



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Fire & Rescue Service

Creating Safer Communities

**Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority
Finance and Resources Committee**

CAPITAL MONITORING TO 28 FEBRUARY 2013

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Date: 5 April 2013

Purpose of Report:

To report to Members on the financial performance of the Service in the year 2012/13 to the end of February 2013. This report analyses significant variances against the original budget.

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1. BACKGROUND

Budget monitoring is a key aspect of financial management for the Fire & Rescue Authority. Regular reporting of spending against both the revenue and capital budgets is a check that spending is within available resources and, if necessary, allows for financial resources to be re-assigned to meet changing priorities. The capital monitoring statement is shown as Appendix A to this report.

2. REPORT

SUMMARY

- 2.1 The capital budget monitoring statement is showing an underspend to date of £3,950k, against the budget for the year of £5,443k. The budget for the year includes slippage of £1,669k brought forward from 2011/2012, which was approved by Members of the Fire Authority on 29 June 2012. Overall, capital expenditure is likely to reach £2,379k by the end of the year, which is an underspend of £3,064k.
- 2.2 The Authority has received a capital grant of £1,487k this year; this will be used to finance an element of the capital programme. In addition, revenue contributions to finance capital have been budgeted for, amounting to £2,200k. This will avoid the need to borrow to finance the programme thereby reducing revenue costs in future years.

SIGNIFICANT VARIANCES

TRANSPORT:

- 2.3 The Rescue Pump replacement programme is usually three or four appliances per annum, however the Fire Cover Review provided the opportunity to suspend purchasing new pumping appliances until 2013/2014. There will be a requirement to go out for a mini-competition in order to put in place a new contract for the supply of Rescue Pumps to resume the programme in 2013/14. Work to evaluate chassis manufacturer options has commenced prior to reviewing the equipment inventory and refreshing the Rescue Pump Technical Specification Requirement. When this work has been completed chassis orders can be placed and the process of the mini-competition for bodywork and fire engineering can be undertaken to select a bodybuilder and put in place another multi-year contract. Work is also underway to provide an interim MDT solution for these vehicles ahead of what the Tri-Service project delivers as a replacement MDT solution. In addition 4 appliances have come to the end of their lease agreements but are still in use; a cost appraisal indicated that it was more cost effective to purchase the appliances than to extend their leases and this has resulted in an overspend of £68k. The financing of this overspend will be considered later in the year, in the light of the overall position on the capital programme. Some

of the appliances previously bought off lease are now being disposed of and two have been sold recently to generate income.

- 2.4. The inspection of the new ALP chassis and platform took place at the manufacturers premises at the end of February and has been shipped to the UK agent for commencement of the bodywork build. Delivery to the Service of the completed vehicle is still on target for June. There will be two early stage payments, totalling £464k, in 2012/13 as part of this planned replacement.
- 2.5 The Special Appliances Budget for 2012/13 is £673k, including slippage. This will be used for the ALP, as detailed in paragraph 2.5 and the remainder of the budget, £209k, will need to be slipped forward into 2013/14 for replacement appliances. The original Fire Cover Review recommendation was to reduce the number of pumping appliances from thirty-six to thirty-one, however the agreed outcome resulted in a reduction to thirty-four pumping appliances requiring the replacement programme to be increased to four vehicles from three in 2013/14 & 2015/16.
- 2.6 Chassis preparation work is also underway for the Water/Foam Unit and the bodywork specification requirements are being drawn up for another mini-competition exercise.
- 2.8 The former ALP chassis bought off lease has had the platform removed and sold to the UK agent. The income generated will be put back into the project to re-body the chassis to become a replacement Hazardous Materials & Environmental Protection Unit (HMEPU).
- 2.9 Initial designs to re-use other existing vehicles for Special appliances are also being drawn up or explored to reduce expenditure. Some of the Special appliances will also require an interim MDT solution and work is underway with the ICT department to facilitate this.
- 2.10 Light vehicle replacement for 2012/13 has been examined carefully and reduced where possible on the basis of increased vehicle life assumptions. The light vehicle requirements will be further examined following the organisational restructure to determine if there can be a reduction in the light vehicle fleet, currently 2012/13 expenditure is estimated at £231k leaving an underspend of £79k. As yet the re-structure has not thrown up any surplus vehicles to enable fleet reduction. Permission to accelerate the 2013/14 replacement programme to secure some of the existing pool vehicles moving over to the First-Responder additional 4x4 vehicles has been granted and these will go in to the pool fleet with role. The Service has been informed that the new 4x4 vehicles are to be delivered in March as planned and these will then go for blue light conversion.

PROPERTY:

- 2.11 The Property programme for the year is currently showing an underspend to date of £2,505k. The main reason for the underspend is the measured slowdown of the capital programme due to the uncertainty of the final

outcomes of the Fire Cover Review (FCR). Capital planning has now started for future projects across the Service's property portfolio and this process will address the programme schedule through feasibility studies of the individual fire stations. The first feasibility study has been completed on Retford Fire Station as this station is considered the highest priority for the station building replacement due to its level of dilapidation. An estimated £690k will be spent in the early stages of this project with the majority of the capital budget being expended between years 13/14 and 14/15. The total project budget is current estimated to be in the region of £2.3M; however this is still based on an outline specification and will be subject to the final operational requirement for the station being established. It is anticipated that a more accurate estimate will be available in April this year once the design has been finalised and agreed.

- 2.12 The Authority is currently looking for land in Nottingham for the relocation of Central Fire Station including office space for administration. Subject to suitable land being available it is assumed at this stage that the budget for the land purchase will be spent in the next financial year. The budget estimate for the project (excluding the land purchase) is yet to be confirmed as this will be reliant on the final site selection and the operational requirement of the station.
- 2.13 Members of the Fire Authority approved slippage of £490k from 2011/12 at the meeting on 29 June 2012 for the Blidworth Fire Station refurbishment project. It is estimated that around £480k will be spent on this project in the current year, with £10k needing to be slipped forward into 2013/14 to cover retentions and other project fees.
- 2.14 One of the projects arising from the FCR is the conversion of Edwinstowe Fire Station from a retained duty section (RDS) station to a wholetime station. This change includes some significant building works and installation of equipment at the premises to allow for the wholetime operation. The budget to cover the cost of this conversion has now been allocated from the current annual budget of £2,200k for Station Refurbishment. The tenders for the main contract works have been evaluated; the contractor has been instructed and has now started work on site. The estimated overall project cost is still expected to be within the project budget of £750k, and £210k of this is expected to be spent in this year with £540k being slipped into 2013/14.
- 2.15 Sustainable energy project: this project was largely completed in 2011/12, with slippage of £162k approved by the Fire Authority on 29 June 2012. This budget has funded additional installation works at Tuxford Fire Station - the funding for this was agreed at the Finance & Resources Committee Meeting in March 2012. The final project costs are within the project budget. The retentions and outstanding fees are circa £15k to £20k and are due in 2013/14.
- 2.16 The SDC shower block has now been refurbished to provide separate showering facilities for female users. The Finance and Resources Committee approved a variation to the capital programme of £65k in October 2012 for

this project. The funding will come from the Capital Reserve thus having no impact upon revenue budgets.

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY:

- 2.17 The Information and Communications Technology budget is currently under spending by £644k to date against the annual budget of £1,075k. Some projects were delayed in 2011/2012 and have been slipped into 2012/2013 – these include the projects for Business Process Automation and the Human Resources replacement system. The project to upgrade to Microsoft Office 2010 was completed in 2011/12, but £150k was brought forward from last year's programme to pay for licences which started in 2012/13.
- 2.18 Following an assessment of the impact of both the Tri-ServiceControl project and the organisational re-structure a detailed specification is being prepared for the Business Process Automation project. The Business Process Automation project is now expected to commence in 2013/2014 with budget provision of £170k being slipped accordingly.
- 2.19 Phase one of the HR system project has been completed and phase two (Procurement) is well under way. Tenders are now being evaluated, with a view to awarding the contract in March 2013.
- 2.20 The Microsoft Infrastructure Upgrade project is currently at the planning stage; this will consider its inter-dependencies and impact on other systems to produce the implementation plan. At present slippage cannot be anticipated into the 2013/2014 financial year, however this may require review when the implementation plan and procurement mechanisms are further developed.
- 2.21 Earlier phases of the Mobile Computing project have been completed and appropriate hardware trials are currently in progress. Once the trials are completed a decision will be taken about rolling the project out.
- 2.22 The CFRMIS budget of £47k is for the Operational Intelligence project which involves the electronic collection of operational data and transfer into the CFRMIS system. It is proposed that the funds are rolled forward into the 2013/14 budget because it has been necessary to extend the pilot before a decision to implement this method of information capture is made. The reason for the extension of the pilot is because the Tri-Service Control project may or may not include a data capture solution and this decision is expected in March /April 2013. There has also been a change of project staff following the service-wide restructure and it was important for new staff to gain an understanding of where the project is currently. This assessment has been made and improvements to project management are in hand. A new cost-free software upgrade is also under review and this has influenced the decision to extend the pilot.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The forecasted level of capital expenditure for this year is set out within the body of the report. It seems likely that the budgeted revenue contributions of £2,200k will not be required in full this year as the capital programme is underspending overall. Any unused revenue contribution will be allocated to the capital earmarked reserve and taken forward to 2013/14 so that it can be used to finance the slippage from the current year.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no human resources or learning and development implications arising directly from this report.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken because this report is not associated with a policy, function or service. Its purpose is to explain variances to the approved budget, which reflects existing policies.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

There are no crime and disorder implications arising directly from this report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

FINANCIAL RISK

8.1 Budget monitoring and the regular receipt of financial reports is key to managing one of the most significant risks to the organisation, that of financial risk. The process of budget monitoring is a key risk management control measure as are the management actions which are stimulated by such reporting.

Specific risks inherent within this report are:

- Risk of overspending on any given project
- Risk of overspending against the whole capital programme

- Risk of significant underspends.
- 8.2 The property programme is where the highest risk of overspends against individual projects will lie, due to unforeseen problems encountered when building works start. To counteract this it is possible to slip other projects forward to ensure that the programme in any one year is affordable.
- 8.3 The ICT budget only presents a high risk of overspending where there are major projects in progress e.g. the replacement HR System. It is essential therefore to engage high quality project managers to mitigate this risk. There is also a concern that the ICT Department may not have the capacity to deliver against the £1,075k programme. The business plans of the ICT Department reflect the level of project work taking place and are monitored regularly. If it becomes clear that projects will have to be delayed due to capacity problems, this will be reported and managed.
- 8.4 Close liaison between finance staff and budget holders will seek to monitor, evaluate and report on the financial risk of overspends and underspends.

CORPORATE RISK

- 8.5 The risk of not completing a given Capital Project either on time, or at all, and the impact that may have on the organisation and its corporate objectives.
- 8.6 An examination of the Capital Programme shows that there are a number of projects which are key to the achievement of corporate objectives. That is not to imply that other projects are not important in supporting those objectives.
- 8.7 These key projects are:
- Retford Fire Station refurbishment
 - Edwinstowe Fire Station Conversion
 - Replacement Aerial Ladder Appliance
 - Replacement IT equipment
 - HR System replacement
- 8.8 Although the project to replace Central Fire Station is in its early stages, with land being sought, there is no corporate risk at present due to the overall underspending on the Capital Programme and the potential to slip budget for the project into 2013/2014.
- 8.9 The replacement of the Aerial Ladder Platform appliance is running to schedule and not posing any corporate risk at present.
- 8.10 Replacement of IT Equipment carries a low risk as there is little work involved in this beyond the preparation and installation of replacement equipment. There is therefore little or no technical risk as all hardware is for known and tested applications.

- 8.11 The replacement HR system is not due to be fully installed and in use for several months and the organisation is able to continue to use the existing HR system to meet its key objectives in the meantime, although a new system will undoubtedly result in significant improvement to processes and management reporting.
- 8.12 The Tri-Service Control project is not covered within the capital programme, as the purchase of the system is being managed by Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service on behalf of the three Services. For information, it is confirmed that the project is on track with tenders currently being evaluated. The Authority has received a capital grant of £1,800k to fund its share of the total project.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members note the content of this report

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)

None.

Frank Swann
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

Capital Budget Monitoring Report as at 28 February 2013

Appendix A

	2012/13 Approved Budget £000's	2011/12 Slipped £000's	2012/13 Revised Budget £000's	Actual to Date £000's	Variance to Date (Under) / Over £000's	Estimated Outturn £000's	Estimated Outturn Variance £000's	2013/14 Provisional Budget £000's
TRANSPORT								
Rescue Pump replacement programme				68	68	68	68	908
Special Appliances	320	353	673	114	-559	464	-209	650
Small vehicle replacement programme	206	104	310		-310	231	-79	479
	526	457	983	182	-801	763	-220	2,037
PROPERTY								
Station Improvements								
Edwinstowe Fire Station Conversion Project	750		750	209	-541	210	-540	
Blidworth Fire Station		490	490	460	-30	480	-10	
Central Fire Station - Land Purchase	468		468	2	-466		-468	
Retford Fire Station	20		20		-20	69	49	
Station Refurbishment	1,423		1,423		-1,423		-1,423	2,200
Tuxford Fire Station	7		7	7		7		
Carlton Fire Station				1	1			
Sustainable Technology Project Phase 1 - 2011		162	162	136	-26	147	-15	
Estates Invest to Save Service Development Centre Shower Block			65	65		65		
	2,668	652	3,385	880	-2,505	978	-2,407	2,200
I.T. & COMMUNICATIONS								
Business Continuity & Disaster Recovery	30		30	17	-13	30		30
Business Process Automation	25	170	195		-195	25	-170	25
Mobile Computing	22	14	36	17	-19	22	-14	
HR System Upgrade	171	206	377	117	-260	171	-206	80
Microsoft Infrastructure Upgrade	120		120	27	-93	120		
Office 2010 Windows 7 Upgrade		150	150	150		150		
Business Expansion	30		30	30		30		25
Replacement Equipment	90		90	73	-17	90		85
CFRMIS Ops Intel Database	27	20	47		-47		-47	
Tri Service Control Project	0	0	0	2				
	515	560	1,075	433	-644	638	-437	245
	3,709	1,669	5,443	1,495	-3,950	2,379	-3,064	4,482
Sale of Principal Officers Cars				-33	-33	-33	-33	
Sale of Rescue Pumps				-5	-5	-5	-5	
Sale of Carlton House				-70	-70	-70	-70	
Revenue Contribution	-2,200		-2,200		2,200	-2,200		
Capital Grant	-1,487		-1,487	-1,487		-1,487		
Total	-3,687		-3,687	-1,594	2,093	-3,794	-107	

