



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority
Policy and Strategy Committee

ICT UPDATE

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Agenda Item No:

Date: 29 July 2011

Purpose of Report:

To update Members on the outcome of the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership bid for transitional funds for a regional approach to ICT.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At its meeting of 10 September 2010, the Policy and Strategy Committee received a report outlining a project to examine whether the current ICT services within Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Leicestershire could be merged to provide a single department servicing all three Fire and Rescue Services.
- 1.2 A further report on 1 April 2011 detailed that the provision could be achieved, but significant investment would be required up-front before any savings could be realised. On this basis therefore, the Policy and Strategy Committee agreed that a regional approach would not be the best way for the Service to meet savings required.
- 1.3 Approximately 24hrs before the meeting on 1 April 2011 however, the Chief Fire Officer, representing the East Midlands Fire and Rescue Services on the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership, became aware of some residual improvement funds which may have assisted in making the project more financially viable. The Policy and Strategy Committee agreed that the Chief Fire Officer should progress these and establish whether the option could still be explored.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 Following the decision made by the Policy and Strategy Committee for the Chief Fire Officer, in conjunction with his colleagues within Leicestershire and Derbyshire, put together a bid for £150k of funding from the East Midlands Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership. The Services had previously been successful with a similar bid to support the provision of a single finance system across the three Services.
- 2.2 The bid was submitted on time, but unfortunately on 21 June 2011, the Chief Fire Officer was informed that the bid had been unsuccessful on this occasion.
- 2.3 Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service will now seek to look at alternative ways in which to maintain and improve its ICT services whilst moving to reduce revenue costs. In the interim the regional collaboration group will continue to work together and hopefully achieve as many efficiencies as possible through joint working.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 It is for financial reasons that the regional project has not been carried forward at this point. Additional funds would have helped to 'pump-prime' any up-front costs.
- 3.2 In terms of moving forward, as part of the current austerity plans, the Service has set a target of a £100k reduction in the revenue budget to be achieved by 2013/2014.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

There were significant human resources implications that would have arisen from the project which would have been addressed through any project management approach. Whilst these have now been shelved, any restructure or realignment of the in-house service will also have human resources implications. The Service will look to manage these through its normal processes.

5. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

There are no implications for equalities arising from this report.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

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

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 As the Service moves towards a greater dependence on IT and its support, the Service will need to address the additional capacity requirements from within existing resources and whilst achieving budget reductions.
- 8.2 The Assistant Chief Officer Finance and Resources has been tasked with producing an option for the Service to enable these risks to be managed and mitigated appropriately.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 9.1 Note the outcomes of the bid for regional funding.
- 9.2 Endorse the original recommendation of the report from 1 April 2011, which was not to progress the regional option on the basis of cost.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)
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None.

Frank Swann
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER