



Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

MEETING	Executive Committee
DATE OF MEETING	15 July 2020
OFFICER	Calum Bell, Head of Service Development
LEAD MEMBER	Councillor David Hopkins
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 its impact on regional and local transition. The last briefing was provided to Members in November 2019.</p> <p>The Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP) is a national programme to deliver an Emergency Services Network (ESN) which will upgrade the current radio system used by emergency services (Airwave). ESN is a system that has not yet been implemented anywhere else in the world, and as such carries significant risk. The current Airwave system is extremely reliable but has limited data capability and is very expensive.</p> <p>The Emergency Services Network will be provided by two commercial companies, Motorola and EE. It will utilise the Public Services Network (PSN) via mobile network operators using 5G LTE (Long Term Evolution) for the transmission of voice and data traffic between emergency service resources. The Programme is extremely complex and has already been subject to a number of delays.</p> <p>In the last briefing, Members were informed of the proposed timetable for the release of details of the revised Full Business Case (FBC). The FBC was due to have been completed early in 2020 and should have passed through various governance stages in order to be released around May 2020. However, we have received notification that it will not now be released for some time. This is in part due to Programme resources being re-assigned to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic, assessment of impact of the pandemic and how it might affect ways of working and the delivery of the various aspects of the project. A document to outline the strategic case for the FBC has been released to User Organisations however we are unable to discuss this as it remains commercially sensitive at this stage.</p>

	<p>Members will recall from the last briefing that there was a proposal to transition the Hampshire and Isle of Wight fire services from the South Central region to the South West region. This is due to those services being part of the Networked Fire Control Services Partnership which encompasses the fire services within the South West region. Arrangements are complete to facilitate this move and the financial aspects have now been agreed. A letter has now been submitted to the NFCC leads which has been approved in principal but there remains a process to applied which is likely to take several weeks.</p>
ACTION	Noting
RECOMMENDATIONS	Members are requested to note the report.
RISK MANAGEMENT	<p>Officers from this Service continue to work closely with our partner fire and rescue services in Thames Valley and with Thames Valley Police, to prepare for the new Emergency Services Network. Regular iterations of the national delivery plan are being received and compared against the regional version. The latest national version released in April 2020 indicates that all Fire Services will have transitioned from the Airwave system onto the ESN by Q4 2024. This would mean that the earliest point at which the Airwave system can be switched off would be Q4 2024, however the official date for this is still December 2022.</p> <p>Members will recall from the last briefing that we provided an update regarding the ongoing discussion regarding the provision of a separate Direct Network Service Provider (DNSP) link with Home Office team members. This link would provide BFRS with a direct link into the ESN without having to go through the link established with the Thames Valley Fire Control Service. We had written a further letter to the Central Programme regarding this issue thanking them for their continued engagement with us to produce a potential solution to this issue. We have since received a response from the Programme which has still to provide the assurance that the organisation will not be disadvantage by not having this link so discussions continue at this stage.</p> <p>Officers from the Service will continue to monitor developments from the national Programme and report to Members as appropriate.</p>
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	<p>Regional funding continues to be overseen via the South Central Programme Board and service draw down funding to cover the costs of day-to-day delivery of the project. These costs are monitored by the financial lead for the South Central Programme Board,</p>

	<p>a role held by the Deputy Director of Finance and Assets in BFRS. The region reports on a quarterly basis regarding the ESMCP transition grant funding.</p>
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	<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>
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 and 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	<p>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.</p>
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY	<p>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.</p>
USE OF RESOURCES	<p>As stated in previous updates to Members, the organisation's Programme Manager is the Project Manager for ESMCP delivery.</p> <p>The Area Commander Service Development is the Senior User for this Authority and is Vice Chair of the South Central Steering Group.</p>
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>The current national Airwave contracts have been</p>

	<p>extended and are now due to be terminated at the end 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 have been reviewed and a revised plan is due to be released following the Programme reset.</p> <p>Provenance</p> <p>ESMCP Update March 2019 ESMCP Update July 2019 ESMCP Update November 2019</p>
APPENDICES	Appendix A: ESMCP Highlight report
TIME REQUIRED	10 minutes
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