of the engagement and consultation, there is no evidence that the proposed change in governance would have a different positive or negative impact on a an individual or a group with disabilities.

c) Gender and transgender (e.g. different effects on men and women): On review of the contents of the LBC, and the outcomes of the engagement and consultation, there is no evidence that the proposed change in governance would have a different positive or negative impact on a specific gender or transgender.

d) Race (including Gypsies and Travellers) and nationality: On review of the contents of the LBC, and the outcomes of the engagement and consultation, there is no evidence that the proposed change in governance would have a different positive or negative impact on the Gypsies or Traveller communities.

e) Faith and / or culture: On review of the contents of the LBC, and the outcomes of the engagement and consultation, there is no evidence that the proposed change in governance would have a different positive or negative impact on a particular faith or culture.

f) Sexual orientation: On review of the contents of the LBC, and the outcomes of the engagement and consultation, there is no evidence that the proposed change in governance would have a different positive or negative impact on a particular sexual orientation.

g) Pregnancy & Maternity; Marriage & Civil Partnership: On review of the contents of the LBC, and the outcomes of the engagement and consultation, there is no evidence that the proposed change in governance would have a different positive or negative impact individuals who are pregnant, on maternity leave, or those who may be married or in a civil partnership.

Describe how the FPPP should or does eliminate discrimination / harassment:

The LBC is focused on a governance change which would have an equal impact of all individuals living and working in Essex. There is no known areas of discrimination or harassment which the change would have a direct impact upon.

Describe how the FPPP should or does advance equality:

The LBC is focused on a governance change which would have an equal impact of all individuals living and working in Essex. There is no known areas where it could advance equality.

Describe how the FPPP should or does promote good relations:

The LBC is focused on a governance change which would have an equal impact of all individuals living and working in Essex. If the preferred governance change is approved ECFRS would be governed by a directly elected PFCC who will be accountable to the public of Essex every 4 years.

Stage 4 Way Forward

Can any different impact as described at a-g above be justified and if so why?

There is no further action required to address any inequalities, as the review did not identify that the LBC would have a negative impact on a particular group.

Describe any options / changes that could be considered / will be made to reduce / eliminate any different negative impact as at a-g above:

There are no changes required to eliminate any different negative impact. However, if as a result of further individual busienss cases, potential equaliy impacts are identified, these will be addressed. Further business cases will themselves include individual EIAs.

Itemise any recommendations from this review which will improve the effectiveness / fairness of delivering this FPPP. Describe how they will be actioned, who is responsible for delivering the action and the timescale:

None

Stage 5 Monitoring Arrangements**Describe how the FPPP is monitored or will be monitored if it is not currently:**

The PCC is scrutinised by the Police and Crime Panel (PCP). Their role includes reviewing the police and crime plan, annual report and both scrutinising and supporting the activities of the PCC in holding the Chief Constable to account.

The Panel, which is currently chaired by Councillor John Jowers from Essex County Council, is made up of members from Essex County Council, Southend and Thurrock unitary authorities and each district council. Two independent members have also been appointed. There is a power to have a co-opted member, but the Panel does not now have one.

The panel has recently established an Ethics and Integrity Committee.

During the course of this LBC being implemented this group will have a role in scrutinising the change.

Stage 6 Publication**Have the outcomes been fed back to those consulted?**

The outcome of the public consultation is included in the LBC in Appendix F. Once it has been submitted to the Home Office, the LBC will be published on the PCC's website, and letters will be sent out to all key stakeholders.

There is no way to contact the individual members of the public who responded to the consultation as they did not provide their personal contact details.

DIVERSITY UNIT: Assessment agreed for publication or further work needed?

Signed: Roger Hirst

Date: 19/5/2017

Date forwarded to website manager for publication: 19/5/2017