

## One Year On: progress report following the transfer of governance in November 2018

### Overview

This cover report provides an overview of the full One Year On report published by the Commissioner and presented to the Panel.

### Governance Transfer

The Policing and Crime Act<sup>1</sup> was given royal assent in January 2017, making provision for local assessments by Police and Crime Commissioners as to the most effective governance model for Fire and Rescue Services (FRS), in the interest of economy, efficiency and effectiveness, and/or public safety.

In North Yorkshire, the Commissioner considered that such a change may be in the best interest across these focus areas. She commissioned a full and independent assessment of the current Fire Authority governance model and the options available through legislation, including robust and extensive consultation with the public and workforce; this resulted in the submission of a business case to the Home Secretary proposing a change in governance.

The Home Secretary approved the transfer in June 2018, recognising the benefits that joint oversight of the police and fire service would bring to the residents and businesses of North Yorkshire. On 15th November 2018, the Commissioner took on all statutory responsibilities of the North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority, becoming the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for North Yorkshire.

### Progress one year on

Published 12 months post governance transfer, the Commissioner's One Year On report (appended) provides an assessment of progress against the intentions set out in her Local Business Case (LBC). The report focuses on the LBC's four Critical Success Factors (CSFs) that represented the attributes essential to the successful delivery of the change in governance, as well an economic assessment.

- CSF 1: Accelerates scale, pace and effectiveness of collaboration
- CSF 2: Brings benefits in terms of transparency and accountability
- CSF 3: Transfer is deliverable

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<sup>1</sup> Policing and Crime Act 2017 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/3/contents/enacted>

- CSF 4: Mitigates strategic risks

The transfer process went smoothly with clear employee consultation and communication, including the publication of an independent baseline assessment to help the Commissioner understand the position of the Service at transfer.

In the 12 months since transfer the pace and scale of collaboration and change has been significant and much progress has been made. The two organisations now share a joint mission and vision with aligned priorities through their respective strategic plans, North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service (NYFRS) have a joint headquarters with North Yorkshire Police (NYP), and ENABLE North Yorkshire has been established to pool corporate enabling services. A single estates strategy is close to being finalised and progress is well under way toward developing a Public Safety Service with multi-agency officers delivering preventative work for both services by the end of the financial year. In addition, several tactical initiatives have been taken forward, with closer working between control rooms, integrated training (for example on mental health), the use of police drones with thermal imaging cameras for supporting fire incidents, and the sharing of calls from the ambulance service for gaining access for medical emergencies.

The Commissioner inherited a significant budget deficit of £1.2 million per year on transfer, increasing to £2.5 million by the end of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and in 2022/23 seeing NYFRS's reserves depleted creating a significant risk. On transfer the Commissioner immediately set out to address this situation, setting up a finance working group and ensuring that ideas were gathered from as wide a range of sources across the Service and nationally. Within 12 months since transfer sufficient savings have been identified over the course of the MTFP that the budget should break even by 2021 without any detriment to frontline services. Furthermore, over the 10 year period covered by the local governance business case, savings are now forecast to reach £8 million across NYFRS and NYP, £1.4 million more than originally estimated.

Much of this progress stems from more dynamic, transparent and accountable governance, allowing work to move at pace and decisions to be made more quickly. Access to information and a greater understanding of detailed business cases, through support from the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (OPFCC) and having more time to spend with the Service, has meant different considerations and potential gaps have been explored, leading to greater focus on clear priorities. Decisions are more transparent to the public and there is greater clarity on roles and responsibilities through a streamlined Corporate Governance Framework and planning cycle.

Public Accountability Meetings (PAM) are live streamed and can be reviewed via the Commissioner's website, providing the public with a more in depth understanding of their Service and the challenges and good work being done to improve it. More members of the public have been involved in setting the direction of the Service and its precept through consultation than ever before, with over 3,700 involved in the first year.

There is still much more work to be done but the Commissioner now has a thorough understanding of the challenges and robust plans in place to address them.

## The Future

Over the next 12 months we will identify tangible outcomes linked to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of our new ways of working, ensuring better outcomes for the public. This will

include an evaluation of ENABLE, the Public Safety Service, and prevention activities more widely, as well as the joint Estates Strategy, including the shared headquarters.