

<b>REPORT REFERENCE NO.</b>	<b>DSFRA/16/5</b>
<b>MEETING</b>	<b>DEVON &amp; SOMERSET FIRE &amp; RESCUE AUTHORITY (BUDGET)</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>19 FEBRUARY 2016</b>
<b>SUBJECT OF REPORT</b>	<b>DEVON &amp; CORNWALL POLICE AND DORSET POLICE STRATEGIC ALLIANCE – OPPORTUNITIES AND OPTIONS FOR DEVON &amp; SOMERSET FIRE &amp; RESCUE AUTHORITY</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	<b>Chief Fire Officer</b>
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<p><i>That the Authority considers the contents of this report with a view to approving full participation in the Strategic Alliance on the basis as set out in this report and summarised in below:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>(a) that the Authority retains full governance arrangements over changes to the number, nature and disposition of Devon &amp; Somerset Fire and Rescue Service staff, resources and services; and</i></li> <li><i>(b) that the Chief Fire Officer be delegated authority to develop business cases to inform decision making by the Authority on proposals for Service staff, resources and services intended to come under the auspices of the Strategic Alliance, attending such meetings as deemed necessary to facilitate the production of such business cases.</i></li> </ul>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<p>As previously advised, the government announced recently that this Authority will be required to realise additional savings of £7.5m over the next four years.</p> <p>As part of meeting this significant financial challenge, officers have been exploring options with members of the Devon and Cornwall and Dorset Strategic Alliance to explore how the resilience of the Service can be maintained and/or how further savings can be achieved as a result of joining the Strategic Alliance. Associated with this, the Authority will also be aware of the government's desire for emergency services to work better together and in this respect intends to legislate to introduce a new statutory duty to collaborate.</p> <p>Participation in the Strategic Alliance is, therefore, in-keeping with both this Authority's Medium Term Financial Plan and government expectations. Furthermore, participation in the Strategic Alliance will reduce the need for staffing savings to be made from other areas of the Service and as such, the impact on the grant reductions on the service to the public will be reduced.</p>
<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>	Will vary dependant on the option to be considered but the strategic intent is that this approach will reduce costs and maintain/improve the quality of service.

<b>EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS (ERBA)</b>	This will be conducted as part of the business case for each area affected.
<b>APPENDICES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Overarching Strategic Alliance Recommendations</li> <li>B. Strategic Alliance Governance Structure, Roles and Responsibilities</li> <li>C. Strategic Level Contribution of DSFRS to the Strategic Alliance</li> </ul>
<b>LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>	<p>Enabling closer working between emergency services</p> <p><a href="http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/495371/6.1722_HO_Enabling_Closer_Working_Between_the_Emergency_Services_Consult...pdf">www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/495371/6.1722_HO_Enabling_Closer_Working_Between_the_Emergency_Services_Consult...pdf</a></p>

## 1. **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Authority has previously been advised that the government is committed to ensuring that emergency services work more closely together and will be introducing, subject to parliamentary approval, a new statutory duty for emergency services (Police, Fire and Ambulance) to collaborate.

[www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/495371/6.1722\\_HO\\_Enabling\\_Closer\\_Working\\_Between\\_the\\_Emergency\\_Services\\_Consult....pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/495371/6.1722_HO_Enabling_Closer_Working_Between_the_Emergency_Services_Consult....pdf)

- 1.2 Within the South West, the concept of formal collaborations between, in particular, police and fire & rescue is complicated somewhat by the lack of co-terminous boundaries between the individual services, for example Devon & Cornwall Police, Avon & Somerset Police and Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service.
- 1.3 Acknowledging the boundary issue and to facilitate broader collaborative working between the emergency services in the South West, the South West Emergency Services Forum was proposed by the Chief Fire Officer and Chairman and has now been established. The first meeting of this group was held in November 2015 at Service Headquarters with a further meeting in February 2016.
- 1.3 In addition, early and informal discussions have been held to explore further opportunities for the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service ('the Service') to work more closely with the police and these also highlighted the potential for Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority ('the Authority') to participate in the Strategic Alliance ('the Alliance') currently in place between the Devon & Cornwall Police and Dorset Police forces. This paper will discuss the options for working more closely with this Alliance.
- 1.4 The Authority has approved a five-year strategic plan (Our Plan: 2015-2020, Creating Safer Communities) which sets out plans for the delivery of an effective and efficient fire and rescue service for the communities of Devon and Somerset whilst at the same time meeting forecast savings targets.
- 1.5 There are however, a number of additional strategic drivers that will require the Authority to look for further opportunities to work differently, not least the potential for the financial challenges to extend beyond the current Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) period and the government's intention for all the emergency services (and particularly the police and fire and rescue service) to work more closely together.

## 2. **BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Statutory reforms (the Police Act 1996) introduced duties on Chief Constables and Policing Bodies to keep collaboration opportunities under review and to collaborate where it is in the interests of the efficiency or effectiveness of their own and other police force areas.
- 2.2 The Policing and Crime Act 2009 expanded the provisions under which collaboration agreements may be made by Police Forces and Police Authorities and imposed a stronger duty than was previously the case on police authorities. Whereas previously such authorities were required only to support collaboration by their own forces, the new duties require Chief Constables and Policing Bodies to work together to review opportunities to collaborate, to engage with their prospective collaboration partners and to make a judgement as to whether those opportunities present the best option available. Where collaboration is judged to be the best option, they must collaborate.

- 2.3 These new duties allow bodies other than police forces and policing bodies to join a collaboration agreement. This will help the police service to take advantage of the opportunities available for collaborating with others in the public and private sector. It is thought the most likely partners will be other public sector organisations involved in a shared service (such as another emergency service body or a local authority sharing business support services with the police).
- 2.4 The Conservative Party has long been committed to ensuring that emergency services work more closely together and in its last manifesto stated that it “*will enable fire and police services to work more closely together and develop the role of our elected and accountable Police and Crime Commissioners*”.
- 2.5 The Spending Review and Autumn Statement (2015) announced the introduction from early 2017, subject to parliamentary approval, of a new statutory duty for emergency services to collaborate. The government has also stated that it is committed to ensuring that emergency services continue to deliver for the public and believes greater collaboration across all three services is fundamental to this ambition.
- 2.6 And at the start of this year, it was confirmed that ministerial responsibility for fire and rescue policy would transfer to the Home Office from the Department for Communities and Local Government. This, it was stated, would support a radical transformation of how the police and fire and rescue services work together and would pave the way for improvement in local fire and policing by providing clear leadership, supporting greater collaboration and delivering value for money for taxpayers. In particular the Home Office has stressed the potential for greater support service integration, highlighting areas such as procurement and information and communications technology (ICT).

### **3. THE DEVON & CORNWALL AND DORSET POLICE STRATEGIC ALLIANCE**

- 3.1 In December 2013, the Police and Crime Commissioners for Devon & Cornwall Police and Dorset Police forces supported the creation of a joint programme team to scope the feasibility of a strategic alliance and to inform the production of a strategic outline business case. The strategic outline business case set out the different proposals for an ‘Alliance Operating Model’, the associated financial and non-financial benefits of those options and made recommendations about the viability of a strategic alliance. The strategic outline business case also outlined a recommended approach and the sequencing of the next phases of the programme.
- 3.2 The strategic outline business case was presented to the Alliance Executive Board in June 2014. It recommended a strategic alliance between the two police forces as the preferred way forward and presented ten overarching strategic alliance recommendations. These are reproduced at Appendix A to this report. The strategic outline business case and strategic alliance recommendations were formally agreed by the Police and Crime Commissioners and Chief Constables on 23 June 2014.
- 3.3 The drivers for change for the alliance programme, identified in support of this programme of work and set out below, will chime with the challenges currently faced by the Authority:
- Financial imperative to provide continued service despite reduced funding
  - Sustainability of local policing/other services
  - Strategic direction set by Government/Her Majesties Inspector of Constabulary
  - Interoperability

- Resilience
- Ability to reinvest to meet new and emerging threats

3.4 With an agreement in place to work towards a strategic alliance, the alliance programme has moved to phase two, which includes:

- The development of all detailed business cases in relevant business areas that are in scope, by 31 March 2016;
- The development of the overarching programme deliverables that support the progress of detailed business cases; and
- Where a detailed business case is approved to ensure the recommended option/model is effectively implemented and business benefits are realised in the longer term

3.5 The strategic alliance is planned to deliver savings in the region of £12m that will be apportioned on a pro-rated basis between the two forces. The programme also intends to support greater cultural alignment between the two police forces and deliver transformational change by aligning and improving business processes and other ways of working. They will also be exploring the potential to develop a single ‘top team’ which will report to the respective Police and Crime Commissioners.

#### 4. **WHAT IS A STRATEGIC ALLIANCE?**

4.1 Within policing, and as defined by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), there is a specific definition of a strategic alliance, i.e. - *an agreement between two or more forces to pursue a set of agreed objectives, while retaining separate identities.*

4.2 Within a continuum of ‘working together’, a strategic alliance sits between the desire to remain independent and the full merger of two police forces (see table 1 below).

Continuum of Working Together					
Independent	Contracted Services	Collaboration	Strategic Alliance	Strategic Alliance (Single Organisational Leadership)	Force Merger

Table 1 - Continuum of Working Together

4.3 Her Majesty Inspectorate of Constabulary’s definition of a strategic alliance is not dissimilar to any standard definition of the term and should therefore not be considered unique to policing. Considering the broader definition there would be nothing to prevent the Authority from working with the police on any of these options and this potential is further strengthened by the recent changes in government policy and legislation related to such matters.

#### 5. **OPTIONS FOR THE AUTHORITY TO CONSIDER**

5.1 It is clear that the government agenda is to drive closer working between the emergency services and especially between police and fire and rescue. In these circumstances, an option to ‘do nothing’ and remain independent is not one that it is felt the Authority would be in position to consider. This option assumes the Authority is confident with the plans in place to meet current and future challenges, or that there are other viable options available.

- 5.2 Elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting, the Authority will be considering plans to deliver savings in 2016-17 and will be invited to consider future plans for further savings in due course. In addition, further requirements for budget savings beyond this CSR period cannot be ruled out. It is also clear that government is committed to enabling closer working between police and fire and rescue and is intending to legislate to make this happen.
- 5.3 Adopting a “do nothing” approach would therefore restrict opportunities to further develop options to work with a key partners and would also be at odds with central government policy. If a “do nothing” option is, therefore, discounted at this stage then the remaining options available to the Authority would appear to be:
- (a) **Contracting services (in or out)**
  - (b) **Collaboration across a range of functions or services**
  - (c) **Full participation in the Strategic Alliance**

These options are now explored in more detail below.

***(a) Contracting Services (in or out)***

- 5.5 ‘Contracting services’ would involve entering into agreements with partners (e.g. the police) or other service providers to deliver specific, usually non-core, services, e.g. payroll, ICT, estates management, etc. at a rate that is less expensive than providing the service in-house and at the same or greater quality. As well as contracting ‘out’, there would also be the potential to contract services ‘in’ which would potentially generate income for the Authority.
- 5.6 The two main areas where the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service already contracts ‘in’ are; procurement services and - through Red One Ltd - training to commercial and public sector clients. Whilst not discounting the ability for other support functions to draw in additional revenue from selling services to others, the Service size and experience may limit the extent of this offer to other (smaller) Fire and Rescue Services. It is worth stating that there is not a strong track record of effective Fire Service to Fire Service back office collaboration. In addition, other upper tier local authorities already provide support service arrangements for other organisations and so the Service would be competing with larger organisations should the Authority wish to progress this arrangement.
- 5.7 Whilst not discounting the ability to participate fully in Strategic Alliance in the future, the Service would essentially be buying in services from it rather than shaping the nature of what would essentially be a shared service from within the Strategic Alliance. It should be noted that some areas have already been fully developed by Devon and Cornwall Police and Dorset Police and are being implemented. Therefore, whilst leaving the door open for future opportunities, this option does run the risk of missing the ability to shape the future as part of the Strategic Alliance.
- (b) Collaboration across a Range of Functions or Services***
- 5.8 Short of full participation in the Strategic Alliance, the Authority could support the option to seek a commitment to much closer ‘collaboration’ with the police. Collaboration is described as working together to achieve a defined and common business purpose (which is not dissimilar to the definition of a strategic alliance as set out in sec 4.1 above) and would align with government expectations.
- 5.9 It could be argued, however, that the focus of the police would be on their preferred option of implementing their Strategic Alliance and they may be reluctant to commit resources to other areas of work not closely associated with this shared aim.

5.10 The Service has a history and good track record of working closely with the police and has developed strong working relationships across various levels, so this option could be seen as extending, and formalising, work that is already taking place but – again - may not fully maximise the opportunities for driving down costs and improving quality of service. It is also worth noting that this option was discounted by Devon and Cornwall Police and Dorset Police who favoured the full Strategic Alliance.

***(c) Full Participation in the Strategic Alliance***

- 5.11 Working with the two police forces towards a commonly agreed aim of creating a broader 'Strategic Alliance' would be innovative and has the potential to generate significant cost savings as well as improved standards and resilience.
- 5.12 Informal discussions have indicated that, if agreed, the Authority would be in a position to exert influence and contribute fully to work identified as being 'in scope'. It is recognised that the Authority may well lead in some areas where there is the expertise and skills to do so and would bring its spend and resources in scope to generate a greater critical mass than would otherwise have been presented by Devon and Cornwall Police and Dorset Police working alone. This should result in even greater economies of scale benefiting (pro rata) all parties.
- 5.13 The Alliance Executive Board would need to agree to a formal extension to include the Authority. It is anticipated that Authority would contribute to the development of relevant business cases and reserve the right to approve (or otherwise) participation in any shared service model prior to implementation.
- 5.14 Since agreeing to commence the alliance programme, the police have dedicated significant resources, many on a full time basis, to support the work they have done to date. The Authority would need to be mindful of this and be assured that the impact of resourcing any potential engagement with the alliance would not adversely affect current planned activity.
- 5.15 To support this review, an Area Manager has been seconded to scope the opportunity and ensure that effective lines of communication are maintained between respective services.
- 5.16 The vision, critical success factors and guiding principles of the Strategic Alliance would need to be amended to accommodate Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service priorities and there would be a need for the Service to support the existing programme arrangements in place rather than establish a separate process. This already includes programme governance, management of the programme (and associated projects) and its resources, benefits tracking and benefits realisation, risk management, communications and staff (and trade union) engagement. It also has arrangements in place to monitor the on-going financial, legal and staffing implications.
- 5.17 Should the Authority agree to this option, more detailed work would be for each business case presented to the Authority for initial consideration prior to declaring the function "in scope" for the Strategic Alliance.
- 5.18 Operational staff will be out of scope for the Strategic Alliance which is primarily focused on delivering improved efficiency and quality in back office services.

- 5.19 Business cases for specific areas of focus will be jointly developed to scope the potential costs/benefits of delivering the function in a different way. Where functions are already competitive in terms of cost and quality, there will be less benefit in developing an alternative model. Each will be determined on its own merits rather than attempt a full scale evaluation of full scale integration into the Strategic Alliance which would require significant time, energy and resource and in all reality will need to be built from specific businesses case for the potential benefits to be realistic and deliverable.

## **6. GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS**

- 6.1 Due to the potential implications of insourcing, outsourcing or merging any support service function, it is proposed that the Authority will approve any proposed changes affecting its services prior to the Alliance Executive Board determining whether or not to progress any particular option. There may be occasions where the Authority determines not to participate in any particular option, leaving Devon & Cornwall Police and Dorset Police to proceed, should they chose to do so, only in so far as their services are concerned.
- 6.2 The Authority's decision making and governance arrangements would, therefore, initially remain separate to that of the Strategic Alliance but would complement the arrangements in place.
- 6.3 For a programme of this size and strategic importance, it is essential that the appropriate governance arrangements are put in place. The existing Strategic Alliance programme governance structure (see fig.1 below) has been developed to align with the police's current governance model to ensure consistency with specific projects and programmes. It is also designed to be dynamic enough to ensure the appropriate speed of decision making for the programme. It has been stated that this governance structure will remain subject to review based on the progress of the programme.
- 6.4 One of the key roles of the Alliance Executive Board is to receive detailed business cases for approval. As indicated earlier, however, this Authority would be required to approve its own business case prior to any option being presented to the Alliance Executive Board that would affect the Authority's resources or services.



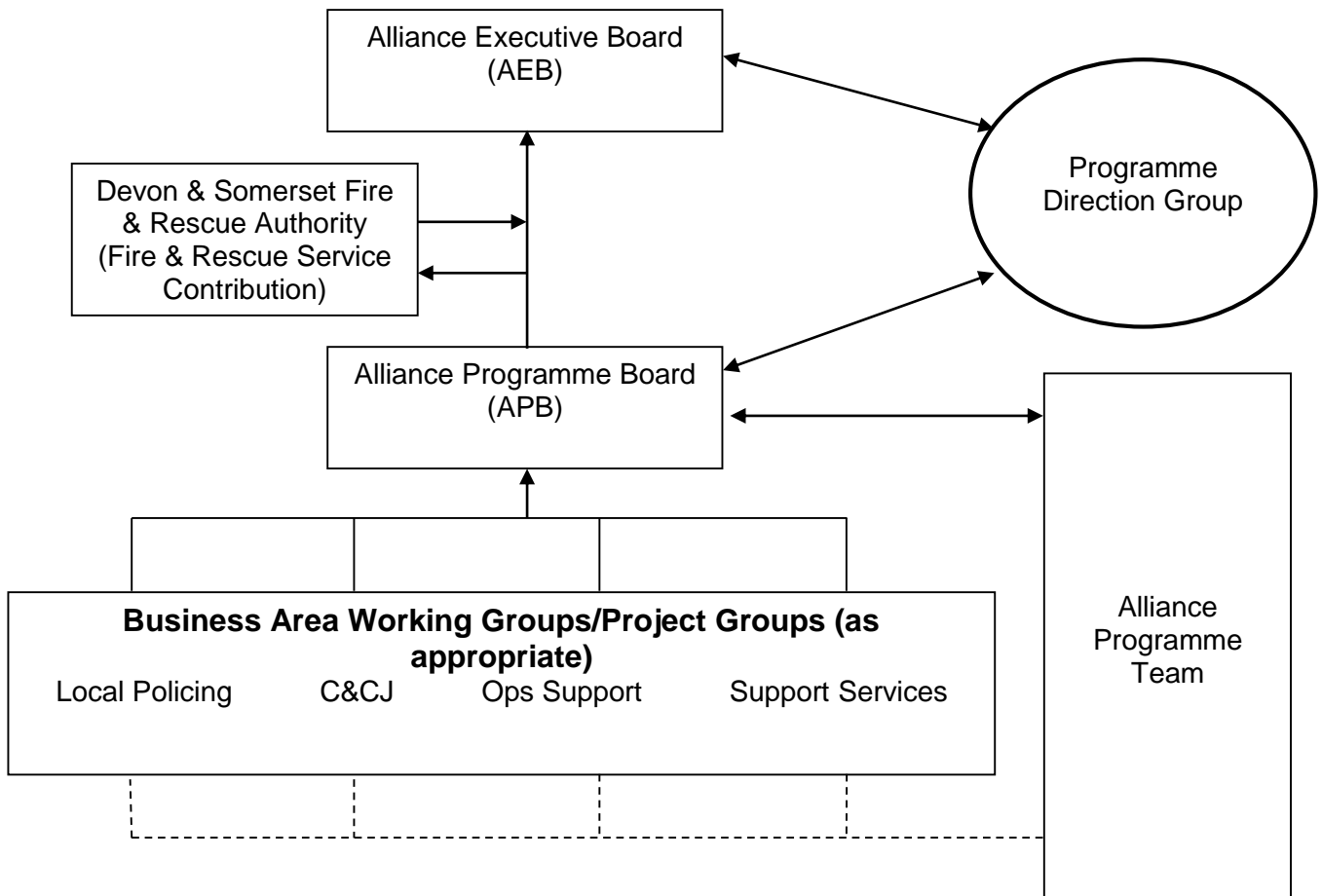


Fig. 1 Strategic Alliance Governance Structure

6.5 The meeting structure and roles and responsibilities of the various forums is set out in Appendix B to this report

## 7. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 To calculate savings associated with the Strategic Alliance programme, the police have used the 2014/15 revenue budgets of each Force as means of establishing a financial baseline.

7.2 In scope budgets were split on a functional basis and not by organisational structure, to allow each to be reviewed on a “like for like” basis as far as possible. Identified savings were calculated across the two forces. A similar model could be adopted to incorporate any of the Authority’s functions.

7.3 It has been identified that the Strategic Alliance programme will require a mechanism for sharing the costs of the functions delivered through the Strategic Alliance. A principle of the Strategic Alliance is that both Forces realise financial and operational benefits from aligning services, which should be assessed across the total of the “in scope” work areas rather than on each of the work areas individually. As such, the cost sharing mechanism should support the objectives of the Strategic Alliance. The current Home Office Statutory Guidance for Collaboration (police collaboration) sets out some core principles for the funding model for any collaboration:

- The funding model should be financially sustainable and stable

- All parties should agree that the proposed sharing of costs and benefits is appropriate and equitable
- Greater financial contribution to the collaboration should not necessarily lead to greater control over the governance of the collaboration
- The parties should recognise that value for money may not be demonstrated by reconfiguration of a single funding model into individual accounting systems: they should not lose sight of the combined benefits that the collaboration brings
- The funding model should encourage participation in the collaboration
- The funding model should not stifle innovation
- The funding model should demonstrate value for money to the member organisations

7.4 There were a number of options identified for allocating the costs between the two Forces, including sharing on a simple ratio based on the proportion of total funding received, through to more complex options that consider demand and usage. Constraining the Forces were a number of issues that had to be considered before deciding the best mechanism for sharing costs. These included disparity in the Council Tax precepts, the degree of local control and flexibility required and the possibility for future changes in priorities.

7.5 Further detailed discussions would be required to assess the whole cost and benefits model should the Authority be minded to apply and be accepted as a partner in the Strategic Alliance.

## **8. NEXT STEPS**

8.1 It is clear that the government is committed to ensuring that emergency services work more closely together and this appears particularly relevant to police and fire and rescue services. There are a range of options that the Authority could consider with participation, where a business case is made, in the Strategic Alliance appearing to be the most beneficial.

8.2 If the Authority decides to pursue participation in the Strategic Alliance, the Authority will be presented, for approval, with individual supporting business cases for each area considered "in scope". These will outline how it will add to the benefits already identified in the Strategic Alliance programme. These will need to be agreed by the Alliance Executive Board prior to being progressed. A top level strategic document is shown in Appendix C to this report.

**LEE HOWELL**  
**Chief Fire Officer**

**DEVON& CORNWALL AND DORSET OVERARCHING STRATEGIC ALLIANCE**  
**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- SA 1: To agree to the allocation of resources (phased as required) to the Programme Team and others to develop options for a Strategic Alliance between Devon and Cornwall Police and Dorset Police through the production of detailed business cases. In addition, external scrutiny will be provided in an assurance role to assist in the provision of challenge to the developing Business Areas.
- SA 2: That clear expectations are set for the Programme for detailed business cases to ensure targeted savings of £12m, in line with industry standards or other benchmarking
- SA 3: That a cost allocation model is produced and rolled out to the decision makers for discussion on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2014.
- SA 4: That the legal basis for any strategic alliance should be using Section 22A collaboration agreements. If a Section 22A collaboration agreement is not considered to be the most appropriate means of supporting the Strategic Alliance in any particular business area/function consideration be given to other potential legal frameworks in those areas/functions.
- SA 5: A separate report is commissioned to assess the costs of outsourcing individual business areas or a suitable combination of functions e.g. support services hub. The output of this would be to provide a market assessment of running costs for key functions delivered separately or collectively that can be used to benchmark against internal cases. The board notes the commitment of the PCCs and CCs to the delivery of in-house services moving forward and the use of the market assessment as part of providing future services as an 'at value equivalent' to other means of delivery.
- SA 6: A new governance structure is introduced to streamline current arrangements whilst allowing for regular updates of the decision makers in intervening times between major decisions.
- SA 7: To require the production of a clear people strategy to enable the successful support for a Strategic Alliance. This strategy should set out to what extent the terms and conditions of service of two organisations should be aligned for business benefit and then clearly assess the costs of achieving any changes.
- SA 8: To require the production of a clear technology strategy to enable the successful delivery for a Strategic Alliance. This strategy should set out to what extent that systems and associated processes across the two organisations should be aligned for business benefit and then clearly assess the costs of achieving any changes.
- SA 9: To prioritise necessary changes within the two ICT networks to facilitate effective project working between the two forces.
- SA 10: That the supporting vision and guiding principles contained within the Executive Supplementary paper are agreed.

## APPENDIX B TO REPORT DSFRA/16/5

### STRATEGIC ALLIANCE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

To ensure the Programme delivers the required outcomes for this phase, the following meeting structure has been established.

Name	Frequency	Attendance	Role
Alliance Executive Board (AEB)	Monthly	2 x PCC 2 x CC 2 x DCC 2 x CE 2 x Treasurer SRO Programme Director 1 x Comms Manager  Other COG members and Heads of Corporate Comms as and when required	The 4 Corporation Soles to make key strategic decisions regarding the overriding principles of the Strategic Alliance programme and whether to proceed to implementation including deciding on the preferred model  To ensure briefing of regional colleagues  To receive programme updates and Detailed Business Cases for approval
Programme Direction Group (PDG)	Weekly (Teleconference)	2 x DCC (Joint Chairs) 2 x CE SRO Programme Director	Exception reporting group to ensure the Programme delivers upon the predicted benefits and outcomes. To receive exception reports and assist in managing other issues potentially impacting on the Programme
Alliance Programme Board (APB)	Monthly	SRO (Chair) Programme Director Business Area Leads 2 x OPCC Reps All Programme Specialists 2 x Force Business Change Leads	Ensure the Programme delivers within its agreed parameters and will resolve the majority of decisions and any strategic or direction issues required for the Programme
Staff Association and Trade Union Group	Monthly	SRO (Chair) Programme Director Strategic HR Lead	A mechanism for keeping all Staff Associations and Trade Unions briefed.  A forum for raising issues of concern.
Business Area Working/Project Groups	As necessary	As appropriate (at SRO and Leads discretion)	
Alliance Programme Team (APT)	Weekly (tasking and co-ordination)	All Programme Team	To support all meetings/groups and subsequent deliverables within the business areas.

**STRATEGIC LEVEL CONTRIBUTION OF DEVON & SOMESSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY  
("THE AUTHORITY") TO THE STRATEGIC ALLIANCE**

- 1) It is clear that the Government is committed to ensuring that emergency services work more closely together and this appears particularly relevant to police and fire and rescue services.
- 2) To support this, responsibility for Fire and Rescue Service policy has moved from the Department for Communities and Local Government to the Home Office. The police and fire and rescue services now share the same Secretary of State and Government Minister.
- 3) At a strategic level in the South West, the Emergency Services Forum has been established to bring together the most senior emergency service political and professional leaders to explore better collaboration and opportunities to reduce costs and improve services to the public.
- 4) At a more practical level, the Devon and Cornwall Police and Dorset Police Strategic Alliance provides an attractive opportunity for the Authority to participate in a well-managed and advanced programme of efficiency and reform at a scale that is attractive.
- 5) In return, the Authority offers a strong track record in innovation in such areas as collaborative procurement (at a national level), training and commercial expertise through having established a commercial trading company, and estate expertise and advanced market engagement (including the appointment of commercial agents who are exploring opportunities to drive value through maximising the effective use of assets).
- 6) Employing 2,300 members of staff (2,000 Firefighters) with a budget of £75m, the Authority brings additional resources to the established Strategic Alliance which will deliver greater scale and in doing so, greater potential for efficiency for partners.
- 7) Accommodation on over 90 sites covering the two geographical counties of Devon and Somerset also provides a wide geographical footprint and with Devon & Cornwall Police Headquarters only 3 miles from Fire Service Headquarters, opportunities to consider co-location and shared estates is an obvious example of a potential area for further development.
- 8) Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service is also making significant advances on a systems based approach to generating efficiency, maintaining a primary focus on public and staff safety and in addition is using the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Model to ensure its progress towards excellence is benchmarked against private and public sector organisations.
- 9) The Authority's continuous improvement journey is articulated in "Our Plan":  
<http://www.dsfire.gov.uk/AboutUs/WhatWeDo/OurCorporatePlan/documents/CreatingSaferCommunitiesOurPlan20152020.pdf>
- 10) Areas of focus (not exhaustive) are shown overleaf:

## Areas of Focus

- Audit, Risk & Insurance
  - Catering
  - Commercial Services
  - Community & Workplace Equalities
  - Community Resilience
  - Corporate Communications
  - Corporate Support
  - Emergency Planning
  - Estates
  - Finance
  - Fitness Advice
  - Fleet
  - Health & Safety
  - Human Resources (HR)
  - Information and Communications Technology (ICT)
  - Learning & Workforce Development
  - Legal Services
  - PA/Secretarial
  - Payroll
  - Performance & Analysis
  - Procurement
  - Risk/Call Reduction
  - Stores
  - Strategy & Business Change
- 11) Operational staff will be out of scope for the Strategic Alliance which is primarily focused on delivering improved efficiency and quality in back office services.
- 12) Business cases for specific areas of focus will be jointly developed to scope the potential costs/benefits of delivering the function in a different way. Where functions are already competitive in terms of cost and quality, there will be less benefit in developing an alternative model. Each will be determined on its own merits rather than attempt a full scale evaluation of full scale integration into the Strategic Alliance which would require significant time, energy and resource and in all reality will need to be built from specific businesses case for the potential benefits to be realistic and deliverable.