



CFOA
Chief Fire Officers
Association



Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service

Fire Peer Challenge

Final Report

1. Introduction, context and purpose

This report outlines the key findings from the Local Government Association's (LGA) Fire Peer Challenge at Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service (SFRS) in March 2016.

The report provides further detail on the areas that the Service requested that the team focus on in addition to looking at the Key Assessment Areas and Leadership and Corporate Capacity elements of the Peer Challenge toolkit upon which the Service produced its Self-Assessment:

1. The overall Leadership, capacity and governance for the Authority and the Service as a whole
2. The Service's culture and testing how well the corporate vision is embedded throughout the Service (with particular emphasis on middle managers)
3. Staffordshire FRS's use of data as a means of intelligence to drive priorities and delivery of outcomes
4. Staffordshire's contribution to the Public Health agenda more widely and
5. Staffordshire's control function which is shared with West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service

Fire Peer Challenge is part of sector led improvement. In the last four years, all 46 FRSs nationally have undertaken a peer challenge. Following this, the process has been revised to reflect developments within the sector and ensure it continues to meet the needs of FRSs and other key stakeholders. FRSs are now able to commission another peer challenge, to take place at a time of their choosing over the next four years. SFRS deserve great credit for being one of the first FRSs to commission a peer challenge using the revised approach and framework. It is a clear reflection of the Service's willingness to undertake external challenge and learn from others.

The SFRS Fire Peer Challenge took place from 21 to 24 March 2016 inclusive. The summary of activity was as follows:

- Background reading was provided to the team in advance (*A comprehensive Self- Assessment and over 300 supporting reference documents*)
- Meeting with a broad cross-section of officers, elected members and partners via a timetable of interviews, focus groups and visits (*39 meetings over 3 Days during which the team met over 140 people*)

During the challenge the peer team were very well looked after and people the team met were fully engaged with the process and very open and honest.

The evidence and feedback gathered was assimilated into broad themes and was delivered to SFRS on the final day of the challenge condensing over 150 pieces of evidence that the team considered. The presentation was delivered

to a gathering over eighty staff and Fire Authority members whilst being streamed live into a number of Fire Stations.

2. The fire peer challenge process and team

Fire peer challenges are managed and delivered by the sector for the sector and peers are at the heart of the process. They help FRSs and Fire & Rescue Authorities with their improvement and learning by providing a 'practitioner perspective' and 'critical friend' challenge.

The peer challenge team for SFRS was:

- **Lead Peer** – CFO Dave Curry (Hampshire and the IOW Fire and Rescue Service)
- **Member Peer** – Councillor David Acton (Chair, Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority)
- **Officer Peer** – Claire Cooper (Home Office/Department for Communities and Local Government)
- **Officer Peer** – Linda Hindle (Public Health England).
- **Officer Peer** – Tom Simms (County Durham and Darlington FRS and CFOA)
- **Officer Peer** – Robert Herring (Performance Coach)
- **Officer Peer** – Brian Neat (Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service and CFOA)
- **LGA Peer Challenge Manager** – Ernest Opuni

3. Executive Summary

There is clearly a good relationship between the political and managerial leadership of SFRS which is a strong foundation on which future success can be built. Going forward it will be important for the members of the Authority to play a stronger role in leading SFRS through some of its future strategic considerations such as the future financial position of SFRS. The Authority may wish to consider whether any future leadership development can support them in their strategic partnerships and decision making to ensure they are able to represent the service and play a full part in shaping and influencing public sector transformation.

A particular strength of SFRS is its empowering culture. This has ensured that the 3 tiers of measure methodology adopted throughout the Service maintains a strong focus on achieving positive outcomes for the communities of Staffordshire. These are not limited to traditional Fire Service delivery but rather impact on wider health outcomes. However sustaining this into the future will require SFRS to look again at how this valuable work is resourced. This will need to be an integral part of the work the Service recognises around future financial strategy and planning.

Using various sources of data as a source of intelligence to shape delivery is demonstrated in all that the Service does. It will be important that this positive approach to delivery focusing on the most vulnerable is supported by the appropriate level of capacity in the team. Whilst the use of data is an overall strength, there is scope for closer alignment with the Services Protection functions.

The service is one of the Fire Sector's vanguard services in relation to delivering public health outcomes. There is a clear commitment across all of SFRS to contributing to this and to partnerships which deliver on this. To ensure this positive impact in Staffordshire's communities the peer challenge team would encourage SFRS to focus further on how it evaluates the impact of this work and develops a stronger narrative to support resourcing requirements into the future.

The current arrangements on Control are shared with West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service. It is a priority for SFRS that it works jointly WMFRS to redefine the overall vision for this joint working so that each Service is able to realise the full potential benefits of this collaboration.

4. Key Recommendations

There are a range of suggestions and observations within the main section of the report that will inform some practical actions. These are areas the team would suggest SFRS prioritises so as to achieve continued improvement.

- **Golden opportunity with a new Chair and CFO to set clear direction and form a close relationship, each understanding the other's role.** Re-focus the Authority to provide strong leadership and scrutiny which would be of benefit to the Service at this particular time. Use this Peer Challenge as a catalyst to focus on what SFRS will deliver as well as how it does this into the future. Use this new relationship to agree a shared vision across members and officers to really drive the future direction of SFRS.
- **Clarifying the medium/longer term savings plan (including health activity) and consideration of wider income generation and commercial opportunities.** Examining resources and their allocation, with clear savings plans will ensure that the service is well placed for the future. Part of this will involve developing a narrative about the wider contribution the Service is making to community wellbeing to inform conversations with partners. This is a good point to rebalance the priorities of the Service and to reallocate resources. Tightening SFRS's innovative approach to performance monitoring to ensure outcomes and success are understood by staff will be an integral part of this work.
- **Re-framing the SFRS/West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service (WMFRS) relationship.** In order to get the most out of the existing collaboration with WMFRS, the current 'rules of engagement' for the two Services need to be reviewed. Putting the past to one side and moving ahead in a new spirit of partnership is critical. At the heart of this will be consideration of how the cultural fit of the two Services can be improved, how best each Service can contribute to the partnership into the future and agreeing a shared understanding of what success looks like for the partnership

Detailed Findings

5. Leadership and Organisational capacity

5.1 The overall leadership, capacity and governance of the Authority and the Service as a whole

Fire and Rescue Authority

The Authority are clearly very supportive, and trusting, of both the current and future Chief Fire Officer and senior management of SFRS more widely. There is a positive alignment between the elected members on the Fire Authority and the senior managers of the Service in relation to driving principles such as the '3 Tiers of Measure' methodology which underpins SFRS priority and delivery. This approach is a particular focus of Staffordshire and is a very innovative approach to identifying community outcomes and how these are delivered. It is a credit to both that these principles have been fully embraced and adopted to the degree that they have.

The Fire Authority see political, professional and representative bodies as a partnership which engenders a culture of collaboration and identification of common aims focussed on delivering positive outcomes for the communities of Staffordshire.

There is a significant amount of experience through the time served by individual members of the Fire Authority and it is clear that they feel an affinity with, and ownership of, their local stations and crews. Their pride in what SFRS has achieved are palpable. The team also felt that the delivery of development sessions for members and the positive way in which they have responded to utilising these are a positive for SFRS.

In terms of contribution to strategic delivery there are some positive examples of scrutiny in individual areas (for example the Fire Authority's scrutiny of the previously excessive level of call outs to prisons, which had led to improvements).

The close alignment between the political and professional leadership of SFRS is a valuable foundation for the Service both now and into the future. However there is more for the Fire Authority to do in engaging effectively with the political leadership of other bodies (for example with the County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner).

In the wider context of collaboration, there are also overarching opportunities for SFRS as a whole to explore. Asset management across partners would be one such area the Service may wish to consider further.

Members of the authority should also play a more active role in shaping the key strategic decisions affecting the Service: for example, engagement with the savings plan within the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) assumptions,

where not all members appeared to have a clear understanding of the need for a plan, and had not yet identified this as a gap for the Service. There also does not seem to be a consistent recognition from members of their overall political leadership role in driving change when this is required: different members appeared to be in different places in terms of offering stronger political leadership to the whole of the Service, rather than focussing on representing their own local areas.

There does not always appear to be a consistent understanding amongst members of the value of scrutiny. The overall sense of the team is that this key function is often seen to be about receiving reports with some debate of the issues. The opportunity is for scrutiny to play a more confident and proactive role in challenging thinking, and identifying areas which may need stronger focus.

With new developments across the public sector such as combined authorities, elected mayors and Police and Crime Commissioners, there are both new challenges and opportunities for SFRS. Members of the FRA may wish to consider the skills and experience they bring to their Authority positions, and consider how they may need to further build on these in this new world of leadership across place, which evolves from a traditional leadership style to developing new partnerships and being able to negotiate and influence others in order to secure shared outcomes across geographical and organisational boundaries.

The timing of the appointment of a new Chief Fire Officer presents a clear opportunity for the Fire Authority to restate its own role in contributing proactively so that the Service can build on its past successes. There is a clear opportunity for the Fire Authority to move forward with a renewed certainty of its role in jointly shaping the future strategy and direction of SFRS with the new Chief. The importance of strong political leadership in securing and sustaining a positive future for SFRS cannot be overstated.

The Service

The culture of Staffordshire FRS is one of its strengths and this theme is explored in greater detail later in this report. The team is very clear about the role that the Service's leadership has played in promoting and embedding this over the past few years. It is one of the clearest legacies from the leadership of the previous Chief Fire Officer that the culture of SFRS does not depend on policies and procedures. Rather it is an example of a Service which promotes a progressive, empowering culture founded upon embedding the right behaviours in its people. Establishing this is more difficult to achieve but this would appear to be sustainable into the future under the leadership of the new Chief Fire Officer.

In delivering a smooth transition of leadership, there seems to be a golden opportunity for the newly appointed Chief Fire Officer and a new Chair, once

appointed, to set clear direction and form a close working relationship where each understands the role of the other.

Significant progress has been made in terms of the Service's culture and its leadership role particularly in relation to promoting the health agenda in Staffordshire. To enable the Service to continue to progress the team believes that it is important not to lose sight of other priorities and now is the time for a re-balancing which should include financial management and budget planning and reframing the shape and nature of relationships with external partners and stakeholders.

The 3 Tiers of Measures are well established throughout the Service. However the team would encourage SFRS to assure itself that everyone within the Service has a shared understanding about what the 3 Tiers mean. This will be important in relation to some of the language around terms such as 'targets' for example; there appeared to be some inconsistency in understanding at different levels in the Service which could be addressed.

Thus far the Service has managed its finances prudently and in comparison to other public sector bodies it appears to have made more time to 'get on the front foot' with planning its future capacity. That said there would be benefit in increasing the pace at which it plans for tighter financial times. There is currently an overall figure of savings to be achieved over the next 3-4 years and identification of savings but these need further work to ensure robustness and deliverability of clearly spelt out figures. This does not suggest that this work has not commenced, rather that it would benefit from further acceleration. The Service has a range of plans in place but the timing of their delivery is crucial to their chances of success.

The team would encourage SFRS's Fire Authority and Senior Managers to look closely at income generation opportunities the Service might utilise through its contribution to the wider health economy of Staffordshire. In the team's view this represents a key priority for the Service to ensure SFRS is able to sustain this valuable contribution into the short and medium-term.

In a wider sense SFRS, not unlike many other Services across the country, would be encouraged to reflect on whether the capacity it has retained through the periods of resource reductions remains sufficient and appropriate for all it wishes to deliver into the future. There may be particular benefit in reflecting on whether the capacity at Group Manager level in particular is sufficient bearing in mind the significant reductions in numbers that have occurred over recent years.

5.2 The Service's culture and testing how well the corporate vision is embedded throughout the Service (with particular emphasis on middle managers)

The Review team was specifically invited to examine any issues around adoption of the organisation's vision and culture at middle manager level.

The team found there is a wide and deep understanding of (and commitment to) the principles underpinning the Service. The approach of involving and trusting people has created a culture where people feel empowered and listened to, which enables them to act with freedom and confidence to deliver their business: this is reflected throughout the Service.

The Service has a longstanding and clear commitment to equality and diversity across all it delivers. This relates to how it deals with internal workforce considerations and the focus of promoting sound principles across all of its staff. The 3 tiers of measures allows the Service to demonstrate this commitment in its outward facing activity. Targeting delivery based on a clearer understanding of vulnerability in order to address possible inequality of outcomes is at the core of SFRS priorities.

The Service has a clearly stated cultural vision developed from the Leadership Message in 2009. In terms of characteristics the Service can be described as self-motivated, supportive, open to challenge (and honest evaluation) and is a Service which welcomes and embraces change. There is a real sense of an open and very welcoming Service with a 'can do' attitude focused on delivering the best well-being outcomes for the people of Staffordshire. This is particularly demonstrated by the focus throughout the Service on contributing effectively to public health outcomes and the appreciation of the importance and relevance of delivering this.

Senior managers are fully committed to the '3 tiers of measures' and the philosophy is supported and articulated with conviction. There is a commitment to delivering in this way into the future. This puts SFRS in a strong position to continue contributing to wider well-being outcomes for communities which add value to the delivery of other agencies in Staffordshire in addition to its 'core business' of reducing the risk of fire related death and injury to some of the most 'at risk' residents with the community. This would further strengthen the Service's ability to discuss how other partners could contribute to funding and resourcing this work in the future.

The '3 tiers' approach also appears to be a proactive 'system' for encouraging staff to seek out opportunities to innovate and focus on outcomes, working back from that into action and delivery. The understanding gained by staff from the 3 tiers system allows them to deliver innovative approaches which contribute to improved community outcomes. Culturally SFRS demonstrates high organisational effectiveness because of its focus on outcomes. This approach was found throughout the Service irrespective of whom the team met with or spoke to. SFRS has an externally driven culture with the emphasis on meeting the needs and requirements of the various communities it serves.

SFRS Cultural Framework, which describes the expected behaviours which underpin the Service's values, allows staff to be trusted to deliver. The Framework itself was clearly valued by staff to whom we spoke, with a real sense that this was a product they themselves developed and owned. There is a high level of trust demonstrated by senior managers and at a time when

capacity has reduced at Group Manager level, this has actually provided opportunity for station managers to develop and grow into stronger leaders.

The team also had the opportunity to meet with Retained Firefighters who have embraced with passion and commitment the contributions of SFRS to wider community outcomes. There was a clear understanding that their contribution to an effective prevention agenda is a valuable element of a modern Fire and Rescue Service. Founded upon effective engagement with communities themselves and engagement with partners from all sectors (including the private sector) this part of the SFRS workforce is making a significant contribution to the Service's success.

Across the Service, staff are being given the freedom to explore a variety of means to deliver the Service's desired outcomes. They are given autonomy with very few barriers to getting things done, especially if it is seen as the right thing to do. It was clear to the team that SFRS has a very professional workforce who are also passionate about learning. In the event that things are tried which do not work as well as hoped, the focus is on learning from the experience as opposed to apportioning blame. It seems that there may at some time in the past have been a perceived blame culture within the Service - this has clearly changed for the better providing strong evidence of a learning Service.

There is an "open chair" approach to all meetings where people from the Service at any level can attend meetings to understand what the current issues and work streams are and to contribute. Added to the 'open door' policy of the senior management team it is clear that staff feel empowered to engage with the service's business. In the team's view there is a collaborative feel to decision-making which appears honest and transparent. The corporate uniform and lack of rank has contributed to the development of a mutually respectful 'one Service', aligned and united in achieving its core purpose of making Staffordshire safe. There is an acceptance and belief that the removal of the rank structure and rank markings has removed barriers (be they real or perceived) and now allows people to deal with the right person to get things done.

Staff strongly identify with SFRS and its purpose. They have a strong sense of connection to their communities and a real desire to make a difference. There is a tangible philosophy around "prevention is better than cure" and this runs throughout the Service and into the communities of Staffordshire via a myriad of partnership working and collaboration arrangements.

It is also clear that staff enjoy working for the Service and genuinely appreciate each other. There are high levels of trust within the organisation demonstrated by the approach taken to working with representative bodies. The relationship with the Service is clearly a healthy and well established one constructed on a foundation of trust, compromise and wanting the best for the Service and its people.

A number of initiatives have been developed for 2016 that will be open to all (including middle managers) which are designed to address some of the skills gaps identified in a previous review of the Service. 'Match Fit Master Classes' and additional modules have been added to CPD training to develop managerial skills around change leadership. This was well-attended as evidenced through the attendance by 38 senior managers and 65 supervisory managers at sessions conducted in April and May 2015.

The 'Match Fit Master Classes' are continuing in 2016 and will cover a range of themes around Resilience, Financial awareness, Industrial Relations, Systems thinking, Collaborative working and the Preventative health agenda.

Whilst the purpose of the Service is clear, the team noted that at least three different 'visions' have been communicated over the course of the Peer challenge. Whilst they do not contradict each other, there were some distinctions and differences. The Corporate Safety Plan vision could be interpreted as a concept of operations whilst the Leadership Message clearly states the vision to be 'To make Staffordshire the safest place to be'. Meetings with various managers in the Service described a vision of a Service in a collaborative partnership with the police and, to a lesser extent, other partners.

The team would encourage SFRS to test whether there is a risk of 'mixed messages' and whether there is some value in better aligning the different strands. This could help in ensuring that a common goal is better articulated and therefore more accessible to, and consistent for, all staff. The vision contained in the leadership message is not easily measureable or quantifiable which could make it more difficult to align relevant strategy within the corporate safety plan. Some senior staff when pushed to articulate what 'making Staffordshire the safest place to be' looks like did not find this easy to describe. This may be exacerbated by the Service's conscious desire to not frame delivery in terms of targets. However the team sensed that an unintended mixed message is being communicated by virtue of there still being a perception that actual targets for Home fire risk Checks (HFRCs) still remain. As a result there is a perception among some staff that that the terminology around 'expectation' is in reality the term 'target' but with a different descriptor.

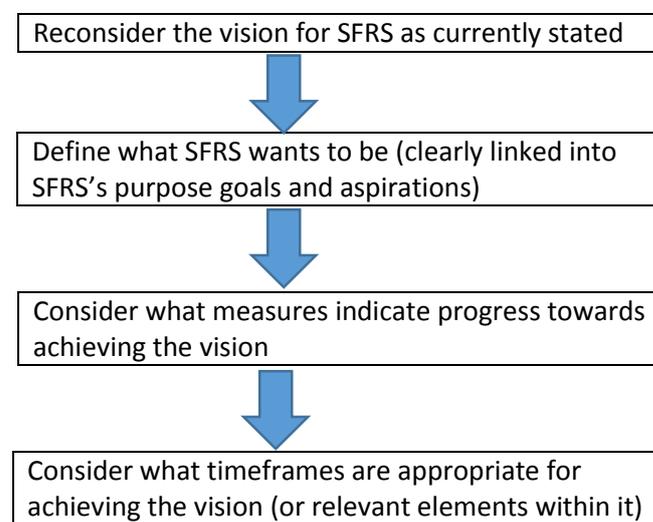
The team had a number of plans shared with it before and during the peer challenge which would benefit from being better underpinned by SMART objectives which may remove the risk of any 'looseness' about what is to be delivered. Part of the reasoning for not having systematic targets is the concern that these measures can become drivers for dysfunctional and counter-productive behaviours. Whilst this case is well made by SFRS, the team would suggest that some degree of tightness in tracking progress would be helpful and not inconsistent with the SFRS culture.

In the team's view, there is evidence that staff are empowered to take responsibility for their actions but this now needs to move to ensuring there is effective performance. Having a greater clarity about what the 'end goal' represents – (a 'Safe Staffordshire' depicted in clear terms) could be broken

down into specific performance goals, mechanisms and processes needed to deliver these.

Whilst the 3 tiers approach allows performance monitoring and the allocation of resources to specific areas there is more to do to ensure a robust performance management framework.

Language and terminology can be key in this. An example of this is that the Corporate Safety Plan includes Home Fire Risk Checks which could be described as an 'Output' rather than an 'Outcome'. Further communications and explanation of the rationale of HFRCs and the recent evolution to a 'safe and well' visit would greatly assist in further embedding the 3 tiers of measure approach. The team believes that there is a staged approach to addressing this which SFRS might find helpful in this regard:



It is clear that the Service has moved away from a blame culture. However there may be value in the Service assuring itself that all staff at all levels are adapting fully from a more familiar autocratic environment to one underpinned by a greater degree of autonomy at all managerial levels. There may be particular value in testing that this approach has been fully embraced at Station and Watch Manager level. Whilst the team believes the change has bedded in well, its sustainability into the future requires that all managers at this level are confident of working in this way.

Group managers demonstrate high levels of confidence in their station managers. However it was also true that there is a feeling that the significant geographical dispersion along with increased workloads could be causing gaps in communication. Also mentioned were instances where the direct accessibility of senior officers to front line firefighters could mean that information was making its way to this tier of the Service ahead of Group managers. There is therefore a case for SFRS seeking to manage information flow in a more systematic fashion to balance a concern expressed that a Principal Officer visit

to a Watch can lead to the management process being bypassed due to senior officers becoming too involved in the details of process.

Alongside this the team also observed an unresolved dichotomy between (i) having the appropriate balance between authority and responsibility when in an operational blue light role but (ii) having responsibility without appropriate or desired authority in the wider managerial context. There were some examples shared with the team of instances in which operational managers felt that the difference between the decisions they had taken and those taken by HR when overruling them had made them feel undermined. A quote was that “managerial discretion sometimes feels like it isn’t supported outside of operational matters”.

The overall conclusion the team would draw is that in spite of the areas raised for consideration by SFRS, the culture of the Service is something that Staffordshire can celebrate. The clear sense of purpose and identity provides an exceptional foundation on which future, continuous success can be built with confidence.

5.3 Staffordshire FRS’s use of data as a means of intelligence to drive priorities and delivery of outcomes

The Service’s ethos of "Prevention is better than cure" led by the Chief Fire Officer and senior managers is well embedded within the mindset of the Service. This was demonstrated on numerous occasions being continually quoted with conviction throughout the various meetings the team had. This was consistent and true across all levels of SFRS.

Use of data and intelligence to target the most vulnerable is a core tool which drives everything SFRS seeks to deliver. This conviction, bought into throughout the Service has led an investment in terms of time, energy and resources. This work has been led by the Business Intelligence Team (BIT) in creating a methodology which allows SFRS to turn data into intelligence thus strengthening its ability to target resources at the most vulnerable in the community. The Business Intelligence Team provides data analysis, intelligence and support for the 3 delivery groups. The team works on a one month lag time for information which allows further, fuller analysis to be undertaken. This approach in turn allows for a more targeted, flexible approach to risk reduction in each of the groups. This approach also supports the planning process (as indicated by the Campaigns calendar) which focusses on the key themes driven by demand. This overall approach clearly supports the empowerment of managers to make decisions and feel supported by senior management. Once again the degree to which this ethos is embedded is indicative of the prevailing culture of SFRS. It is clear to the team that this influences the activity of each of the delivery groups as evidenced through the various information sources it examined and considered as part of the Peer Challenge.

BIT is clearly a positive strong asset for the Service both now and into the future. However in order to sustain this positive impact, the team recommends that as further datasets which assist SFRS in reducing risk to its communities become

available, the Service continues to evaluate the capacity and resilience of the BIT. This will be important in ensuring that the excellent work already achieved is not undermined by capacity or resilience challenges.

The development of the 'Gold, Silver, Bronze' (GSB) approach to targeting resources at the most vulnerable members of the community, utilising the Mosaic and Exeter data sets, enables SFRS to make efficient use of the resources available in servicing the demand generated. Whilst this has placed SFRS in a strong position in the use of analysing data to drive activity, it is essential that SFRS continues with the proposed development of reporting services to support the capability of Delivery Groups in refining the targeting of risk even further to ensure future demands are properly serviced as resources become tighter.

As stated above, the methodology of the GSB approach places SFRS in a strong position, but senior managers and GSB approach developers should ensure that all levels of the organisation fully understand the process and expected outcomes. There was clear evidence, held on the CMIT system, that a significant proportion of Home Fire Safety Risk Checks are completed outside of the GSB process, with a greater proportion of visits being undertaken in the bronze category rather than the Gold. This area for improvement links closely to concerns around the level of understanding in regard to the purpose of the 3 tiers of measures, how it applies to the role of individual teams and ultimately how the work of teams from all areas contribute to achieving the aspirations of 3 tiers principles.

The ethos of the Protect team is focused on Business Support and is evidenced through close collaboration with the Business Support Team. This focus on working closely with business, in clear support of the Government's Better Regulation agenda, in conjunction with the Protect inspection programme using a variety of sources of intelligence, which includes information from response crews through the Provision of Operational Risk Information System (PORIS), local intelligence and consideration of national events allows each Delivery Group to focus more effectively on the highest risk premises within its area of responsibility. Whilst it is clear that the business support ethos is a strong positive for the organisation, and could be considered as sector leading, the impact of the Protect activity, in supporting the Service aim of making Staffordshire the safest place to be, is less clear due to the outcomes of Protect activity not forming part of the 3 tiers of measure.

The Protect inspection programme uses a variety of sources which includes information from response crews through Provision of Operational Risk Information System (PORIS), local intelligence and consideration of national events to focus on themed inspections. This has allowed each group to focus more effectively on its particular risks. However further consideration should be given as to how best to integrate the Protect data into the 3 tiers of measures demonstrating a clear integrated approach to risk management.

In terms of areas for the Service to explore further, Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH) are a fundamental part of protecting the most vulnerable in the

community. The team would encourage the Service to assure itself that its connections into the MASH are as strong as they could be. On more than one occasion questions were raised by individuals and groups about whether there is more the Service could do to positively influence and impact the work of the Hubs.

SFRS staff raised the question of whether the Service has utilised certain assumptions in devising the 3 tiers approach which might have benefited from more robust challenge. In particular, the commendable focus on working across organisational and sectoral boundaries to address the health needs of communities was driven by a strong ethos that this was the right thing to do. Senior staff referred repeatedly to the “moral” case for action. This belief was expressed to the team in terms suggesting that to question the value for money elements of such activity was “immoral”. Whilst this demonstrates the strength of commitment to this agenda, all public services have a responsibility to evaluate both the impact and value for money of their activity, recognising that resources deployed on one type of activity directly impacts on the ability of the Service to deliver a range of other activities, and that all activity is funded by the taxpayer. It is important that the strongly-held – and admirable – values of the Service as a force for good are reflected in effective internal challenge as to whether some outcomes are being achieved as effectively and efficiently as they possibly could. There also appear to be further opportunities to better communicate the purpose of the 3 tiers of measures, how it applies to the role of individual teams and ultimately how the work of teams from all areas contribute to achieving the aspirations of 3 tiers principles.

5.4 Staffordshire’s contribution to the Public Health agenda more widely

Shared Vision for Prevention

The Home Safety and Community Wellbeing strategy was written in 2014 and set the tone for an increased focus on wider health and wellbeing alongside home safety checks. Since then Staffordshire has been at the forefront of national leadership to develop Fire as a Health asset.

The Service’s focus on systems leadership encourages an approach which starts with the issues affecting the community and then works backwards through identification of what the FRS can do to help address them. The people vulnerable to fire are the same people vulnerable to hospital admissions, falls and poor health outcomes and therefore the work on health links to the core business of a Fire and Rescue Service. There is a strong belief within the Service that prevention of ill health is the right thing to do and (as referred to previously) is in fact the moral imperative, but also a growing recognition that SFRS cannot pick up the full cost of this.

This narrative and vision are shared by the senior leadership team and are consistently articulated with a strong sense of passion. There has been a journey to reach a point where the vision is supported at all levels of the Service; staff have moved along this journey at different speeds and for some it has been a more difficult shift from the traditional rescue image of the Fire and

Rescue Service. However, the majority of front line staff are now very supportive of the focus on prevention, including prevention of ill health'. Front line staff who deliver safe and well visits talk of the job satisfaction from being able to help someone to improve all aspects of their life.

Partnerships

SFRS has many partnership arrangements and these are at varying levels of development and sophistication. Partnerships range from full strategic partnerships working on programmes to transform public services and support community needs through to smaller, more informal arrangements to speak at each other's events.

Partners universally speak highly of SFRS. The Service is seen as one which 'collaborates well without an ego', 'does what it agrees to' and 'is able to be flexible'.

Work with Tamworth Borough Council is an example of a partnership which has stood the test of time and has evolved over a period. The council, SFRS and other partners have developed shared priorities, shared risks and shared success measures. This 'let's work together' approach has matured to enable discussions around different future models of funding. There is recognition from the council leader that after demonstrating proof of concept and impact there is potential to consider commissioning work directly from the FRS.

The redesigning of the use of fire stations as a community resource in supporting local partnership development and community engagement is creating opportunities to engage with partners and the public about fire prevention and health and wellbeing. Fire station staff are very positive about welcoming the public and partners into their stations. They hope that other emergency services will co-locate with them as they can see the mutual benefit of working in close proximity such as sharing of intelligence and learning from each other.

Smaller voluntary sector services value the ability to link with the Service which benefits from high levels of public trust in the SFRS. In terms of reputation enhancement, Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) partners feel that there is an increased kudos to them as a result of being associated with SFRS.

The engagement with partners and the public as part of the consultation for the Lifeskills resource centre has been described as second to none and the focus on this by the Service can be held up as notable practice. The FRS has been praised by partners for doing a thorough consultation and really taking the time to listen to everyone to capture what people want from this centre even if this meant slowing the process. The Service is self-aware about the need for being involved in partnerships which add best value to SFRS

The team feels that the Service does need to be aware of how different their way of working is to that of health and social care colleagues. Partners really value the 'get on and do' approach of SFRS however, equally, they feel there

is a need for greater priority being given to planning, programme management and evaluation. The benefit of this would be that aims, objectives, partner contribution, risks, methods, engagement and evaluation are identified and planned from the beginning. Ideally the SFRS will work with partners to find a middle ground which responds to their needs for planning whilst not losing the ability to get going and make a difference.

Other partnerships currently rely on the ability of Service to support broader priorities, but where the Service does not always reap the benefits. This does not mean that more mutually beneficial arrangements are not possible. Part of this change may require the service to consider its own financial needs and commission evaluation to ensure reciprocal benefit, either financially or in kind.

SFRS has a strong relationship with Age UK and other voluntary sector partners who pick up referrals from the Service for vulnerable individuals. Age UK in particular is an integral partner in the SaFER and PHE pilots. This has placed pressure on their capacity with 15% of visits resulting in a referral. It will be important to manage this relationship going forward both to be (i) explicit about the future demand and the costs of this to potential funders and (ii) to identify where FRS could potentially destabilise voluntary sector partners' income streams, for example if the Service starts to take on work previously undertaken by this sector.

Whilst recognising that work with health partners remains at an early stage, it is clear that the Service expects to build on these foundations and expand its work. It was less clear that the resource implications of this approach were being considered by SFRS over the longer term.

There may be some value in the Service exploring further how capacity might be increased through commissioning other partners -(for example Voluntary and Community Sector providers (VCS))- to carry out some activity on the behalf of SFRS. This may assist in the Service having a greater capacity/resilience to pursue some of these wider well-being outcomes that it is clearly passionate about achieving.

Supporting staff to deliver prevention

Time has been invested in a training and awareness programme to help staff across the Service to better understand the focus on health and wellbeing. As a result all staff appreciate and support the move to include health issues within the safe and well check.

Of notable practice is the learning and development progression pathway being developed around prevention. There is no national framework for measuring what good looks like for prevention staff and no national occupational standards for prevention work. Staffordshire have moved to fill this gap by working with Skills for Justice and Skills for Health to develop occupational standards, a career development pathway and training packages. This is still in development however, once complete, it will be disseminated to other Services and could potentially generate a future income stream for SFRS.

Evaluation and evidence of impact

There is an acknowledgement that the impact and return on investment is not yet evidenced although the Service has many stories of how their intervention has had a positive impact and saved costly NHS and social care interventions. SFRS is working with Age UK and Public Health England (PHE) on pilots to build the evidence base and this will be key to future planning with partners and also to the SFRS in understanding better where to focus resource and effort going forward.

Partners feel that the unique value of the FRS comes from the scale that only they can currently deliver, the trust to get over the threshold of households (the pilots suggest virtually 100% success) and the ability of the FRS to do an initial assessment as part of a broader safety check to identify health as well as safety risks.

The Health and Wellbeing board has worked with the FRS to oversee the development of the evidence base. It is positive that the FRS has been invited to sit on the Staffordshire Health and Wellbeing Board- having the opportunity to contribute to these bodies is not a given in all parts of the country. This membership is relatively new but provides an excellent opportunity to shape activity across different organisations.

Looking to the future the FRS may need to look to strategic partners to fund some of the health work. Partners are not averse in principle to this although even with a good evidence base there may still be challenges moving money from health because of their significant financial pressures they face. It would be prudent to lay the groundwork for future financial conversations with partners. The basis for such discussions would be the independent reviews of SFRS's work in this area, the Service's role in supporting CFOA on the sector's agenda around strategic health work and the work SFRS is undertaking in continuing to develop good local links with health partners.

Frontline staff are engaged with the pilots, however there have been teething problems with the tablets being used to collect data. The team would encourage the Service to seek further assurance that the challenges here can be addressed.

Prioritisation – (cross reference to use of data)

The FRS is refining its ability to target interventions. The 'Gold, Silver, Bronze' approach is being used to do this and the data sources and analysis are constantly being refined to ensure safe and well visits are prioritised.

Partners have assisted with this including the Health and Wellbeing Board and CFOA. The use of Exeter data has improved this further. It is clear that this process is evolving and partners are becoming more willing to share data.

There are no doubt further opportunities to develop this and the FRS may wish to formulate a clearer data ask of a wider range of partners. The National 'Fire as a health asset' work on outcomes, metrics and data sharing will support this.

Workplace wellbeing

Staffordshire FRS are a signatory to the Public Health Responsibility Deal and have been awarded the Staffordshire Workplace Health Award Gold level in recognition of their contribution to achieving a healthy and productive workplace. In addition to physical fitness, there is an increasing recognition of the need to support the emotional wellbeing of staff and particularly those with mental health issues. The staff wellbeing survey highlighted work related stress as an issue particularly for middle managers and it is not clear that staff members feel able to raise issues about their mental health.

The Service has taken steps to address this through the appointment of a health and fitness advisor, health and wellbeing champions and more recently MIND training for managers and a mindfulness session. It has recently signed up to the Blue Light time to change pledge to tackle mental health stigma.

The focus on emotional wellbeing of staff is an area which would benefit from further exploration and possibly a dedicated strategy. Whilst this does not suggest a particular problem exists at SFRS, there are always potential benefits for any Service securing further assurance in this area.

5.5 Staffordshire's control function which is shared with West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service

The relationship with the West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) requires both Services to commit significant investment in order that this is effective and resilient. There is an opportunity with a new Chairman of the Staffordshire Fire Authority and Chief Fire Officer to re-frame this relationship. It is felt that SFRS has to take its share of responsibility for this as it appears that a cultural norm 'of being the underdog' is fairly ingrained.

The Members' Governance Board is a valuable opportunity for elected politicians to set the tone and culture for partnership between two Services, and lead by example. As this originally developed from the former Fire Control project which focused on a number of purely operational and technical discussions, the time is right to review the role of the Board and the contribution it is currently making. It has the opportunity to reset this relationship ensuring that positive officer relationships and joint working are endorsed by elected politicians and have their full backing.

In the past few months some changes have been made to the Officer leadership of Fire Control which appears to have led to some encouraging signs of improved relations between the two Services. This has been demonstrated through the new WMFS officer leading on the collaboration attending the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority Performance and Scrutiny Committee and seeing at first-hand some of the concerns raised.

It is clear to the team that at the heart of this issue are cultural differences and, in terms of scale and workforce, some significant differences between the two Services. This is illustrated in the level of supervisory management as well as the procedures/empowerment afforded to the control operators. Differences in attendance targets/measures and policies and procedures generally were a source of frustration for some of the control team. It was clear to the Peer Challenge team that different approaches to mobilising (flexible vs fixed approach) has caused some tension between operating models for the team and could benefit from being more aligned where possible. The impact of this was an outcome, on occasions, of frustration where one cultural and resourcing approach was not fully understood by the other party. The Team felt that this highlighted the challenges of a single control function delivering to two very different services. It also impressed on the need for a better understanding of the differences between the services to lessen the frustration, in order to develop a shared vision with sufficient flexibility to accommodate the differences.

There is room for improvement in regards to communications across the two Services. There were examples given where a change in operational procedures in Staffordshire may not have been fully communicated with the shared control. In a more general sense, it appears that when meetings are held face-to-face the experience is more productive than when conducted over the phone or via email. It was reported that the SFRS crews that had visited the control had realised the scale of operation, the need for automation and had forged relationships which have engendered a greater degree of trust.

It was also noted by the Team that the Control centre hold internal 'change' meetings which seeks suggestions on new ways of working to continuously improve. However it appeared that there was no connection with front line staff and the ideas and concerns they have round the control Service. It may also be useful to link the work of this change group into the two Services to improve communication.

The use of the issue log is seen as a negative and impersonal method of raising concerns which does not build relationships. Wherever possible the team would advise that not only what is communicated is important but also how this is happening. This may not seem a significant issue but based on the potential benefits of effective communication, there is considerable gain to be made on this front.

Without making a judgement either way, the team recognises that there is a difference in views from either side in relation to the arrangement being an 'equal partnership with equal voice'. It is clear that there is a strong view within SFRS that the arrangement feels more like a standard Service offering and that the balance of influence is not equal. This is despite the fact that the governance is balanced. It appears that such feeling are driven more by the fact that the control facility itself was originally WMFRS and that a limited number of SFRS control operators were TUPE'd across during the merger. Conversely WMFRS

view is that their relationship with TUPE'd staff from SFRS is very good and are now 'just part of the team'.

Another key issue relates to the 'Over the Border' OTB incident management and particularly the management of the retained duty system (RDS) crews. This area of the collaboration is leading SFRS to feel that because WMFS's experience of RDS is not as extensive as theirs, the management and sensitivities of this section of the workforce does not meet SFRS expectations. There is an opportunity for the two Services to explore these impacts further and implement future mitigating approaches

The team observed that there were a number of opportunities to develop joint technical solutions, which would naturally lead to a further alignment of operational procedures and therefore maximise the potential efficiencies of the partnership.

The OTB management of incidents into Staffordshire has seen an increase in WMFS mobilisation into the SFRS area. This increased cross border activity increases SFRS costs which is impacting on their wider budget savings plans. This needs to be re-balanced according to potential risk and to ensure that some of the impacts on SFRS RDS crews in those areas are mitigated.

In other parts of the country alternative models include the establishment of a completely separate company which runs the control function, is jointly managed and separately branded independent of either partner. This may be one approach which could be explored.

The Vision 4 upgrade and the full introduction of the Integrated Command Control System (ICCS) should allow better integration of policy around incident types and this is yet another step towards closer working. Alignment of policies and procedures is progressing albeit not at speed and people from both Services are aware of the different operating models in each Service.

It might be helpful for the two Services to jointly identify and employ external support to help to resolve some of these relationship issues. The LGA could have a role in helping to progress this.

In spite of historical problems, both CFOs are now committed to re-framing the relationship and approach to future collaboration, including meeting regularly and visiting the control room to show a united front. It may also be helpful to consider a joint vision statement for the function and an agreement about how SFRS and WMFS can work effectively in partnership.

Whilst not exhaustive or prescriptive, the team reflected on a number of questions that the two Services could jointly explore in order to agree their future collaboration. These are listed in Appendix 2 of this report.

6. Key Assessment Areas

KAAS	DESCRIPTION
KAA1 - Community Risk Management	How well is the authority identifying and prioritising the risks faced by the community?
	The peer challenge team found that Staffordshire FRS were advanced in their identification and prioritisation of risks faced by the community and had been innovative in using established databases and methods of categorisation to target these priorities. It was felt that other databases were emerging nationally which Staffordshire FRS could utilise to ensure they remain 'advanced' in this area.
KAA2 - Prevention	How well is the authority delivering its community safety strategy?
	Staffordshire FRS have a clear community safety plan and have utilised their understanding of prevention to add public value into the area of ill health prevention. It was impressive to see that everybody throughout the Service was brought into this concept and the peer team could see that local innovation was adding value to this agenda.
KAA3 - Protection	How well is the authority delivering its regulatory fire safety strategy?
	The peer team found a very solid approach to fire protection activities. There was clearly good engagement with the Chamber of Commerce and also some good progress had been made in implementing the Primary Authority Scheme. The concept of business support was not only understood but was advanced in its approach to engaging with local businesses and understanding its role in supporting the local economy.
KAA4- Preparedness	How well is the authority ensuring that its responsibilities for planning and preparing are met?
	The approach that we saw to multi agency emergency planning was innovative and noted as best practice. Through this approach we could see the Authority was advanced in its planning and preparedness for situations or events that may impact upon service delivery, however, in some aspects of corporate services, such as the medium term financial savings plan, the planning and preparation were not as advanced.
KAA5- Response	How well is the authority delivering its response, call management and incident support activities?
	Clearly the main focus of the teams review was on the shared control facility with West Midlands FRS where we found that relationships between the 2 Services needed to be rebuilt. However, we did not see that this had had a detrimental effect on the response provided to the communities of Staffordshire and the operational capability that we did observe appeared to be well resourced and supported by the positive culture of the organisation.
KAA6- Health and Safety	How well is the authority ensuring its responsibilities for health, safety and welfare are met?
	Health and safety was not a particular focus of the peer review team but it was evident through working with and in the Service for a number of days that health and safety is at the

	front of the mind of both staff and leaders within the organisation. This was evidenced by the material that was provided to us and the visual communications in the establishments we visited.
KAA7- Training and Development	How well is the authority ensuring its responsibilities for training, development and assessment of its staff are met?
	Staffordshire FRS had shown an innovative approach which was held as best practice in their work on creating training packages and occupational standards for prevention and this demonstrated how they were adapting their training and development capability to meet the needs of the workforce and their future role within the community.

7. Notable Practice

We, as a team would like to highlight the following as areas of notable practice

- Health and the work with skills for justice/skills for health in developing new capabilities to deliver health activities
- The Staffordshire FRS Culture
- FBU – relationship and involvement in delivery
- Civil Contingencies Unit
- Open chair approach to all meetings
- Business Support Team

Conclusion and contact information

Through the peer challenge process we have sought to highlight the many positive aspects of Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service but we have also outlined some key challenges. It has been our aim to provide some detail on them through this report in order to help the Service consider them and understand them. The senior managerial and political leadership will therefore undoubtedly want to reflect further on the findings before determining how they wish to take things forward.

Thank you to SFRS for commissioning the challenge and to everyone involved for their participation. The team are particularly grateful for the support provided both in the preparation for the challenge and during the on-site phase and for the way people we met engaged with the process.

Following SFRS's invitation, members of the peer team will be available to return to work with the Service as it takes forward the messages within this report. Helen Murray (the Local Government Association's Principal Advisor for

the West Midlands) will act as the main contact between SFRS and the Local Government Association going forward, particularly in relation to improvement. Hopefully this provides you with a convenient route of access to the LGA, its resources and packages of support.

All of us connected with the peer challenge would like to wish Staffordshire and SFRS every success in the future.

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Appendix 1 – Contents of the feedback presentation delivered to SFRS on Thursday 24 March 2016

Authority – Governance (Areas of Strength)

- Member development sessions
- Members proud of Service achievements
- Fire Authority members feel an ownership for their local stations and crews
- Some positive examples of scrutiny in individual areas (e.g. excessive call outs to prisons)

Authority – Governance (Areas to explore)

- Needs stronger focus by members on the strategic development and financial planning of the Service
- Last 12-18 months authority has been distracted by internal and external factors and replacement of chairman
- There is a need for Fire Authority members to offer more robust challenge to senior management; this would be welcomed

Authority – Leadership (Areas of Strength)

- Authority very trusting of both the current and future Chief Fire Officer and senior management.
- Authority see political, professional and representative bodies as a partnership

Authority – Leadership (Areas to Explore)

- Question mark as to whether or not the Authority is playing a leadership role in directing the Service
- There are certain frustrations for the senior team in getting members to own decision making (for example the Community Safety options including the consultation)

Authority – Capacity (Areas of Strength)

- There is a significant amount of experience through the time served by individual members of the Authority

Authority – Capacity (Areas to Explore)

- Following member development a further review of the committee structure should be undertaken to ensure the authority is operating in the most efficient and effective way

Service – Governance (Areas of Strength)

- Good Police/Fire collaboration at local level
- High performing teams do not seem to be affected by the uncertainty of future governance

Service – Governance (Areas to Explore)

- Opportunity to refresh challenges and the linkages to priorities and principles and how there appears to be a disconnect with leadership messages in the re-write of the corporate safety plan

- Future savings plan requires further development
- Corporate safety plan doesn't mention partnerships
- The closing of the Service Improvement Plan indicated a loss of momentum in responding to the outcomes from previous Peer Reviews and other audits

Service – Leadership (Areas of Strength)

- Consistency of message regarding prevention is better than cure
- Transformation team working on impact of future governance models

Service – Leadership (Areas to Explore)

- Opportunity for new Chairman and CFO to set clear direction for the authority and Service
- Culture and work on the health agenda well established - time to rebalance priorities to include finance, relationships and project management
- Is “systems leadership” approach understood throughout the Service?

Service – Capacity (Areas of Strength)

- The Service is in a good position in relation to capacity and financial position to deliver on its health agenda based on its positive culture
- PFI working well and providing value for money

Service – Capacity (Areas to Explore)

- No ‘burning bridge’ financially which is leading to pipeline savings figures being unclear
- Maximise the opportunities to use fire/health activities as an income stream
- The reduction in group manager capacity highlights a concern over future sustainability at this level of management

Culture

Areas of Strength

- There is a real sense of an open and very welcoming Service with a ‘can do’ attitude passionately focused on delivering the best outcomes for the people of Staffordshire
- The organisational cultural vision is fully embodied throughout the Service
- The cultural journey has delivered significant cultural change driving a high performance culture
- Positive culture extends beyond staff into the Services provided by the community
- SFRS’ Cultural Framework describing the expected behaviours is the foundation for this performance that focuses on outcomes, not outputs
- The Service are united in excellence and committed to improvement with a strong learning ethos
- The staff genuinely do feel empowered to make a difference and believe that the culture is one where all voices are equal and where empowerment and initiative are welcome
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Areas to Explore

- The vision contained in the leadership message is not readily measureable/quantifiable; you may gain more leverage with your Corporate Safety Plan if it was described
- The ethos of 'prevention is better than cure' runs throughout the Service with many organic and localised initiatives. There does not appear to be a clear performance management process to shape development to ensure coherence.
- There is a small (not clearly identified by the team) minority reported from a number of sources who may wish a return to the previous hierarchical, rule book culture.
- There may be some value in conducting a staff survey to assure yourselves that the 'Match Fit Master Classes' for 2016 and new CPD modules are delivering the desired impact
- Middle managers perceive a lack of authority in the managerial space contrasting with both responsibility and authority in the operational space
- Action plans generally lack smart targets and relative prioritisation
- There is a absence of programme and project management skills in SFRS. Focus is on "getting on with it", before the necessary planning work had been done to clarify objectives, develop the right skills, etc. – a 'Master Class' topic?
- A number of issues around communication, both transmission and reception of messages, were raised by middle managers (not included in some meetings, messages 'lost in the middle')

Data and Intelligence

Areas of Strength

- The 'prevention is better than cure' ethos is well embedded across the whole Service and drives the Service's activity of targeting resources at the most vulnerable.
- The 'Gold, Silver, Bronze' approach to identifying the most vulnerable members of the community is utilising the mosaic data and recently acquired Exeter data effectively.

- The Protect inspection programme uses a variety of information sources and brought together allows each delivery group to focus clearly on its particular risks
- The work of the Business Intelligence Team (BIT) is allowing for a more targeted, flexible approach to risk reduction in each of the delivery groups. This supports the planning process as indicated by the Campaigns calendar that focusses on the key themes based on demand
- Development of Reporting Services – Building on an already strong use of intelligence, will continue to support the ability for Delivery Groups to target risk specific to their area.
- This overall approach clearly supports the ‘empowerment’ of managers to make decisions and feel supported by senior management, reflected in cultural comments

Areas to Explore

- A significant proportion of HFRCs are still completed outside of the GSB process
- The term ‘target’ has been removed from the Service’s vocabulary, which is consistent through all of the discussions, however, still a perception that ‘expectations’ are targets....’however you term it, the Output in the Strategic measures is considered a target’
- 3 Tiers of measures – additional work required in the Individual level to include Protect feedback
- Additional work on communicating the purpose of the 3 tiers of measures and how it applies to the role of teams, and how teams from all areas contribute to them.
- Ability to insert ‘markers’ into the Strategic measures to identify changes in policy or new ways of working that impact on the outcomes. Allows for a greater analysis of the impact of organizational, or environmental, decisions.
- Proactively target new data sets to assist in further refining risk
- Evaluation – continue to evaluate the contribution you are making
- BIT – Fully embedded
- Future investment
- Future Resilience
- Performance of teams not challenged as part of a performance management framework

Health

Areas of Strength

- Clear vision supported across the Service
- Systems leadership approach
- Significant partnership working
- Methodology to target safe and well visits
- Evaluation pilots
- Fire stations as community hubs

Areas to Explore

- Initiating conversations with key partners about potential future scenarios, especially funding
- Finding a middle ground with partners between a project management approach and 'just get on with it'
- Grasping the opportunity of health and wellbeing board membership to influence change in other Services
- Continue to encourage co-location of ambulance and police staff within fire community hubs
- Maintain a focus on evaluation to refine thinking about where FRS have most value and what works best
- Further develop the focus on mental health aspects of workplace wellbeing

Fire Control

Headlines

- We acknowledge the work and resources SFRS have committed to the project
- Relationships
- Cultural differences
- Over the Border incidents
- Home Safety Centre
- Technical Issues
- Communication

Time to reflect

Take a step back from all of the issues and consider the following points:

- You have managed to create a functioning joint control using one system across two very different Services
- The Service to the public for emergency incidents is still excellent
- Your control team is highly motivated to give the best Service they can and want this to work
- Celebrate what you've achieved so far!

Notable Practice

- The Staffordshire FRS Culture

- Health Work (particularly that which focuses on skills for justice/skills for health in developing new capabilities to deliver health activities)
- FBU – relationship and involvement in delivery
- Civil Contingencies Unit
- Open chair approach to all meetings
- Business Support Team

Game Changers

- Golden opportunity with a new Chair and CFO to set clear direction and form a close relationship, each understanding the other's role
- A good point in time to rebalance the priorities of the Service using the successes around culture and health to now refocus on relationships, finance, project management and performance
- Tightening the innovative approach to performance monitoring to ensure outcomes and success are understood by staff.
- Re-framing the Staffordshire/West Midlands relationship
- Clarifying the medium/longer term savings plan (including health activity) and consideration of wider income generation and commercial opportunities
- Re-focus the Authority to provide strong leadership and scrutiny which would be of benefit to the Service at this particular time

**Appendix 2 – Partnership/Collaboration
Rationalisation questions for SFRS and WMFRS to
jointly consider in progressing the next stage of their
joint delivery of Control.**

1. Why are we doing this?
2. (i) How well do our respective organisational cultures line-up and (ii) What can we do jointly to improve alignment in order work effectively with each other?
3. Has there been a period of negotiation in relation to our respective priorities and interests in achieving the partnership?
4. How will we agree to share mutual benefits, risk, responsibility, resources and accountability?
5. How well do we understand what each other have has to gain and lose?
6. How will the nature of the relationships between the two Services partnership be negotiated and explicitly agreed?
7. What are our respective roles in this partnership?
8. How will areas of common ground and conflict/duality of interest be openly mapped out and the implications of these areas be discussed and addressed?
9. What will happen as a result of the partnership existing that would not if it did not exist?
10. What does success look like for both Services and how can we prove the partnership has made a difference to it being achieved?
11. What are the best ways for our partnership to communicate (internally and externally)?
12. Who does the partnership benefit and how are these stakeholders involved in what the partnership does?
13. Who does what best?
14. Do I have to be right all the time?
15. You Win- I win...is this a good description for how we approach joint working on this area of our respective operations?