

## report

meeting	<b>NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE &amp; RESCUE AUTHORITY</b>		
date	<b>9 September 2005</b>	agenda item number	<b>8</b>

### REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

#### REGIONAL FIRE CONTROL LOCATION

##### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the intended location of the Regional Fire Control Centre.

##### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Members will recall that the White Paper 'Our Fire and Rescue Service', published in June 2003, set out the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's (ODPM) vision of a modern Fire and Rescue Service. The paper identified a number of service functions where collaboration would lead to more efficient service delivery. One of those functions was Control Rooms. The White Paper proposed rationalisation of Fire Service Control Rooms at regional level.
- 2.2 Members will also recall the Fire and Rescue National Framework 2005/2006 document, which stated "for resilience purposes all Regional Control Rooms will operate the same call-handling and mobilisation technology, procured and paid for by the ODPM". In addition, the ODPM would ensure the provision of accommodation for the Regional Control Centre.
- 2.3 This national direction was based on work carried out by Mott MacDonald for the Government in 2000, together with an interim report of an updated study which had been carried out, taking into account changes which had occurred including New Dimension (CBRN) and the *Independent Review of the Fire Service*.
- 2.4 The Mott MacDonald report concluded that there should be nine Regional Controls throughout England, they should be implemented as a matter of urgency and in conjunction with the rollout of the National Radio System being procured by the Firelink Project.
- 2.5 The report recommended that there should be one Control for the East Midlands. This would handle emergency calls from Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire and Leicestershire.
- 2.6 The ODPM set up a Project Team entitled 'FiReControl' to carry out the procurement and set up the network of nine Regional Control Centres.

- 2.7 The Regional Management Board (RMB), within the National Framework were given the responsibility for implementing the regional aspects of this project and has set up a Project Board to oversee the work.

### **3. REPORT**

- 3.1 The location of the East Midlands Control Centre has been determined by the ODPM after following EU procurement guidelines and a full evaluation of the potential sites provided from the public and private sector. The ODPM took into consideration many factors in evaluating potential sites, one of which was the accessibility of the site to potential Control Centre staff.
- 3.2 The location announcement was first due in November / December 2004, but has been delayed at national level for a number of reasons.
- 3.3 At 09.30hrs on 10 August 2005 the ODPM made the announcement on the location of seven of the nine Regional Control Centre locations. The East Midlands site will be at :

**Willow Farm Business Park, Castle Donington, Leicestershire**

- 3.4 The ODPM press release is attached as Appendix A for Members' information.

### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications from the announcement of the East Midlands Regional Fire Control location.
- 4.2 The establishment of a Regional Fire Control Centre will inevitably impact on many aspects of the Service. There may well be financial implications from these impacts, but as of yet these have not been identified or determined. 'New Burdens' funding may be available for some aspects of the changes, whilst others may not be covered. Officers will bring appropriate reports as and when required so as to keep the Fire & Rescue Authority informed.

### **5. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

The movement of Control to a new location clearly has an impact on the staff within our Control Rooms. The exact timing of this move has still to be set, but will not be until between 2008 and 2010. The RMB are aware of the concerns of staff and the Regional Project Team is working with the National Team on Human Resources Strategies to assist staff during the transition.

### **6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

There are no equalities implications identified from the location announcement, which was an ODPM decision.

### **7. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

The announcement of the location will have an impact upon the Project's Risk Log and the Fire Authority's Risk Profile. The implications of the announcement will be incorporated into both for the future.

### **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Members note the contents of this report.

## **9. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION**

- Mott MacDonald – The Future of Fire and Rescue Service Control Rooms in England and Wales – Update 2003 ;
- ODPM – White Paper – Our Fire and Rescue Service – June 2003 ;
- National Framework Document 2005/2006 ;
- BAIN Report – Independent Review of the Fire Service.

Paul Woods  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**

News Release 2005/0168:  
10 August 2005

## **NEW FIRE CONTROL CENTRE LOCATIONS ANNOUNCED**

Plans to set up a new national network of control centres for the Fire and Rescue Service which will deliver the best possible service to the public came one step closer today when the first seven locations were named.

The control centre network is part of the Government's major investment in modernising the Fire and Rescue Service to equip it for the demands of the 21st century. Nine control centres will replace the existing 46 local fire service control rooms across the country. The locations of the seven named sites are:

- Belmont Business Park, Durham
- Lingley Mere Business Park, Great Sankey, Warrington, Cheshire
- Cambridge Research Park, Cambridge
- Willow Farm Business Park, Castle Donington, Leicestershire
- Wolverhampton Business Park, Wolverhampton
- Paragon Business Village, Wakefield, West Yorkshire
- Blackbrook Business Park, Taunton, Somerset.

Discussions with developers are being finalised in the South East and it is hoped to make an announcement shortly on the location of the South East centre. London already has a regional control centre which will be integrated into the national network in time for the Olympics in 2012.

Today's announcement was made by ODPM Minister Jim Fitzpatrick MP, who has responsibility for Fire. He said:

"There is a compelling need to modernise and rationalise the control rooms in England, as part of the overall modernisation agenda. In the post-9/11 world, and in the wake of the events of 7th July, we need control centres that are resilient enough to deal with a terrorist attack or any natural disaster.

"London's experience on the 7th July showed that only a regional control centre can deal effectively with an event of that scale particularly in terms of the specialist management required for inter-agency liaison and on-going communications to synchronise plans and deployment when the Fire and Rescue service is not the prime service on the scene.

"While existing control rooms do a good job, they are not designed to deal in a co-ordinated way with major regional or national incidents - they need improvement and investment.

"The new national network will provide the Fire and Rescue Service with a modern, effective system that will better protect the public. The centres will use the latest proven technology which will not only enable firefighters to respond more quickly to incidents but improve their safety by providing accurate information before they reach the scene. The network will deliver a service that is resilient and capable of responding to anything from a small house fire to a large scale national emergency. It will also be much more efficient, which will free up resources for other Fire and Rescue Service work, such as fire prevention."

All sites were selected taking into account factors such as accessibility (for both people and services), demographics, vulnerability to threats such as flooding and suitability for development.

Mr Fitzpatrick, himself a former firefighter, said:

"We recognise that establishing the new network will inevitably result in change for staff. We are working very closely with the national employers so that staff are treated well, and will continue to work hard to keep staff informed of developments as they happen.

"As it is for the Fire and Rescue Service, public safety is our priority. We will work with them and other stakeholders to take this important project forward. This is all about improving public safety and improving the Fire and Rescue Service."

Today's news was welcomed by Tom Carroll President of the Chief Fire Officers Association who said:

"CFOA is delighted that the ODPM has announced the locations of the new control centres today. CFOA has supported the FiReControl project from the outset, and this is a significant milestone. We are also delighted that ODPM is investing so much in the Fire and Rescue Service. Establishing this national network of nine centres will be a huge step in the modernisation of the Service. It will provide a better service for the public and will greatly improve resilience, particularly important in the light of recent events."

In some cases, work on the new sites will begin within six months. Work is currently underway to procure the infrastructure that will provide state-of-the-art technology for the new control centres. The national network should be fully operational by 2009.

### **Notes to Editors**

1. The FiReControl project - the move to regional control centres - is the result of an independent review of fire and rescue control rooms by Mott MacDonald which concluded that current arrangements are costly and inefficient. The Government published this report in December 2003 and consulted widely on its recommendations. The project forms part of the National Framework for the Fire and Rescue Service which sets the objectives the Government expects the service to achieve. Copies of the framework and the Mott MacDonald report are available on the ODPM website.

2. The new Fire and Rescue Control Centres will be the result of over a year of intensive research and planning. Every part of the buildings has been designed to meet fire control needs and to provide staff with a high quality, secure and attractive place to work. The buildings will fit in with their local surroundings and meet or exceed environmental standards. The new control centres will be at the forefront of architectural design, exceeding many current health and safety, disability access and fire safety requirements. Control staff from across the country, at all levels, have contributed to the design process by making it clear what is important to them. As a result, the centres will be places which support control staff in delivering an excellent service to the public.

3. An artist's impression and photos of how the sites will look are available from the FiReControl website [www.firecontrol.odpm.gov.uk](http://www.firecontrol.odpm.gov.uk) or by contacting the press office. Further information on the FiReControl project is available on the ODPM website :

[www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm\\_fire/documents/divisionhomepage/039000.hcsp](http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_fire/documents/divisionhomepage/039000.hcsp)

4. For more information from CFOA, contact Geraldine Tunney, Communications Officer, on 01827 302307, or email [geraldine.tunney@cfoa.org.uk](mailto:geraldine.tunney@cfoa.org.uk)