



Committee report

Committee	EXECUTIVE
Date	8 SEPTEMBER 2016
Title	FUTURE FIRE CONTROL PROVISION
Report to	EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH, PUBLIC PROTECTION AND PFI

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report seeks a decision from the Executive to approve the recommendation to move the control function from Surrey Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) to Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service (HFRS) for a period of 5 years. When referring to “control” within this report this refers to the call handling and mobilisation of fire service resources for operational incidents via the 999 call centre.
2. The recommendation within this report has been made following our consideration of the options described within this document.
3. The current five year contract between SFRS and the Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service (IWFRS) expires on the 31 March 2017.
4. The Isle of Wight Council (IWC) commissioned a feasibility study from Mott MacDonald to explore if the move to HFRS is technologically feasible. The study produced a report which is explained within the body of this. IWFRS officers have used this report and the strategic information contained within this document to reach this recommendation.
5. The Isle of Wight Fire Authority (IWFA) and Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority (HFRA) are working within a successful strategic partnership which is delivering savings to the Isle of Wight Council. This decision will assist in delivering those savings.
6. Fire and rescue services have been given clear direction to collaborate which government is seeking to make a statutory obligation through the Policing and Crime Bill. The continued collaboration with HFRS supports this position.

7. The timing of this decision is critical due to the current contract with SFRS ending on the 31 March 2017 coupled with the national Emergency Services Mobile Communication Programme (ESMCP) that is in progress. This decision will assist in IWFRS transitioning into the ESMCP (the replacement for the current national emergency services communication network) with HFRS and benefit from the additional capacity that HFRS can offer.
8. HFRS are part of the Network Fire Control Services Partnership (NFCSP) which comprises of Hampshire, Devon and Somerset, Dorset and Wiltshire FRS. IWFRS will benefit from the resilience of this existing collaboration.
9. As the strategic partnership with HFRS matures, with this product included, there are significant resilience and capacity benefits to the IWFRS which also deliver savings to the IWC.
10. The decision to accept the recommendation will lessen the current risk of working with another service with differing operational procedures and policies. Whereas working with HFRS has already seen policy and procedure alignment that will positively continue as the partnership develops. There will be a reduction in the cost of provision to the IWC which will see an improvement in service delivery to the public due to the already aligned operational procedure and policy between the two organisations.

BACKGROUND

11. At Full Council on the 21 January 2015 a decision was made for the Isle of Wight Fire Authority to enter into a strategic partnership with Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority. It was resolved:
 - (i) THAT a strategic partnership agreement be entered into with Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority.
 - (ii) THAT strategic leadership is provided as set out in the agreement. As a consequence of that, Hampshire Fire and Rescue Services (HFRS) Chief Fire Officer is appointed the Chief Fire Officer of the Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service.
 - (iii) THAT the Managing Director (now Chief Executive), be delegated the authority, in consultation with the then Leader and Executive Member for Public Protection and PFI, to conclude on the precise wording of the agreement, provided it remained within the broad terms as set out in the report (attached to and forming part of these minutes).
12. The agreement sets out that those products of the partnership are to be considered for inclusion through the lifetime of the partnership. Inclusion of in scope areas are to be subject to the partners agreeing key terms as to costs, staff and governance. One of these products is the consideration of the future of fire control provision after the current contract post March 2017.
13. Upon commencement of the partnership it was decided that the future provision of fire control must be considered. The decision would be based on the

recommendations of the service after reflecting on the findings of an independent technological feasibility study.

14. Mott MacDonald was the preferred provider to deliver this feasibility study. They have experience in delivering strategic projects for Communities and Local Government in relation to the national Firelink project. Mott MacDonald has also worked with other fire and rescue services on previous fire control transfer projects such as London Fire Brigade.
15. Mott MacDonald was tasked with investigating the feasibility of two business options for the Isle of Wight Fire Authority. One being the contract to continue with provision through the current provider SFRS for a further five years. The other option to transfer the provision to HFRS also for five years.
16. The Mott MacDonald report has been attached as Appendix 1 to this paper.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

17. The strategic partnership with HFRS continues to deliver in accordance with the Isle of Wight Council Corporate Plan 2015-17. Priority 1 “Supporting growth in the economy, making the Island a better place and keeping it safe”.
18. The Isle of Wight Council remains the Isle of Wight Fire Authority and the strategic partnership will provide enhanced command and control, increased capacity, resilience and sustainability as well as a range of benefits that a partnership brings in which additional significant savings can be achieved.

CONSULTATION

19. There has been no requirement for consultation on this decision as full council agreed for the fire control provision to be included in the content of the strategic partnership.
20. The service highlighted a potential risk during the first year of the partnership with HFRS in that the continued good collaborative work with Surrey Fire and Rescue Service, as a fire partner within the South East Fire group, maybe affected because of the intended process and communication. Therefore Surrey was kept informed of the potential decision and of the process involved in obtaining a feasibility study to ensure there was a sound basis for the recommendation to be made.
21. Mott MacDonald engaged with various departments within IWC, IWFRS, HFRS and SFRS. This ensured that relevant and sufficient data was collated to provide accurate information for inclusion within the report.

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE OR PANEL VIEW

22. HFRA requires the project manager to report to the HFRS Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee as part of their scrutiny process.

23. IWFRS reports progress to the Executive member on a monthly basis and the partnership is subject to financial scrutiny.

FINANCIAL / BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

24. Surrey currently provides the control contract to IWFRS for £304,168 per annum which includes a four percent increase year on year.
25. The feasibility report sets out three financial options for the future provision these are:
 26. Surrey option 1
Ongoing revenue costs £419,000 (38 percent increase on the current contract price)
 27. Surrey option 2
Ongoing revenue costs £324,000 (six percent increase on the current contract price)
In addition transition costs- revenue £12,000
 28. HFRS option 3
Ongoing revenue costs £200,000 (presents savings as part of the overall DDIP figures as per the DDIP business case)
Transition costs- capital £89,000
29. All the above costs are based on net present value.
30. Options 1 and 2 provide differing levels of service based on a modular approach to charging. These modules are providing levels of service that Surrey FRS believes it is currently providing through the contract that were not agreed at its commencement.
31. Option 2 assumes IWFRS will provide part of the services that the modules included in Option 1 provide.
32. Option 3 involves HFRS via NFCSP providing all of the services through the strategic partnership.
33. It is the intention of the strategic partnership to absorb costs both in transition and revenue costs to ensure the business case figures are achieved. The business case figures state that the project will make cumulative savings to IWC of £1,194,895 over three years. This product will contribute to those savings.
34. Financial tolerances have been set within the strategic partnership agreement at plus or minus ten percent of the business case figures. Therefore a change request would be required through the Delivering Differently in Partnership (DDIP) implementation board for approval to continue with the project. This decision would have to be approved by the IWC chief executive.
35. Expectations are also stated within the report that all works are required to be completed immediately. This may not be the case due to the impending ESMCP.

This national project will see new suppliers of technology and providers of the communications network. Therefore it will make sense to use existing technology in the period between this year and the beginning of the programme which will commence during 2016 to 2020.

36. These figures have been confirmed by the management accountant for fire and rescue.

LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

37. By virtue of section 16 of the Fire and Rescue Act 2004 provision for the arrangements for the discharge of the functions of one fire and rescue authority by others including provision as to the terms on which any function is to be discharged, including provision as to payment can be made. The IWC as the Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority entered into a Strategic Partnership with Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority which commenced on the 1 April 2015.
38. The purpose of the agreement was, through the partnership, to ensure delivery of the "Delivering Differently in Partnership" project by ensuring:
- continued effective delivery of fire and rescue services
 - reduction in the cost of provision of the Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service to assist the Isle of Wight Council achieve efficiency savings
 - standards of service provision are not reduced in a way that adversely affects Isle of Wight and Hampshire residents.
 - a platform is created for the future delivery of both services
 - both Authorities retain financial and political control and accountability of their fire and rescue service as fire authorities
39. This agreement enables a range of leadership and service elements to be considered, and where feasible, to be progressed into the partnership. One of these service elements was identified in the agreement as being the inclusion of the Network Fire Control Service.
40. The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (the Fire Act) permits the local fire and rescue authority (FRA) to explore the outsourcing of fire control operations to another service without undertaking a procurement exercise. Section 16(1) of the Fire Act provides that a fire and rescue authority (in this case IWFRS) may enter into arrangements with either another fire and rescue authority, or any other person, for the discharge of one/all of the function(s) listed in sections 6 to 9 (the core functions) and/or section 11 (other functions) of the Fire Act.
41. The core functions are as follows:
42. Section 6(1) - making provision for the purpose of promoting fire safety.
43. Section 7(1) - making provision for the purpose of firefighting & protecting life and property
44. Section 8(1) - making provision for the purpose of rescuing people in the event of road traffic accidents, etc.

45. Section 9(1) - functions relating to emergencies.
46. IWFRS is discharging its functions in accordance with the Fire and Rescue Act 2004 therefore this does not fall within the scope of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

47. The council, as a public body, is required to meet its statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equal opportunities between people from different groups and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
48. The current contract with SFRS does not have any identified equality and diversity implications. An equality impact assessment has been completed as part of the strategic partnership with HFRS and has also been advised to take into account the current proposal.
49. This EIA has been reviewed by the responsible manager and IWC legal department. This does not identify any equality implications of entering into partnership with HFRS in that the services currently provided by SFRS will continue.

PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

50. Property implications will exist in relation to the permission for the provision of fire and rescue services to access our property and ICT systems and hardware to assist in the transition from Surrey to Hampshire.
51. All hardware provided to Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service has either been purchased by Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service or purchased by Surrey Fire and Rescue Service and recharged back to Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service.

OPTIONS

52. Option 1 - continuing with SFRS for five years core service and all of the optional modules with no enabling work required.
53. Option 2 - continuing with SFRS for a period of five years for core services and additional modules. This option requires some minor enabling works and additional revenue costs.
54. Option 3 - Movement of the control function from Surrey Fire and Rescue Service to Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service for a period of five years from end of transition date (nominally 1 April 2017).

RISK MANAGEMENT

55. The DDIP Project risk register currently rates ICT as an amber risk on JCAD this is due to the technology required for such a project. This decision paper for executive will potentially instigate movement to HFRS. This will create a product and project plan within DDIP. ICT will be an integral section of this product and project plan. IWC ICT will work with partner ICT sections to ensure the project plan is executed within cost, time and quality tolerances.
56. Risks associated with the SFRS options are listed below:
57. SFRS has ambitious plans for tri-service integration. This could mean that there is a risk that the services provided to the IWFRS are not seen as important by the larger partners such as Surrey Police and South East Coast Ambulance Service Trust. This would have to be monitored through regular stakeholder engagement and reviews of levels of service provision.
58. There is a risk that harmonisation with HFRS as part of the strategic partnership will not be reflected in SFRS operations without increased effort and cost. The current work being undertaken within the operational products of the strategic partnership link IWFRS and HFRS. This would require additional capacity and funding to realign with SFRS which could undermine the benefits of the existing partnership with HFRS.
59. The SFRS control room is unlikely to be in a position to easily take advantage of efficiencies that will be gained from DDIP harmonisation between IWFRS and HFRS.
60. Risks associated with the HFRS option are listed below:
61. There may be disruption to control room operations during the migration process that will need to be managed to avoid operational impacts. These risks will be mitigated through the project management of the migration. HFRS have experience of this through their NFCSP work and well-founded project management expertise.
62. There may be a risk of the exit plan requiring an agreed extension period to enable transition. The project plan submitted by Mott MacDonald (Page 38-39 of Appendix 1) suggests it is possible to coincide with the contract end date (31 March 2017). Mitigation will be an agreement with SFRS that they will provide support in accordance with the exit management plan.
63. There may be barriers to integration of the NFCSP into IWC back office support systems that may mean that some of the manual transfers with these systems may continue to need to be supported. These will be kept to a minimum and will be managed through inclusion of IWC ICT teams in the migration and implementation.

64. There is a minimal risk of challenge (from other potential providers) if it could be deemed that IWFRS is procuring a service rather than using existing partnering arrangements to effectively bring the call handling and mobilising service back in-house. However the mitigation is captured within the statement made in the “Legal and Procurement Implications” section of this report.

EVALUATION

65. The recommendation of this report is for the IWC Executive to approve the decision for option 3 the movement of the control function from SFRS to HFRS for a period of five years.
66. Our organisations are currently working within a positive strategic partnership that is providing savings to the authority in accordance with a carefully managed project plan.
67. The response products being delivered through the strategic partnership will be further enhanced through the increased ability to share common operational and mobilisation procedures.
68. Option 3 will ensure the transition from our current national communications network to the emergency services network will be closely managed. This will be in accordance with both organisations to further align systems and project management processes.
69. The replacement of current differing business processes that may be subject to human error with automated solutions.
70. IWFRS will benefit from the resilience of a control partnership consisting of Hampshire, Devon and Somerset, Dorset and Wiltshire fire and rescue services.
71. Hampshire and the Isle of Wight may be working closely in the future through the potential devolution agreement and the Home Offices motivation for the Police and Crime Commissioners involvement with fire authorities through the Policing and Crime Bill.
72. Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service is mentioned in government’s consultation as already leading in collaboration with our partners which can only benefit IWFRS and the IWFA in the future.

RECOMMENDATION

73. Option 3 - Movement of the control function from Surrey Fire and Rescue Service to Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service for a period of five years from end of transition date (nominally 1 April 2017).

APPENDIX ATTACHED

74. [Appendix 1](#) - Technological Feasibility Study – Mott MacDonald.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

75. Policing and Crime Bill - <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/lbill/2016-2017/0055/17055.pdf>

76. Minutes to Full Council – 21 January 2015 - <https://www.iwight.com/Meetings/committees/mod-council/21-1-15/minutes.pdf>

77. Corporate Plan 2015-17 - <https://www.iwight.com/search/?q=corporate%20plan>

78. Business Case - <https://www.iwight.com/Meetings/committees/mod-council/21-1-15/Background%20Papers/Business%20Case%20-%20Delivering%20Differently%20in%20Partnership.pdf>

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