

# **THAMES VALLEY FIRE CONTROL SERVICE**

## **Joint Committee**



## **Thames Valley Fire Control Service**

### **Joint Committee Meeting**

**The next meeting of the above Committee will be held remotely on Thursday 28 May 2020 at 11am**

**For anyone wishing to observe this meeting, details will be published shortly.**

**The business to be transacted will be the agenda for the postponed meeting on Monday 23 March 2020 at 2pm**

Notice dated: 20 May 2020

# THAMES VALLEY FIRE CONTROL SERVICE JOINT COMMITTEE



## Thames Valley Fire Control Service Joint Committee Meeting

**Monday 23 March 2020 at 2.00 pm,  
Meeting Room 1, BMKFA, Brigade HQ,  
Stocklake, Aylesbury, Bucks, HP20 1BD**

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### AGENDA

	Item	Page No.
1.	Apologies	
2.	Introductions	
3.	Declarations of Interest	
4.	Minutes of the last meeting held on 9 December 2019	(Pages 5-10)
5.	Matters Arising	
6.	Questions from Members (written questions)	
7.	Questions submitted under Standing Order 9.5 (questions from members of the public)	
8.	TVFCS Performance Report Quarter 3 2019/20	(Pages 11-30)
9.	Thames Valley Fire Control Service 5 Year Report	(Pages 31-

	<b>Item</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
		44)
10.	Emergency Services Mobile Communication Programme (ESMCP) Update	(Pages 45-48)
11.	Forward Plan	(Page 49)
12.	Date of Next Meeting:  Monday 13 July 2020, 2.00 pm at Large Conference Room, Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service, Sterling Road, Kidlington, OX5 2DU	

## Joint Committee Terms of Reference

### 1. REMIT AND OBJECTIVES OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE

- 1.1. The Joint Committee is constituted to provide overall strategic direction and oversight for the TVFCS.
- 1.2. The Joint Committee shall have the following functions:
  - 1.2.1. champion the TVFCS;
  - 1.2.2. act as the link between the TVFCS and the Fire Authorities;
  - 1.2.3. guide recommendations from the TVFCS, that may affect the operational functions of the Fire Authorities, through the governance processes of the Fire Authorities;
  - 1.2.4. assist with the management of the relationships between the Fire Authorities;
  - 1.2.5. monitor the steady state operational benefits and performance of the TVFCS, against the agreed measures and targets;
  - 1.2.6. monitor steady state risks relevant to the TVFCS;
  - 1.2.7. monitor the financial performance of the TVFCS against required and available budget, benefits and efficiencies, and to contribute to the financial processes of the Fire Authorities;
  - 1.2.8. discuss, and contribute to, proposals on future developments for the TVFCS;
  - 1.2.9. provide strategic direction on the future of the TVFCS;
  - 1.2.10. consider and recommend to the Fire Authorities proposals in relation to Fire Authority Decisions including but not limited to:
    - (b) discuss and recommend proposals for additional full partners into the TVFCS;
    - (c) discuss and recommend proposals for the supply of TVFCS services to other fire and rescue services or other clients;
  - 1.2.11. decide upon and determine all matters which are Joint Committee Decisions, any matters referred to the Joint Committee for decision pursuant to the TVFCS decision making process in clause 11 (Decision Making by TVFCS) and any matters reserved by law or otherwise to the Joint Committee.

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## Thames Valley Fire Control Service Joint Committee Meeting

Monday 9 December 2019, 2.00 pm at Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service,  
Brigade HQ, Stocklake, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, HP20 1BD

### Minutes

**Present:** Councillor Lesley Clarke OBE (BMKFA) - Chairman  
Councillor Steven Lambert (BMKFA) (part)  
Councillor Angus Ross (RBFA)  
Councillor David Cannon (RBFA)  
Councillor Judith Heathcoat (OCC)

**In Attendance:** Jason Thelwell (Chief Fire Officer BFRS)  
Graham Britten (Director of Legal and Governance BFRS)  
Dave Norris (Head of Service Delivery BFRS)  
Calum Bell (Head of Service Development BFRS)  
Katie Nellist (Democratic Service Officer BFRS)  
Asif Hussain (Principal Accountant BFRS)  
Rob McDougall (Chief Fire Officer OFRS)  
Michael Adcock (Area Manager, OFRS)  
Steve Foye (DCFO RBFRS)  
Mark Arkwell (Assistant Chief Fire Officer, RBFRS)  
Tony Vincent (Head of Business Information and Systems, RBFRS)  
Simon Harris (Group Manager, TVFCS)  
Connor Byrne (Head of Finance and Procurement, RBFRS)  
Jim Powell (Area Manager RBFRS)

**Public:**

#### 01. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mark Gray (OCC)

## **02. INTRODUCTIONS**

All Members and Officers introduced themselves.

## **03. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

## **04. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23 SEPTEMBER 2019**

RESOLVED –

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2019 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

## **05. MATTER ARISING**

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2019 but Councillor Heathcoat wanted the hard work undertaken by officers, so that sickness absence was the second lowest level of any control room in the UK, to be noted.

## **06. TVFCS BUDGET 2020/21**

The Head of Finance and Procurement advised Members that the proposed revenue budget for 2020/21 was £2,355,114 an increase of 4.05%, £92k over the current budget. £80k of this rise related to employment costs, which was made up of two components. The first of which was an anticipated pay rise of 2% and the other increase related to the number of staff who would move from a development rate of pay to a competent rate of pay. The differential between the two rates of pay was 27%.

There were two areas within the recharge section of the budget that had increased more than expected. The first was the facilities recharge which had increased by 9.76%. This was due to a sharp increase in gas and electricity prices over the past two years. The other area was a larger than expected increase in the recharge for liability insurance. To offset some of these additional costs, savings had been identified in two areas, technology and the recovery of alarm centre income.

It was proposed that each Service continued to set aside £50k towards capital replacement costs. The fund was at nearly £1.6m but it was considered prudent to continue setting aside these funds. It would be used to replace or upgrade technology within the control room.

The Head of Service Delivery BFRS advised that the ICT increase of 2% represented the ICT support provided by RBFRS and the section on Technology

represents the change related to TVFCS.

Members asked that their thanks be passed onto all the staff in the control room.

Simon  
Harris

(Councillor Lambert joined the meeting)

RESOLVED –

1. That the proposed TVFCS revenue budget for 2020/21 as details in Appendix A be agreed.
2. That the contingency budget allocation of £150,000 which would provide an upper limit of expenditure without further Fire Authority approval be agreed.
3. That delegated authority to the three CFO's (unanimous decision required) for any unplanned expenditure between £10,000 and £150,000 be agreed.
4. That an amount of £150,000 be set aside (£50,000 from each partner) towards capital replacement costs, be agreed.
5. That the TVFCS budget for the financial year 2020/21 and the individual Authority contributions to this budget, be recommended to each respective Authority.

#### **07. TVFCS PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 2 2019/20**

The Area Manager OFRS advised Members that demand had been consistent as would be expected at this time of year and some new BT technology was helping the control room answer calls quicker. With regard to emergency calls, there had been just over 10,500 calls this quarter, leading to 6,500 mobilisations, which was an increase of 12.4% from this time last year. Sickness levels had risen slightly, but were being well managed. The system continued to remain stable and reliable in operation.

The Head of Service Delivery BFRS advised that a Station Manager had been appointed in the control room which would provide stability. This now provided an opportunity for the control room to consider succession planning, resilience in the team and developing staff in post. There was also now an increased focus in performance, how well the team performed together and how well they provided support for the three services.

The Head of Service Delivery BFRS advised Members that as previously mentioned, having upgraded the control room systems to enable the new BT 999 Advance Mobile Location (AML) technology, planning had begun for a major system software update to take place, likely within the next two years. The software upgrade would provide new functionality and would be an enabler for improved ways of working.

The Head of Service Delivery BFRS advised Members that the Joint Coordination Group had commenced work with staff groups to identify how the control room could develop the excellent work it already did and further improve



as it moved beyond the five year anniversary in 2020. Officers would speak to control room staff on a range of different topics over the next period, to understand their experience and would build that into scoping work for a full review of TVFCS in the next 12-18 months.

The Area Manager RBFRS took Members through the Establishment table which showed a vacancy that had now been filled. The table would reflect this in the next quarterly report and also the Attendance/Absence table which reflected what had already been spoken about.

The Area Manager OFRS highlighted the Performance Measure table and wanted to mention to Members the areas high-lighted in red. As of April 2020, new performance measures had been agreed as the current measures did not represent how the control room worked now and the challenges the three Service's had got with regard to their information requirements and the use of mobile phone technology. AML was starting to be very effective and the control room had the ability to turn out fire appliances much quicker.

Councillor Lambert asked about the capacity issue of administrative calls versus emergency calls, was there an impact on staff and was advised that when the calls were received on the telephony equipment, it was very obvious to the call handler whether it was an emergency call or an admin call, they had different sounds and colours. What should happen if someone was engaged in taking an admin call and an emergency call came in and there was no capacity to answer it, the call handler would immediately place the admin call on hold and move over to the emergency call, although it would take a couple of seconds to politely put someone on hold, the impact was minimal. The admin calls tended to be calls from fire stations, officers etc., preparing for emergency response and managing resources.

Councillor Heathcoat asked about the billing error with BT which had been going on for a long time and when were BT going to sort this out and was advised that advice had been sort as to what could be done, but the control room were beholden to BT (who had made the mistake) to sort it out. The contract it related to was managed on behalf of TVFC by Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service who had worked very hard to try and resolve this.

Councillor Lambert asked whether a complaint should be made to Ofcom regarding the BT billing issue and Members were all in agreement that a letter should be written.

The Chief Fire Officer BFRS felt that issues coming out of the Grenfell enquiry would need to be considers across the TVFCS and a development plan to cover those issues agreed.

The Head of Service Delivery BFRS advised Members that officers had been considering this from a range of perspectives, including how this could be linked with wider work across the Thames Valley, individual services, TVFCS and the approach of the National Fire Chiefs Council. This matter would be raised at the

Tony  
Vincent

Thames Valley Service Delivery Group and would be considered within the frameworks that currently existed.

Councillor Ross felt that as a Committee they should be aware of what was being done and perhaps there should be a Grenfell update at the next meeting all Members agreed.

Dave  
Norris

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted and a letter be written to Ofcom and sent to each Authority for signature.

## **8. EMERGENCY SERVICES MOBILE COMMUNICATION PROGRAMME (ESMCP) UPDATE**

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer RBFRS advised Members that the report updated the status of the National Programme and the South Central Region input into it. It had been a relatively short period since the last update to the Joint Committee and there were no significant areas to update on. At the last meeting, the Joint Committee agreed to write collectively to the Home Office Permanent Secretary, Sir Phillip Rutnam, setting out the Committee's concerns in respect of the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP) and consequently, delivery of the Emergency Services Network (ESN). A response had been received from Sir Phillip Rutnam on 12 November 2019 and was attached to the report. Officers continued to engage positively with the National programme and the South Central Region and in terms of the work streams that were overseen in the governance structure, there were no specific changes to report on.

The Head of Service Development BFRS advised Members that the Deputy Chief Fire Officer RBFRS represented the interests of this body of people in a very robust, frank and professional way. He had confidence in the way in which the interests of the TVFCS Joint Committee's position was represented and defended.

The Chief Fire Officer OFRS advised Members that it was an Emergency Services programme so it effected the ambulance and police services too. The police as primary users had a very forthright view.

RESOLVED –

That the contents of the report and the delivery of the ESN be noted.

## **9. FORWARD PLAN**

It was agreed that a Member's Workshop be held before the next meeting to discuss forward planning and future direction. Also to be discussed would be the frequency of meetings of the Joint Committee.

Katie  
Nellist

RESOLVED –

That the Forward Plan be noted.

**10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 23 March 2020, 2.00 pm at BMKFA, Brigade HQ, Stocklake, Aylesbury, Bucks, HP20 1BD

(The Chairman closed the meeting at 14.55)

DRAFT

# THAMES VALLEY FIRE CONTROL SERVICE



<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>TVFCS PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 3 2019/20</b>
<b>PRESENTED TO:</b>	<b>TVFCS JOINT COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>23 MARCH 2020</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	<b>AM MIKE ADCOCK</b>
<b>EXEMPT INFORMATION</b>	<b>NONE</b>
<b>ACTION</b>	<b>FOR NOTE</b>

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To provide the Joint Committee with an update report on the performance of the Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS)
- 1.2 The Control Manager's performance report for 2019/20 Quarter 3 (Appendix A) provides a detailed narrative on TVFCS- performance together with the agreed set of performance information to enable comparisons.

## 2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **That the Joint Committee note the report.**

## 3. REPORT

- 3.1 Demand has been consistent with what would normally be expected for this period.
- 3.2 Recruitment activity has taken place to fill establishment vacancies which have arisen.
- 3.3 Performance against key measures shows sustained improvement.

#### **4. COMPLIANCE WITH THE TVFCS PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT**

- 4.1 This report complies with the Steady State Legal Agreement which defines the responsibilities for measuring and reporting on performance.

#### **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no implications within this report.

#### **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no implications within this report.

#### **7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no implications within this report.

#### **8. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no implications within this report

#### **10. PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION**

- 10.1 None for this report.

#### **11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 11.1 Programme Sponsoring Group Benefits Paper – 11 April 2013.

#### **12. APPENDICES**

- 12.1 Appendix A – TVFCS Control Manager's performance report for 2019/20 Quarter 3.

#### **13. CONTACT DETAILS**

- 13.1 Simon Harris GM Thames Valley Fire Control Service

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# Thames Valley Fire Control Service



## Joint Committee Performance Report (Quarter 3 2019/20)

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## Introduction

The Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) performance report presents information on the performance of the joint control room. This is to provide structure and governance that enables TVFCS to measure, monitor and manage outputs and outcomes in a timely manner, allowing us to respond and make informed decisions to ensure that our statutory and partnership obligations are successfully delivered.

The aim of this report is to share how TVFCS has performed over the previous three months, offer explanation, analysis and mitigation for target outcomes, and to suggest positive means of carrying effective performance into the future.

### Key to Icons and Colours

	Target exceeded by more than 10%
	Target met or exceeded by up to 10%
	Target missed by up to 10%
	Target missed by more than 10%
	NA or data accuracy issues affect confidence in reporting



## Key Highlights

### Context

During Quarter 3 2019/20 TVFCS handled 8478 emergency calls which lead to 5427 mobilisations. This represents a slight decrease in demand compared with the equivalent period in 2018/19 with a 5.5% reduction in the number of calls received and a 2.8% reduction in the number of mobilisations. The data shows a decrease in emergency call numbers of 20.3% and a decrease in mobilisations of 13.9% compared with Quarter 2 2019/20, which is in line with expected seasonal variations in demand.

Whilst no weather conditions were experienced within the reporting period causing spikes in call numbers, heavy rain fell within the Thames Valley area through December causing notable flooding to highways. TVFCS have received a number of calls from drivers requesting assistance to recover their vehicles from floodwater. This is not a Fire & Rescue Service responsibility and these requests create additional demand on Control room capacity. Discussions in the NFCC Control Managers Forum indicate that this is occurring nationally and it has been agreed that the NFCC group will take some actions to provide guidance to motorists and recovery organisations.

Recruitment took place within the reporting period to fill the vacancies that have arisen as a result of staff turnover and to cover forthcoming maternity leave. The standard of applicants for vacancies was high and four new starters will join TVFCS in January 2020.

### Successes

TVFCS performance against the measure for how quickly calls are initially answered continues to exceed the target. Performance in this area is strongly linked with the maintenance of crewing levels, which is a continuing area of focus for the management team. As part of the contract for BT 'Smart' numbers, additional data relating to incoming call volumes is now being provided to the TVFCS Management team, allow better analysis of peaks and troughs in demand.

Although performance against the measure for the amount of time taken to mobilise after a call has been answered remains below target, performance has consistently improved during the course of the year, with the final figure for Quarter 3 against the key 90 second measure showing an improvement of 4.32% compared with the same

## TVFCS Joint Committee Performance Report

period in 2018/19. In December 2019 the target was achieved on 76.5% of occasions, comparing favourably with the figure of 70.05% achieved in December 2018. Significant efforts have been made by the TVFCS Management team to improve performance in this area by working with staff on call handling techniques and use of systems. This has been greatly assisted by the introduction of BT's Advanced Mobile Location (AML) functionality, which is reducing the time taken to identify the location of mobile callers.

The HMICFRS inspection for BFRS was published in late December, with no areas for improvement relating to TVFCS specified in the report. In relation to TVFCS, the report identified that "The training for Control staff is well managed and mobilisation is generally good"

### Areas for Improvement

Although the percentage of mobilisations which take place within 90 seconds of the call being answered has improved considerably, further efforts are being made in order to sustain this improvement. In April 2020, Changes are planned to the mobilising gazetteer used to identify addresses and to the way incidents are categorised during call handling with a view with a view to improving the workflow for call handling and speeding up call handling times.

Staff focus groups, run by the TVFCS Senior Responsible Owners, have taken place during December. These focus groups provided an opportunity for those working in the TVFCS Control room to give their thoughts on how aspects of the service could be further improved directly to senior managers. The focus groups were very well received by the staff that took part and will assist in the development of an action plan to develop the excellent work TVFCS does now as it moves beyond the it's 5 year anniversary.

### Emerging Issues & Risks

The initial contract for maintenance and support of the Command & Control system expires in April 2022, with the option to extend the contract for up to eight years. Information is expected from Capita during Spring 2020 outlining the costs associated with any extension of the contract. A report will be provided to the September Joint Committee for consideration



## Establishment

The authorised establishment and current staffing position are shown below. It details the number of people in their substantive posts and those in temporary positions.

Role	Authorised Establishment	Staff in substantive Posts and FTE	Staff in temporary Posts and FTE	Vacancies
Group Manager	1	1-1 FTE	0 – 0 FTE	0
Control Manager	1	1-1 FTE	0 – 0 FTE	0
Control Training Manager	1	1 – 1 FTE	0 – 0 FTE	0
Watch Manager	4	4 – 4 FTE	0 – 0 FTE	0
Crew Manager	12	11 – 11 FTE	1 – 1 FTE	0
Fire Fighter	20	19 - 17.82 FTE	0 – 0 FTE	1.18
Non Uniformed	1	1 – 1 FTE	0 – 0 FTE	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>37 – 35.82 FTE</b>	<b>1 – 1 FTE</b>	<b>1.18</b>



## Competence Levels

Role	Current staff	Number Competent in Role	Number in Development	% of Current Staff in Development
Group Manager	1	1	0	0%
Control Manager	1	1	0	0%
Control Training Manager	1	0	1	100%
Watch Manager	4	4	0	0%
Crew Manager	12	5	7	58%
Fire Fighter	21	16	5	24%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>33%</b>

Please note, the above figures relate to the actual numbers of staff employed, not the Full Time Equivalents used for establishment. Figures have been rounded up/down to the nearest full percentage point.

## Attendance/ Absence

Measure	October 2019	November 2019	December 2019
Short-term Sickness Episodes	7	7	7
Long-term Sickness Episodes*	1	0	1
Total Days lost to Sickness	23	32	36
Average days lost per FTE	0.59	0.82	0.93

\*long-term sickness is sickness absence of more than 28 days.

TVFCS staff were affected by a number of seasonal illnesses during November and December, which led to an increase in the number of days lost to absence during the quarter. The majority of sickness absence relates to separate short term absence for a variety of members of staff, however a very small number of staff are now being managed in line with the RBFRS attendance management policy due to the frequency of absence. The average number of days lost across the quarter was 0.67 days per FTE, this is a slight reduction over the equivalent period in 2018/19, when 0.78 days per FTE were lost to sickness.

# TVFCS Joint Committee Performance Report

## Overtime Claims and Payment records

(Excluding Bank Holiday Pay and Handover Pay)

Measure	October 2019	November 2019	December 2019
Number of Staff Claiming OT	11	17	11
Hours Worked	182	266	166
Total Paid	£3489.41	£5711.65	£3971.40

## Performance Measures (Data accurate as of 31/12/2019)

Measure	October 2019	November 2019	December 2019	Reporting period average	Same period 2018/19	Rolling 12 month average
1 Total Emergency calls answered	2947	2807	2724	2826	2982	2991
2 Number of Mobilisations	1900	1825	1702	1809	1889	1708
3 No. of times Emergency Fall-back instigated	0	0	0	0	0	0
4 Number of Co-responding incidents	168	179	217	188	45	112
5 Total Admin Calls answered	7410	7208	6923	7180	7222	7146

## TVFCS Joint Committee Performance Report

Measure*		2019/20 Target	October 2019	November 2019	December 2019	Reporting period average	Same period 2018/19	Rolling 12 month average
6	Emergency calls answered within 5 seconds	92%	97.36%	97.17%	97.15%	97.23%	96.39%	95.60%
7	Emergency calls answered within 10 seconds	97%	99.26%	98.65%	99.01%	98.97%	98.80%	97.85%
8	% occasions where time to mobilise is within 60 seconds	60%	53.58%	49.70%	53.53%	52.27%	44.68%	48.41%
9	% occasions where time to mobilise is within 90 seconds	80%	75.11%	73.92%	76.50%	75.17%	70.85%	72.89%
10	% occasions where time to mobilise is within 120 seconds	95%	86.68%	85.48%	87.13%	86.43%	82.60%	84.11%
11	Admin calls answered within 15 seconds	n/a	82.87%	82.03%	84.09%	83.00%	81.39%	82.21%

\*Definitions are available in appendix A



Financial Position

Data accurate as of 31/12/2019

TVFCS Budget Monitoring 9 Months to 31 Dec 2019						
	<i>Total Annual Budget</i>	<i>Actual Expenditure To 30 June 2019</i>	<i>Forecast Outturn at Year End</i>	<i>Variance = Forecast - Annual Budget</i>	<i>Variance %</i>	<i>Commentary</i>
Staff						



## TVFCS Joint Committee Performance Report

Employment Costs	1,673,370	1,205,826	1,645,588	-27,782	-1.66%	The underspend in this area is a result of staff leaving employment since the original budget was set and a member of staff being granted a career break.
Mileage and Subsistence	6,000	4,456	6,549	549	9.15%	The original budget for 2019/20 was set before a full year's data relating to the new Management team was available. The expenditure relates primarily to travel costs and accommodation for attending NFCC meetings and other similar events, as well as day to day travel between sites within the Thames Valley.
Uniform Allowances	3,000	1800	2,400	-600	-20.00%	This expenditure relates to a locally agreed allowance

## TVFCS Joint Committee Performance Report

							relating to work wear payable to eligible members of staff. Variance has been caused by TVFCS employing less eligible members of staff than when the budget was set.
Training	1,000	179	750	-250	-25.00%		
Recruitment	300	194	300	0	0		
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>1,683,670</b>	<b>1,213,223</b>	<b>1,656,568</b>	<b>-27,102</b>	<b>-1.61%</b>		
<b>Corporate</b>							
Facilities	89,455	44,730	89,455	0	0		Forecast outturn is expected to equal budget. Costs incurred to date are based on 1/2 of the annual budget.
Finance	22,276	11,140	22,276	0	0		
HR	71,636	35,820	71,636	0	0		
ICT	89,736	44,870	89,736	0	0		
Liability and Equipment Insurance	6,405	3,205	6,405	0	0		
Management	15,353	7,675	15,353	0	0		

# TVFCS Joint Committee Performance Report

<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>294,861</b>	<b>147,440</b>	<b>294,861</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Other</b>						
Professional Services and General Equipment Purchase	6,000	4,383	8,836	2,836	47.27%	In addition to the building survey undertaken in the Control room environment, a number of the Control room seats have developed faults. The predicted overspend is in anticipation of needing to purchase replacements, but TVFCS management are investigating whether these items can be economically repaired, which may cause this line to be adjusted in Q4

## TVFCS Joint Committee Performance Report

OFRS Costs (secondary control facility)	42,215	0	42,215	0	0	
TVFCS Alarm Receiving Centre income	-9,000	0	-9,000	0	0	
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>39,215</b>	<b>3,461</b>	<b>41,295</b>	<b>2,080</b>	<b>5.33%</b>	
<b>Technology</b>						
Capita Mobs System (maint)	68,386	50,398	67,197	-1,189	-1.74%	This contract is subject to an annual increase based on RPI. The rate of RPI when the budget was set was higher than the rate of RPI when the supplier applied the increase in cost leading to a forecast underspend.
DS3000 (for primary and secondary) ICCS	85,737	61,232	81,463	-4,274	-4.99%	This contract is subject to an annual increase based on RPI. The rate of RPI when the budget was set was higher than

# TVFCS Joint Committee Performance Report

							the rate of RPI when the supplier applied the increase in cost leading to a forecast underspend.
Telephony and Network costs.	52,188	32,261	64,395	13,607	26.79%		A billing error within BT led to a refund being received by TVFCS during 2018/19. The refund sent by BT was in fact intended for a different customer and has had to be repaid from the 2019/20 budget. Negotiations are ongoing with BT to establish what refund will actually be received by TVFCS. Figures will be updated once this has been resolved.
EISEC Services (Primary and Secondary Control)	9,000	6,750	9,000	0	0		

# TVFCS Joint Committee Performance Report

Smart services to switch 999 lines to secondary control or elsewhere	16,323	0	16,323	0	0	
Airwave rental ( SAN I ,B ) ( Primary,secondary ) (7+8)	14,058	0	14,058	0	0	
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>245,692</b>	<b>187,851</b>	<b>253,836</b>	<b>8,144</b>	<b>3.31%</b>	
<b>Total Budgeted Expenditure</b>	<b>2,263,438</b>	<b>1,625,849</b>	<b>2,246,560</b>	<b>-16,878</b>	<b>-0.75%</b>	

## Appendix A

### Performance Measure Definitions

Measure	Description
<b>% of occasions where the time to answer admin calls is within 15 seconds</b>	This measure uses the time taken from when the Fire Control Room system receives an admin call alert to the moment they are answered by a TVFCS Operator
<b>% of occasions where the time to answer emergency calls is within 5 seconds</b>	This measure uses the time taken from when the Fire Control Room system receives an emergency incoming call alert to the moment they are answered by a TVFCS Operator
<b>% of occasions where the time to answer emergency calls is within 10 seconds</b>	
<b>% of occasions where time to mobilise is within 60 seconds</b>	This measure is calculated from when emergency calls are answered to when control room staff request stations to mobilise the appliance.
<b>% of occasions where time to mobilise is within 90 seconds</b>	
<b>% of occasions where time to mobilise is within 120 seconds</b>	

# THAMES VALLEY FIRE CONTROL SERVICE



<b>SUBJECT</b>	Thames Valley Fire Control Service 5 Year Report
<b>PRESENTED TO:</b>	Thames Valley Fire Control Service Joint Committee
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	23 <sup>rd</sup> March 2020
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	AM Mike Adcock
<b>EXEMPT INFORMATION</b>	None
<b>ACTION</b>	For Note

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) opened in April 2015, and represented the culmination of significant collaborative effort between the three fire and rescue services (FRS) in the Thames Valley. The collaboration was ambitious and far-reaching. At the time of the endeavour, there were few combined fire control services, and those extant at the time were beset with challenges.
- 1.2 This report provides an overview of the substantial progress that TVFCS has made through its first five years. Members have made key decisions along the way that have enabled a robust and stable structure to be implemented leading to sustainable improvements across all areas of the service.
- 1.3 TVFCS has created efficiencies for each FRS, providing excellent value for money for the residents of the Thames Valley and will result in collective savings of over £1 million a year for the next 15 years. Overall, the combined services are projected to achieve total savings of £15,871,672 by the end of 2024-25.
- 1.4 This platform means that TVFCS is well placed to meet the challenges ahead as we look forward to the review and refresh of control systems, ensuring we are prepared for the introduction of the Emergency Servicers Network (ESN) and can manage the demands of operational response when faced with the additional complexities of the changing dynamics in the built environment.



## **2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That members of the TVFCS Joint Committee **NOTE** the report.

## **3. Background**

- 3.1 TVFCS became fully operational on April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2015. The service replaced the three existing Control rooms serving Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Oxfordshire and Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Services. The project to implement TVFCS was funded from grants from central government following the closure of the regional fire Control project (FiREControl).
- 3.2 TVFCS provides a resilient, cost effective and fully integrated call handling and mobilising service. It manages daily the operational response of 62 Fire stations and over 450 operational resources across a c.2200 square mile area with a population in excess of 2.1 million people.
- 3.3 TVFCS is a truly Collaborative partnership with all partners, at both Officer and Members level. Each partner contributes to the governance of TVFCS through membership of the TVFCS Joint Committee and at individual Service level through a TVFCS Joint Coordination Group.

## **4. THE GATEWAY REVIEW AND MOVE TO 'STEADY STATE'**

- 4.1 In November 2015, the TVFCS Joint Committee commissioned a Gateway Review to establish the current position and determine any action required to fully close down the project and move to 'Steady State'.
- 4.2 The Gateway Review utilised stage 5 of the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) Gateway review process, but tailored to the specific requirements of the TVFCS partner organisations.
- 4.3 The Gateway Review was conducted by officers from Hampshire FRS, Wiltshire FRS, Devon & Somerset FRS and Gloucestershire FRS; all with significant experience in programme management, Control room management and training, Control room systems and technical support procurement and contract management and human resources .
- 4.4 The Gateway Review report was published in April 2016. The review concluded that TVFCS was operating successfully, but was not yet in 'steady state' and made a number of recommendations on the actions and activities required to move to that position.
- 4.5 The Joint Committee moved swiftly to act on the recommendations in the Gateway Review and put in place a comprehensive transition plan which meant that the project was transferred to 'business as usual' in December 2016, only eight months from the publication of the review.

## **5. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

- 5.1 The strategic management of TVFCS is overseen by the Joint Coordination Group (JCG) as set out in Schedule 4 (Coordination Group Terms of Reference) of the steady state legal agreement. The JCG comprises a 'Senior Responsible Owner' (SRO) from each partner FRS. The JCG meets monthly and takes strategic ownership of the various areas of work associated with an integrated Control Service. The JCG scrutinises TVFCS performance, financial management, contract management and risk management. It further provides constructive challenge, guidance and support to the TVFCS management team, and assurance to the senior teams within each FRS. The JCG owns the TVFCS Service plan and agrees priorities for both business as usual activity and the progress of projects/single work packages involving TVFCS. The JCG provides a representative to the NFCC Control Advisory Board, where there is an opportunity to influence the development of the Fire Control sector nationally.
- 5.2 The initial management team for TVFCS comprised an Operational Station Manager with overall responsibility for the day to day running of TVFCS and a Control specialist Station Manager with responsibility for the training and development of staff.
- 5.3 The Gateway Review identified that, due to the complexity of the operating environment, the rationale for the Control Room Manager's post being filled by an Operational officer was not strong and that this post should be filled by someone with a Control room background at an appropriate point.
- 5.4 The Gateway Review also identified that a more senior middle manager should be appointed to take overall responsibility for TVFCS, supporting and managing the complexities of the partnership environment.
- 5.5 As an interim measure, until the recommended revised management team could be recruited, a Group Manager with significant Control room management experience was seconded from Hampshire FRS on a part time basis to assist with the ongoing management of TVFCS until April 2017.
- 5.6 In June and July 2017, a selection process took place for a dedicated TVFCS Group Manager with Control room experience. The post was filled by an experienced Control Room middle manager from Dorset & Wiltshire FRS. At the same point, the Control room Station Manager's post was filled by another experienced Control Room middle manager from Surrey FRS.
- 5.7 The revised management arrangements have created the additional capacity, capability and confidence required to develop TVFCS in accordance with the transition plan and to create longer term resilient and sustainable processes, systems and guidance. This additional capacity and Control Room sector expertise has led to the management team being an active part of the NFCC Mobilising Officer's Group and the Capita National Users group.

## 6. Control Room Staffing

- 6.1 TVFCS aims to have a diverse workforce. Currently 65.8% of the total TVFCS workforce are female, with 62.5% of Supervisory Management roles and 66.7% of Middle Management roles being occupied by female staff.
- 6.2 Table 1 shows that there were some initial challenges to staff retention, peaking in 2016/17 as a number TUPE arrangements came to an end. However the data clearly demonstrates how the continued scrutiny, oversight and decision making at strategic level has contributed to significant improvement in this area, ensuring we maintain a capable and confident staff group.

Year	% Turnover
2015/16	10.53%
2016/17	26.32%
2017/18	0%
2018/19	10%
2019/20	5%

Table 1

- 6.3 Entry level recruitment has not created any issues for TVFCS however, where vacancies has arisen in supervisory and middle management roles, it has proved challenging to attract skilled, experienced transferees from other FRS.. In order to address this, TVFCS has focused training and development activities on preparing staff for progression into Supervisory Management roles. Since January 2018, it has been possible to fill all vacancies which have arisen in Supervisory positions with internal applicants who have come through the TVFCS staff development programmes.
- 6.4 Levels of sickness absence can be problematic in emergency Control room environments, with most emergency service's suffering from spikes in absence at certain points. TVFCS are affected by these issues, but have been able to address some factors affecting sickness absence through the application of attendance management policies, use of a range of health and wellbeing services and initiatives, including occupational health provision, mental health awareness and staff engagement. These management actions have had a significant effect over time and staff sickness levels have reduced by 51.7% since April 2015.
- 6.5 Mental health is a key factor in the overall health and wellbeing of all staff. The TVFCS management team and staff are able to call upon the resources of all three FRS to assist with the support of mental health for staff, including access to traumatic incident debriefing, MIND blue light champions and employee assistance programmes.

## 7. **Finance**

- 7.1 TVFCS is financed through a cost apportionment model, which is set out in the TVFCS steady state legal agreement.
- 7.2 Table 2 shows the TVFCS budget for each year of operation, the final expenditure and the variance between forecast and expenditure.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Agreed TVFCS Budget</b>	<b>Actual Expenditure</b>	<b>Variance</b>
2015/16	£1,985,590	£1,787,442	-9.98%
2016/17	£2,166,050	£2,006,415	-7.37%
2017/18	£2,123,210	£2,030,010	-4.39%
2018/19	£2,105,422	£2,130,127	+1.20%

*Table 2*

- 7.3 The 2019/20 budget for TVFCS was £2,263,438. The current forecast is for a 0.75% underspend against this budget. This figure and the data in table 2 demonstrate a continued improvement in budget management and forecasting by the TVFCS management team supported by the oversight and direction of the Joint Committee.

## 8. **SYSTEMS AND TECHNOLOGY**

- 8.1 TVFCS uses the Capita Vision 4 Command & Control System and the Capita DS3000 Integrated Communications Control System (ICCS) to deliver the service. This is the most common operating platform used by FRS across the UK and Northern Ireland.
- 8.2 The contract for provision of the Command & Control system was awarded to Capita in 2014 following a tender process. The contract had an initial duration of 7 years from the date of system acceptance (April 2015), with options to extend up to 8 years. A report is required from Capita in April 2020 outlining the implications of any contract extension.
- 8.3 The current contract for maintenance and support of the DS3000 ICCS runs until January 2021.
- 8.4 The TVFCS management team have worked closely with Capita to improve the performance of the system and its stability. The TVFCS Group Manager meets with the Capita contract manager monthly to discuss issues surrounding the system and Capita's performance against the Service Levels in the maintenance and support contract. System stability has greatly improved as a result of this focused attention and action, with issues only being experienced on rare occasions and full service being restored in a timely manner.

- 8.5 As recommended by the Gateway review, a dedicated Mobilising Systems Support Officer was recruited in September 2019 to act as a single point of data management within TVFCS. In addition, a TVFCS Data Management group was established, chaired by the TVFCS Group Manager and attended by staff from each FRS' data teams. This ensures standardisation in the way FRS data is entered into the Command & Control system.
- 8.6 The improvement in both the Command & Control system performance, and data management, have enabled TVFCS to adopt key new technology in a controlled way. TVFCS now uses new location finding technology for 999 callers such as BT's Advanced Mobile Location Service, and is 'What3Words' enabled. Further technological advances are being reviewed which will further improve effectiveness of TVFCS, these include Multi Agency Information Transfer (MAIC).
- 8.7 With the option to exercise a Capita contract break in 2022, the Joint Coordination Group and TVFCS officers are developing options as part of the review and refresh of the command and control system. These will be presented to Joint Committee for consideration and decision.

## **9. Performance**

- 9.1 Performance measures for TVFCS were set by the Joint Committee to monitor the speed with which TVFCS answer emergency calls and the speed with which they then assign operational resources to these calls.
- 9.2 TVFCS targets relating to the speed with which calls are answered are currently that 92% of calls will be answered within 5 seconds of being routed to TVFCS and 97% of calls answered within 10 seconds of being routed to TVFCS.
- 9.3 TVFCS have consistently met or exceeded these targets since April 2015. The targets can be challenging when TVFCS experiences sudden spikes in demand associated with extreme weather conditions such as exceptionally heavy rainfall, or prolonged dry and hot weather as seen during the summer of 2018.
- 9.4 TVFCS targets for the speed in which operational resources are assigned to incidents after the call has been answered are that resources will be assigned within 60 seconds on 60% of occasions, within 90 seconds on 80% of occasions and within 120 seconds on 95% of occasions.
- 9.5 These targets proved to be challenging initially. Only 25% of calls had resources assigned within 90 seconds in July 2015, when staff were still becoming familiar with the new system and new mobilising arrangements within TVFCS. Improved system stability, data quality, new assistive technology and a sustained focus on call handling technique has greatly improved performance against these measures, with resources being assigned within 90 seconds of the call being answered on 76.5% of occasions.

- 9.6 In July 2019, the TVFCS Joint Committee agreed a new suite of performance measures to take effect from April 2020. These new measures expand the focus of TVFCS performance to include the Control room's contribution to wider Service aims and objectives, whilst retaining key indicators relating to the speed of response. (**Appendix A**).
- 9.7 TVFCS staff performance of their role has been consistently recognised since April 2015. During that period staff have dealt with many challenging situations ranging from the Didcot power station collapse to the prolonged period of high demand experienced during the summer of 2018. The performance of staff has been recognised with individual and team awards, acknowledging their contribution to the three Service's operational response. Staff have recently been recognised for their team work alongside crews at incidents in Wokingham and Olney where the advice provided to 999 callers and the information provided to responding crews resulted in successful resolutions to highly challenging incidents.
- 9.8 TVFCS were inspected as part of each of the partner FRS HMICFRS inspections. No areas of weakness were identified by the inspection teams, with the BFRS inspection report noting that "The training for Control staff is well managed and mobilisation is generally good".

## **10. OPERATIONAL ALIGNMENT**

- 10.1 A key factor in the efficiency and effectiveness of TVFCS is the alignment of Operational policy and procedure across the Thames Valley FRS.
- 10.2 A collaborative project has been commissioned to align the most critical areas such as Breathing apparatus and National Operational Guidance. This project is being led and managed by AM Mike Adcock.
- 10.3 Several areas have already been aligned, including the pre-determined attendance to a number of different incident types and the policy and procedure for providing relief crews to incidents with an extended duration.
- 10.4 A key enabler for further alignment has been the purchase of a single type of fire engine, along with major items of equipment, across the Thames Valley FRS.

## **11. RESILIENCE**

- 11.1 Resilience arrangements for TVFCS are robust. The Primary Control room in Calcot is backed up with a well provisioned fallback Control facility at Kidlington in Oxfordshire. The command and control system has multiple servers available in the event of a failure and both Primary and Secondary Control rooms are protected from issues with power supply by multiple generators and UPS batteries.

- 11.2 In 2015, a 'buddy' arrangement was put in place with North Yorkshire Fire Control, to allow the mobilisation of resources and handling of calls in the event that TVFCS capacity was exceeded or a catastrophic failure occurred at the Primary control room requiring an emergency evacuation. In 2017, North Yorkshire gave notice that they would be unable to continue with this arrangement. An alternative arrangement was put in place with Staffordshire & West Midlands Fire Control with effect from February 2018, providing improved resilience due to the larger size and capacity of the Control room located in Birmingham.
- 11.3 TVFCS have business continuity plans in place for a range of eventualities including staff shortages, issues affecting premises and system failures. Since 2017, a quarterly regime of business continuity exercises has been put in place to test these arrangements, including full evacuations with call handling and mobilisation being carried out by Staffordshire & West Midlands Fire Control. JCG provide scrutiny and assurance of these exercises

## **12. SUMMARY**

- 12.1 As TVFCS approaches the significant landmark of successfully operating for five years, it is important to recognise it has not been without its challenges. However, stringent and focused oversight from elected members has provided valuable leadership and officers from across the Thames Valley have worked in true collaboration to deliver the vision. We can now see the full impact of key decisions along the way as they manifest in a robust, resilient structure that, as the data suggests, provides one of the best call handling and mobilising facilities in the country, with staff who are competent, confident and engaged. The future however, will not be without further challenge. We look forward to the review and refresh of the command and control systems which commences later this year and we have also started work on ensuring we can deliver our crucial services in a post Grenfell world.

## **13. COMPLIANCE WITH THE TVFCS PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT**

- 13.1 This report complies with the TVFCS partnership agreement and principles of collaboration.

## **14. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 14.1 None

## **15. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 15.1 None

## **16. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 16.1 None

## **17. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

17.1 None

**18. PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION**

18.1 AM Mike Adcock - OFRS

18.2 AC Dave Norris - BFRS

18.3 AM Jim Powell - RBFRS

**19. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

19.1 None

**20. APPENDICES**

20.1 Appendix A – Proposal for revised TVFCS Performance Measures

**21. CONTACT DETAILS**

21.1 GM Simon Harris – harriss@tvfcs.org.uk



# THAMES VALLEY FIRE CONTROL SERVICE



<b>SUBJECT</b>	Revised Performance Monitoring for the Thames Valley Fire Control Service
<b>PRESENTED TO:</b>	TVFCS Joint Committee
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> July 2019
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	Area Manager Mike Adcock
<b>EXEMPT INFORMATION</b>	None
<b>ACTION</b>	For decision

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 At the meeting of the TVFCS Joint Committee on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2018 it was agreed that CFO Furlong (OFRS) would lead a working group to review the overall performance framework for the Thames Valley Fire Control Service, with a view to providing more meaningful performance information to Committee members. A workshop was held with members to identify the desired strategic outcomes. A further workshop was then held with Control room staff to identify the metrics that could be reported on to advise members of TVFCS' contribution to those strategic outcomes.
- 1.2 The report below identifies a number of measures that could be applied to the various strategic outcomes.
- 1.3 Each FRS already extracts performance data relating to TVFCS which relate to their own performance requirements and Integrated Risk Management plans. Adopting these recommendations will not prevent the FRS from continuing to extract this data.

## 2. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Joint Committee agrees to adopt the measures outlined in this report.

### 3. **REPORT**

- 3.1 The following section of the report identifies each desired strategic outcome, with the suggested areas to be monitored by the Joint Coordination Group and reported on to the Joint Committee.
- 3.2 After 4 years of operation, with performance being measured against the previously agreed measures, we have a better understanding of how TVFCS contributes to the strategic goals of the three FRS and how this information can be presented to members. Both performance and the suitability of the measures will be reviewed by the TVFCS Senior Responsible Owners as part of the work of the TVFCS Joint Coordinating Group.
- 3.3 **PEOPLE** : To ensure TVFCS staff are capable and competent to carry out their role to the highest professional standards, with a continuing focus on their well-being.
- Staff turnover as a percentage of the TVFCS establishment. The number of staff leaving employment with the TVFCS gives an indication of the morale and wellbeing of the workforce. Commentary from the Control Management team would give more insight into trends captured at exit interviews, as well as giving context to some leavers (e.g. retirements).
  - Long and Short term absence levels as currently reported. This gives an indication of the overall health and wellbeing of the workforce, supported by relevant commentary from the TVFCS Management team.
  - Percentage of staff currently competent within their role as currently reported.
  - Commentary on the delivery of new training in keys areas. For instance JESIP and incidents related to National Security.
- 3.4 **PREVENTION**: To work with partners to ensure that advice, support and guidance is given to both the residents and visitors to the Thames Valley to help keep them safe from harm.
- The number of calls handled relating to defective domestic smoke detectors.
  - The number of safeguarding referrals passed through TVFCS to the FRS.
  - The number of 'Threat of Arson' referrals processed by TVFCS and passed to the FRS for action.

All of the above will capture TVFCS involvement in processes intended to keep members of our communities safe from harm.

- Commentary on an 'ad hoc' basis relating to any other significant activity in these areas.
- 3.5 **PROTECTION:** To work with partners to ensure that advice is given to businesses to meet their fire safety requirements.
- Commentary to be provided on liaison between TVFCS and the relevant teams within the FRS where applicable.
- 3.6 **RESPONSE:** To ensure the preparedness and response to emergency incidents through resource mobilisation and the management of the incident.
- Continue to report on the time taken to answer calls and the percentage of occasions where mobilisation takes place within 90 seconds. It is recommended that these figures exclude occasions where other organisational imperatives require extended call handling to take place prior to a decision to mobilise resources being reached.
  - Provide the average call handling times to key incident types. It is recommended that these categories are :- **Primary Fires, Secondary Fires and Road Traffic Collisions** as average call handling times for these types are now also being collated by the Home office, allowing comparison between TVFCS and the national averages.
- 3.7 **RESILIENCE:** To ensure resilience of the fire control service. To support the resilience and business continuity of each partner organisation.
- The number of occasions where the agreed minimum crewing level for TVFCS is achieved.
  - The number of hours of crewing provided by resources outside the TVFCS shift based establishment, supported by commentary from the TVFCS Management team.
  - The number of occasions that TVFCS Business Continuity plans are tested and exercised.
  - For FRS which apply 'call challenge', the number of occasions on which this prevented the mobilisation of resources, thereby preserving their availability.
- 3.8 **DATA AND INTELLIGENCE:** To meet the data and intelligence requirements of the TVFCS and each FRS.
- Report on the speed with which TVFCS processes requests for change to data received from the FRS in the agreed manner.
  - Commentary on data and information sharing with other agencies.
  - Commentary on TVFCS data and information provision to the FRS. For example, the provision of data required for HMICFRS returns.
- 3.9 **FINANCE:** To provide a cost-effective service and assist each service to evaluate performance and inform their financial planning.

- Provide information on the costs incurred as a result of sickness absence. This would replace the current reporting on the overall costs of overtime, which can have a variety of causes.
- Continue to report on the budget in the current manner, which includes the percentage variance between actual expenditure and the agreed budget.

4. **COMPLIANCE WITH THE TVFCS PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT**

This report complies with the “Principles of Collaboration”

5. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

None

6. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

None

7. **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

None

8. **RISK IMPLICATIONS**

None

9. **PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION**

TVFCS Joint Coordination Group.  
Members of the TVFCS Joint Committee  
TVFCS Control staff  
TVFCS Control FBU Representative  
RBFPS Performance and Monitoring Officer.

10. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

**11. APPENDICES**

**12. CONTACT DETAILS**

12.1 GM Simon Harris – Head of TVFCS

# THAMES VALLEY FIRE CONTROL SERVICE



<b>SUBJECT</b>	<i>Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP) update</i>
<b>PRESENTED TO:</b>	<i>Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) Joint Committee</i>
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<i>23 March 2020</i>
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	<i>DCFO Steve Foye</i>
<b>EXEMPT INFORMATION</b>	<i>None</i>
<b>ACTION</b>	<i>For Note</i>

## 1. **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report follows the update of the ESMCP programme provided to the TVFCS Joint Committee on the 9 December 2019. The report updates the status of the National Programme (NP) and ESMCP South Central Region input into this. It has been a relatively short period since the last update to the committee and there are no significant changes to report.
- 1.3 The ESMCP Full Business Case, currently under review by the Home Office, is expected to commence the sign-off process from May 2020, with the national programme assuring this is on schedule.
- 1.4 An updated work plan has been issued by the national programme. This indicates a slippage of 4-5 months in the availability of the ESN prime product, with delivery documented in the plan as February 2021 from a previous forecast of Q3 2020 (indications are further slippage is likely).
- 1.5 The Home Office Fire and Resilience Directorate have proposed a standard operating model, to all ESMCP regions, for project roles and associated expenditure of grant funding for the 2020/21 year. Officers will be proposing minor alterations to meet the South Central operating model and the Home Office have provided a process to achieve this. The South Central operating model remains within the Home Office accepted expenditure of grant funding for 2020/21 and this spend will be met from previous years grant funding still held by the services.

## **2. RECOMMENDATION**

The TVFCS Joint Committee are asked to:

- 2.1 **NOTE** the contents of this report on the ESMCP and delivery of the ESN.

## **3. REPORT**

- 3.1 Whilst officers have continued to undertake work in respect to ESMCP, since the last update to the Thames Valley Joint Committee, there have been limited developments on which to provide updates. Pertinent changes are detailed in 3.2 to 3.8 below.

### **National Programme**

- 3.2 The National Programme continue working to bring the Full Business Case (FBC) for the ESN forward for consideration and approval by the Minister. The FBC will not have been considered for approval before the Thames Valley Joint Committee meeting of the 23 March 2020. Representatives of the National Programme continue to give assurance that the FBC is in development and on schedule for review and we assume approval. The latest information is that the FBC is likely to begin its governance process in May 2020, when it is presented to the Programme Board, but that User Organisations may not have access to it for some months.

### **ESN Adoption position (Thames Valley)**

- 3.3 Cessation of the Airwave system is still indicated as being the end of December 2022. However, the most recent National Programme work plan suggests Fire & Rescue sector transition to ESN is in window spanning beyond this date and the planned date at which all UK Capita equipped control rooms will be ESN ready is currently set at Q2 2023. Consequently we anticipate that a revised Airwave cessation date will be announced as part of the Full Business Case publication.
- 3.4 Thames Valley officers continue to have a preferred position that transition to full ESN is implemented no later than 12 months prior to the confirmed Airwave cessation date. This would allow for managing delivery in context of other commitments and create a prudent period of overlap between the old and new systems. Officers will continue to plan flexibly within this planning assumption and in response to new information from the programme.

### **Governance**

- 3.5 An ESMCP South Central (SC) Regional Programme Board continues to operate as one of a number of ESMCP FRS regions across the UK. The SC Board meets monthly and comprises senior responsible owners from the three Thames Valley FRSs alongside Hampshire and the Isle-of-Wight FRSs.
- 3.6 Work is on-going to consider arrangements for Hampshire and the Isle-of-Wight FRS's to move to the ESMCP South West Region. Officers across services in both regions are agreement with the move and work is now

taking place to ensure we have the agreement and support of the National Programme and Fire and Resilience Directorate.

- 3.7 Officers in each service report on ESMCP through their own governance structures to ensure appropriate oversight at a Service level.

### **Control Room Work Stream Update**

- 3.8 There are no updates in respect to specific TVFCS control room changes since the last update to the TVFCS Joint Committee.

## **4. COMPLIANCE WITH THE TVFCS PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT**

- 4.1 This report and its contents are considered to offer no conflict to the Steady State Legal Agreement.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Regional grant funding from the National Programme is administered by the Finance department from Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service, and is overseen through the South Central Programme Board. Services draw down funding to cover costs of work-streams leads and ancillary costs, such as attendance at meetings, workshops etc.
- 5.2 Separate full funding from the National Programme was provided for control room upgrades and DNSP connections into TVFCS. This funding is based upon the original regional delivery plan and full payment has been made to the providers without direct impact on FRS budgets. With the change to the incremental delivery plan, we are seeking assurance that additional costs incurred will be met by the National Programme.
- 5.3 As previously reported, the Home Office Fire and Resilience Directorate now maintain scrutiny of the use of grant funding, providing clearer guidance on how this grant funding can be spent and receiving quarterly reporting of ESMCP Transition Grant spend.
- 5.4 There is sufficient grant funding from previous years provision by the National Programme to meet costs of roles within the ESMCP South Central region for 2020/21. The Home Office Fire and Resilience Directorate wrote to all ESMCP regions on the 13 February to confirm what roles and expenditure in relation to grant funding they will accept for the 2020/21 year.
- 5.5 Officers are currently reviewing and will be proposing adaptations to the Home Office model in relation to distribution of funding against project roles though not the extent of the budget. This approach is acceptable to the Fire and Resilience Directorate, provided we remain within the funding envelope, as they recognise regions have taken varied approaches to fulfilling the roles that deliver ESN activity in support of the programme.

## **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**



6.1 None

**7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 None

**8. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 The ESMCP SC Board considers risks and, as appropriate, reports these through the programme who maintain a national risk register.

8.2 Each Service is expected to consider its own corporate risk associated with the ECMCP Programme and record treatments to mitigate this risk. By example, two risks are recorded on the RBFRS Corporate Risk Register concerning ESMCP and these take account of implications on TVFCS.

**9. CONTRIBUTION TO SERVICE AIMS**

9.1 This report complies with the “Principles of Collaboration”

**10. PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION**

10.1 None

**11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

11.1 None

**12. APPENDICES**

12.1 None

**13. CONTACT DETAILS**

Steve Foye  
Deputy Chief Fire Officer – Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service  
Chair ESMCP South Central Board  
Tel: 07887 830208

ITEM	NEXT REPORTING DATE	FEEDING FROM/TO	RECOMMENDED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	LEAD MEMBER	PART I / II
Emergency Services Mobile Communication Programme	23-Mar-20	N/A	note	Steve Foye	N/A	Part I
Quarterly Performance Report/Budget Monitoring	23-Mar-20	N/A	note	Mike Adcock/Simon Harris	N/A	Part I
Thames Valley Fire Control Service 5 Year Report	23-Mar-20	N/A	note	Mike Adcock/Simon Harris	N/A	Part I
Emergency Services Mobile Communication Programme	13-Jul-20	N/A	note	Steve Foye	N/A	Part I
Quarterly Performance Report/Budget Monitoring	13-Jul-20	N/A	note	Mike Adcock/Simon Harris	N/A	Part I