

Divisions Affected –

DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH, INEQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

4 June 2024

Contract Award for the provision of Pumping Appliances (aka Fire Engines)

Report by Corporate Director for Public Health

RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Member for Public Health, Inequalities and Community Safety is RECOMMENDED to:

- a) To approve the delegation of contract award decision for the provision of Pumping Appliances, to the Corporate Director for Public Health, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer, having followed a fully compliant procurement process.**

Executive Summary

1. This paper details the funding and requirements specific to Pumping Appliances only, while the attached Fleet Strategy document provided for context, covers the entirety of the OFRS fleet.
2. The proposed contract will be for the call off of an indicative volume of pumping appliances, with no obligation to purchase in line with those indications.
3. All other streams of fleet and equipment work are captured in separate tenders and governance programs.
4. It should be noted that, having presented the “OFRS Fleet Strategy” containing a request for increased funding to cover the spend detailed within this paper to OFRS SLT, this recommendation has been agreed to go forward for OCC consideration.

5. The requested delegated authority to award will not become relevant until the tender process is completed, this tender process will not commence until funding has been confirmed.

Business Need

6. The National Fire Chiefs Council Transport Officers Group (NFCC TOG) which is made up of Fleet Managers and Engineers nationally across the Fire Sector share experience, technical knowledge and recommended standards for Fleet, these ensure that the Fleet are suitable for Fire Services across the UK are able to fulfil their statutory duty. 81% of UK Fire and Rescue Services maintain their fleet for up to 15 years and 100% of that membership recommend having a fire service fleet that includes no greater than 15-year-old Fire Engines (appliances) meet today's industry needs (See table below).
7. NFCC TOGs recommendations for the lifecycle of a Fire Service Fleet are:
 - Pumping Appliances 13 to 15 years (with up to a further year in the case of youth training schemes).
 - Special Appliances such as aerial ladder platforms and prime movers 15 to 20 years
 - Support vehicles Pool cars, Vans, Motorcycles and 4x4's up to nominal 6 years up to 8 years depending on condition.
 - Ladders linked to appliance life. (Maximum 18 years which also means if you extend the life of an appliance beyond 18 years, the ladders will also need replacing)
8. From this it was agreed that any OFRS appliance breaching its 15-year lifespan would be considered to have breached the recommended period of use.

Overview

9. Asset lifecycles have previously been set for each group of vehicle types used within Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service (OFRS). Improvements in vehicle design and construction have allowed vehicle lifespan to be increased moderately without effecting service delivery. However, our planned 15-year appliance lifecycle has already been increasing towards 18 years, due to previous non-replacement of vehicles and previous budget reductions and pressures. Operating an aging fleet significantly increases periods of unavailability due to breakdowns and/or major repairs and increases the time workshops spend on unplanned maintenance which can lead to outsourcing of certain fleet repairs or servicing. The increased workload has an impact on the capacity of the team and the costs of maintaining our vehicles, with an ageing fleet becoming much more expensive to maintain over 15 years old. There is also an added risk of parts becoming unavailable due becoming obsolete.
10. In order to counteract the downtime from the extended operating life of the vehicles, an increased number of spare appliances will be required.

Financial Implications - Budget - Whole Life Costs

11. The below details the costs associated with OFRS spend only.

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28 Onwards
Planned Expenditure	£	£	£	£
Appliances	1,680,000	1,713,600	873,900	891,400
Funding available				
Income from sales	36,000	36,700	18,700	19,100
Core budget	759,000	759,000	759,000	759,000
Reserve b/f from previous year	2,222,500	1,337,600	0	0
(-) surplus/shortfall	(1,337,600)	572,500	691,600	719,300

Proposed purchases per year*

	Total No. of Fleet - Current	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Appliances	46	6	6	3	3

(*The purchases are to replace vehicles in the current fleet not to increase the volume)

12. Conventional appliances should be purchased until at least 24/25 by which time projects and technology relating to Hydrogen Fuel Cell and Electric (with or without conventional range extender) appliances should have developed to the standard required for formal operational assessment. However, the provision of Hydrogen Appliances will not be serviced through this contract, a separate tender will produce a separate contract.

13. In 26/27 we will have a number of 18-year-old appliances to which we will again need to review the number of spares we have for resilience. With the new Fleet Management system, we will be able to analyse the utilisation of spare vehicles and analyse the downtime relative to vehicle age for all appliances.

This section has been checked by: Stephen Rowles, Strategic Finance Business Partner (Stephen.Rowles@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Legal Implications

14. Pursuant to Section 7 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004:

- (1) A fire and rescue authority must make provision for the purpose of—
- (a) extinguishing fires in its area, and
 - (b) protecting life and property in the event of fires in its area.

(2) In making provision under subsection (1) a fire and rescue authority must in particular—

(a) secure the provision of the personnel, services and **equipment necessary efficiently to meet all normal requirements.**

(b) secure the provision of training for personnel.

(c) make arrangements for dealing with calls for help and for summoning personnel.

(d) make arrangements for obtaining information needed for the purpose mentioned in subsection (1);

(e) make arrangements for ensuring that reasonable steps are taken to prevent or limit damage to property resulting from action taken for the purpose mentioned in subsection (1).

15. The procurement of the pumping appliances will be conducted in compliance with the Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

16. This section has been checked by: Jayne Pringle, Head of Law and LBP (Contracts & Conveyancing) (Jayne.Pringle@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Equality & Inclusion Implications

17. In planning, delivering, monitoring and evaluating this tender, equality and diversity issues will be appropriately considered from the outset.

18. The tender process and subsequent awards will be screened for relevance against our statutory duties to promote equality and raise no concerns for any of the nine protected characteristics.

Risk Management

19. In completing a fully compliant tender in line with PCRs and CPRs, the Council will mitigate risk of challenge for the purchase of Pumping Appliances.

Ansaf Azhar
Corporate Director for Public Health

Background papers:



Fleet Replacement
Strategy v2.3.docx

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