



BY EMAIL ONLY

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Date: 23rd May 2018

Dear Panel Member,

RE: Fire Service Governance Update

I am writing to you to explain the steps I am taking in relation to police and fire governance in Lancashire.

To clarify my current position, I commissioned a consultant to undertake an independent review of the options for the future of police and fire governance in Lancashire. I have accepted the recommendation in the report that there is a case for a change of governance and I am going to proceed with the formulation of a draft business case. This work will start in early June and will explore in detail all the options available, including keeping the status quo.

I fully appreciate that there may be many views in respect of this matter and I want to reassure you that there will be a formal opportunity to set out your views in due course.

Collaboration between the Fire Service and the Constabulary does take place and both bodies have worked together for some time. However, through fragmented governance, collaboration is currently slow, unambitious and without a single strategic vision. Further, the current fire governance arrangements provides little by way of direct visibility and accountability to the people of Lancashire through the committee of 25 local Councillors appointed by the County Council and Unitary Authorities, with no mandate for how the public want their fire service to be run.

There is therefore an opportunity to make a difference and to make a change to these governance arrangements for the benefit of people of Lancashire. This could maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of both services and reinvest resources into frontline services to protect the people of Lancashire.

I believe this opportunity must be taken seriously, especially at a time when funding nationally is likely to be reducing not increasing. There are challenging times ahead for both services and more savings still to find. This is due to reductions in budgets from national government, growing demand and increasing costs of delivering both services.

It is therefore critical that all avenues are pursued to enhance collaboration and to secure the wide ranging benefits that it can bring. For those who would wish for the status quo to be retained I would ask you to think about how the current arrangements can effectively rise to the challenges ahead.

I am asking all stakeholders to keep an open mind at this time. I would ask you to look at other areas of the country where this has been taken forward already or is about to be and ask yourself how could this make a difference in Lancashire?

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Once the detailed draft business case has been set out the facts will be publically available on my website along with all my decisions and other relevant information.

There will also be a comprehensive public consultation exercise, where Lancashire residents and all key stakeholders will be able to review the draft business case and share their views with me. As I have already stated above, I would welcome your views on the draft business case through that consultation when it begins, which is likely to be towards the end of summer.

I am planning to consult on both a governance model and single employer model. The governance model would be where the Police and Crime Commissioner becomes the fire authority but both services are run separately, reporting to different Chief Officers. The second option to be explored will be the single employer model, where the Police and Crime Commissioner becomes the fire authority and both services operate under one Chief Officer while maintaining the independence of functions between fire fighters and police officers.

As always if you would like to discuss any aspect of this and the future consultation, please contact me or my office and I will continue to keep you up to date as this work progresses.

Yours sincerely,

Clive Grunshaw
Police & Crime Commissioner for Lancashire