

REQUEST FOR DEPUTY MAYOR FOR FIRE AND RESILIENCE DECISION – DMFD151

Title: Procurement of Mobilising System

Executive summary:

This report seeks the approval of the Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience for the London Fire Commissioner (LFC) to commit expenditure of up to £43,050,000 for the purposes of procuring and running a new mobilising system; an integrated communication control system (ICCS); and fire station mobilising equipment; and work to interface the new system with existing LFC systems, for a period of up to 15 years.

The procurement of a new mobilising system will ensure that the LFC has a modern system that can be used to underpin and further develop the emergency response provided to Londoners over the next 15 years.

A 10-year contract for the supply of the Vision mobilising system, an ICCS and associated services was awarded to Capita on 1 August 2012. The contract was recently extended for two years, and is now set to expire in July 2024.

The London Fire Commissioner Governance Direction 2018 sets out a requirement for the LFC to seek the prior approval of the Deputy Mayor before “[a] commitment to expenditure (capital or revenue) of £150,000 or above as identified in accordance with normal accounting practices...”.

Decision:

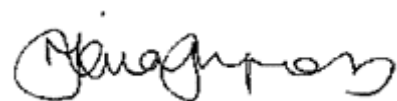
That the Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience authorises the LFC to commit expenditure of up to £43,050,000 for the purposes of procuring and running a new mobilising system; an ICCS; fire station mobilising equipment; and work to interface the new system with existing LFC systems, for a period of up to 15 years.

Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in the proposed decision.

The above request has my approval.

Signature:



Date:

25/4/22

PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE TO THE DEPUTY MAYOR

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 Report LFC-0624 to the London Fire Commissioner (LFC) sets out the background for the request to approve London Fire Brigade (LFB) to commit expenditure of up to £43,050,000 for the purposes of procuring and running a new mobilising system; an integrated communication control system (ICCS); fire station mobilising equipment; and work to interface the new system with existing LFC systems, for a period of up to 15 years.
- 1.2 In March 2020, the LFC agreed that a corporate project be established with the objective of delivering a new mobilising solution for LFB by 2026; and that the project be delivered in three phases. It was also agreed that funding for phase three (procurement and implementation) would be sought separately for future financial years, and this is the purpose of this report.
- 1.3 A contract was awarded to Capita for the supply, in 2012, of a new mobilising system (Vision) and related services, including an ICCS (which provides the voice and data communications hub of the mobilising solution, designed to bring together and integrate a number of subsystems (such as digital and analogue telephone and radio systems) with call-handling solutions), fire station equipment and interface to LFB systems.
- 1.4 The contract with Capita has been recently extended by two years and is now set to expire in July 2024. The Mayor's Chief of Staff, on behalf of the Deputy Mayor, agreed the expenditure for the contract extension (DMFD137 Contract Extension – Vision Mobilising System). Further options are available to extend the contract up to 2026 if required. The Deputy Mayor also approved expenditure of £176,572 for the purposes of the LFC upgrading LFB's ICCS (Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience Decision 138). This was necessary as the ICC needed to be upgraded to the ICCS at the London Operations Centre (LOC) in Merton, and at the fallback control room at Stratford, by December 2022 to take account of the replacement of Airwave components by the Home Office/Motorola that allow emergency services to connect to the Airwave digital radio network. Airwave will ultimately be replaced by the Emergency Service Network (ESN). Specific dates are not known for the transition to ESN, but it is anticipated that the LFC will not transition until at least 2025.
- 1.5 Previous procurements suggest that the specification, procurement, testing and implementation of a mobilising solution can take up to four years. With that in mind, a project was established in March 2020, with the objective of replacing the current system by July 2024. The project was split into three phases as follows:

Phase one: enabling activity	Governance approvals to approach; establish project board and team; approval of a Project Initiation Document; agree requirements for engaging external subject matter experts (in phase two); early market engagement; governance approvals (up to Deputy Mayoral approval to access funding – DMFD137) to move to phase two.
Phase two: requirements-gathering	Requirements-gathering (including any recommendations emanating from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry); draft Statement of Requirements (SOR) produced; sign off SOR; governance approvals to go to phase three, and to accept tender up to predefined value.

Phase three: procurement and Implementation	Initiate procurement action; award contract; systems implementation; system go-live; project closure.
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- 1.6 With phase two of the project (requirements-gathering) and the SOR reaching the end of development (it is currently being reviewed), this report focuses upon phase three. The intention is to have any new system in place prior to July 2024, so that there can be a managed transition from the existing system to a new one.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1 The procurement of a new mobilising system is a key action within the LFC Control Improvement Plan, which represents a significant change programme designed to enhance the LFC operational response capability.
- 2.2 The objective of this report will be to secure authorisation to procure a new mobilising system, an ICCS and fire station equipment; and to interface the new system with existing LFC systems, such as a Staff Attendance Recording System, which feeds officer availability information to the mobilising system.
- 2.3 The expected outcome is that a new mobilising solution will be in operation prior to the existing contract with Capita coming to an end in July 2024. Options exist to extend the current contract with Capita beyond the 2024 date by up to two years, to 2026, if required. However, the mobilising project cannot yet determine a precise go-live date for the new solution until procurement has been completed and a supplier is appointed.
- 2.4 Whilst any system procured will need to be 'configured' to LFB's needs, the project intends to deliver an 'off the shelf' solution, rather than customising any solution as has been the case historically. In order to achieve this important goal, senior stakeholders have accepted that where required, the project team will very much be looking to "bend the business" rather than customise an existing product. That is to say that existing business processes will be reviewed and amended where possible, to operate effectively with any new system.
- 2.5 The SOR that has been developed is agnostic in terms of the type of solution proposed by suppliers. The current mobilising system is entirely an on-premise system, with Capita servers located at LFB's LOC at Merton, and at the secondary control room site at Stratford. However, in line with the current information and technology strategy (LFB in a Digital World) and indeed the way ICT services are moving in general, a number of mobilising solution providers now offer for some or all elements of their solution to be cloud-based. Cloud-based solutions are hosted remotely (usually in specialist or commercial data centres) and are accessed securely by users via the internet or dedicated communication links. In some cloud-based solutions there may be element(s) of the system installed locally, but in some there may be no server hardware/software installed locally.
- 2.6 This means that it could be possible for LFB to use a mobilising solution (or elements of it) that is not installed at the Merton LOC (or the fall-back control at Stratford) as is the case with the current solution. Access to the system would be via internet links, and LFB would be consuming a service on a pay-to-use basis.

- 2.7 One of the impacts of moving to a cloud-based model would be that the system costs would move from being largely capital to revenue-based expenditure. However, it is not possible to state how the costs will be apportioned between capital and revenue at present, other than to say it is expected that the new system will be largely revenue-based, with elements of capital expenditure, predominantly at fire stations.

Risks

- 2.8 All project-based risks will be managed via LFB's established project management governance process; the project has an A1 project governance rating, the highest. Risk workshops are currently being established, and a wide variety of stakeholders will be invited to participate in these workshops where all risks will be recorded, assessed and actively managed throughout the life cycle of the project. A comprehensive lessons-learned report has already been used as a key input to the process of developing a statement of requirements; this will also be referenced during this workshop. Lessons-learned reports are produced as the final part of the project governance cycle. The report will highlight if there were any particular issues with the project that can be recorded; it will be used as guidance for future projects, to avoid similar issues happening again.
- 2.9 The main risk that the project has identified so far relates to the timing around the implementation of any new mobilising system and the transition away from the Airwave national digital radio system. The Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP) is the national project tasked with delivering a new emergency services network (ESN) to replace the existing Airwave service. A revised national plan for transitioning fire and rescue services (FRSs) to ESN is not expected to be in place until mid-2022. However, there is an interoperability matrix in place that indicates to the ESMCP programme any specific dates that FRSs have identified that they could not undertake transition, due to technical or operational restrictions. The LFC has stated to the programme that the earliest transition date would be 2025. This is part of a strategy to reduce risk by leaving at least six months after deployment of the new mobilising system (in particular the ICCS component), before transitioning to ESN.
- 2.10 The risk is that should the mobilising project be delayed for any reason, the anticipated implementation date of 2024 may slip and there may not be sufficient time to leave a six-month gap between systems implementation and transition to ESN. One possible mitigation of this risk will be to ensure that the ICCS is the first part of any replacement mobilising system to be replaced, therefore ensuring that the necessary ESN-compliant infrastructure is in place to transition to ESN, even if full implementation of a new mobilising system has not been completed at that time.

Collaboration

- 2.11 Both during the initial phase of this project and previously, the LFC has explored collaboration opportunities, with both the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and the London Ambulance Service (LAS). These discussions did not result in any joint approach to procure a system that would suit the needs of all three services. Both the MPS and the LAS have since embarked on individual procurement projects for systems designed for police and ambulance control functions. Collaboration between these services is, therefore, focused on digital transfer of incident information between systems, for example via a Multi-Agency Incident Transfer (MAIT). MAIT is a protocol that allows emergency service organisations with compliant mobilising systems to exchange incident data securely and in real time. The MAIT programme is being led by the Home Office, but at present there have been no updates on when the central procurement activities are

likely to be completed. However, we would anticipate this being concluded before the end of 2022.

- 2.12 LFB has also had discussions with other FRSs in order to identify any collaboration opportunities. In common with the LFC experience, the FRSs contacted have not joined with either police or ambulance partners to procure a new mobilising system. Furthermore, LFB has not as yet identified any opportunities to jointly procure a new system with other FRSs. Some of the reasons as to why this is the case are set out in the following paragraphs.
- 2.13 Modern mobilising systems are increasingly cloud-based, as set out in paragraph 2.6. This means that the infrastructure is no longer stored on an organisation's premises (as is the case with LFB current mobilising system, Vision). The adoption of this cloud model means a reduction in benefits that could perhaps have been anticipated by two or more services collaborating to co-host the infrastructure required for a system.
- 2.14 Many systems have operating models based on purchasing licences for use of the general system, with extra costs to integrate the system with other systems already in use by that service. Given the different ICT systems employed across emergency services, the integration time will most likely be longer if the new mobilising system is procured with another service. This is predominantly due to the requirement for multiple sets of interfaces to other ICT systems to be written, rather than just those for the LFC.
- 2.15 Referring to the risks raised in paragraph 2.12 (above), if a collaboration with other FRSs was adopted, this would add extra layer of complexity and risk to the implementation, as the schedule would have to take into account the timelines for multiple FRSs' ESN cutover schedules, not just those of London.
- 2.16 Having a joint procurement and implementation process can have an impact on the required timelines for go-live, meaning that one service has to wait for the other, to the detriment of both.
- 2.17 In terms of procurement, the timeframes for starting and completing the process will differ between services, mostly driven by contract arrangements and local governance structures. Unless these are aligned, then scheduling and contractual arrangements, with both LFB's existing supplier and any new one, become more difficult to control.
- 2.18 The requirements-gathering and evaluation process, and the subsequent tender generation for a joint procurement process, are often more complex, due to increased potential for conflicting requirements and contract terms. This can lead to a less competitive tender process where one supplier has been able to meet the needs of one of the services, but not the other, meaning they have had to drop out of the process for both.
- 2.19 In participating in a collaborative procurement, there is also a risk of resource "conflicts" in both the pre- and post-implementation phases. Issues may take longer to resolve if a supplier has to support multiple services who have just gone live.
- 2.20 In terms of choosing a collaboration partner for procurement and subsequent implementation of a new system, the logical choice would be with a 'buddy' FRS (this refers to a partner FRS that would work with the LFC on operational matters) such as NW, Staffordshire or West Midlands. Alternatively, this partner could be a border FRS such as Essex or Hertfordshire; the MPS; or the LAS. However, allied to the reasons already stated above, all of those services also have different

life cycles for moving to a new system; for example, some are not ready to start looking for a new system for a couple of years and others have already procured a system. However, the LFC recognises and has considered the potential benefits of closer cooperation with other services in the procurement and subsequent use of a mobilising system; and will continue to explore opportunities, especially around data-sharing and easier integration of systems via interfaces or shared access.

Cost of a replacement system

- 2.21 As modern mobilising systems differ in their deployment and support to LFB's current system, it is difficult to provide an accurate estimate of the costs both, from an initial purchase price and ongoing annual system support/licence costs. Discussions with other, much smaller FRSs have revealed that licences and support (for less than 20 per cent of the users London would require), have cost those FRSs several million pounds over a 10-year period. Considering the much larger user base the LFC has, similar licence costs and system support for up to a 15-year period could equate to a spend of up to £28,050,000. This figure will ultimately depend upon the actual number of licences procured.
- 2.22 In addition to licences, costs will be incurred at the system implementation stage. These could include design and development of interfaces to other LFB systems, integration and configuration of the system according to LFB's requirements and hardware purchase costs (for the control room at the Merton LOC and at 103 fire stations). Whilst it is difficult to provide accurate cost projections at present (until potential suppliers start submitting tender responses), a figure of up to £15,000,000 for implementation is probably a good estimate of likely costs for purchase of and deployment of a system.

Breakdown of anticipated costs (pre-tendering)

Software licence provision and support (including annual running costs for 15 years)	Up to £28,050,000
Procurement and implementation (includes replacement of all fire station mobilising equipment)	Up to £15,000,000
Estimated total	£43,050,000

- 2.23 The costs shown include a planning assumption for indexation at five per cent each year for the term of the contract using the current spend with Capita for the Vision mobilising system as a baseline. More precise figures cannot be established until it is known if the system will be fully or partially cloud-based infrastructure hosted elsewhere.
- 2.24 As it is not yet known if a cloud-based solution (or part cloud-based solution) will be recommended as a result of tendering, it is not possible to state what the split between capital and revenue costs will be. Cloud-based systems tend to require less capital funding; instead, the whole-life cost of the system (or parts of it) moves to revenue-based funding.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1 The LFC and the Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience are required to have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) when taking decisions. This in

broad terms involves understanding the potential impact of policy and decisions on different people, taking this into account and then evidencing how decisions were reached.

- 3.2 It is important to note that consideration of the Public Sector Equality Duty is not a one-off task. The duty must be fulfilled before taking a decision, at the time of taking a decision, and after the decision has been taken.
- 3.3 The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership (but only in respect of the requirements to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination), race (ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality), religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex, and sexual orientation.
- 3.4 The Public Sector Equality Duty requires decision-takers in the exercise of all their functions, to have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct
 - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
 - foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 3.5 Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic where those disadvantages are connected to that characteristic
 - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it
 - encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- 3.6 The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.
- 3.7 Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
- tackle prejudice
 - promote understanding.
- 3.8 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out in respect of this project to make sure that any replacement mobilising solution will not have a disproportionately adverse effect on any persons with a prescribed characteristic. The development of a specification for a replacement mobilising solution is ensuring the needs of staff users with protected characteristics are taken into account; this will be particularly important where any business process changes are needed if

LFB is to adopt an 'off-the-shelf' solution. The Statement of Requirements is also taking account of: the impact on those members of the public with protected characteristics who might need to engage with the LFC to call for assistance; and whether they would be affected by any change to the mobilising solution.

- 3.9 At this stage, the EIA has shown a positive impact on two of the protected-characteristic groups: age and disability. The fact that the SOR makes provision for the interface to be configured (change font size, background colour, etc) will potentially be beneficial to disabled staff and some older control staff who may have visual impairments. Given the approach is to acquire an 'off-the shelf' solution with minimum customisation for LFB, the EIA will need to be reviewed and updated once a selected solution and supplier have been identified, and in advance of a decision to accept a tender.

4. Other considerations

Workforce comments

- 4.1 The LFC will undertake formal staff-side consultation in respect of this report at the appropriate point.

Sustainability and procurement implications

- 4.2 The proposed route to market is to use the Find a Tender (formerly OJEU) process following a review of the frameworks currently available. This decision has been reached on the basis that there are currently no known frameworks that meet the requirements of the SOR whilst offering a longer contract term. A longer-term contract should encourage greater engagement from this sector of the market and more competitive pricing, as any supplier will be able to bid for the work. Use of the Find a Tender process allows consideration of any solution available in the market, and so it offers the flexibility required for this contract.
- 4.3 The duration of the contract is proposed to be 10 years with the option to extend by a further five years, allowing for up to 15 years in total.
- 4.4 Due to the potential contract value, additional sustainability and responsible procurement requirements will be included within the tender. These include the requirement for bidders to have in place an organisational Carbon Reduction Plan, aimed at achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Conflicts of interest

- 4.5 There are no conflicts of interest to declare from those involved in the drafting or clearance of this decision.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1 This report seeks the approval to commit expenditure of up to £43,050,000 for the purpose of procuring and running a new mobilising system, ICCS, fire station mobilising equipment and work to interface any new system with LFC systems for a period of 15 years.

- 5.2 Revenue costs are estimated at £28,050,000 for the purposes of supporting and maintaining the mobilising solution during its operational life. There is currently an approved budget of £1,870,000 for 2022-23 for the existing contract, set to expire July 2024.
- 5.3 This report sets out a plan to replace the current system by July 2024. It is anticipated that the revenue costs of the new contract will be contained within the existing budget of £1,870,000 per annum. Any variation in the assumption on inflation is to be incorporated in the medium-term financial plan in the relevant year.
- 5.4 The total cost of up to £15,000,000 is estimated for capital costs. Currently, the capital programme incorporates a budget of £3,800,000 in 2022-23; £7,600,000 in 2023-24; and £3,605,000 in 2024-25.
- 5.5 The existing and new contract for the system will run concurrently for a period before July 2024, estimated at a one-off cost of £425k. This will be incorporated as part of the budget process for 2024-25.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1 Under section 9 of the Policing and Crime Act 2017, the LFC is established as a corporation sole with the Mayor appointing the occupant of that office. Under section 327D of the GLA Act 1999, as amended by the Policing and Crime Act 2017, the Mayor may issue to the LFC specific or general directions as to the manner in which the holder of that office is to exercise his or her functions.
- 6.2 By direction dated 1 April 2018, the Mayor set out those matters, for which the LFC would require the prior approval of either the Mayor or the Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience (the Deputy Mayor).
- 6.3 Paragraph (b) of Part 2 of that direction requires the LFC to seek the prior approval of the Deputy Mayor before “[a] commitment to expenditure (capital or revenue) of £150,000 or above as identified in accordance with normal accounting practices...”. The decision to approve expenditure up to the value of £49,000,000 for the procurement and running of a new mobilising system, ICCS , fire station mobilising equipment and work to interface the new system with existing LFC systems, for a period of up to 15 years, will therefore require approval from the Deputy Mayor.
- 6.4 The LFC’s General Counsel notes that the procurement of the new contract for a new mobilising system, an ICCS, fire station mobilising equipment and work to interface the new system with LFC systems shall be conducted in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the LFC Standing Orders.
- 6.5 The statutory basis for the actions proposed in this report is provided by sections 7 and 5A of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (FRSA 2004). Under section 7 (2)(a) FRSA 2004 the LFC has the power to secure the provision of personnel, services and equipment necessary to efficiently meet all normal requirements for firefighting and section 5A allows the LFC to procure personnel, services and equipment they consider appropriate for purposes incidental or indirectly incidental to their functional purposes.

Appendices and supporting papers:

Report LFC-0623 – Procurement of Mobilising System

Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI Act) and will be made available on the GLA website within one working day of approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary. **Note:** This form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after approval or on the defer date.

Part 1 Deferral:

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? No

Part 2 Confidentiality: Only the facts or advice considered to be exempt from disclosure under the FOI Act should be in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form – NO

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Drafting officer to confirm the following (✓)

Drafting officer

Richard Berry has drafted this report with input from the LFC and in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Assistant Director/Head of Service

Niran Mothada has reviewed the documentation and is satisfied for it to be referred to the Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience for approval.

✓

Advice

The Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal.

✓

Corporate Investment Board

This decision was agreed by the Corporate Investment Board on 11 April 2022.

✓

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES: Anna Casbolt on behalf of David Gallie

I confirm that financial and legal implications have been appropriately considered in the preparation of this report.

Signature



Date

11/4/22