



# Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

<b>MEETING</b>	Fire Authority
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	7 June 2017
<b>OFFICER</b>	Neil Boustred, Head of Service Delivery
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	Community Protection
<b>SUBJECT OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>USAR Canine Capability</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<p>The New Dimension programme identified and delivered national assets which enhanced the fire and rescue service (FRS) response to a range of catastrophic incidents, including natural and deliberate events, and specifically including response to large-scale structural collapse and serious transport incidents. The Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) capability was one of a number of national capabilities developed and delivered in a phased approach throughout 2006-07, and subsequently reviewed in 2014. With the introduction of the (USAR) 'Concept of Operations' (ConOps) in 2015, the 20 government funded USAR teams from across the UK were grouped in to four zones, each comprising of five teams. Buckinghamshire have been placed in to Zone 2 with Norfolk, Essex, West Midlands and Leicestershire.</p> <p>Some modifications to the staffing and response from Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Services (BFRS) USAR capability have been required. The major change to the capability provision is that each USAR team must have their own search dog capability, provided from within the host Service.</p> <p>Our current capability is delivered through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service, this is due to end 1 February 2019.</p> <p>There are two options available:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To remain as we are, and not replace our current canine team once the existing MOU ceases;</li> <li>2. To establish an in Service USAR canine search capability.</li> </ol> <p>If we proceed with option 2, we will enhance our current USAR capability, our local search and rescue ability and fully meet all of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) set under the ConOps.</p>

	<p>This report explains our current position, the expectations placed on USAR hosting Services and the costs associated with progressing Option 2.</p>
<p><b>ACTION</b></p>	<p>Decision.</p>
<p><b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b></p>	<p>It is recommended that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The move to an In-Service USAR Canine capability be implemented to become effective no later than 1 February 2019.</li> <li>2. The current MOU be terminated once the In-Service USAR capability is effective.</li> <li>3. That an internal recruitment process for a suitable dog handler be undertaken.</li> <li>4. A suitable dog be procured.</li> <li>5. A suitable converted vehicle be procured.</li> <li>6. The Authority approve Capital funding of £36,500 to procure the canine, vehicle, kennels and equipment as set out in the report.</li> </ol>
<p><b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b></p>	<p>There is a potential risk that if the Service is not able to demonstrate a continued compliance with the USAR Concept of Operations, then BFRS may see the central USAR funding reduced or removed. If an In-Service capability is established before February 2019, Hampshire FRS are willing to withdraw early from the current arrangements.</p> <p>By selecting a handler from the existing operational establishment and carrying out a dual role, the funded establishment model will not need to be changed.</p>
<p><b>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</b></p>	<p>Vehicle, Kennels and Equipment, initial set up costs.  <math>£30,000 + £4,000 + £1,500 = £35,500</math></p> <p>Initial canine purchase/Donation:          Up to £1,000 = £1,000          Total £36,500 Capital.</p> <p>Food, Vet costs, Holiday kennelling:  <math>£300 + £400 + £400 = £1,100</math> (Per Annum)</p> <p>Existing FF as dog handler:          Annual handler Costs Retainer, Training days  <math>£1,656 + £5,736 = £7,392</math></p> <p>Total proposed £8,500 Revenue.</p> <p>Costs have been averaged out to give indicative</p>

	<p>funding requirements.</p> <p>£30,000 capital reallocation of underspend, from collaborative procurement of new vehicles will cover vehicle and conversion costs, plus the purchase of majority of the kennels and initial equipment inventory.</p> <p>Reallocation of USAR budget lines, where there have been consistent underspends identified will cover additional costs. This includes handler retainer and training days.</p> <p>Once the overlapping MOU is terminated, the funding of £6, 600 can be utilised as revenue, which will cover running costs for the working life of the capability.</p> <p>If recommendations are approved, the costs would be:          £36,500 Capital to set up with canine, vehicle and equipment.          £8,500 annual running costs which can be met within existing resources.</p>
<p><b>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</b></p>	<p>The existing MOU may be terminated by BFRS on 28 day's written notice with any under or over payments made under the MOU being reconciled accordingly.</p> <p>The terms and conditions of a prospective appointment to the position of dog handler will be amended where necessary on acceptance of role.</p>
<p><b>CONSISTENCY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DUTY TO COLLABORATE</b></p>	<p>The other Thames Valley Fire Services do not have a Canine Search capability, and have no requirement to establish one as non USAR hosting Services.</p> <p>The fire services within Thames Valley are however covered by Hampshire and Thames Valley Police, and either would be able to call on this BFRS resource should it be required.</p> <p>The capability could be developed to allow for multi-agency work with Police Search Teams (POLSA) to search for high risk missing persons such as dementia sufferers, vulnerable adults and children.</p>
<p><b>HEALTH AND SAFETY</b></p>	<p>By utilising a canine search team in the early stages of any search operations, exposure to associated risks and hazards to human crews are vastly reduced. National Risk Assessments are in place, along with long standing guidance and procedures, which are owned by the National Resilience Assurance Team.</p>
<p><b>EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY</b></p>	<p>An open and transparent selection process would be carried out.</p>
<p><b>USE OF RESOURCES</b></p>	<p><b>Communication with stakeholders;</b>          A number of staff, USAR hosting fire and rescue</p>

	<p>services, both within Zone 2 and wider, Hampshire and Thames Valley Police and non-Government organisations have been consulted. Discussions have been held with local FBU representatives.</p> <p><b>The system of internal control;</b> Once approved, the overall project will be led by USAR lead, Aylesbury Station Commander, monitored by Group Commander Service Delivery South, reporting to Head of Service Delivery. Individual elements of the project will be monitored by the finance team, procurement team, workshop manager, employee services.</p> <p><b>The medium term financial strategy;</b> There will be associated year on year costs such as replacement of damaged or unserviceable equipment, canine training aids and welfare equipment. These will be covered through identified revenue underspends from within existing USAR budget.</p> <p>Once the overlapping MOU is terminated, this funding will be utilised to cover running costs.</p> <p><b>The management of the asset base;</b> If approved a single vehicle will be procured that will be for the whole life cycle of the Canine search team (up to 8 years).</p> <p>All equipment will be managed through current asset management system (Red Kite).</p> <p><b>Environmental;</b> Procured vehicle will comply with Service CO2 policy. Any asset or equipment disposal will be impact assessed at time of action.</p>
<p><b>PROVENANCE SECTION &amp; BACKGROUND PAPERS</b></p>	<p><b>Background</b> USAR Concept of Operations Master Document V2.0 USAR Search Dog Guidance Final Document USAR Canine agreement</p>
<p><b>APPENDICES</b></p>	<p>Report into Providing a USAR Canine Capability Within BFRS</p>
<p><b>TIME REQUIRED</b></p>	<p>15 minutes.</p>
<p><b>REPORT ORIGINATOR AND CONTACT</b></p>	<p>Station Commander Phill Mould <a href="mailto:pmould@bucksfire.gov.uk">pmould@bucksfire.gov.uk</a> 07786 747712</p>