

Statement of Intent for Improving Public Safety Through Collaborative Arrangements Between North Yorkshire Police and North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service

The benefits of working collaboratively across public services have been recognised in many settings and sectors for some time¹. It is well understood that our emergency services can make substantial improvements to their efficiency and effectiveness by working together more closely.

The North Yorkshire Fire Authority (the Authority), the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC), North Yorkshire Police and North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service (NYFRS) agreed a Statement of Intent for strategic partnership² over three years ago; it is now necessary to convert that intent into realisation of the benefits and advantages to our communities that will be achieved with a different, more ambitious approach. Those benefits and advantages are at the heart of a proposal that the Police and Crime Commissioner will be bringing to partners imminently. To achieve them we need to go beyond what have been termed the rituals of cooperation³ and build in collaboration that is innovative, ambitious and inherent in all that we do for our communities. Enabled and supported by the Government's proposed legislation⁴ there will be an unprecedented opportunity to provide our communities with a truly joined-up approach that will provide greater efficiency and effectiveness, allow reinvestment in our emergency services and ultimately improve public safety. The evidence base for this will be set out in detail in the business case which the Authority is invited both to support and develop.

In June 2013, following discussions with North Yorkshire Police (NYP), the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service (NYFRS) the Authority agreed a strategic approach to providing services for the County and the City of York in the future. While this was principally driven by the funding and resourcing requirements emanating from the Government's austerity programme, the strategic commitment made by partners remains as valid and necessary as it was then. What has changed is that the Government has signalled a very clear intention to encourage and empower forward-thinking and innovative local policing and fire bodies such as ours in North Yorkshire to align their services in the interests of their communities and public safety.

There is one principal overarching objective for this Statement of Intent: the outcomes for the communities of North Yorkshire. Early pre-statutory consultation within our communities shows

¹ See e.g. The Institute for Government <http://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/blog/12858/integration-and-collaboration-in-public-service-markets/>;

² See attached Statement of Intent

³ Sennett, R. (2012) *Together: The Rituals, Pleasures and Politics of Cooperation.*

⁴ The Policing and Crime Bill 2016

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support for a collaborative arrangement between the fire and policing bodies in North Yorkshire under a single accountability framework.

As set out in the Statement of Intent (2013) the principal drivers for alignment in a future collaboration remain:

- Operational synergies in the services provided, particularly those that prevent harm to our communities
- Similarities in organisational cultures of 24-7 emergency service provision across a wide and diverse geography
- A shared context in relation to national funding reductions and a need to cut non-frontline costs
- A coterminous boundary that encompasses a large and logistically difficult territory
- An innovative approach to service redesign
- Parallel work developing across the country between fire and police services.

A key enabler of this intent is the existing alignment at strategic level.

A review of the strategic aims and objectives of both North Yorkshire services shows immediately how closely aligned they are; the proposed arrangements would reflect and reinforce that alignment at the governance level, while at the same time introducing single, straight line accountability to communities for performance and delivery towards those aims and objectives (see fig 1).

This alliance, like the commitment given in 2013, will produce an alignment of services in the functions of:

- Community Safety
- Command and Control / FCR
- Training Facilities
- Transport Management
- HR / Personnel Services
- Training & Development
- Finance
- Estates including a shared Headquarters in the northern area
- Health and Safety
- Communications
- Planning (Operations)
- Planning (Corporate incl. Project teams)
- IT
- Data / Information Management
- Legal Services

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	<u>NORTH YORKSHIRE POLICE</u>	<u>NORTH YORKSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE</u>
	Be Safe, Feel Safe	Working Together for Safer Communities
MISSION	To be the most responsive police service in the country.	To deliver the best service to the people of North Yorkshire.
PRIORITIES / VALUES	<p>Policing Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting vulnerable people • Cut crime & Antisocial Behaviour • Prevention & early intervention • Improve Victim Care <p>Corporate Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transforming the organisation • People First • Partnerships & commissioning 	<p>Strategic Aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection (technical fire safety) • Intervention • Prevention (community safety) • Sustainable organisation

Fig 1.

We already work well together. However since the initial statement of intent progress has been frustratingly slow. For example in terms of our estate we have six proposals in development with NYFRS but there are 22 co-location opportunities. There are many more operational benefits that we can achieve for our communities, benefits that include:

Protecting the vulnerable - a completely integrated approach would provide better care for the most vulnerable, early prevention work for those most at risk in their own homes

Improving Road Safety - although we work collaboratively as members of 95 Alive, demand data illustrates that there is more that can be done by visibility of emergency vehicles on key routes

Responding to calls for service - the quality of response through joint control room functions would ensure more efficient deployment

Managing and recovering from critical incidents – incidents that threaten people’s lives, liberties and livelihood e.g. flooding and other civil emergencies can be improved through the function of one coordinated emergency service approach, together with better utilisation of enhanced first responder training in rural communities

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In short, we could work even more efficiently and effectively if we align our police and fire services in a more streamlined, less bureaucratic way. Bringing both emergency services under a single strategic direction and governance framework will enable transformational collaboration to happen quickly, efficiently, effectively and with a firm view on protecting frontline servicers and increasing public safety.

By creating one clear direction of travel, one overarching strategy delivered and monitored through one governance mechanism where both the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Constable sit together on the sole Executive Board, the Police and Crime Commissioner would be able to provide accountable oversight and strategic direction in a way that gives our communities, for the first time, a single point of accountability for both of the critical emergency services across their county.

As under the previous strategic commitment, the scoping, costing and delivery of these community benefits will be governed under joint scrutiny arrangements through a Programme Board and Steering Group. Any disputes or changes to the scope will be dealt with at these forums. The Steering Group hold the final decision.