

8. IRMP 2011/12 Environmental Management

Purpose of report

1. To update the Policy and Resources Committee on actions and direction to support our IRMP Recommendation 7 relating to Environmental Management.
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Recommendations

The Chief Fire Officer recommends that the Policy and Resources Committee:

- i) Note the content of this report; and***
- ii) Agree that IRMP Action Plan 2011/12 Objective 7 be considered complete.***

Introduction and Background

2. As part of the IRMP process, the 2011/12 annual action plan set out priorities for that financial year. Objective 7 of that plan stated;

'We will review our approach to environmental issues to ensure that we are maximising the potential partnership working in this area, reducing our energy usage and identifying further opportunities for cost efficiency'.

3. The original intention of this objective was to implement a full review of the Service's approach to environmental issues. Due to other commitments within the Service and reduced officer capacities following the need to deal with budgetary pressures, a full comprehensive review could not be undertaken. However, in the daily running and decision making at all levels of the Service environmental issues are considered and initiatives implemented, notably with regard to energy usage.
4. This approach of mainstreaming environmental thinking into daily activities will be expanded during 2012/13 but this paper sets out the key initiatives completed during 2011/12 that provide environmental efficiencies as well as cost savings.

Property

5. During 2010 the Asset Management Strategy was reviewed which informed a programme of fire station replacements based upon the condition of the assets. This produced the largest capital works programme that the Service has undertaken in 20 years and provides opportunities in the new builds for more sustainable solutions and greatly improved energy management. SMB have agreed that all new fire stations will have as a minimum:

- a. Solar photovoltaic panels to provide the electricity required to maintain fire appliances on charge (where planning allows).
 - b. Lighting timers where appropriate (this has been completed at Service Headquarters).
 - c. Solar water heating to be utilised where appropriate (where planning allows).
 - d. Ground source heat pumps as the main source of heating at new locations.
 - e. Rainwater harvesting and grey water usage at locations of high water consumption (where planning allows).
6. The Total Place initiative has led to the joint Fire and Police Station in Bromsgrove becoming a Capital and Asset Pathfinder project, recognised nationally as a leading partnership project that will reduce the size of the public estate in Worcestershire. The project will provide significant energy usage savings when compared to individual Police and Fire stations, and the building will be built to current BREEAM (BRE Environmental Assessment Method) standards.
7. The West Midlands Contractor Framework is another partnership initiative which provides an opportunity to produce cost efficiencies. From an environmental perspective it ensures that the latest building technologies will be used on projects and vets contractors to comply with the most stretching energy performance standards (for example, one contractor has demonstrated compliance with the demanding Passivhaus standard). The framework also stipulates that all construction resources, labour and materials will be sourced locally to the project, unless not available.
8. Despite a demanding overall property maintenance requirement, the Service has focussed on improvements that will provide long term sustainability and cost efficiencies relating to energy usage; for example, inefficient metal framed windows have been fully replaced by uPVC double glazing to the latest standards at Kidderminster, Evesham, Pershore, Ledbury, Ross-on-Wye, Eardisley, Leintwardine, Kingsland, Leominster, Bromyard, Bewdley, Stourport, Tenbury and Broadway fire stations.

Fleet

9. There are limitations on energy saving with the Operational Fleet, but the move to Land Rovers as Officer response cars has provided cost savings through the arrangements to purchase by negotiating with the supplier to reduce the purchase cost and purchase rather than lease where this is more cost effective. More importantly from this report's point of view, Land Rover provide a carbon offset programme which invests in global projects to offset the carbon used in the manufacturing of the vehicle and exhaust emissions created during the vehicle's asset life in use as a response vehicle. These two initiatives see the carbon footprint of the whole production process and the first 45,000 miles of usage off-set.

10. The Service has enhanced its foam strategy by the proposed procurement of an additional Compressed Air Foam System (CAFS) fire engine. Whereas the long-term environmental impacts of CAFS remain uncertain, there is certainly evidence to show that there are advantages in mitigating the equivalent water usage and impact of water run off by using CAFS, which is generally more efficient as a fire fighting medium.
11. The Off-Road fire fighting vehicles (Land Rover Defender 130s) being specified utilise a Fire Express water fogging system, which again reduces the amount of water used and reduces the potential for environmental contamination through water run off. One of these vehicles has been put into service in Hereford and another has been specified for Malvern. Senior Management Board (SMB) have also approved replacement of the Argocat at Malvern with an updated and improved version of this vehicle, which like its predecessor utilises a low contact pressure tyre combination which minimises the impact on the flora and fauna of the Malvern Hills and similar locations.

Equipment

12. Again, it is difficult to source immediate environmental quick wins with the operational equipment used but there have been improvements where possible. More consideration has been given to 'end of life' equipment disposal. Previously a disposal agency was used to dispose of equipment which was no longer required but officers in the Operational Logistics Department now look at specific initiatives which will recycle this equipment, rather than scrapping or sending to landfill. For example, when the Breathing Apparatus sets were recently replaced, the old sets were sold to be re-used by organisations operating in developing countries.

Information Communications Technology (ICT)

13. The Service has supported improvements in its ICT systems that support a move to a 'paperless office', decreasing the energy consumption and resource impact of printing and copying. SMB has moved away from using printed materials for their meetings with the use of electronic document readers (Tablets). These are also being trialled in the operational arena. Tablets have been issued to Inter-agency Liaison Officers (ILOs) to enable quick access to a large repository of information in their operational role and this will now be extended to Hazardous Materials officers (Hazmats) and Fire Safety officers.

Conclusion/Summary

14. Although a comprehensive review and investigation has not been completed into environmental issues in the Service a number of environmental management solutions have been introduced within the organisation which maximise cost efficiencies. Moving forward, the Service will continue to manage resources in the most environmentally and cost effective way, ensuring that our actions now will assist in securing our long term future.

Financial Considerations

Consideration	Yes/No	Reference in Report i.e paragraph no.
There are financial issues that require consideration	Yes	Whole document – cost efficiency.

Legal Considerations

Consideration	Yes/No	Reference in Report i.e paragraph no.
There are legal issues e.g. contractual and procurement, reputational issues that require consideration	Yes	Sustainable procurement – whole document.

Additional Considerations

15. The table below sets out any additional issues arising from the proposals contained in this report and identifies the relevant paragraphs in the report where such issues are addressed.

Consideration	Yes/No	Reference in Report i.e paragraph no.
Resources (e.g. Assets, ICT, Human Resources, Training & Development, Sustainability).	Yes	Assets – whole document.
Strategic Policy Links (e.g. IRMP, Authority Plan, Equality & Diversity, Partnerships, Environmental Impact).	Yes	Authority Plan 2011/12.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (e.g. risk management and control measures, risk register score).	No	No
Consultation with Representative Bodies	No	

Supporting Information

None

Background Papers

Authority Plan 2011/12

Contact Officer

Ian Edwards, Head of Asset Management
(01905 368360)

Email: iedwards@hwfire.org.uk