



Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

MEETING	Executive Committee
DATE OF MEETING	21 November 2018
OFFICER	Julian Parsons, Head of Service Development
LEAD MEMBER	Councillor Peter McDonald
SUBJECT OF THE REPORT	Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP)
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>This paper provides Members with a further update regarding the national status of the programme and the impact on regional and local transition.</p> <p>The Home Office have now confirmed the decision to move to an incremental delivery approach for ESMCP.</p> <p>The National Fire Chiefs Council, together with the Local Government Association Fire Services Management Committee, have formally written to the Programme expressing a number of concerns regarding delivery.</p> <p>The continued concern of officers is that lack of detail regarding what will be delivered by the incremental approach and when.</p> <p>There is still no indication of what the costs of both delivery and in-life arrangements will be. The Programme is currently reviewing the Full Business Case and we expect the detail to be reported to us in the New Year.</p>
ACTION	Noting.
RECOMMENDATIONS	That the report be noted.
RISK MANAGEMENT	<p>It was reported in the last briefing to Members that the financial risk consists of three different aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery • Airwave costs • Future costs <p>It is still evident that further detail will need to be provided before firm decisions can be made by this Service regarding when and how our transition to ESN will be made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detail regarding the devices that will be available to User Organisations (UOs) and their cost remains scant. The programme is looking

	<p>to deliver a range of ESN products that have different capabilities and benefits (not unlike different mobile phone contracts. It remains unclear how the newly adopted system will be funded, as the future of the Section 31 funding arrangements currently in place for the Airwave system are unlikely to remain 'as is'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair of the National Fire Chiefs Council, Roy Wilsher and the Chair of the Local Government Association Fire Services Management Committee, Cllr Ian Stephens have jointly submitted a letter regarding ESMCP to Permanent Secretary, Sir Philip Rutnam (see Appendix C). This letter raises concerns, at the highest level, about parallel funding for both Airwave and ESN during the period of transition, but no answers have been received to date. • It remains unclear how the ESN service and associated contracts will be managed. It has been stated by the programme that there will be a single point of contact to manage the major contracts with both Motorola and EE but any other contracts that are entered into by UOs to secure devices will have to be managed locally. This may require resources to manage an in-house triage and resolution process. It has been reported in previous papers to Members that there was an unknown financial risk to the Service with regard to effectively transitioning to the new service. The risk is seen as high due to the delay to delivery and the ongoing uncertainty around the extension to the Airwave contract.
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	<p>The Home Office (HO) have committed to provide funding through Section 31 Grants to cover local transition support, upgrading control rooms, vehicle installations and devices. BFRS will act as treasurer for the collaborative aspects of the project delivery.</p> <p>HO will directly fund ten regional implementation managers to coordinate and monitor the transition in fire and rescue services.</p> <p>The programme board is continuing to take a prudent approach to use of the Section 31 grant. To date the only funds that have been committed are to fund the external programme support costs. Funding has now been allocated to individual services and they are drawing down against their allocation to cover costs. We have been advised that the Programme are likely to commission an audit of Service's expenditure of centrally allocated funds.</p>

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service have already signed up to the principles of the ESN. Officers will continue to monitor the progress of the Programme closely and will provide challenge to the process where it is felt necessary.
CONSISTENCY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DUTY TO COLLABORATE	<p>This Authority remains an active participant of the South Central Transition Delivery arrangements. The governance and delivery models have now been established and Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service officers are involved at each level. The principle has been adopted that information is shared across all five services and where appropriate, joint responses to work requests are submitted.</p> <p>The Head of Service Development is the Vice Chair of the Regional Strategic Board as is also the Fire representative on the equivalent Police Board.</p> <p>Funding awards have been pooled centrally, and Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service are now acting as treasurers for the region.</p>
HEALTH AND SAFETY	There are no health and safety implications perceived at this time. There is constant review of this and any issues that may arise in the future will be referred.
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY	There have been no equality and diversity implications identified to date. As the programme progresses and further information and a confirmed plan become available, then an Integrated Impact Assessment will be completed.
USE OF RESOURCES	<p>Members may recall that the last briefing note explained that the central programme was developing a number of alternative incremental approach options for consideration by the Home Office. This was because the original Plan A was no longer considered to be a viable option. These options ranged from the delivery of data only in the first stages followed by voice capability through to the full ESN functionality being available and the Airwave service being transitioned out. Broad customer and stakeholder consultation has taken place to inform these options.</p> <p>In a letter from the Senior Responsible Owner for ESMCP, Stephen Webb, the Home Office has now announced that the incremental transition approach has now been approved following a robust review of the Programme (see Appendix A). The decision will be subject to independent verification and it has been confirmed that this will be delivered by a series of assurance reviews – one of which will be carried out by the Major Project Review Group of HM Treasury. The Full Business Case will require amending and will also be subject to a further governance review. It is expected that this process will be completed by the</p>

	<p>New Year.</p> <p>The Home Office believes that this decision now secures the future of the Emergency Services Network (ESN) and will result in savings of approximately £200million per year once the Airwave service has been fully transitioned out. User Organisations will be able to access data services over ESN from early 2019 and will be able to test and choose ESN products as they become available and not when the entire network is fully implemented. The projected date for the Airwave service to be switched off has now been extended to December 2022.</p> <p>The National Fire Chiefs Council has also released a statement in support of the latest announcement from the Home Office (see Appendix B). There is a feeling amongst the Fire community that this decision now provides greater certainty regarding the future of ESN and will allow more detailed planning for how each service will adopt and implement the new service to take place.</p> <p>The current thinking regarding the BFRS adoption timetable of ESN is linked to upgrades of systems within the Thames Valley Fire Control Service – strategies to achieve this are being discussed with our Thames Valley partners and the South Central Delivery Team.</p> <p>As stated in previous updates to Members, the Transformation Programme Manager is the Project Manager for ESMCP delivery.</p> <p>The Area Commander Service Development is the Senior User for this Authority and sits on the South Central Steering Group.</p> <p>This Authority is providing officers to lead in two workstreams of the South Central Region Transition Team – in Procurement and Finance, and Operational Policy (this officer is also the lead for Operational Alignment within the Thames Valley collaboration programme).</p>
PROVENANCE SECTION & BACKGROUND PAPERS	<p>Background</p> <p>ESMCP is the programme that will provide the next generation of mobile communications for emergency services and will replace the Airwave Tetra network introduced to fire services in 2009.</p> <p>The Programme is considered to be ground breaking and innovative and is designed to improve the integration of emergency services communications by taking advantage of 4G communications developments and by reducing costs to user organisations.</p> <p>The current national Airwave contracts have been extended and are now due to be terminated at the end</p>

	<p>of December 2022.</p> <p>The period of transition for the South Central Region was originally planned to take place between November 2017 and November 2018. These dates are being reviewed and a revised plan is due to be released following the Programme reset.</p> <p>Background Papers</p> <p>ESMCP Update November 2017</p> <p>ESMCP Update May 2018</p>
APPENDICES	<p>Appendix A: Letter from ESMCP Senior Responsible Owner – Stephen Webb</p> <p>Appendix B: NFCC Statement</p> <p>Appendix C: Letter to Sir Philip Rutnam</p> <p>Appendix D: ESN Review – Press Releases</p>
TIME REQUIRED	10 minutes
REPORT ORIGINATOR AND CONTACT	<p>Marie Crothers</p> <p>mcrothers@bucksfire.gov.uk</p> <p>07765 001907</p>