



Shared Services Joint Committee Wednesday 15th December 2021

Report Title	Emergency Planning Disaggregation	
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List of Appendices

None

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. Following completion and review of an Impact and Options Assessment, this document is to confirm the preferred direction based on Officers' assessment for both authorities in relation to the disaggregation of the shared Emergency Planning service.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Emergency Planning service is due to disaggregate before April 2022.
- 2.2 Following disaggregation, local decisions will be made on the architecture of new service areas.
- 2.3 Due to additional base budget funding allocated for specialist equipment (which is unlikely to be a requirement for FY23), both models will cost less for each authority to implement, although savings may differ due to the scale of team structures being proposed in each area.
- 2.4 The Joint Officers' Board met on 11th November 2021 and agreed to proceed with the proposals outlined for each authority, pending approval from JCSS.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 The Joint Committee (Shared Services) is asked to consider the information presented and agree the preferred approaches outlined for the disaggregation of the Emergency Planning service between the West and North Northamptonshire Councils, as follows:
- a) To disaggregate the Emergency Planning service as is by April 2022.
 - b) Grant delegated authority to the Monitoring Officers for the North and West to take any further decisions or actions necessary to conclude the requirements of the Exit Plan of IAA Schedule, following approval of the plans by the Joint Committee (point a).

4. Report Background

- 4.1 Since the launch of the two new unitary authorities in April 2021, the Emergency Planning service (a team consisting of 14 posts, with 2 current vacancies) has been hosted in North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) and currently delivers the statutory duty of running the service for both NNC and West Northamptonshire Council (WNC).
- 4.2 An Impact and Options Assessment was completed and signed off by both North and West SROs at the time and subsequently presented and discussed at both North and West Executive Management team meetings and Transformation Boards. The outcomes of which have meant that each authority has a slightly different preferred approach towards the formation of the service following disaggregation. Both authorities recognise the need to balance the provision of service delivery against other factors and are therefore working to initially implement viable service delivery models from the outset.
- 4.3 To facilitate this approach, it is therefore considered prudent to disaggregate the existing service as is and allow each authority to move separately towards two new delivery models after disaggregation.
- 4.4 WNC intend to review, design and implement the most appropriate future model for the authority after disaggregation has occurred, although work is underway to review and implement a suitable service model as early as possible.
- 4.5 NNC have already commenced the process of service redesign based upon information gathered as part of Impact assessment and option appraisal work carried out to date. It is intended that the new structure will be in place at the time of disaggregation or very shortly afterwards.

5. Issues and Choices

5.1 Core Impact and Considerations

- 5.1.1 Timing** – whilst the split itself of services could be done relatively quickly (dependent on TU and staff consultation etc.) further exploration into specific authority models following this may take further time. During this period, the strain on services (North and West) could prove challenging. However, both authorities are working towards implementing a model which best meets service needs as early as possible.
- 5.1.2 Resources** – As a shared project between West and North, it has been agreed that the North Transformation team provide a lead Project Manager, with a Project Manager also assigned in the West as a supporting role. However, with the proposed split and transformation review work, this will require significantly more resource from the West and add significant further complexity to the project.
- 5.1.3 Partners** – All partners within the Northants Local Resilience Forum are County-wide focussed, with agreements and plans shared accordingly. It will take significant time to map out and agree responsibilities between both partners and the two local authorities (i.e. who leads on what plans etc.). There are significant risks associated with splitting the service without fully agreeing and documenting future arrangements.
- 5.1.4 Funding** – there are several grant funded initiatives within the service which are currently being managed on a county-wide (single role) basis (such as the flooding Pathfinder project through the Environment Agency). It is unclear at this time whether the funding will be removed if services are split, or how responsibilities can be assigned moving forward.
- 5.1.5 Staffing** – certain staff within the service are already under strain with regards to duty rotas and Business as Usual versus incident management. If the team were to be split with no mirrored roles or further investment, this will place a significant further strain on both West and North staff – expectation for rota duties will move from one week in 6, to one week in 3. This is likely to impact on staff retention and/or recruitment, as it is already cited as an issue. Reducing the team (effectively halving) will have a major impact on workload in the short-medium term pending transformation, with a strong likelihood of not being able to carry out many functions/tasks.

5.2 Benefits

The core benefits of this proposed approach are:

- 5.2.1** Being able to split away from the North Northants/West Northants unitary shared agreement and have full autonomy regarding how the service is shaped for each.
- 5.2.2** Potential for greater focus on local resilience, specific to the responsibilities and remit of each authority's geography.
- 5.2.3** Greater control and transparency of budget and other financial arrangements.
- 5.2.4** Building up a robust team for North and West Councils will provide greater capacity and capability to meet planned and unplanned events/incidents in the

immediate short-term following disaggregation, as well as build future resilience plans against expected changes within the Civil Contingencies Act revisions.

6 Implications (including financial implications)

6.1 Resources and Financial

- 6.1.1 The budget position for the service is complex and in need of further review. This is currently being investigated by finance colleagues and the project team to resolve in time for 1 April 2022.
- 6.1.2 The service currently receives some external funding to support community projects – a key one being with the Environment Agency (EA) for delivery of the flood resilience Pathfinder Project. Discussion and agreement will need to be made with the EA to determine whether this can be split, which will then determine how the project work will be carried out (either split, in partnership between North/West or by one party on behalf of the other).
- 6.1.3 Budgets for the West and the North must be able to support any future teams once disaggregated, and any growth in the budget will need to be put into the Medium Term Financial Plan. Indications for both Councils suggest that there will be no requirement for additional funding, with possible savings identified.

6.2 Legal

- 6.2.1 Process mapping will need to be done to ascertain any changes to statutory processes required and to develop and implement effective ‘to-be’ processes with agreed roles in place to minimise risk of lack of compliance.
- 6.2.2 Change timelines will need to facilitate statutory reporting timelines, which will need to be captured and mapped out.

6.3 Risk

6.3.1 Key Risks

Risk Description	Impact	Mitigating Action
Staffing impact risk	Staff morale, efficiency Risk of staff leaving posts Risk of gaps in knowledge when teams are disaggregated	Engagement with unions will need to happen. An engagement plan with the team members will need to be developed. It will include a team meeting and one to one meetings to explain the situation to the individuals affected. The team are aware of the intention to disaggregate and to do so in the coming months. Informal communication with the team has already occurred in team meetings and emails. They are not yet aware of the exact timeframes.
Service capacity	Capacity and accessibility of	This has already proved to be somewhat of an issue, with dealing with recent fuel shortages,

	service to carry out/support disaggregation work due to responding to other priorities and situations	Afghanistan refugees situation and other local emerging priorities (including increasing and recurring risk of COVID-19 infections). Will continue to monitor and escalate if necessary. Project Plan should identify clear pinch points/critical milestones for resource planning.
Enabler availability	Enabling functions in IT, HR, Property, Legal and other areas may not be available to support the work at the times required.	'Develop a comprehensive implementation plan (with realistic timescales for delivery) as early as possible, to understand/address early the potential pinch points and plan availability of resources Seek confirmation as soon as possible from Enablers Group regarding allocated resources
Partnership Working	Failing to engage with partners appropriately will damage existing working relationships and upset arrangements in place for shared local resilience/risk management.	Need to complete a comprehensive stakeholder review and develop/implement a Comms and Engagement Plan Need to map out all current partnership forums and service involvement to determine future models of involvement (West and North). Need to make partners aware of plans and factor in policy/agreement and process changes to the implementation plan
ICT risk	ICT dependencies to confirm	There may be some ICT issues making disaggregation in the timelines challenging – TBC Risk of availability of IT areas to carry out change at time require
Work locations	Unable to identify suitable work locations in practice	The need for a work location for the team both in West and North. The majority of staff are currently working from One Angel Square, with some home working. A suitable location for North team has been identified and pending further review as part of the accommodation (OAS) review project.
Customer experience	Risk if change is not coordinated effectively with the customer experience areas (inc. web)	Webpages and customer journeys need to be reviewed to establish separate information and customer handling processes.
Statutory	Performance of statutory duties, completion of returns and data flow entries	Risk here is of ensuring statutory and legislative requirements can be met – need enough staff, trained, budget etc.

6.4 Consultation

None arising from this report.

6.5 Consideration by Scrutiny

None arising from this report

6.6 Climate Impact

None arising from this report

6.7 Community Impact

None arising from this report.

7 Background Papers

None