



DEBATE PACK

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Police and Fire Shared Services

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Westminster Hall Debate 3 November 2015 at 1430hrs

A debate on shared services between police forces and fire services will be held on Tuesday 3 November at 1430hrs.

The member in charge of the debate is Amanda Milling.

On 11 September 2015, the Government announced a consultation on proposals for further collaboration between the emergency services, which included a proposal for Police and Crime Commissioners to take responsibility for local Fire and Rescue Authorities if appropriate. The consultation closed on 23 October and the Government is currently analysing the responses.

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The House of Commons Library prepares a briefing in hard copy and/or online for most, but not all, non-legislative debates in the Chamber and Westminster Hall other than half-hour debates. Debate Packs are produced quickly after the announcement of parliamentary business. They are intended to provide a summary or overview of the issue being debated and identify relevant briefings and useful documents, including press and parliamentary material. More detailed briefing can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

1. Collaboration between the police and fire services

The challenges of policing in austerity have been the subject of much debate as have the changing nature of the risks and demands within which the fire service operates and the rising demands on the ambulance service. Many have advocated closer co-operation between “blue light services” to achieve greater efficiencies, and there have been many innovative local examples of joint working and asset sharing.

1.1 Development of Government policy

The [Conservative Party Manifesto 2015](#) contained a commitment, ‘to enable fire and police services to work more closely together.’ On 20 May 2015, the Home Secretary gave detail in her speech on the forthcoming *Policing and Criminal Justice Bill* to the Police Federation:

In addition to the Bill, we will make further changes, including enabling the fire and rescue services to engage in much closer joint working with the police.¹

In an earlier speech given on 7 November 2013, the Home Secretary praised the collaborative work of PCCs with other blue light services; in particular Northamptonshire, Merseyside and Surrey:²

Many police and crime commissioners are looking not just to reform and make savings by collaborating with other forces but with other emergency services. In Northamptonshire, Adam Simmonds has been bold enough to question why we have three separate emergency services. He is considering ways of integrating the police and fire service, and I know – with the support of his local county council – he’s looking at setting up a combined headquarters, possibly inside a new county council centre. This is exactly the sort of innovation I want the Government not just to applaud – but take firm action across the whole country to help deliver.

In Merseyside, Jane Kennedy has signed a contract giving the go-ahead for a new joint Police and Fire Command and Control Centre, and building work is already underway. And in Surrey, Kevin Hurley is driving collaboration between the three emergency services, as part of the Public Services Transformation Network. This will see Surrey Police, Surrey Fire and Rescue and the South East Coast Ambulance Service come together to deliver streamline operations, share more premises and deliver joint safety campaigns.³

¹ Home Office, *Home Secretary's Police Federation 2015 speech*, 20 May 2015.

² For more information see: Northants Constabulary, *New Police and Fire joint operations planning team launched* (22 July 2014), Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, *Police and Fire Control Centre Contract Signed* (6 March 2013), and Surrey County Council, *Emergency Services Collaboration* (15 April 2015).

³ Home Office, *Police and Crime Commissioners, one year on: warts and all*, 7 November 2013.

On 11 September 2015, a [press release](#) accompanying a speech made by the Prime Minister indicated that there would be, 'new legislation to help the police, fire and ambulance operations collaborate'.⁴ In the speech, *My vision for a smarter state*, Mr Cameron said:

Take our emergency services. Right now we have a situation where in most towns, the police, fire and ambulance services all have different premises, back offices, IT policies and systems, and procurement policies – despite all their work being closely related.

Places like Hampshire have shown the way forward, where the emergency services have brought functions together to save millions of pounds a year. We need to see that sort of thinking in other places.

So I can announce today that we will introduce reforms that will enable the police, fire and ambulance services to work more closely together to save money and improve their effectiveness. And in areas with local support we will enable Police and Crime Commissioners to take on control of the fire and rescue services, including in London where that power will be vested in the Mayor.

1.2 Government Consultation

Between 11 September 2015 and 23 October 2013 the Government ran a consultation, [Enabling closer working between the police and fire services](#). This summarised the proposed measures as:

- introducing a new duty on all three emergency services to actively consider collaboration opportunities with one another to improve efficiency and effectiveness;
- enabling Police and Crime Commissioners to take on the duties and responsibilities of fire and rescue authorities, where a local case is made;
- where a Police and Crime Commissioner takes on the responsibilities of a fire and rescue authority, enabling him or her to create a single employer for police and fire staff, facilitating the sharing of back office functions and streamlining management;
- in areas where a Police and Crime Commissioner has not become responsible for fire and rescue services, enabling them to have representation on their local fire and rescue authority; and
- abolishing the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority and giving the Mayor of London direct responsibility for the fire and rescue service in London, as will be the case in Greater Manchester.

The consultation is now closed and the Government are currently analysing the responses.

⁴ GOV.UK Press Release, [Prime Minister sets out vision for a "smarter state"](#), 11 September 2015.

1.3 What is already happening?

The [Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group](#) published a report in 2014, *Emergency Services Collaboration – The Current Picture*, which gives several examples including:

- Poynton Emergency Services Hub in Cheshire, which opened in January 2014
- A new combined police and fire and rescue service training centre in County Durham
- A joint police and fire communications centre in North Wales
- Combined fire and police stations in Norfolk and Suffolk

Other examples given in the Government's consultation document include:

- Northamptonshire's Interoperability Programme which is working towards greater collaboration between the police and fire services and eventually incorporating the ambulance service. Current measures include joint training, coordination of fleet and logistics management, colocation of premises, a new Community Protection Team and a joint operations team. This is expected to save £21 million for the police and £2 for the fire service over 4 years.
- In Surrey and Sussex, under the Multi-Agency Information Transfer Programme, the emergency services are working to create an electronic connection between command and control systems. This will reduce the time taken to transfer information between police and fire services, culminating in an integrated control centre amalgamating 13 saving about 7,500 operator hours per year.
- In Lincolnshire the fire service now responds jointly with the ambulance service to give patients faster treatment.
- In Hampshire police and fire services are creating a shared headquarters and strategic command centre as well as collocated stations and shared training facilities: this will save around £1 million for both services.
- Suffolk police and fire services now have five shared stations used by retained firefighters and Safer Neighbourhood Teams.

There are also two major programmes to improve joint working between the emergency services:

- The [Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme](#) which is replacing services currently provided by Airwave with a new national mobile communications service for the three emergency services across Great Britain.
- The [Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme](#), which initially ran from 2012-14, and focused on improving the way the police, fire and rescue and ambulance services worked together when responding to multi-agency and major incidents. The programme is now in continual implementation to encourage long-term change towards a culture of interoperability and collaboration between the emergency services.

1.4 Facing the Future

Sir Ken Knight's report, *Facing the Future*, was commissioned by the previous Government and published on 17 May 2013. It focuses mainly on the fire service, but [section 3.2](#) considers collaboration with other "blue light services". It argues that, 'efficiency and quality can be driven through collaboration outside of the fire sector,' and that opportunities can be found in procurement, co-working, and co-location.⁵

Whilst *Facing the Future* looks mainly at the more developed area of co-working with ambulance services, it does note examples of collaboration with the police service on a local community policing project and through joint emergency control rooms.⁶ It also suggests a number of larger-scale options to increase efficiency, including:⁷

- merging fire and rescue services with one or more of the other blue-light services, improving interoperability;
- sharing governance structures with other blue-light services, such as Police and Crime Commissioners taking on the role of fire and rescue authority; and/or,
- improving join up at a government level between sponsors of the blue-light services and other departments that hold an interest in activity related to fire and rescue work.

The report adds the proviso that, 'these are clearly broad-brush options, many of which would involve upheaval in fire and rescue authorities and potentially in other blue- light services. But the gains could be considerable.'⁸

Furthermore, the report notes that whilst proposals for PCCs to take responsibility for fire and rescue services are innovative, it would complicate the current administration of fire authorities. However, Sir Ken Knight concludes he would welcome a trial of such a model which, if effective, could be adopted universally with clearly set out benefits and a suitable level of public scrutiny.⁹

⁵ Sir Ken Knight, *Facing the future*, 17 May 2013, p52.

⁶ *Ibid*, pp53-4.

⁷ *Ibid*, p74.

⁸ *Ibid*.

⁹ *Ibid*, p75.

1.5 Reactions to Government Proposals

The Government is still considering responses to its consultation document, and has yet to publish any analysis of them. The following draws on some of the responses which have been published online.

The Fire Brigades Union is opposed to the changes:

The FBU believes it is huge mistake to allow Police and Crime Commissioners to take over the management of fire and rescue services. The union believes such a step would ruin the service firefighters provide to the public, damage the functioning and reputation of the fire and rescue service, diminish local democracy, worsen firefighters' working conditions and is bad news for the police service itself. Many stakeholders, councillors and other elected representatives, including MPs share these concerns. The FBU urges the government to stop and think again before it damages an irreplaceable public service.¹⁰

Pete Murphy, director of the public policy and management research group at Nottingham Business School, has argued that services would suffer given PCCs' primary focus:

...if the current plans are implemented there is a very strong chance that the fire and rescue services would go back to the "benign neglect" that characterised the service from 1974 to 2001 when the Home Office was last responsible for fire services. Police, civil disobedience, immigration and criminal justice dominated the Home Office agenda, as well as its time and resources.¹¹

A number of Police and Crime Commissioners have welcomed the proposals, for example Julia Mulligan, North Yorkshire's Conservative Police and Crime Commissioner, was quoted as saying, 'I very much welcome this announcement. PCCs have for some time been making the case to combine support services and take over the powers of Fire Authorities. This makes complete sense – we can save considerable amounts of money, cut out bureaucracy and improve accountability to the public.'¹²

Devon and Cornwall's Conservative PCC, Tony Hogg, was quoted as saying that he had, 'long argued that emergency services should work more closely together to ensure integrated service deliver, better value for money and improved service,' and that it would be right to, 'fully explore what further benefits might be achieved by pursuing the Government's proposals.'¹³

In contrast, Cornwall Council's cabinet member for fire services, Geoff Brown, said he was, 'totally opposed,' to the scheme and that, 'a much

¹⁰ *Fire Brigades Union's Submission to the Consultation Enabling Closer Working between the Emergency Services*, undated.

¹¹ *Guardian*, 'Plans to merge fire and police services have dodged proper scrutiny', 2 November 2015.

¹² *The Selebian*, 'Police Commissioner backs PMs call to merge Police and Fire support services', 11 September 2015.

¹³ *Western Morning News*, 'South West could see police and fire services under PCC control, as ministers move forward with plans', 21 August 2015.

more sensible approach would be greater cooperation at an operational level.¹⁴

West Sussex's Conservative PCC, Katy Bourne said she was, 'very supportive of the creation of a new duty which would help drive collaboration between the emergency services and would strongly advocate Police & Crime Commissioners taking a leading role in the facilitation of this work.'¹⁵ West Sussex County Council reportedly argued the procedure was, 'heavily biased in favour of a PCC-based governance model,' whereas there were, 'other ways of delivering a fire and rescue service within a county council that deliver more effective outcomes and collaboration.'¹⁶

A Labour councillor Michael Jones was reported as saying:

Our concern is losing direct local control would not only make things worse, but there would be even less local scrutiny of any further cuts that the PCC may then decide to make. After all, the current members of the Police and Crime Panel are not there for their expertise on the fire service, their focus is on crime and the police.¹⁷

Brighton and Hove's Green Party are opposed to the changes:

To move the responsibility for running the fire service to the Police & Crime Commissioner would pose an enormous threat to fire safety and undermine substantial progress made in fire prevention. The PCC is focused on law and order, they have no knowledge or expertise on fire safety or fire services, which should not in a million years be subject to political posturing. The idea that this is somehow democratic is absurd - the PCC elections were risible, with only 5% of all residents voting for the current incumbent as their first choice ".Green Councillors are now urging the public as well as councillors and MPs from all political parties to unite in resisting any restructure of the fire service and calling on the government to scrap these plans.¹⁸

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner, *HM Government - Enabling closer working between the emergency services*, 23 October 2015.

¹⁶ *Eastbourne Herald*, 'Are Sussex Tories 'at war' over plans to transfer fire authorities to PCCs?', 14 October 2015.

¹⁷ *Milton Keynes' Citizen*, *Are Sussex Tories 'at war' over plans to transfer fire authorities to PCCs?*, 14 October 2015.

¹⁸ Brighton and Hove Green Party, *Public urged to help protect fire service from "life-threatening" reforms*, 8 October 2015.

2. Parliamentary Business

2.1 Parliamentary Questions

The following is a selection of PQs (written and oral) asked in relation to shared services between the emergency services. To search for more parliamentary material relating to this, or any other topic, please use [Parliamentary Search](#).

Police and Crime Commissioners

[\[HC Deb 12 Oct 2015 c5\]](#)

Amanda Milling (Cannock Chase) (Con): I recently joined Staffordshire's police and crime commissioner and other local MPs to call for greater integration of the back-office functions of our police and fire services. That option was presented to avoid front-line fire services being cut, but we have now seen fire engines removed from both Cannock and Rugeley stations. What are the Government doing to encourage police and fire authorities to share back-office services?

Mike Penning: We are already seeing around the country the sort of innovations my hon. Friend talks about, and I have no idea why they are not doing it in that part of the world. It is common sense to break down silos and get the emergency services working together to secure more money for the front line. It is what we would all expect.

Police Funding Formula

[\[HC Deb 12 Oct 2015 c3\]](#)

Mr Philip Hollobone (Kettering) (Con): Northamptonshire police have been particularly innovative in finding joint operational and cost-saving initiatives with the local fire service, but it faces a particular challenge involving violent crime. How might those two important factors be factored into the new police funding formula?

Mrs May: I welcome my hon. Friend's comments on Northamptonshire police, who have indeed been very innovative. They have been at the forefront of work to join together the police force and the fire authority to ensure savings and a better service for the people of the county of Northamptonshire. We are trying to adopt a funding formula that is simpler than the previous one, that is fair across the board and that people can look at and understand; a funding formula where people can appreciate why the elements are in there. That cannot be said of the current funding formula.

Emergency Services [\[214658\]](#)

Asked by Mr Peter Bone on 17 November 2014

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what his policy is on the fire service, police service and ambulance service sharing the same buildings; and if he will make a statement.

Answered by Penny Mordaunt on 20 November 2014

The Government supports and encourages fire and rescue authorities to share estates with the the police and ambulance services in cases where the opportunity to do so is locally identified. The recently announced £75 million fire transformation fund includes, for example, £4.5 million for new fire stations in Merseyside which will be shared with the police and ambulance service. Sharing estates can of course help drive efficiency savings and further collaboration between the emergency services.

Local Government: Cooperation [7051]**Asked by Maria Caulfield on 14 July 2015**

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, which local authorities work with other public bodies to house their offices in public sector buildings and hubs; and if he will make a statement.

Answered by Mr Marcus Jones on 21 July 2015

The Department does not collect data on which local authorities work with other public bodies to house their offices. However, we encourage all authorities to make the best use of their assets to save money and provide collaborative services by sharing of premises.

In November 2014, we announced a further tranche of £89.4 million Transformation Challenge Award funding for 2015-16. The successful bids included local authorities sharing buildings as well as services with public sector partners, such as Charnwood Borough Council's co-locating its customer service office with Jobcentre Plus and Leicestershire County Council. This will provide customers with a one-stop jobs and benefits service and annual accommodation savings of some £440,000.

My Department is also encouraging and supporting collaboration through the £75 million Fire Service Transformation Fund. Out of the 37 winning bids, 31 of those bids are for collaboration-type activities with other emergency services, including through sharing stations and services.

The One Public Estate programme, jointly run by Cabinet Office and the Local Government Association, supports collaboration across central and local government and the wider public sector on asset management. Across the programme over 40 co-location opportunities are being taken forward. For example Hampshire County Council, fire and rescue service and Police Force have an integrated (shared services) business centre and shared facilities at Alresford, Stockbridge and Redbridge fire stations. Two of these locations are also used as ambulance standby points, making them emergency service 'blue light hubs'. Following last week's Budget announcement of £6 million to extend the programme, we would expect this to support an increase in co-location opportunities over the Parliament.

2.2 Written Statements

Enabling closer working between the emergency services [[HCWS191](#)]

Made by Mrs Theresa May, Home Secretary, 11 September 2015

The police, fire and rescue and NHS ambulance services play a vital role in serving and protecting our communities. The Government is committed to ensuring that they continue to deliver for the public and believes greater collaboration between the services is fundamental to this ambition.

We know that where the emergency services already collaborate, they can deliver efficiencies and service improvements. The Government has already invested over £70 million in local blue light collaboration projects. However, despite some good local examples, the overall picture on emergency services collaboration is patchy and we must do more to improve the position.

I am clear, as are the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, and the Secretary of State for Health, that the emergency services should be accountable to the communities they serve. In keeping with the Government's broader approach to the devolution of powers to local people, we want to ensure that the public has a real say in the way that emergency services are delivered in their area. Directly elected Police and Crime Commissioners can provide this, with their clear local accountability and strong incentive to pursue ambitious reform to improve local services and deliver value for money in the interests of the people they serve.

We have today published a joint Home Office, Department for Communities and Local Government and Department for Health consultation paper to seek views on proposals to improve joint working between the emergency services and provide local accountability. The consultation paper proposes:

- introducing a high level duty to collaborate on the three emergency services to improve efficiency and effectiveness;
- enabling Police and Crime Commissioners to take over governance of their local fire and rescue authority, where a local case is made;
- where a Police and Crime Commissioner takes on the responsibilities of a fire and rescue authority, enabling him or her to create a single employer for police and fire staff, facilitating the sharing of back office functions and streamlining management;
- enabling Police and Crime Commissioners to be represented on fire and rescue authorities, in areas where such authorities remain in place;
- bringing fire and rescue services in London under the direct responsibility of the Mayor of London by abolishing the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority; and

- encouraging local ambulance foundation trusts to consider their engagement with their local Police Crime and Commissioners and whether to have Police and Crime Commissioner representation on their council of governors.

The consultation ends on 23rd October 2015. A copy of the consultation paper has been placed in the House Library.

Our public services need to continue to adapt and innovate to carry on delivering the world-class services that communities deserve. We strongly believe that greater collaboration and closer working is the best way for the emergency services to achieve this.

3. Media Articles

The following is a small selection of recent press and media articles relevant to this debate.

Please note: the Library is not responsible for the views expressed in, nor the accuracy of, external content.

Guardian, 2 November 2015

[Plans to merge fire and police services have dodged proper scrutiny](#)

The Telegraph, 11 September 2015

[Police and fire services set to merge in radical shake up of emergency services](#)

Guardian, 3 September 2014

[Emergency services 'will have to be integrated', warns Theresa May](#)

Independent, 24 August 2015

[Fire ambulances: Soaring demand prompts move for firefighters to support NHS crews](#)

Telegraph, 24 April 2015

[UK's first tri service safety officer ready for duty](#)

Milton Keynes' Citizen, 14 October 2015

[Are Sussex Tories 'at war' over plans to transfer fire authorities to PCCs?](#)

Dorking and Leatherhead Advertiser, 7 October 2015

[Surrey's commissioner backs plan to merge fire services with police force](#)

The Selebian, 11 September 2015

[Police Commissioner backs PMs call to merge Police and Fire support services](#)

South Wales Argus, 14 September 2015

[Proposals for firefighters and police officers to have the same boss met with lukewarm response](#)

Eastern Daily Press, 12 September 2015

[Plans for police chief to lead fire services fail to impress union chairman](#)

The Northern Echo, 11 September 2015

[Police commissioners welcome plans to oversee fire services](#)

Western Morning News, 21 August 2015

[South West could see police and fire services under PCC control, as ministers move forward with plans](#)

Sunday Express, 31 May 2015

[Call the police, get a fireman! 'Barmy' plan to combine our 999 services](#)

4. Press Releases

Association of Police and Crime Commissioners

Blue light services 'can work successfully together', 17 November 2014

Blue light services can work together successfully, says the APCC representative on the Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group.

The working group, which comprises senior leaders from across the emergency services and will act as a national driver for innovation and best practice, recently published an overview report giving the most accurate picture yet of the current collaborative projects between blue light services in England and Wales. The report was compiled and produced by central Government with key APCC involvement.

David Lloyd, the Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner who represents the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) on the group and is chairing an Emergency Services Collaboration Workshop at today's Partnership Summit said: "This excellent report gives a thorough national picture of the collaboration projects that exist between the emergency services today.

"There are many innovative schemes included in the report which show how the blue light services can work successfully together in order to improve the services they provide to the public while ensuring value for the taxpayers' pound.

"I am particularly pleased to see the myriad of different ways police forces up and down the country are working closely with their partner organisations to meet the challenging financial environment they find themselves in.

"By reporting on and sharing the details of these projects, we can learn how similar schemes can benefit similar organisations in different parts of the UK."

The working group was formed in September this year with funding from three Government departments in order to support and drive closer working between the emergency services and as a means to share best practice among services and their governing authorities.

This overview report, called 'Emergency Services Collaboration – The Current Picture', provides a baseline for the working group to commission research into those areas of collaboration that appear to provide the potential for improving services.

The research will provide a firm evidence base for those services wishing to pursue their own transformational projects and for future policy development.

Report: *Emergency Services Collaboration – The Current Picture*

Police and Crime Commissioner for Warwickshire

PCC has no desire to take on responsibility for fire and rescue services, 15 September 2015

Warwickshire Police and Crime Commissioner Ron Ball says he has no desire to taken on powers and responsibilities for fire and rescue services within the county under new proposals for blue light collaboration announced by the Government.

On Friday the Prime Minister announced radical proposals to transform the way police, fire and ambulance services work together, including enabling police and crime commissioners to take on the duties and responsibilities for fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) if there is a local demand for it.

The measures in the Government consultation paper also include the introduction of a new statutory duty on all three emergency services to look at opportunities to work with one another better to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

Where PCCs do take on the role of FRAs, they would become the single employer for police and fire staff, to enable easier sharing of back office functions and streamline management. The proposals would also allow Chief Fire Officers to be appointed as Chief Constables, despite having no prior police experience.

Improved working practices between PCCs and ambulance services are also proposed, with the suggestion that NHS ambulance foundation trusts should consider PCC representation on their board of governors.

Reacting to the proposed changes, Warwickshire Police and Crime Commissioner Ron Ball said:

“While I welcome any proposals which encourage closer working between the blue light emergency services, I do not have any desire to assume responsibility for fire and rescue services within the county.

“We have a good relationship with Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service and already co-operate on a number of initiatives, but I am not convinced that there would be a significant business case or local desire for a merged police and fire service.

“Warwickshire Police has been at the forefront of police collaboration nationally thanks to the alliance with West Mercia Police and together we are already pursuing options for wider collaboration, for example through the management of our property portfolio through the public sector company Place Partnership. I will continue to pursue other options where there are benefits to working together but I do not believe there is a strong business case for taking responsibility for the fire service locally. Equally, I find it extremely difficult to see how a Chief Fire Officer could take over as a police Chief Constable or vice versa.”

Public Service Transformation Network

Research reveals new opportunities for emergency services collaboration, 26 March 2015

The national lead working group on emergency service collaboration has welcomed the publication of research into joint working between blue light services up and down the country.

The Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group commissioned the study to identify the factors that have resulted in a number of very positive collaborations and the main barriers to increasing the scope and speed of collaboration between services in England and Wales.

The research by the Universities of Nottingham, Birmingham and West Scotland in conjunction with the charity Skills for Justice, was commissioned to identify how services could work together to improve delivery at a time of restricted public funding.

More than 50 in-depth interviews were conducted as part of the study with emergency service leaders and front line staff in Greater Manchester, Surrey, Sussex, South Wales and Gwent, Lincolnshire, Hampshire and Northamptonshire.

The views of chief fire officers, chief constables, ambulance chief executives, fire authority chairs, police and crime commissioners and emergency service unions in England and Wales were also sought.

Importantly, the public were also surveyed and the results showed an overwhelming number of people believed the emergency services should work together more often to deliver better services.

The researchers identified a number of collaboration opportunities ranging in scale of complexity from the sharing of control rooms and estates through to joint training programmes and the merging of local emergency service budgets and governance structures.

Police and Crime Commissioner David Lloyd, whose office oversees the working group, said: "The research undertaken by the universities and Skills for Justice highlights the potential for further collaboration across the county. It is clear from the report that there is strong public support for the emergency services working closer together."

"The next government now has an opportunity to help deliver more joined up working between the emergency services, by further supporting local services to develop collaboration and breaking down the barriers and professional silos that unfortunately still exist in some places. This support will help our blue light services work together even more effectively to put the needs of the public at the heart of what they do."

Chief Fire Officers Association President Peter Dartford said: "This report identifies the great progress that has already been made by the emergency services in working collaboratively for the benefit of our communities. We want to work with our blue light partners to improve outcomes in health, education, crime and disorder and economic development, and we know that the public wants us to cooperate to deliver these services. The innovative partnerships that the report illustrates are a fine example of the good practice that is being undertaken, but we can't rest on our laurels. We need to work to overcome barriers and issues that stand in the way of more collaboration."

Association of Ambulance Chief Executives managing director Martin Flaherty OBE said: "This is interesting research and we are pleased that it shows how much hard work is already going into sensible and appropriate joint working initiatives."

"We have a long history of working closely with our partners in the police and fire and rescue services and there are undoubted benefits of closer collaboration where our services overlap. We must also remember there are specific differences between the three services and different objectives. The ambulance service is first and foremost an intrinsic part of the NHS providing a wide range of clinical services and not just an emergency response. In fact the majority of patients responded to by ambulance services have less serious conditions and there are relatively few crossovers in front line services between ourselves and fire & rescue and police."

"We look forward to working with our partners in the police, fire and rescue services as well as our partners in the rest of the NHS to evaluate any new areas of collaboration to determine which are sensible, workable and truly deliver benefits for our patients and the public alike."

Going forward, the working group will use the research to work with the government following the general election in May to identify ways to deliver greater collaboration among services in England and Wales.

Full report: [*Research into Emergency Services Collaboration*](#) (2015)

5. Further Information

5.1 Government Consultation

The Government Consultation, *Enabling closer working between the emergency services*, ran between 11 September and 23 October 2015. The consultation is now closed and the Government is analysing the responses. In the meantime, the consultation paper is still available online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/enabling-closer-working-between-the-emergency-services>

5.2 *Facing the Future*

An independent review of the efficiency and operations of fire and rescue authorities in England was conducted by Sir Ken Knight in 2013. Sir Ken Knight's full report, *Facing the Future*, is available online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/facing-the-future>

5.3 Emergency Services Collaboration

The Emergency Services Collaboration Working Group published a report in 2014 which gave several examples of current collaborative practise between the emergency services. The report, entitled *Emergency Services Collaboration – The Current Picture*, is available online at:

<http://www.apccs.police.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Emergency-Services-Collaboration-2014.pdf>

5.4 Library Briefing Papers

House of Commons Library, *Police and Crime Commissioners*, SN06104

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