



# Collaboration Strategy

2026-2028

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# Executive summary

Collaboration is essential to Avon Fire & Rescue Service's (AF&RS) mission to protect our communities through prevention, protection, response and resilience. With the previous Collaboration Strategy (2021–2026) now expiring, this updated Strategy for 2026–2028 sets out how we will work with partners to improve public safety, strengthen resilience, and deliver value for money in a changing risk and financial environment.

This Strategy explains our approach to collaboration and the governance, planning and evaluation processes that ensure joint working is safe, effective and aligned with our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). It reinforces our commitment to ethical, transparent and effective partnership working, guided by our values and the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Code of Ethics.

## **Our priorities for collaboration**

We have identified seven priority areas where collaboration will deliver the greatest benefit:

1. Response, resilience and emergency planning
2. Training, learning and development
3. Shared communications, working, functions and infrastructure
4. Shared estates, assets (fleet) and equipment
5. Procurement
6. Joint prevention and protection activities
7. Climate change

## **Delivering effective collaboration**

Our Collaboration Framework and Toolkit provide a consistent approach to planning, managing and evaluating collaborative work. All formal collaborations will be risk-assessed, aligned to strategic objectives, and supported by written agreements. Annual evaluation, including RAG-rated assessments, ensures activity remains effective, safe and beneficial to communities.

## **Expected outcomes**

Through focused and well-governed collaboration, AF&RS will enhance public safety, improve efficiency, support vulnerable people, develop organisational capability and contribute to wider environmental and sustainability goals.

By working with the right partners in the right way, this Strategy enables AF&RS to deliver measurable benefits for our communities and ensures we remain a modern, adaptable and trusted Service.

# Introduction

Collaboration means working with other people or organisations to achieve outcomes of mutual benefit that are greater than those either could achieve alone.

At Avon Fire & Rescue Service (AF&RS), collaboration is a key enabler in delivering our mission to improve public safety through prevention, protection, response, and resilience. In an increasingly complex and resource-pressured environment, effective collaboration allows us to pool expertise, share resources, innovate, and provide a more joined-up service to the communities we serve.

From how we work together at incidents, to our community safety initiatives and how we use our estates, we have significant experience collaborating both formally and informally with a wide range of partners, including other emergency services, local authorities, voluntary and community organisations, and the private sector.

This Strategy builds on our experience and sets out our approach to collaboration, how we will deliver and measure the benefits of our work, and our areas of focus. It aligns with our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) and other strategic documents to ensure collaboration supports the delivery of our core purpose: keeping people safe.

## Scope

This Strategy applies to all formal and informal partnerships and collaborative initiatives that contribute to the delivery of our statutory functions, strategic objectives, or community outcomes. Activities outside its scope include:

- Any transfer of our duties or functions to another organisation through outsourcing or takeovers.
- Cooperation where we agree to share something with another organisation, such as information or resources, solely to assist with their goals.
- Contracts where we commission an organisation to provide us with goods or services (or vice versa).

## Our values and code of ethics

Our values - respectful, honest, courageous, ambitious, inclusive, and transparent - guide how we work with our partners. Aligned with the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Code of Ethics, they promote integrity, fairness, accountability, and leadership. Embedding these values ensures trust, mutual respect, and shared purpose, supporting transparent and equitable decision-making.

## Our people at the centre of collaboration

Our talented and committed workforce is at the heart of every successful collaboration. Staff engagement, expertise, and experience are essential to delivering shared objectives, and we encourage collaborative working across the Service and welcome ideas from all staff, regardless of role or experience.

# Our statutory obligations

As a Fire and Rescue Service, we have a statutory obligation to collaborate with a range of agencies to improve efficiency, safety, and resilience. The following table outlines the key legislation, purpose of each, and examples of how these are delivered in practice.

Legislation	Purpose	Example collaboration
<b>Fire &amp; Rescue Services Act 2004</b>	Efficient delivery of core functions	Fire safety, joint response, shared resources
<b>Policing &amp; Crime Act 2017</b>	Improve efficiency and public safety	Co-responding, shared estates, cross agency training
<b>Civil Contingencies Act 2004</b>	Emergency planning and cooperation	Information/risk sharing, Local Resilience Forum exercises
<b>Building Safety Act 2022</b>	Enforcement and intelligence sharing	Building risk assessments, Primary Authority Schemes
<b>Children Act 2004 / Care Act 2014</b>	Safeguard children and adults at risk	Multi-agency safeguarding work

To support our statutory obligations, we actively engage with voluntary and community organisations to enhance public safety and address wider social needs. These partnerships extend our reach, and support services that go beyond core emergency response.

Type of organisation	Collaboration Purpose	Community Outcomes
<b>Voluntary/charitable organisations</b>	Support vulnerable groups	Home safety visits, awareness campaigns, fire safety education
<b>Local community groups</b>	Engage communities directly	Community events, risk reduction workshops, neighbourhood safety programs
<b>Faith-based organisations</b>	Engage populations that may be harder to reach through traditional channels	Disseminating safety information, hosting safety seminars
<b>Volunteer networks</b>	Supplement FRS capabilities	Emergency response assistance, recovery support
<b>Social enterprises</b>	Promote innovation and joint initiatives	Co-developing safety apps, volunteer mobilisation during emergencies
<b>Health &amp; wellbeing organisations</b>	Promote health and safety in homes and care settings	Smoke alarm checks during health visits, education on fire risks in care settings

# Our approach to collaboration

## Our strategic commitment

Our CRMP outlines our vision for the future of the Service and the actions required to make our communities safer and our organisation stronger. Collaboration is central to achieving these objectives, and we commit to:

- Championing a culture of collaboration across all areas of the Service to support the achievement of our objectives.
- Collaborating with appropriate organisations to achieve shared goals.
- Operating within our existing corporate governance structure to direct, oversee and assure collaboration activities.
- Allocating resources to develop and sustain collaboration.
- Regular horizon-scanning for local, regional and national changes in our community risk profile and any developments impacting the role and function of the fire and rescue service.
- Maintaining and regularly reviewing this Strategy and its underpinning Framework and Toolkit to ensure a consistent, high-quality approach, continuous improvement, and the embedding of best practice across the Service.

## Our drivers

We already collaborate with a wide range of organisations and there are numerous drivers for this, both internally and externally. These drivers can be summarised into the following broad themes, and successful collaborations are usually driven by all these factors in combination.

<b>Mutually agreed shared outcome</b>	<b>Greater efficiency</b>
<b>Keeping our communities safer</b>	<b>Improved value for money</b>
<b>Increased effectiveness</b>	<b>Increased resilience and sustainability</b>

## Our strategic guiding principles

We have five strategic guiding principles when examining whether to enter a formal collaborative arrangement:

<b>Shared vision and business need</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A clear common goal must justify the investment of time and resources.</li><li>• The primary focus is mutual benefit to the community, not just financial or efficiency gains.</li></ul>
<b>Specific aim aligned to our objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collaborations should enhance our ability to deliver the objectives of the CRMP, while maintaining high-quality services.</li><li>• Statutory functions must never be compromised.</li></ul>

<b>Clear planning and sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timelines, objectives, resourcing, costs, and expected benefits must be defined.</li> <li>• Financial sustainability and equitable benefits are essential.</li> </ul>
<b>Robust governance and assurance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear mechanisms for governance, quality assurance, performance management, reporting, risk sharing, and data protection ensure that agreed benefits are realised and maintained.</li> </ul>
<b>Ethical and cultural compatibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partners should demonstrate integrity in how they treat staff, the public, and each other.</li> </ul>

## Key considerations for successful collaboration

To ensure collaboration strengthens - not compromises - service delivery, we also carefully consider:

<b>Drivers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why the collaboration is needed and what it seeks to achieve.</li> </ul>
<b>Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operational, functional, or economic gains for both parties and the community.</li> </ul>
<b>Risks and costs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential challenges, resource implications, and financial impact.</li> </ul>
<b>Organisational impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring quality is maintained or enhanced.</li> </ul>
<b>Workforce considerations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How the collaboration affects staff and how they are supported through the change.</li> </ul>

The goal is to balance organisational aims and ensure that collaborations are efficient, effective, and aligned with Service priorities.

## Funding

While collaborations can improve efficiency, effectiveness, and value for money over time, most successful partnerships require initial investment from one or more parties, and ongoing costs to maintain operations.

To ensure viability, full lifetime costs, cost/benefit analysis, and funding arrangements will be identified, discussed, and agreed early in the planning process.

Collaborations planned through the CRMP process will be incorporated into the Medium-Term Financial Plan, with budgets or earmarked reserves used to support invest-to-save initiatives or other collaborative activities.

We are open to exploring external and transformational funding opportunities, including support from central Government and other sources, to enhance collaborative working. By ensuring funding aligns with strategic objectives, we can support collaborations that deliver measurable benefits and sustainable outcomes for our communities.

# Delivering our strategy

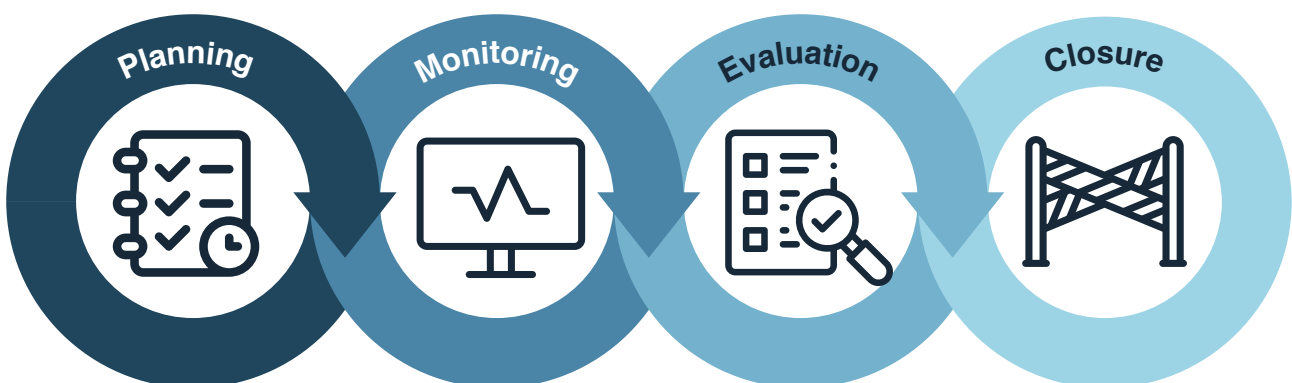
## Collaboration Framework

Underpinning the strategic intentions set out in this document is the Collaboration Framework which defines the core principles for successful collaboration, and outlines how AF&RS considers, approves, establishes, manages, and, where necessary, exits a collaboration arrangement.

The Framework provides a consistent approach to the assessment, assurance and delivery of formal collaboration projects and arrangements. It ensures that each arrangement contributes to the Service's key objectives, is centrally documented, quality-assured, and supports business continuity and reporting.

## Collaboration Toolkit

The Framework is complemented by our online Collaboration Toolkit which provides guidance, practical tools, and step-by-step procedures to support activity across the following four phases of the collaboration lifecycle.



**Making the arrangements to implement and manage the collaboration, including risk and impact assessments, ensuring it aligns to CRMP objectives and supports our communities.**

**Maintaining the partner relationship and capturing qualitative and quantitative performance data to ensure it stays on track, and as supporting evidence for evaluation.**

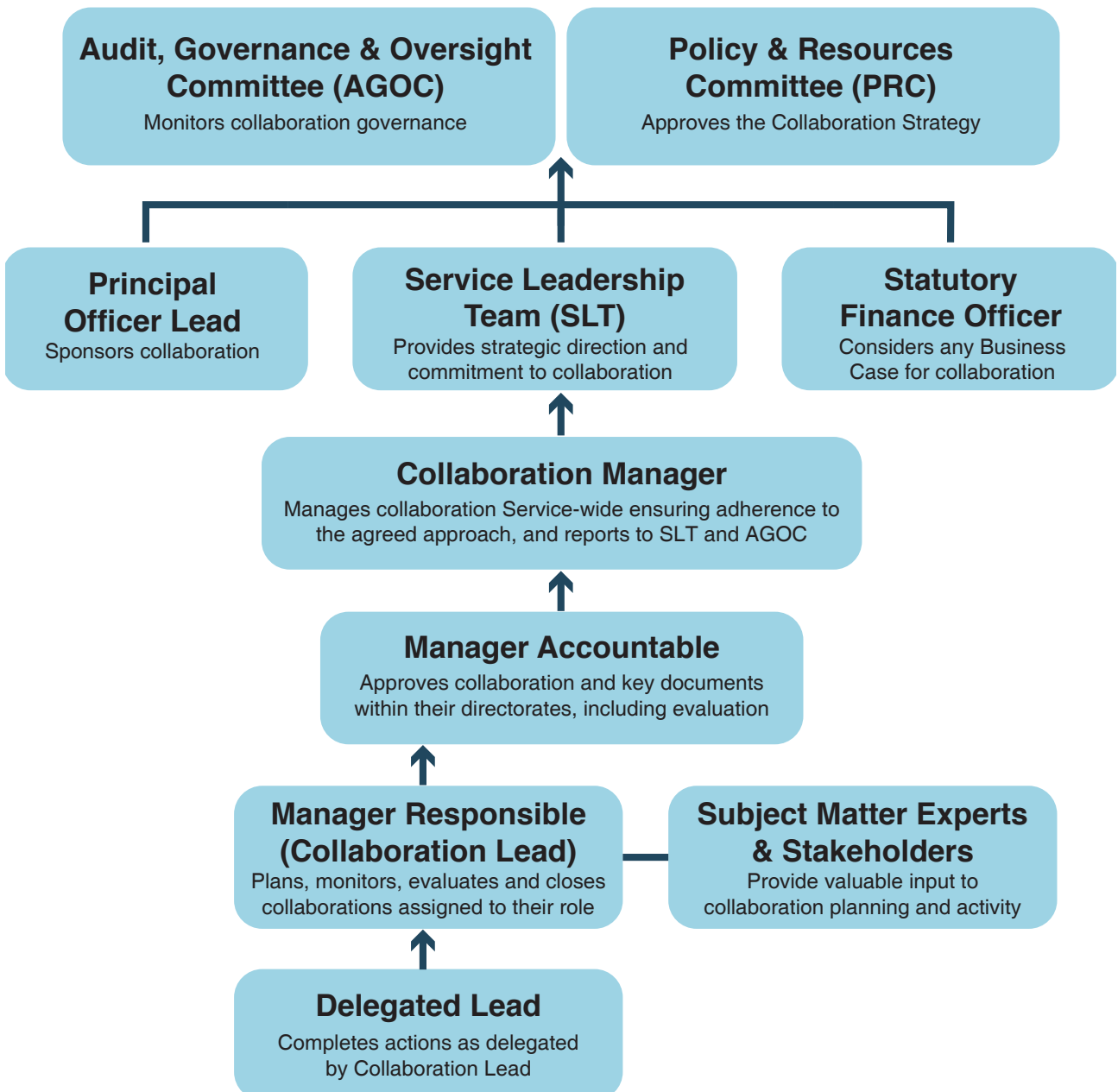
**Liaising with the partner to review the arrangement, capture performance and feedback, make improvements, and evidence delivery of the intended outcomes and benefits.**

**Activating the agreed exit strategy and professionally disengaging from the partner; documenting closure actions, including the impact, lessons learned, and stakeholder communication.**

## Governance, roles and responsibilities

It is important that an appropriate governance structure is established within the Service's overall corporate systems and assurance frameworks.

Our collaborations are implemented, managed, and reported through the following governance and reporting structure, which provides clearly defined lines of responsibility, scrutiny, and oversight - including reporting to the Audit, Governance and Oversight Committee (AGOC). This approach supports organisational alignment, transparency in decision-making, effective risk management, and the efficient use of resources.



## **Partner suitability and due diligence**

Strong partnerships begin with the right partners. All potential partners are assessed to ensure alignment with the Service's and Avon Fire Authority's goals, ethos, and values. Key considerations include:

- Complementary values, skills, resources, and objectives
- Strong cultural fit and ethical alignment
- Early due diligence to protect organisational reputations
- Escalation or mitigation if alignment cannot be established
- Sharing the NFCC Code of Ethics to ensure mutual understanding and commitment

All decisions and rationale are documented to ensure accountability and transparency.

## **Collaboration governance structure**

Each collaborative arrangement is supported by a mutually agreed governance structure that clearly defines partner roles and responsibilities, establishes decision-making processes, sets out mechanisms for resolving conflicts, and provides for regular performance monitoring and evaluation.

## **Managing collaboration risk**

Collaborative initiatives introduce specific risk that, if unmanaged, could undermine both the collaboration and the Service's statutory duties. Proactive risk management is discussed and agreed early in planning to ensure collaborations are safe, compliant, and financially sustainable.

Our Collaboration Risk Register provides a structured approach to identifying, assessing, and managing risks associated with our collaborative arrangements. It ensures that potential operational, financial, legal, or reputational risks are recognised early, mitigated where possible, and monitored throughout the lifecycle of the collaboration. The register supports accountability, informed decision-making, and effective governance, helping to protect resources and maintain the integrity of the Service's objectives.

## **Written agreements**

Well-documented written agreements - such as Memoranda of Understanding, Service Level Agreements, or Terms of Reference - reduce misunderstandings, promote transparency, and provide a clear reference point for resolving issues.

All our collaborations are supported by a robust written agreement tailored to the scale and complexity of each arrangement. These agreements define the purpose and objectives, roles and responsibilities, governance structures, resource commitments, information-sharing protocols, expected behaviours and values, and include an exit strategy.

## Exit Strategies

Collaborations vary in duration, with some being long-term and others concluding due to changing objectives, circumstances, or emerging risks. When considering the implications of a collaborative engagement, partners should also jointly evaluate the key aspects of disengagement.

Establishing potential triggers and rules of disengagement early during planning builds confidence between the parties, helps protect resources, and ensures continuous and reliable service delivery.

## Register of Collaborations and Formal Partnerships

The Register of Collaborations and Formal Partnerships records key information for all our collaborative arrangements. It is published internally and reported to AGOC to provide assurance of effective governance and risk management. The Register captures each collaboration's alignment with Service objectives, the governing arrangements in place (such as Memoranda of Understanding), confirmation of insurances along with risk and impact assessments, and evidence of evaluation activity, including assessments of effectiveness.



*Gambia and Avon Fire & Rescue Service in Partnership*

# Evaluating effectiveness

Collaboration requires a mutual investment of time and resources, making it essential to monitor delivery against agreed outputs and outcomes. Effective relationship management is crucial to maintaining the success of each arrangement, and it is equally important to share achievements and learn from experiences to ensure our collaborative work delivers the greatest benefit to communities and stakeholders.

To ensure collaborations remain aligned with strategic objectives, deliver tangible value, and create meaningful impact, we regularly assess their effectiveness in practice.

## How we evaluate

All collaborations and formal partnerships are guided by our Collaboration Framework and Toolkit and undergo annual evaluation using a balanced mix of qualitative and quantitative measures. Quality assurance is led by the Collaboration Manager to ensure evaluations are rigorous, evidence-driven, and consistent with organisational standards.

Evaluation is centrally coordinated to maintain consistency and timeliness, and key documentation is readily accessible, supporting transparency, accountability, and business continuity.



## Rating effectiveness

Each evaluation is assigned a Red/Amber/Green (RAG) rating, providing a clear indication of how well intended outcomes are being achieved.

Urgent improvement required, or consider closure

Some issues identified, action needed to improve

Outcome being fully achieved or exceeded

These ratings highlight areas requiring improvement or urgent action, and guide decisions about whether to continue, adapt, or close the collaboration.

## Reporting effectiveness

Evaluation outcomes are reported through our established governance structure to provide accountability and support informed decision-making, as follows.

Audience	Frequency	Content
Performance Improvement Team	Monthly	Percentage of evaluations completed on time (target 90%)
Departmental Managers and Principal Officer Lead	Six-monthly	Evaluation status of each collaboration, written agreement status, and RAG rating
Audit, Governance & Oversight Committee	Annually	Register of Collaborations and Formal Partnerships, including evaluation status and RAG ratings

# Our areas of focus for collaboration

## Current collaboration

We engage with colleagues from Avon and Somerset Police (ASP), and South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SWASFT) to identify and explore collaboration opportunities.

We actively participate in various forums nationally, and across the South West, to share best practice, identify opportunities for good collaboration and multi-agency working, remove barriers, and embed collaboration as the norm.

We are also a key partner in the South West Emergency Services Collaboration Group (SWESC) and the Avon and Somerset Local Resilience Forum (ASLRF). This allows us to co-ordinate a shared understanding of risk within our community, a joined-up approach to addressing the risk, optimise collaboration effectiveness and efficiency, and improve prevention across the South West.

We are currently engaged in numerous collaborations and formal partnerships, alongside a range of informal arrangements, and work with a wide variety of agencies that refer vulnerable people for fire safety advice and support.



## Future collaboration ambitions

Collaboration takes time, resources and sometimes financial investment to initiate, progress and performance manage. Therefore, to ensure we have the organisational capacity to deliver our ambitions while maintaining core business and our statutory operational and corporate duties, new opportunities must be carefully assessed and priority given to those that:

- Deliver maximum benefit to the Service and our communities
- Align with our areas of strategic focus
- Complement existing partnerships and maintain current levels of operational effectiveness
- Are manageable in addition to our current collaborations and partnerships

## Areas of focus

The areas of focus within this Strategy were established in consultation with Avon Fire Authority, Service Leadership Board (SLB), and Service Leadership Team (SLT). They echo our strategic priorities of making our communities safer and making our Service stronger through protection, prevention, response, and resilience; and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) key areas of effectiveness, efficiency, and people.

1. Response, resilience and emergency planning
2. Training, learning and development
3. Shared communications, working, data, functions and infrastructure
4. Shared estates, assets (fleet) and equipment
5. Procurement
6. Prevention and Protection
7. Climate change



The following pages provide further details on each focus area, including our definitions, current collaboration activities, and future plans.

## Focus 1: Response, resilience and emergency planning

### What this means:

We will:

- Seek suitable opportunities to collaborate with other FRSs, emergency responders, local organisations, and the ASLRF to manage demand for our services, ensure effective multi-agency working, compatible command, control and co-ordination, risk planning, cross-border working and use of national assets. This intelligence led approach supports the best use of skills and availability to enhance public safety, risk management and ensure resilience.

### Current collaboration:

- **Community resilience** - Engaging within the ASLRF at all levels to give combined efficiencies and support to our partner services and the public, with the aim of utilising community resilience and returning society to normal as quickly as possible after an incident while meeting our obligations.
- **Emergency services planning** - Working with other emergency services through SWESC at both strategic and tactical level, to ensure joined up and effective development of procedures and tactics that promote interoperability and collaboration, for example, the development of response methods to technical rescues, and to incidents involving people with complex needs.
- **Joint cross border training** with our FRS neighbours to promote interoperability, and share knowledge and understanding of risks within our overlapping geographical areas.
- **Inter-agency sharing** - Member of the South West Regional Operational Assurance Group working with other FRSs to standardise processes and procedures, and sharing risk critical information to assist with Joint Organisational Learning (JOL) and National Operational Learning (NOL), and ensure effective inter-agency operations.
- **Shared learning** - Member of the South West Regional Command and Control User Group, raising local learning nationally, and assessing how national concerns affect AF&RS.
- **Regularly exercising with partner agencies** in our Service area and across our borders to enhance joint agency interoperability in support of JESIP, and to develop and assure effective operational response capabilities.
- **Sharing risk data** - Working with LRFs, the NFCC, Fire Standards Board, Business Continuity Institute, and partner agencies to enhance our use and analysis of shared risk-related data (SSRI), and ensure we have the plans and resources in place to provide the services our communities need.
- **Reducing water related harm** - Working with public, private, voluntary and community sector partners to reduce the risk of harm along our local waterways, and the number of incidents requiring an emergency response.

- **Understanding risk and improving response** - Maintaining strong relationships and sharing information with significant sites, organisations and educational facilities to improve response practices, understand individual risk and allow for quick resolution.
- **Improving safety** - Educating staff and stakeholders of practices and methods to improve safety across a range of areas while understanding localised needs and restrictions, including aspects such as religion, race, disabilities, nationalities, geo-politics and more.

#### Our plan for future collaboration:

- **Work with Bristol Airport** to enhance guidance, data, policies, learning, risk assessments and procedures, ensure cross-organisational alignment, and prevent inefficiency and duplication of effort.
- **Work with local water companies** to facilitate the sharing of specialist knowledge, enhance resilience, and support effective incident management.
- **Continue working with Local Authorities** on housing and development planning, road improvements and events.

## Focus 2: Training, learning and development

#### What this means:

We will:

- Seek and implement joint multi-agency training, exercises, development and learning for operational and non-operational work, to increase and expand skills and effective cross-agency working and singular governance models.
- Encourage an agile, adaptable, and collaborative culture focused on productivity and working across prevention, prevention and response to reduce the risk of fire and other incidents and put our community first.

#### Current collaboration:

- **Shared Training Centre** (Severn Park) with Gloucestershire FRS and Devon and Somerset FRS.
- **Joint training and exercising** - Engaging with ASP, SWASFT and the Hazardous Area Response Team (HART) to ensure our teams work effectively and safely together to improve service to the public.
- **Building relationships with community groups** - Working with partner agencies on public and business safety, recruitment, and to deliver equalities training, for example, the Bristol Race Equality Strategic Leaders Group and SARI (Stand Against Racism and Inequality).

#### Our plan for future collaboration:

- **Cross border training** - Explore potential cross border incident command training with South Wales FRS.

### Focus 3: Shared communications, working, functions, information and infrastructure

#### What this means:

We will:

- Seek opportunities to share compatible communications systems, information, data, procedures and intelligence without a reduction in quality or service provision.
- Consider if we can provide or share expertise, functions and resources with other emergency services or partners where the cost and impact does not outweigh savings over a reasonable period, and if priority and quality of service is maintained.
- Learn from other organisations to refine our business models and ensure central services are modern, effective, and efficient focusing on specialist, value-added work

#### Current collaboration:

- **Sharing information and data** - Engaging with the NFCC, ASP, FRSs, LRFs and local authorities to develop, access and share working practices, resources, data and initiatives, and to ensure joined up media communications for incidents.
- **Engaging with the community** - Involving relevant societal and community stakeholders in the progression of community resilience and understanding of risk.
- **Campaigning, communication and events** - Working with a range of partners to establish joint marketing and communications, supporting local and national safety campaigns, the NFCC Fire and Rescue Campaign Calendar, jointly branded events, diversity and inclusion and wellbeing initiatives.

#### Our plan for future collaboration:

- **Community outreach** - Explore further formal community outreach partnerships with ASP, local councils, organisations and community groups for work placements, school engagement and other initiatives to improve outcomes in diversity and inclusion through recruitment, positive action, and community engagement.
- **Joint open days** - Continue to jointly run emergency services open days to communicate and build community awareness of our work and recruitment opportunities.
- **Mutual cost and efficiency benefits** - Consider shared or joint working arrangements in respect of any purely transactional services where there is mutual cost and efficiency benefit, and retained priority of service to AF&RS.
- **Academic research** - Work with education establishments to support academic research into the FRS sector.

## Focus 4: Sharing estates, assets (fleet) and equipment

### What this means:

We will:

- Where opportunities arise, seek ways in which our estate can be shared with partners, for example, emergency services, charity organisations and voluntary groups. Doing so can bring benefits in the form of shared work space leading to closer collaboration, shared capital costs from investments, and greater efficiencies in combining the use of services such as utilities, cleaning and refuse collection.
- Consider co-location for larger capital projects if suitable.
- Consider opportunities to share assets and equipment with other emergency services or partners to improve service to the public, share best practice in maintenance and quality standards, and realise value and efficiency.
- Form strategic partnerships with industry associations, technology providers, research institutions and peer organisations to stay informed about emerging trends, exchange best practice, and collaborate on joint initiatives for driving innovation in fleet management.

### Current collaboration:

- **Shared Headquarters** with Avon & Somerset Police.
- **Shared fire stations** and/or provision of storage, offices, set down facilities, training space and community engagement space for ASP, SWAST, and community and voluntary groups, for example, British Red Cross, St John Ambulance, The Fire Fighters Charity.
- **Sharing access to our equipment** - Sharing our drone live feed with ASP to enable effective risk assessment of the casualty and environmental conditions, and to aid rescue.
- **NHS Blood Donation centres** held at fire stations to reduce cost and increase public reach.
- **Gambia and Avon Fire Service in Partnership (GAFSIP)**, donating out of service vehicles and equipment to preserve life in The Gambia.

### Our plan for future collaboration:

- **Explore further joint training** with blue light partners as part of our long term training needs analysis and in anticipation of the end of the PFI arrangement at Severn Park.
- **Sharing space** - Seek to move the contractual and leasing arrangements in place with the Police and Ambulance services into a collaborative reciprocal arrangement which streamlines the process for sharing rooms and space in each other's buildings and ensure any costs applied are mutually fair and value for money.

## Focus 5: Procurement

### What this means:

We will:

- Seek further opportunities for joint procurement where requirement and needs align. Joint procurement, regionally and nationally, can provide economies of scale, organisational and financial efficiencies. It can also encourage closer working and sharing of procurement resources, which in turn helps to reduce the procurement demand further.

### Current collaboration:

- **Joint regional and national procurement of goods and services**, for example, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), smoke and deaf alarms, and emergency response vehicles; and development and utilisation of FRS frameworks.
- **Best practice and value for money** - Working with regional public sector organisations, including the Police, NHS, universities and councils to share knowledge, resources, buying power and best practice, and to deliver the best value for money service to our communities, for example, Joined Procurement in Partnership.

### Our plan for future collaboration:

- **Continue sharing our procurement pipelines** with FRSs and other partners regionally and nationally, to identify and progress additional opportunities for joint, cost-effective procurements.
- **Improved processes** - Engage with the NFCC and Blue Light Commercial to develop tools and processes for national collaboration, helping ensure efficient and effective category, contract and supplier management.

## Focus 6: Joint prevention and protection activities

### What this means:

We will:

- Build community resilience by seeking further opportunities to collaborate on local, regional and national initiatives.
- Develop communications, marketing and public safety messages which increase the impact and reach of our work.

- Target the most vulnerable in our communities and achieve shared community outcomes to improve lives adopting the person-centred approach.
- Explore opportunities to collaborate to improve local business fire safety, and work with a range of diverse groups to build a network of communication, support and engagement to ensure our services are accessible to, and effective for, all members of our local community.

#### Current collaboration:

- **Education** - Joint working with local authorities and a range of agencies locally, regionally and nationally on education packages for our Home Fire Safety Visit programme, road safety, water safety and fire setting interventions.
- **Rented housing** - Working with local authority housing partners to ensure fire safety in rented housing meets the required standards.
- **Businesses** - Working with businesses as part of the Primary Authority Scheme to ensure consistency against fire safety standards.

#### Our plan for future collaboration:

- **Home Fire Safety Visits** - Deliver our improved Home Fire Safety Visit programme which includes referrals to and from other agencies, such as local authority, adult social care and the charity sector, to support the most vulnerable in the community.
- **Business and buildings** - Partner with businesses and agencies in areas of licensing, building regulations and housing to drive down risk within the built and business environment.
- **Cladding remediation** - Work with regional partners and the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) to accelerate the cladding remediation programme.
- **Fire Setters** - Explore further development of our Firesetters Intervention Scheme, in particular in the area of arson prevention working with partners.
- **Community engagement** - Engage with our local communities by supporting focus groups, community meetings and partner events; and explore further development of community engagement programmes with, for example, the King's Trust.
- **Community safety and awareness** - Continue to jointly run a range of community safety and awareness programmes in collaboration with partners, focusing on fire prevention, water safety, community mental health and road safety.
- **Young carers** - Develop a Young Carers intervention programme and work with partners to support young carers and their families.

## Focus 7: Climate Change

### What this means:

We will:

- Work with local councils, emergency services, and beyond where this will enable a more effective response to the global climate and ecological emergency, and the national, regional and local action required to mitigate this.
- Take a lead in the sector by delivering our own Net Zero plan, and collaborate to support local change such as the Clean Air Zones in our region to improve local air quality.

### Current collaboration:

- **Clean air zones and decarbonisation** - Joint working with blue light partners to develop a Memorandum of Understanding for emergency vehicles in Bristol and Bath Clean Air Zones, and commitment to fleet decarbonisation.
- **Reducing carbon emissions** - Member of the Emergency Services National Environment Group, and cross-public sector Carbon Trust Public Sector Network.

### Our plan for future collaboration:

- **Net zero and renewable energy** - Work with other FRSs, local authorities and organisations to maximise opportunities for joint net zero and renewable energy generation and share best practice with, for example, Bath University to assess the embodied carbon of the new Bath Fire Station and with Bristol City Council on electric charging networks.

# Closing summary

Collaboration is at the heart of our ambition to make our communities safer and our Service stronger. This Strategy sets out our clear and structured approach, ensuring that every partnership aligns with our strategic priorities and delivers tangible value beyond what we could achieve alone.

By combining robust governance, careful evaluation, and a focus on areas of greatest impact, we commit to working with the right partners in the right way. Together, we will achieve meaningful outcomes that strengthen both our Service and the communities we serve.

Through continuous learning, transparency, and shared responsibility, we will not only respond to the challenges of today but anticipate and shape the opportunities of tomorrow - ensuring our Service remains adaptive, effective, and trusted.



*Police, Fire & Ambulance Service, working together*



Produced by  
the Corporate Communication department

Avon Fire & Rescue Service,  
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