



Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

MEETING	Executive Committee
DATE OF MEETING	18 November 2020
OFFICER	Anne-Marie Carter, Head of ICT, Transformation and PMO
LEAD MEMBER	Councillor David Hopkins
SUBJECT OF THE REPORT	Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP)
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>This paper provides Members with an update regarding the latest developments in the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP). The last briefing was provided to Members in July 2020.</p> <p>Members will recall that in previous information papers, reference has been made to the Full Business Case (FBC) which has yet to be made available for all User Organisations (UOs) to review.</p> <p>The latest iteration of the FBC, version 0.08d dated 18 September 2020, has been reviewed by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Strategic Lead for Operational Communications (CFO Darryl Keen and the Fire Customer Group and a letter of response has been submitted to the Senior Responsible Owner for the Programme, Stephen Webb. This letter can be seen at Appendix A.</p> <p>This draft of the FBC continues to be reviewed and is continuing on its governance route as approval is needed for many governmental purposes, including treasury approvals, funding and commercial / contractual purposes.</p>
ACTION	Noting.
RECOMMENDATIONS	Members are requested to note this report and Appendix A, the letter from the NFCC dated 20 October 2020.
RISK MANAGEMENT	<p>The letter from CFO Darryl Keen, Strategic Lead for Operational Communications for the NFCC provides feedback on the latest draft of the ESMCP Full Business Case (FBC) version No. 0.08d dated 18/09/20.</p> <p>The FBC is currently going through a process of review and approval within the Home Office with an indicative timeline of completion to go to the Minister in the Spring of 2021.</p>

	<p>There have been some changes in the governance and leadership of ESMCP which were announced last week, so it is not anticipated that there will be any update to the FBC for the next few weeks at least, but the current draft will continue on its governance route as approval is needed for many governmental purposes, including treasury approvals, funding and commercial / contractual purposes.</p> <p>There is other developing information from the Programme which indicates a further delay in the delivery of the Prime product. At the time of writing, it is not known if there are any implications for overall programme timelines or the review of the FBC.</p> <p>The current version of the FBC presents four options for the future of the ESMCP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Option 1: Stop ESN and continue with Airwave indefinitely (Do Minimum)• Option 2: stopping ESN, extending Airwave and starting a new Programme to replace it from April 2022.• Option 3a: incremental delivery of ESN, with a risk based, expected Airwave Shut Down date of June 2025. The base case of Airwave shut down for this option is November 2024.• Option 3b: incremental delivery of ESN, with a risk based expected Airwave Shut Down date of February 2024. The base case of Airwave shut down for this option is June 2023 - this being the <i>Programme</i> preferred option. <p>The FBC leans towards the dismissal of options 1 and 2, as they would lead to the on-going maintenance of the current Airwave provision. Option 3a would see incremental delivery of ESN, with an Airwave shut down date between November 2024 and June 2025.</p> <p>Option 3b minimises the on-going use of Airwave, which adds substantial costs to the Programme. This option offers incremental delivery of ESN, with an expected Airwave shut down date between June 2023 and February 2024. The earliest possible transition, from Airwave to ESN, remains the best long-term option from the Programme perspective as ESN will be cheaper than Airwave long term and maintaining both systems concurrently is extremely costly.</p> <p>However, due to the absence of detailed plans, assumptions and other information that sit behind options 3a and 3b, the NFCC and CFO Keen are not in a position to offer a firm view or any assurance around either option.</p> <p>There has been regular input to the Fire Customer Group (FCG) from across the fire sector including the</p>
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	<p>South Central region and these issues are addressed in detail through the NFCC letter. DCFO Steve Foye of Royal Berkshire currently chairs the South Central ESMCP Board and regularly attends the National FCG, to ensure our concerns are raised for consideration.</p> <p>It is clear in the letter from CFO Keen, that the NFCC does not yet feel sufficiently informed to assure the FBC on grounds of technical and operational viability, and its ability to deliver.</p> <p>The concern that ESN will cost Fire and Rescue Authorities more at local level than they currently pay for Firelink is becoming more pressing. Essentially, whilst the overall cost for the ESN is expected to be cheaper than Airwave, the distributed costs at an individual FRS level could be higher. The NFCC have been clear that Fire Authorities will want high levels of assurance on the financial elements, in particular the non-core and in full life costs that would fall to these Fire Authorities. To date, this detail has not been made available to User Organisations.</p> <p>An anticipated revised draft of the FBC may address some of the matters raised in the letter from CFO Keen. It also notes that a number of Fire Authorities have expressed their desire to provide feedback on the FBC. The NFCC are exploring with the Local Government Association how a collective view can be given and officers belief this collective approach, as seen in the NFCC letter, offers a powerful voice.</p> <p>The view of the NFCC, however, still supports the premise that ESN ultimately provides the best strategic fit for the future of emergency services communications and is anxious to continue to work with the Programme to find solutions to the issues already outlined.</p> <p>It is not recommended that any formal action should be taken by Members of the Executive Committee and the Fire Authority at this time due to there being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• robust and detailed feedback in the NFCC letter to the National Programme• a revised FBC expected imminently• methods of LGA feedback being explored <p>Officers will continue to work together at local and regional levels to provide input to the FBC and will liaise with Chairman of the Fire Authority and the Chairman of the Executive Committee if a formal consideration of the FBC and written comment to the national programme is required at a future date.</p> <p>It should also be noted that the Programme has announced that the ESMCP Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) has stepped down with immediate effect. An interim SRO has been appointed pending the</p>
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	<p>appointment of a permanent SRO but to date we have not received any further information regarding who that is. The Programme has recognised that there is now a requirement for a full time SRO to take the Programme towards transition.</p> <p>The reporting line for the Programme will shortly be moving from Digital Data and Technology to the Crime, Policing and Fire Group within the Home Office. The Programme have stated that this has been planned for some time and they feel that the technology has developed to a point where it is known what the solution will look like. As the Programme moves towards the =transition phase, it is felt that the move will benefit from established relationships within the police and fire sectors.</p>
<p>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</p>	<p>The NFCC considers the economic case contained within the latest version of the FBC a priority which needs to be addressed. There remains a lack of clarity regarding the future operating model (FOM) and the NFCC considers itself to be unsighted on any proposals from the Programme regarding the FOM. It does, however, have clear ideas on what it should contain and are of the opinion that the success of the ESN delivery is heavily dependent on the FOM.</p> <p>This lack of clarity impacts the finance case in terms of the 'cost of the FOM, its remit, how the funding for it will be recouped and flow, and how any ESN core charges will be funded.' NFCC has requested the provision of a cost modelling tool from ESMCP Finance so that User Organisations are able predict costs at a local level.</p> <p>The concern remains that 'in life' ESN will cost more than the current Airwave system and it is felt that in order to provide assurance and approval of the FBC at FRS and NFCC level, the provision of the tool and further detailed information is critical.</p>
<p>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>CONSISTENCY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DUTY TO COLLABORATE</p>	<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 three South Central services and where appropriate, joint responses to work requests are submitted.</p> <p>Funding awards have been pooled centrally, and Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service act as</p>

	treasurers for the region.
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, further information, and a confirmed plan become available, then an Integrated Impact Assessment will be completed.
USE OF RESOURCES	As stated in previous updates to Members, the organisation's Programme Manager is the Project Manager for ESMCP delivery. The Head of ICT, Transformation and PMO is the Senior User for this Authority.
PROVENANCE SECTION & BACKGROUND PAPERS	<p>Background</p> <p>ESMCP is the programme, which 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>Provenance</p> <p>ESMCP Update, Executive Committee July 2020 https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2020/07/item-7-emergency-services-mobile-communication-programme.pdf/</p>
APPENDICES	Appendix A: NFCC Response to Stephen Webb re FBC
TIME REQUIRED	10 minutes
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