

Report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer

Fire Alliance Fire Control Project Update

Purpose of report

1. To update the Fire Authority on progress of the Fire Alliance Fire Control Project.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the decision to award the contract for a new joint fire control system in partnership with Shropshire FRS, Cleveland FRS and County Durham & Darlington FRS to Motorola, following a competitive procurement exercise, be noted and approved.

Introduction and Background

2. At the FRA meeting on 15 February 2022 Members approved the utilisation of funding against the Fire Control reserve to secure an appropriate replacement command and control system.
3. Subsequently the Alliance Board approved a project to procure a jointly funded Command and Control system able to work across both Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) and Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) areas from 2 sites (Telford and Hindlip).
4. In October 2022 the project was re-scoped following an approach from Cleveland (CFB) and County Durham and Darlington (CD&D) who asked us to consider involving them in the procurement.

Progress to date

5. In January 2023, HWFRS commenced a full procurement process, acting as the lead authority on behalf of all four Services.
6. Following a rigorous evaluation of submissions by representatives from all four Fire and Rescue Services, the panel recommended to the Chief Fire Officers that the contract be awarded to Motorola Solutions.
7. Motorola's system offers a number of improvements such as the integration of WHAT3WORDS, the ability to transfer incident details electronically between control rooms and other agencies, the ability to accurately pinpoint the location of callers who are using mobile phones and artificial intelligence to give control staff an estimate as to the truthfulness of a caller which would encourage a

more robust challenge, potentially reducing the number of hoax calls attended.

8. Motorola will provide a single system for all four control rooms which will be hosted in their secure resilient data centres which would be accessed from each control through a secure internet link.
9. On a day to day basis each control room will handle calls and mobilise resources for their own Service area.
10. All four control rooms normally operate with three staff on duty, but one of the advantages of having a single system is that whenever any of the control rooms requires additional assistance they can immediately support one another expanding the pool of staff able to deal with incidents in any of the Service areas to twelve. This could be for major incidents, spate calls such as widespread flooding or multiple calls requiring the staff to provide fire survival guidance.
11. As Motorola are also providing updated systems on the Fire Appliances, linked directly to the fire control system, it will also further support the recommendations from incidents such as Grenfell and Kerslake as all the information in the control rooms will be shared in real time with the crews at the incidents. The exchange of information between the fire crews, fire control and senior officers will be much faster and accurate as the systems are all linked so will use direct messaging rather than voice to pass information back and forth.
12. Another advantage of sharing the system across four Fire Services is a considerable reduction in set up and running costs for the system itself. Further cost savings will be realised through freeing up building space as there will no longer be a need to maintain secondary control rooms and all the hardware will be removed from Fire and Rescue Service premises.
13. Motorola have already delivered this system into individual Fire Services such as Bedfordshire and Essex, but the very real collaboration between the four Fire and Rescue Services, being led by HWFRS, will be the first of its kind, which not only brings greater resilience but also affordability, allowing the communities of HWFRS to benefit from the improvements that can be achieved through access to the latest technology.

Summary

14. The replacement system will provide a more reliable, flexible and resilient product with increased functionality to better support the work of the control staff, and streamline the flow of information between the control rooms and operational crews which mitigates risk to firefighters and the public.
15. By working in partnership with Cleveland and County Durham Fire Authorities, the Fire Alliance has not only been able to make significant cost savings which allows us to provide the benefits of the most up to date technology to better support our communities, but has also improved our ability to scale up

operations to deal with multiple calls and major incidents.

16. The new software on fire appliances allows real time information sharing between control rooms, the incident ground and senior officers.

Corporate Considerations

<p>Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)</p>	<p>Budget implications already agreed and approved by the Authority</p>
<p>Strategic Policy Links & Core Code of Ethics (Identify how proposals link with current priorities & policy framework and align to the Core Code of Ethics)</p>	<p>Links to delivery of the CRMP and Core strategies</p>
<p>Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).</p>	<p>Not required at this stage of the project</p>
<p>Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)</p>	<p>Wide consultation has been carried out with all stakeholders</p>
<p>Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)</p>	<p>Not required at this stage of the project</p>
<p>Data Protection Impact Assessment (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)</p>	<p>DPIAs are all aligned to current standards and Codes of Compliance for the current system and will be refreshed when the data transfer happens against the project timeline.</p>