



# Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

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**Meeting and date:** Executive Committee, 14 September 2022

**Report title:** Thames Valley Fire Control Service system contracts and hardware refresh

**Lead Member:** Councillor Simon Rouse (Chairman)

**Report sponsor:** Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Mick Osborne

**Author and contact:** Area Commander Simon Tuffley - Head of Prevention, Response and Resilience [stuffley@bucksfire.gov.uk](mailto:stuffley@bucksfire.gov.uk)

**Action:** Decision

**Recommendations:**

That:

1. Oxfordshire County Council and Royal Berkshire Fire Authority be authorised to extend the Vision mobilising system maintenance and support contract for five years, from 10 April 2023 to 10 April 2028.
2. In respect of the above, the Chief Fire Officer be instructed to request that the contracting authorities negotiate pricing options including those dependent on variations to the break clause exercisable by them in the current contract.
3. Royal Berkshire Fire Authority be authorised to tender for a five-year maintenance and support contract, for the ICCS DS3000 from 10 April 2023 to 10 April 2028 (with options to extend for two years).
4. That the decision by officers to place the order for the hardware refresh of the Vision mobilising system be formally endorsed on behalf of the Authority.

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**Executive summary:**

This report seeks approval for the future support of key Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) systems and the requirement to refresh the mobilising system hardware to ensure TVFCS can continue to deliver a quality, robust service for the Thames Valley Fire and Rescue Services and the communities they serve.

At the TVFCS Joint Committee meeting on 11 July 2022, Members approved and noted the following recommendations, regarding the TVFCS mobilising and control room systems contracts.

- . AGREE to recommend to partnership Authorities that they authorise Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) and Royal Berkshire Fire Authority (RBFA)

extending the Vision mobilising system maintenance and support contract for five years, from 10 April 2023 to 10 April 2028.

- . NOTE the use of the annual profiled capital expenditure for 22/23 from the Renewals account to deliver the hardware refresh for the Vision system.
- . AGREE to recommend to partnership Authorities that they authorise Royal Berkshire Fire Authority to tender for a five-year maintenance and support contract, for the ICCS DS3000 from 10 April 2023 to 10 April 2028 (with options to extend for two years)

See appendix 1, agenda item 13 for the full TVFCS Joint Committee report.

Under normal circumstances, Senior Responsible Owners from each FRS are required to submit a report paper to their respective Authorities seeking approval of the recommendations from the Joint Committee, as per the requirements of the TVFCS inter-authority agreement for the prior consent from each Authority before the extension or renewal of these contracts.

Specifically relating to the recommendation to use the annual profiled capital expenditure for 22/23 from the renewals account to deliver the hardware refresh for the Vision system, awaiting the September committee meeting would have delayed placing the order for the hardware refresh into the Autumn, which is a concern for the officers and staff working in the TVFCS.

The rationale for taking an alternative approach is primarily due to the ageing hardware starting to present performance issues which are reducing the effectiveness of the TVFCS and due to the order being placed against a landscape of rising costs, and scarcity of electrical components leading to extended lead times.

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**Financial implications:** The financial implications are set out in 3.11 – 3.13 of the Joint Committee report attached as appendix 1

**Risk management:** Risk implications are set out in 8.1-8.2 of the Joint Committee report attached as appendix 1

**Legal implications:** The 'DS3000' (ICCS) contract and the 'Vision 4' mobilising system contracts are defined in the Inter Authority Agreement as requiring the unanimous consent of the three fire and rescue authorities for its extension or renewal (per clauses 17.3, 17.5 and Schedule 6; and Schedule 5, para 1.2.15). RBFA is a party to the 'DS3000' (ICCS) contract. OCC and RBFA are parties to the 'Vision 4' mobilising system. The legal implications of terminating or extending the contract are set out in the contract and procurement teams of RBFA and OCC have been engaged to ensure that the contracting authorities comply with the relevant legislation. The DS3000 tender will be undertaken in compliance with the requisite legislation by RBFA on behalf of the partnership authorities.

Clause 25.1.2 of the Inter Authority Agreement requires the decision from each fire and rescue authority to, i.a., refresh hardware under the terms of the Vision 4 contract.

Clause 36.1 of the Inter Authority Agreement provides that no term or provision of shall be considered as waived by any participating authority unless a waiver is given in writing by a duly authorised representative of that authority.

Clause 44.1 of the contract for provision of a mobilising system and related services for the Thames Valley Fire Control Service provides that the Fire Authorities shall have the right to terminate the Contract in whole or in part at any time after the fourth anniversary of the Commencement Date on serving 12 months written notice which the Fire Authorities may serve to expire on the fourth anniversary of the Commencement Date, or any date thereafter.

Clause 44.2 of the contract for provision of a mobilising system and related services for the Thames Valley Fire Control Service provides that where the Fire Authorities exercise the right to terminate in accordance with Clause 44.1 above, neither Party shall be liable to the other for any compensation or other payments arising as a result of the termination.

**Privacy and security implications:** None arising from this report

**Duty to collaborate:** The Fire Authorities of Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire County Council and Royal Berkshire have collaborated to deliver the TVFCS as a single joint emergency call handling, mobilising, and resource management function for all the Thames Valley.

**Health and safety implications:** None arising from this report.

**Environmental implications:** None arising from this report.

**Equality, diversity, and inclusion implications:** None arising from this report.

**Consultation and communication:** Principal consultation was between the TVFCS Joint Coordination Group members. Further communication was sent to Executive Committee Members in relation to recommendations two and four of this report.

**Background papers:**

<https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2021/09/legal-agreement-relating-to-the-steady-state-operation-of-the-thames-valley-fire-control-service.pdf/>

TVFCS Joint Committee Annual Meeting – 11 July 2022 Item 13: TVFCS System Contracts and Hardware Refresh

<https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2022/07/tvfcs-joint-committee-agenda-and-reports-110722.pdf/>

Executive Committee, 9 February 2022| Item 11 – TVFCS ICCS Contract and IAA

<https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2022/01/ec-item-11-090222.pdf/>

Executive Committee, 14 September 2022| Item 9 – Thames Valley Fire Control Service system contracts and hardware refresh

Appendix	Title	Protective Marking
1	<a href="#">Thames Valley Fire Control Service system contracts and hardware refresh, TVFCS Joint Committee, 11 July 2022, Agenda item 13, pages 71-76</a>	Not protectively marked