

**M. Pearson
CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY**

**To: The Chair and Members of the
Community Safety and Corporate
Planning Committee
(see below)**

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COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CORPORATE PLANNING COMMITTEE
(Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority)

Thursday 6 November 2008

A meeting of the Community Safety and Corporate Planning Committee will be held on the above date, **commencing at 10:00 hours in Conference Room A in Somerset House, Service Headquarters** to consider the following matters.

M. Pearson
Clerk to the Authority

A G E N D A

1. **Apologies**
2. **Minutes** of the meeting held on 4 September 2008 attached (Page 1).
3. **Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

Items which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered at the meeting as matters of urgency.

4. **Declarations of Interest**

Members are asked to consider whether they have any **personal/personal and prejudicial interests** in items as set out on the agenda for this meeting and declare any such interests at this time. *Please refer to the Note 2 at the end of this agenda for guidance on interests.*

PART 1 – OPEN COMMITTEE

5. Operations and Resilience Summary Update

Report of the Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Operations) (CSCP/08/4) attached (page 4)

6. Regional Control Centre Update

Report of the Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Operations) (CSCP/08/5) attached (page 11)

7. Retained Duty System (RDS) Review - Update

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Operations) will give an oral update at the meeting in respect to the progress made to date on the RDS review.

PART 2 – ITEMS WHICH MAY BE TAKEN IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Nil

MEMBERS ARE REQUESTED TO SIGN THE ATTENDANCE REGISTER

Membership:-

Councillors Fry (Chair), S. Hughes (Vice Chair), Dyke, Foggin, Leaves, Manning, Tully

Substitute Members

Members are reminded that, in accordance with Standing Order 30, the Clerk (or his representative) MUST be advised of any substitution prior to the start of the meeting.

NOTES

1. ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Any person wishing to inspect any minutes, reports or lists of background papers relating to any item on this agenda should contact Sam Sharman on the telephone number shown at the top of this agenda.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS BY MEMBERS

What Interests do I need to declare in a meeting?

As a first step you need to declare any personal interests you have in a matter. You will then need to decide if you have a prejudicial interest in a matter.

What is a personal interest?

You have a personal interest in a matter if it relates to any interests which you must register, as defined in Paragraph 8(1) of the Code.

You also have a personal interest in any matter likely to affect the well-being or financial position of:-

- (a) you, members of your family, or people with whom you have a close association;
- (b) any person/body who employs/has employed the persons referred to in (a) above, or any firm in which they are a partner or company of which they are a director;
- (c) any person/body in whom the persons referred to in (a) above have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000; or
- (d) any body of which you are a Member or in a position of general control or management and which:-
 - you have been appointed or nominated to by the Authority; or
 - exercises functions of a public nature (e.g. a constituent authority; a Police Authority); or
 - is directed to charitable purposes; or
 - one of the principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)

more than it would affect **the majority** of other people in the Authority's area.

Anything that could affect the quality of your life (or that of those persons/bodies listed in (b) to (d) above) either positively or negatively, is likely to affect your/their "well being". If you (or any of those persons/bodies listed in (b) to (d) above) have the potential to gain or lose from a matter under consideration – to a **greater extent** than **the majority** of other people in the Authority's area - you should declare a personal interest.

What do I need to do if I have a personal interest in a matter?

Where you are aware of, **or ought reasonably to be aware of**, a personal interest in a matter you must declare it when you get to the item headed "Declarations of Interest" on the agenda, or otherwise as soon as the personal interest becomes apparent to you, **UNLESS** the matter relates to or is likely to affect:-

- (a) any other body to which you were appointed or nominated by the Authority; or
- (b) any other body exercising functions of a public nature (e.g. membership of a constituent authority; other Authority such as a Police Authority);

of which you are a Member or in a position of general control or management. In such cases, provided you do not have a prejudicial interest, you need only declare your personal interest if and when you speak on the matter.

Can I stay in a meeting if I have a personal interest?

You can still take part in the meeting and vote on the matter unless your personal interest is also a prejudicial interest.

What is a prejudicial interest?

Your personal interest will also be a **prejudicial** interest if **all** of the following conditions are met:-

- (a) the matter is not covered by one of the following exemptions to prejudicial interests in relation to the following functions of the Authority:-
 - statutory sick pay (if you are receiving or entitled to this);
 - an allowance, payment or indemnity for members;
 - any ceremonial honour given to members;

- setting council tax or a precept; **AND**
- (b) the matter affects your financial position (or that of any of the persons/bodies as described in Paragraph 8 of the Code) or concerns a regulatory/licensing matter relating to you or any of the persons/bodies as described in Paragraph 8 of the Code); **AND**
- (c) a member of the public who knows the relevant facts would reasonably think your personal interest is so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.

What do I need to do if I have a prejudicial interest?

If you have a prejudicial interest in a matter being discussed at a meeting, you must declare that you have a prejudicial interest (and the nature of that interest) as soon as it becomes apparent to you. You should then leave the room unless members of the public are allowed to make representations, give evidence or answer questions about the matter by statutory right or otherwise. If that is the case, you can also attend the meeting for that purpose.

You must, however, leave the room **immediately after you have finished speaking (or sooner if the meeting so decides)** and you cannot remain in the public gallery to observe the vote on the matter. Additionally, you must not seek to **improperly influence** a decision in which you have a prejudicial interest.

What do I do if I require further guidance or clarification on declarations of interest?

If you feel you may have an interest in a matter that will need to be declared but require further guidance on this, please contact the Clerk to the Authority – preferably before the date of the meeting at which you may need to declare the interest. Similarly, please contact the Clerk if you require guidance/advice on any other aspect of the Code of Conduct.

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CORPORATE PLANNING COMMITTEE

(Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority)

4 September 2008

Present:-

Councillors Dyke, Foggin, Fry (Chair), Leaves and Tully

Apologies:-

Councillors S. Hughes and M. Phillips

***CSCPC/9. Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2008 be agreed and signed by the Chair.

CSCPC/10. “The Future Risk of Flooding - Reflections on the Pitt Review”

(An item taken in accordance with Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972).

The Chair determined that this matter should be determined at this meeting to facilitate a formal decision on attendance to be taken for the purposes of the reservation of places associated with attendance as the conference bookings needed to be made prior to the next meeting of the Authority.

The Clerk reported receipt of information from the Local Government Association (LGA) in respect of a national conference to be held in central London on Tuesday 18 November 2008 on “The Future Risk of Flooding – Reflections on the Pitt Review”. The conference would review the findings of the review undertaken by Sir Michael Pitt into the flooding which took place in the summer of 2007 and would include information about national and local plans for the future. He sought interest from Members wishing to accompany the Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Operations) at the meeting.

That it be **RECOMMENDED** to the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority that Councillor Tully accompanies the Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Operations) at the conference “The Future Risk of Flooding – Reflections on the Pitt Review” on 18 November 2008, attendance to be approved for the purposes of claims for travel and subsistence.

***CSCPC/11. Declarations of Interest**

Members were invited to consider whether they had any **personal/personal and prejudicial interests** in items as set out on the agenda for the meeting and to declare any such interests at this time.

No interests were declared.

***CSCPC/12. Community Safety Department Plan**

The Committee received for information the Community Safety Department Plan together with a presentation given by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Community Safety).

The presentation covered the following areas:

- The Plan reflected the activities in the Authority's Corporate Plan for 2008/09 to 2010/11;
- The Plan was split into two main areas, namely Protection and Prevention activities;
- Many of the activities set out in the Plan were under development still, in particular the enforcement of the Fire Safety Order, youth strategies and the approach to be taken in reducing road traffic collisions;
- The work was being undertaken to support the goals set out in the Corporate Plan and the Department would be measured on its performance in achieving the activities set out in it;
- The activities in the Plan included the Arson Reduction Programme, the development of a community safety strategy, community mapping and expanding the youth inclusion programmes;
- Many of the activities were being undertaken in conjunction with partners such as the police, local authorities and health service and also through the auspices of Local Area Agreements (LAAs).

Reference was made to a "Driver Live Workshop" which was an excellent example of the partnership work being undertaken and Members were invited to participate in a session that was to be held on 16 October 2008. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Community Safety) undertook to provide the Committee with further information in due course. It was noted, in addition, that a report in respect of the issues surrounding LAAs would be submitted in due course.

***CSCPC/13. Community Safety - Targetting of Resources**

The Committee considered a report of the Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Community Safety) (CSCPC/08/3) that set out a request for support to redirect existing resources into community safety activities within the service, including partnerships and an increase in the focus on hard to reach groups.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Community Safety) advised the Committee that there were two issues for consideration, namely that the Department and Group Plans contained activities relating to retained staff and it was envisaged that the service could utilise existing capability within the retained pay budget (resulting from fewer emergency calls) to support community safety activities. In addition, there was software available (for which additional funding would be required) to support work on community mapping which would assist the service in being able to target hard to reach groups.

RESOLVED

- (a) To support further targeted community safety prevention work in retained areas, utilising capacity within the budget for retained pay;
- (b) To endorse, in principle, the future procurement of a technical solution for community mapping to improve targeting activities;
- (c) That, subject to (a) and (b) above, the report be noted.

***CSCPC/14. Retained Duty System (RDS) Employers'**

The Committee received for information an update given by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Community Safety) in respect of the arrangements being made to set up open evenings for the employers of retained staff (RDS) in a bid to thank them for their support.

It was noted that employers of retained staff would be invited, in the future, to attend the Good Conduct and Long Service Medal presentations evenings when one of their staff was to receive an award. In addition, Area Commanders had also been tasked with considering the establishment of local events for RDS employers to celebrate the contribution made by their staff. The suggestions made were being considered and the Committee would receive a further update in due course.

The Committee requested that Members be advised when an employee from their local area was receiving a Good Conduct or Long Service medal and that they be invited to attend the ceremony.

***CSCPC/15. Co-Responder**

The Committee received for information an update given by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Operations) on the position in respect of the progress being made with the Co-responder scheme. He stated that discussions were continuing with the West Country Ambulance Service in respect of Co-responder although, as these discussions had not been concluded, it was not possible to brief the Committee on the outcome at this stage. He indicated that a full report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee.

*** DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The meeting started at 14.00hours and finished at 15.00hours.

DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY



REPORT REFERENCE NO.	CSCP/08/4
MEETING	COMMUNITY SAFETY & CORPORATE PLANNING COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	6 NOVEMBER 2008
SUBJECT OF REPORT	OPERATIONS AND RESILIENCE SUMMARY UPDATE
LEAD OFFICER	Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Operations)
RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>That the report be noted.</i>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>The following update provides a brief summary of progress against the Corporate and department Plans. The majority of work seeks to improve service delivery arrangements through a more flexible approach being taken to not only the workforce, but the procurement and future disposition of appliances and equipment reflecting local community risk.</p> <p>The department is currently preparing a five year 'Vision' regarding service delivery which will be presented to Members in due course.</p>
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	Programmed and agreed.
APPENDICES	N/A
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS	N/A

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Operations and Resilience Department is working on a number of projects linked to the corporate objectives and department plan. This paper provides a brief update on the specific projects linked to these and other projects that the department is currently working on. Each activity will improve operational service delivery, provide a more efficient, effective and safe response and also, looking to the future, provide a more flexible and responsive operational workforce, able to deal with local, regional and national challenges.

2. COMMUNITY SAFETY AND TRAINING ACTIVITY

- 2.1 This project is considering the current wholetime and day crewed shift arrangements, looking at the flexibility required to meet the challenges faced by a modern fire and rescue service, including our ability to match resources to demand and provide a more flexible, family friendly working environment. The National Framework Document clearly indicates that any improvements must be made by utilising existing resources. By reviewing current shift arrangements, resources may be released and re-invested to support community safety activity, training and provide a more evenly balance between risk and resources across the Service.
- 2.2 The initial scoping work for this project has been completed and further work is now underway to look at the best options for DSFRS. This work will incorporate a dialogue with Representative Bodies and a further detailed report will be presented to the Committee in due course.

3. REVIEW OF WORKING PRACTICES AT STATION LEVEL

- 3.1 Work has been undertaken on examining current wholetime and day crewed fire stations working practices with a view to maximising available time in support of operational preparedness, training and local community activity. The review is now complete and a revised 'work routines' policy is currently undergoing consultation in accordance with the normal procedures. This policy will provide an improved framework for the prioritisation and pre-planning of work and a new system for recording and monitoring station based activity thereby improving community station plan targets.

4. REVIEW OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF EMERGENCY RESPONSE RESOURCES

- 4.1 This project is considering the current distribution of stations, personnel, appliances and equipment following the implementation of the new emergency response standards. The aim is to ensure that resources reflect the risks associated for local communities in the most flexible manner possible. Understanding the local community risk profiles is key and integral to a rolling programme of review of service delivery arrangements across DSFRS.
- 4.2 The project will also scope out a range of options that reconsiders the 'one size fits all' approach with the standard B type water tender. Whilst there is a need to ensure we meet our emergency response standards there are opportunities to utilise different types of vehicles relevant to local risk and with the potential to improve our capital expenditure in this area. A further detailed report will be submitted to the Committee early in 2009.

5. REVIEW AND HARMONISE THE PROVISION OF OPERATIONAL RISK INFORMATION

5.1 This project will harmonise and update arrangements for gathering, storing, disseminating, reviewing and testing operational risk information. The National Framework Document makes a specific requirement on Services to ensure that operational personnel are provide with current risk information. As well as harmonising existing arrangements, the project has looked extensively at national good practice to ensure that crews have the most effective system for provide accurate risk information. This work will also ensure our new system will be fully compatible with the requirements of the 'Firelink' and Regional Control Centre (RCC) projects. Progress has been positive and it is anticipated that the new system will be operational by the beginning of April 2009.

6. CO-RESPONDER UPDATE

6.1 Following extensive consultation and cooperation with South West Ambulance Service Trust (SWAST), a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been produced. This document confirms the commitments of both services to collaborate in the provision of life saving medical care in the community, providing an agreed framework of operation for the joint initiative.

6.2 The new MOU includes a performance based financial agreement resulting in DSFRS receiving funding for meeting trust attendance time targets for medical emergencies. A funding floor of £66,000 per year has been agreed, with the potential to achieve an agreed ceiling of £90,000. In addition to this operational funding the SWAST also continues to provide an officer who is seconded to the Service Training Centre, delivering first aid training on a full time basis.

6.4 A decision was made in 2007 to reduce the co-responder budget by £150,000. This target has been reached through changes to mobilising arrangements and will continue to improve once roll out of the remainder of the light vehicles has been completed and will contribute significantly to further reductions in co-responder costs. At present the service has introduced 7 of these new vehicles across Devon, with the remaining vehicles to be acquired and allocated by early 2009.

7. TECHNICAL RESCUE

7.1 Additional funding was secured within the 2008/09 budget to introduce a specialist Technical Rescue capability across four stations. This is now moving forward at pace and the following progress has been made to date:

- Implementation plan complete
- Consultation with Representative Bodies on-going
- Decision made on location of all stations (Special Ops, Camelshead, Bridgewater and Barnstaple)
- Courses arranged
- Equipment ordered
- Specialist rescue vehicle specification complete

Water Rescue

- Consultation on implementation plan now complete and final draft distributed
- Instructor training complete
- Course package complete
- Planned date of commencement January 2009
- Draft Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) written
- Draft training policy written
- Draft in-water training policy written
- Water training venue risk assessments complete

8. NATIONAL RESILIENCE PROGRAMME

- 8.1 The Fire and Rescue National Resilience (New Dimensions) programme, developed through the Cabinet Office for Fire and Rescue is nearing completion. This programme which commenced in 2001 will be completed this month (Acquisition and rollout) with the final delivery of the Enhanced Command Support Unit (ECSU) shortly to be delivered to DSFRS.
- 8.2 As a Service we now host the largest special appliance and staff assets outside of London; which also includes the newly established Urban Search and Rescue Teams (USAR), appliances, and equipment that has been delivered into the service over the last five years. These assets now include three Incident Response Units, two High Volume Pumps, two Hose Vehicles, six Transport Vehicles, two Mass Decontamination Units, and six Specialist Modules.
- 8.3 Although this capability is primarily designed to deal with terrorist incidents, it is increasingly becoming used to support a multi-agency capability when large-scale incidents or natural disasters occur e.g. the flooding in Gloucestershire and South Yorkshire, where substantial support was provided by specialist officers, high volume pumps, equipment and teams.
- 8.4 The delivery of the ECSU will enhance substantially our command support function, locally and at national incidents across the UK. In preparation for this new role the Service has recently trained 26 first response officers and USAR Technicians to undertake the role National Resilience Support Officers for out of county DSFRS deployments which includes performing the roles such as: welfare support, cross border liaison and as a contact point between DSFRS and the Special Operations Team Leader. The Service has also recently completed the building of a new Specialist Station and Training Rig for the USAR teams, servicing the needs of the South West. These assets are being embedded within DSFRS mobilising arrangements.

9 CIVIL CONTINGENCIES

- 9.1 The arrangements for supporting, two Local Resilience Forums (LRFs), Devon & Cornwall along with Avon & Somerset, has been reported to the Committee on previous occasions. The purpose of each LRF is to delivery of a number of core duties within the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 that need to be developed through a multi-agency approach. The LRF also provides a forum for sharing good/poor practice, lessons learnt, understanding the various frameworks and relationships between the Government Office SW, Regional Resilience Team, each LRF and supporting agencies.
- 9.2 The Service continues to provide a regular and strong commitment to both Forums which includes two Chief Officers Groups, two Business Management Groups and several sub groups; this includes chairing a number of groups and providing administrative support and meeting venues. The sub groups undertake emergency planning, training and exercising against the National Capability Work streams such as Pandemic Flu, Flooding, Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN(E)), Community Risk Registers and dealing with Mass Casualties. The Service has recently issued two LRF wide CBRN(E) Plans for consultation and has incorporated lessons learnt from recent terrorism events.
- 9.3 The Service is planning to hold two LRF wide CBRN Seminars to be held at Service HQ in February 2009. These will provide the opportunity to share information with other responders, obtain a greater understanding of roles and responsibilities of statutory partners, and demonstrate the resources DSFRS has to offer in terms of community protection.
- 9.4 The department has also recently recruited a new Emergency Planning Officer who commences in December 2008; which will enhance our arrangements, assist in meeting legal obligations and provide support for both Forums.

10 STATION PREPAREDNESS.

- 10.1 Given the history of recent tragic firefighter fatalities and subsequent HSE Improvement Notices issued to some fire authorities, there is a need to ensure a robust and frequent assessment of Service Delivery arrangements. This is particularly relevant in terms of operational preparedness and emergency response, which compliment the full annual station audits, providing checks against risk critical areas concerning staff, skills, appliances and equipment.
- 10.2 These visits are being conducted through the Group Command structure who will audit stations on a three monthly basis. Specifically, the visits will examine the following areas:-
- The identification and sharing of “best practice” locally within each Area Command
 - Provide a basis for Group Commanders and their support teams to maintain or improve station standards;
 - Ensure compliance with safety critical instructions and associated procedures
 - Ensure that the activities of the station are based around risk analysis and risk reduction, operational preparedness, emergency response, and local partnerships

- Provide evidence of continuous improvement when examined under formal Service audits; and
- Provide support to improve standards relating to Health & Safety, appliance & equipment maintenance, and Equality and Diversity

TREVOR STRATFORD
ACFO (Operations)

DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY



REPORT REFERENCE NO.	CSCP/08/5
MEETING	COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CORPORATE PLANNING COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	6 NOVEMBER 2008
SUBJECT OF REPORT	REGIONAL CONTROL CENTRE UPDATE
LEAD OFFICER	Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Operations)
RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>That the report be noted.</i>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>This paper updates Members on the current position of the FiReControl project, a government project integral to the national resilience programme.</p> <p>DSFRS is one of the first Fire and Rescue Services to transfer into the RCC, with a due date of October 2009. Although the management of the project for DSFRS remains on track and within the parameters set by the transition plan from CLG, there are a number of emerging issues that are delaying our continued progress.</p> <p>These have had the effect of compressing the project timetable to such a degree that it is considered the Service would be unable to meet the proposed deadline, all of which have been raised to CLG through the SW Regional Project Board. However, this position has now been superseded by the announcement that the national project timetable is to be realigned, although we await confirmation of alternative 'Cut Over' dates.</p> <p>Consideration is therefore being given to the financial and technical impact this decision may have upon the Service for the foreseeable future.</p> <p>Finally, Members will be aware that the Business Case has been circulated for consultation raising concerns regarding the financial assessment of the project. This has been reported to the Fire Authority and we await a response from CLG regarding the considerations and proposal made by Members.</p>
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	N/A
APPENDICES	N/A
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS	N/A

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 The publication of the business case has raised concerns with Members regarding both the manner in which this was published and the financial position within the South West Region. More recently CLG have notified each FRS that the current project timetable is no longer achievable within current project constraints and although we are yet to be notified of the revised dates, this will inevitably have an impact upon the current workloads in support of the project and both fire controls. This paper therefore seeks to inform Members as to these events and the potential impact this may have upon DSFRS.

2 BUSINESS CASE

2.1 The most recent publication of the Business Case was unfortunately not published in full with Part 1, regional information, being circulated separately, and Part 2 yet to be circulated. The concerns around whether there is information in Part 2 that has relevance to DSFRS, has been dealt with by the Regional Project Board who made representation to CLG. We have been assured that there is no information that would adversely affect any decision required of the region.

2.2 With regard to the financial savings, the region was always sceptical whether the projected figure of 30% was achievable from the outset. As a consequence we have seen this figure steadily eroded since 2003. In fact the regional position is one that considers a deficit may be incurred once other aspects of this project have been factored in such as Out Of Scope Work.

2.3 A solution has been proposed for a centrally allocated resilience payment to be met by CLG offering regional savings, a point the Chairman has already made to CLG. Once this position has been clarified a further report will be presented to the fire authority.

3 PROJECT TIMETABLE

3.1 The project timetable has over recent months become significantly compressed due to a number of contractual issues between EADS and CLG. DSFRS are currently programmed to 'Cut Over' to the RCC in October 2009, with an earlier date to transfer our control arrangements to Avon FRS as part of the Initial Staff Pool in June/July 2009.

3.2 However, with a continuing number of programmed activities slipping, such as New Ways of Working, the replacement of Station End Equipment, data management; etc, this timetable was becoming unachievable. All these issues have been raised with the Regional Project Board and CLG. This position has also been reflected by other fire and rescue services across the country and CLG have now confirmed that the project will be subject to realignment, although we are yet to be advised as to the new dates. Regardless of proposed changes to the project time table the work for DSFRS continues.

3.3 However, in doing so a further impact assessment will be necessary on both fire controls to understand what, if any, a delay will have upon the current legacy systems, staff and skills retention within each fire control. In addition an early assessment will be made to understand the financial impact of this decision and the potential budget implications for 2009/10.

4 PROJECT TEAM

- 4.1 The establishment for the project team is supported through CLG New Burdens funding. This originally was developed prior to combination and supported each fire control respectively. Since combination these teams have been amalgamated along with the project plans although the reporting mechanism to CLG reflects each fire control, separately. The complex nature of this project requires significant lead in times for staff to become fully conversant with their areas of responsibilities and staff retention and skills is of paramount importance given that DSFRS is one of the first FRS to 'Cut Over' to the Regional Control Centre. Although the status of this team is under regular review, the normal movement of staff and retirements may have an effect with a longer project lead in time.

5 PROJECT BENEFITS

- 5.1 Despite the obvious concerns raised by the project delay and lack of financial savings it must be realised that this project provides real and tangible benefits to the Service.
- 5.2 The current mobilising arrangements within both fire controls, whilst fit for purpose are out of date and in need of replacement. Regardless of the FiReControl project the Service would have considered options for the amalgamation of both controls along with the procurement of a suitable replacement mobilising system, review of staffing and technical solutions. This would have been undertaken at considerable cost to the fire authority. The RCC therefore provides DSFRS an opportunity to replace existing arrangements at no additional cost other than that required to support our two fire controls.
- 5.3 The regional control centre will provide a range of improvements for DSFRS a few examples are as follows:

(a) Mobile Data Terminals

A fundamental part of the FiReControl project in terms of enhanced capability for frontline firefighters is the provision of the software for mobile data terminals (MDT), which are being provided through the Firelink project. MDTs will provide access to a range of data, from the within the appliance cab, such as Chemdata, hydrants, risk information etc. The MDT will also enable the data stored on the equipment to be automatically synchronised each time the appliance returns to station so it is guaranteed to be up to date and also enables data communication and status messaging between the appliance crew and the RCC.

(b) AVLS and Satellite Navigation

The MDT will contain a Global Positioning System (GPS) transmitter allowing the exact location of the appliance to be known. This will ensure that the nearest appropriate appliance or equipment will be mobilised. The topographical knowledge of fire appliance drivers and their crews using paper-based maps is the normal method for travelling to incidents. This knowledge will be enhanced through the provision of satellite navigation technology showing the quickest route to an incident and will be updated with road closure information.

(c) Caller Location Technology

Within the control room environment technology advances will enhance the range of information available to control room operators.

The Enhanced Information Service for Emergency Calls (EISEC) will allow the billing address of the telephone from which an emergency call is being made to be displayed to the Control Room Operator, augmenting their professional call handling skills and speeding up the task of confirming the caller's location. The technology can also be used to locate the whereabouts of a mobile telephone caller by identifying the network cell from which they are calling. This is particularly useful when callers are reporting incidents on the road network and are unaware of their exact location, for example on the motorway. This technology also assists in identifying hoax callers and reducing the number of times DSFRS is mobilised unnecessarily.

(d) Enhanced Capability - General

The Mobile Data Terminal will also provide crews with information on-board the appliance about the incident location, incident type and information regarding risks, building plans and chemical hazards associated with the incident. MDTs will also help direct crews to the incident, knowing where the appliance is in relation to the incident and showing the route/directions on a mapping system.

In the RCC the technology will include an address gazetteer covering all premises, road and landmark locations with tools for searching and matching, caller location services to assist in identifying where a caller is located and real-time appliance location information to determine the nearest available appliance. Incident addresses will be matched at premises level where possible, providing maximum accuracy.

6 SUMMARY

6.1 This is a complex and protracted national project that will provide tangible benefits for DSFRS and local communities. The project costs to date are being met centrally through CLG and New Burdens and the team are building a level of knowledge and understanding that will support progress despite revised 'Cut Over' dates. Clearly there remain issues regionally for Members regarding funding, cost apportionment and a commitment to the Business case. However, whilst there is some way to go to fully understanding the final costs to the project, technical solutions and operational protocols, the work being undertaken for a single regional fire control removes the development costs for DSFRS that would be associated with a local replacement programme.

**TREVOR STRATFORD
ACFO Operations**