

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

12 DECEMBER 2011

1. COLLABORATION WITH STOKE ON TRENT AND STAFFORDSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY; GOVERNANCE BOARD – INAUGURAL MEETING

Report of the Chief Fire Officer.

RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 THAT the Committee note the inaugural meeting of the collaborative Project Governance Board and minutes attached;
- 1.2 THAT the Committee note the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding for collaboration;
- 1.3 THAT the Committee note the Project Governance Board's decision to commence the recruitment of an independent project manager;
- 1.4 THAT the Committee note the Project Governance Board's decision to approve the £4.154m funding bid to the Department for Communities and Local Government.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report is submitted to provide information to the Committee of the main areas of discussion and decisions made during the inaugural meeting of the Shared Fire Control Project Governance Board on 3 November 2011.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Authority, at its meeting on 19 September 2011, endorsed the principle of working towards a joint arrangement for delivering Fire Control services between the Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority and this Authority. This Authority delegated power to this Committee to approve the governance arrangements for the project and at the Executive Committee

meeting on 10 October 2011 it appointed Members of this Authority to sit on the Project Board; to oversee progress and receive regular reports from the Project Board.

- 3.2 The inaugural meeting of the Shared Fire Control Project Governance Board met at Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) Headquarters on 3 November 2011 and the minutes of this meeting are attached at Appendix A.
- 3.3 The Board discussed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which is a clear and accountable framework under which both services are able to identify potential opportunities and deliver joint benefits and outcomes that improve the delivery of services to their respective Authority's. It also sets out ways that the partners will work together to deliver a shared Fire Control Service for joint delivery; will clarify and record the responsibilities of the partners individually and establish guidelines for taking forward collaborative joint working.
- 3.4 The MoU was approved and signed by the respective Chairs of the Authorities and Chief Fire Officers from West Midlands Fire Service and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service.
- 3.5 The board discussed a paper which set out the project management options for the management, delivery and implementation of the shared Fire Ccontrol project. The paper provided four options:
 - single project manager from within SFRS or WMFS;
 - joint project managers appointed from within SFRS and WMFS;
 - a single full time project manager appointed for the duration of the project independent of either Service; and
 - a single part time project manager appointed for the duration of the project independent of each Service.
- 3.6 The Board decided that an independent project manager with the requisite skills, knowledge and experience be appointed on a fulltime basis initially (on a twelve month fixed term contract), to ensure that the project is given the correct level of priority to commence.
- 3.7 The Committee will recall that the national FiReControl project was terminated by the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) on 20 December 2010. The Government's

preferred approach to achieving improved resilience and efficiency is now through encouraging increased collaboration in a locally-determined way and grant funding of £81million has been made available for all England's Fire and Rescue Authorities (£1.8m per Authority) for which authorities can bid.

- 3.8 The Board were presented with a proposed joint collaboration bid between the two Authorities for consideration and submission to the CLG. The joint bid contained a summary of the local plans; the expected costs and benefits; the resilience benefits; efficiency benefits; the assessment of risks and dependencies. Supporting the bid was a Project Initiation Document, the MoU; the project timeline and indicative project costs of £4.154m.
- 3.9 The Board approved the funding bid and it was submitted to the CLG on 4 November 2011. The CLG have outlined their expectation that the grant funding will be confirmed by 31 January 2012.

4. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not required for this particular report as it concerns the setting up of project arrangements and approval of a bidding process. Any expenditures and plans that have implications requiring an Equality Impact Assessment will need to be incorporated in any future reports for consideration as part of the ongoing project.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Fire and Rescue Authorities are empowered by Section 7(2)(c) of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 to make arrangements to deal with calls for help and for summoning personnel. The Fire Services Minister in July 2010 emphasised the need for Fire Authorities to work collaboratively to deliver efficiency, effectiveness and an enhanced resilience capability.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 In July 2011 CLG announced funding arrangements to support locally delivered solutions for Fire and Rescue Control services. Each service could submit a bid for up to £1.8m. There are clear criteria as to how funding will be allocated based on resilience and efficiency outcomes and evidence of collaboration between

Services. By working with another Fire Authority a potential sum of £3.6 m becomes available to develop solutions that are truly integrated for intelligence-led mobilising, collation of data and evidence, resource management and ensuring response outcomes are factored into preventative and protective services.

- 6.2 The Shared Fire Control Project Governance Board approved a £4.154m funding bid to the CLG as the CLG will consider bids above £1.8m per authority where they consider the bid offers 'significantly improved benefits' and also other where it is assessed that other authorities may not require the full £1.8m.
- 6.3 The appointment of a Project Manager is to be undertaken on a fixed term contract and the cost would be met from the grant funding.
- 6.4 A further report will be presented once the outcome of the bid is known, setting out the delivery and implementation proposals for the project and the proposed joint arrangements following project completion.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Authority Report 19 September 2011 - COLLABORATION WITH STOKE ON TRENT AND STAFFORDSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Executive Committee Report 10 October 2011 - COLLABORATION WITH STOKE ON TRENT AND STAFFORDSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

VIJ RANDENIYA
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

APPENDIX A

Meeting of	Inaugural Fire Control Project Governance Board
Date & Time	Thursday 3 November 2011 10.30 am
Venue	Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Pirehill
Minute Taker	Kay Johnson

Attendance:

Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority	West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority
Mr L W Bloomer (in the Chair)	Mr J Edwards
Mr A E Dutton	Mr K Chambers
Mr P G Jones	Mr K Turner
Mr S J Tagg	
Mr P Dartford	Mr V Randeniya
Advisors	Advisors
Mr D Stevens	Mr D Walton

Apologies: Mr N Eustace, Mr H Norris, and Mrs N Sharma

Declarations of Interest: None

Welcome by Mr Len Bloomer, Chairman of the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire and Rescue Authority

Mr Bloomer welcomed both Members and Officers to the Inaugural meeting of the Fire Control Project Governance Board and invited them to introduce themselves.

Agenda Item		
4	Membership of the Governance Board	
		Purpose of Item
Key points discussed	Outlined on the Agenda for information.	For information
Decisions made	That the Membership be noted.	

Agenda Item		
5	Terms of Reference	
		Purpose of Item
Summary of document	The document sets out the General Terms of Reference; timescales and governance; proposals for the Membership of the Board; proposal for support arrangements/resources; and specific support for the Project Board.	For approval
Decisions made	That the Terms of Reference be approved.	

Agenda Item		
6	Memorandum of Understanding	
		Purpose of Item
Summary of document	<p>This is a clear and accountable framework under which the services can work together to identify potential opportunities to deliver joint outcomes that promote the Fire Service and improve the delivery of services to their respective Authorities.</p> <p>It sets out ways that the partners will work together to deliver a shared Fire Control service for joint delivery; will clarify and record the responsibilities of the partners individually and collectively, and establish guidelines for taking forward collaborative joint working.</p> <p>The partners will explore the benefits of joined up service delivery of discreet elements of an effective Fire Control including and not limited to: command and control mobilising systems; ICT support; training; data management; and equipment maintenance.</p>	For approval
Key points discussed	<p>Content of points</p> <p>They discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the key elements of the Memorandum of Understanding guided by Mr Walton. joint statements and publicity and 	

	<p>decided that as there may be sensitivities and confidentiality around the project going forward it was important for a joint communications strategy to be drawn up as soon as possible which would work to the key milestones of the project and be proactive to media activity. The need to formalise a range of media statements going forward was recognised. The formulation of a joint communications strategy was supported by all to ensure that responses to the media could be given quickly. Overall the project would be a good news story about shared solutions, facilities, capability, and capacity although it was acknowledged that there was the potential for staffing levels to be lower within the shared facility.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the project achieving its objectives and reaching a successful outcome. The Board were absolutely committed to delivering the project, for the right reasons in the right way and to achieve the outcomes. The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding will be used as a public declaration of this commitment. the “in principle” framework for the financial arrangements. Further work will be done in this regard by the project manager and project team. 	
Decisions made	The Memorandum was approved and signed by the respective Chairs of the Authorities and Chief Fire Officers from West Midlands Fire Service and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service.	

Agenda Item		
7	Arrangements for Officer Support and Advice (if not dealt with in the Terms of Reference)	
		Purpose of item
Summary of the purpose of the discussion	No further comments made.	For discussion

Decisions made	No decision made.	
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Agenda Item		
8	Shared Fire Control Project Management Options – Appointment of Project Manger	
		Purpose of Item
Summary of the document	The paper set out the project management options for the supervision, delivery and implementation of the shared fire control project. The paper set out four options: a single project manager from within SFRS or WMFRS; joint project managers appointed from within SFRS and WMFRS; a single full time project manager appointed for the duration of the project independent of either Service; and a single part time project manager appointed for the duration of the project independent of each Service.	For approval
Key points discussed	<p>Content of points.</p> <p>They discussed:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the job description which will be checked by the HR lead for the project. their support for the appointment of a person that was independent of both services. the salary in the job description which should be set as “competitive” rather than be specific. the qualifications quoted which should also say comparable qualifications. the appointments process having a political element. The Board were advised that for this level of appointment it would not be usual for Member involvement. Members indicated that for a project of such magnitude it was important, at least for the Chairman of the two Authorities to have some part in the process even if they were not involved in the technical interviews. The HR advisor would be asked to build a political element into the process. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the fact that the appointment would be for a fixed term 12 month contract. It was acknowledged that there is a degree of risk involved in making the appointment before the funding from DCLG has been agreed. the issues relating to Staffordshire's Control maintenance contract which is time limited. Mr Dartford advised that the Service will be reluctant to extend the current maintenance contract past March 2013 and so should the project not be completed by then interim arrangements will need to be made using WMFS technology. 	
Decisions made	<p>Decisions made from discussions</p> <p>Following the evaluation of the four options it was decided that an independent project manager with the requisite skills, knowledge and experience be appointed on a fulltime basis initially (on a twelve month fixed term contract), to ensure that the project is given the correct level of priority to commence. The appointment will be beneficial to both Authorities by delivering the project to fulfil the vision of a Joint Intelligence and Logistics Centre that will meet the needs of both Authorities now and in the future.</p> <p>The Project Governance Board is to review the appointment conditions at each (quarterly) meeting to determine whether there is a need for the position to remain full time or whether it could be managed as a part time role.</p> <p>The salary commensurate with the post will be £45-£65 k and the cost of this will be built into the joint bid for funding available from DCLG to support the project. There will be adjustments to the job description with regard to salary level and qualifications as discussed. The process for the recruitment of project manager would commence immediately.</p>	

Agenda Item		
9	Project Objectives and Plan – Consideration of Project Initiation Document	
		Purpose of Item
Summary of document	<p>The document sets out the key information relating to the project. The aim of the project is to provide a collaborative approach to future provision of Fire Control Services for Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service and West Midlands Fire Service. The documents further outlines the objectives; the deliverables and benefits; the date related milestones; constraints; project work streams; ICT requirements; finance requirements; budgetary control; training and development requirements; performance and planning requirements; equality and diversity support; stakeholder management and communications strategy; risk management; evaluation and review processes; project control and reporting.</p> <p>Appendix 1 set out the Project Management Structure; Appendix 2 set out the benefits of adopting a long term option; and Appendix 3 set out the indicative project timeline.</p>	For approval
Key points discussed	<p>Content of points</p> <p>They discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that the document is a frame work rather than a clear set of rules. • that as the project progressed the detail will flow through the document. • that the aim is to deliver the project on time, cost and quality. • the document itself which was very clear and well thought through. 	
Decisions made	<p>Decisions made from Discussions</p> <p>That the Project Initiation Document be approved</p>	

Agenda Item		
10	Bid for Funding to the Department for Communities and Local Government	
		Purpose of Item
Summary of the document	The joint Shared Fire Control Partnership Resilience and Efficiency Grant Bid contained a summary of the local plans; the expected costs and benefits; the resilience benefits; efficiency benefits; the assessment of risks and dependencies. Contained within the bid will be the Project Initiation Document, the Memorandum of Understanding, the Project Timeline; all as approved by the Governance Board; the Project Costs; and the individual Fire and Rescue Service costs without Project Partnership.	For approval
Key points discussed	<p>Content of points.</p> <p>They discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the fact that officers had been working on the refinements of the bid right up to the date of the meeting and that last minute changes have been made to the figures reducing the bid by £88,000 in savings which related to technological equipment already provided at WMFS. the National “pot” of £81 m which roughly meant an allocation of £1.8m per authority regardless of need. The joint bid for WMFS and SFRS will be for approximately £4.2m. the fact that at the outset some of the detailed costings were estimated at this time although supported with evidence where available. However, given the nature of the bid it is not possible for all costings to be definitive at this stage. Nonetheless, the bid was as accurate and prudent as it could be and would be supported by a folder of supporting documents. the visit to DCLG by Mr Stevens and Mr Walton where the requirements of 	

	<p>the bid was discussed. The officers were somewhat disappointed that DCLG had advised that reference to wider innovation should not be included as a formal part of the bid. The meeting with DCLG was useful as it gave them an idea of the requirements of the bid to tick the right boxes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the bid would be compliant but would also include the broader vision in the documentation. • DCLGs request for the bid to include details of the number of staff which would be lost due to the joint project. The Authorities had resisted putting this information in the bid as it would be inappropriate until they were further into the project so that they could then properly assess the staffing requirements. • the large amount of research and contributory work carried out by officers up to this stage in the process. • the fact that Board were optimistic in attracting the funding. • the worst case scenario should the bid not be successful. This was unlikely but the Authorities would need to do something as the project was a significant contribution to wider whole service cost reductions going forward. 	
Decisions made	<p>Decisions made from discussions</p> <p>That the bid for funding to DCLG be approved and that it be submitted by 4 November 2011.</p>	

Agenda Item		
11	Project Mandate/Vision Document	
		Purpose of Item
Summary of the document	The document outlines the shared vision of the both Authorities broken down into a number of discreet topic areas: resource management; resilience; incident management; intelligence hub; contact centre; and open source shared back	For approval

	office services. The document outlines the establishment of the project team and the associated work streams, the establishment of the scope of the project, which would be established by the Project Governance Board; the constraints facing both Fire and Rescue Services and the responsibilities.	
Key points discussed	Content of points discussed The document has been produced using PRINCE2 methodology.	
Decisions made	Decisions made from discussions The Project Mandate/Vision Document was approved.	

Agenda Item		
12	Programme of Meetings	
		Purpose of Item
Key points discussed	Frequency of meetings	For discussion
Decisions made	<p>The meetings will be held quarterly with the next meeting commencing in early March 2012 and then being arranged quarterly thereafter.</p> <p>At the March meeting Members will be given the opportunity to view the WMFS Control Centre.</p> <p>The venue for the meetings will alternate between Staffordshire and West Midlands.</p>	