



REPORT TITLE: Procurement of Specialist Vehicles GFRS

Cabinet Date	21st September 2022
Cabinet Member	Cllr Dave Norman, Cabinet Member for Fire, Community Safety and Libraries
Key Decision	Yes
Purpose of Report	To seek approval to procure up to 3 new specialist vehicles for Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue (GFRS) over the 2-year period commencing September 2022.
Recommendations	<p>That Cabinet delegates authority to the Executive Director of Economy, Environment & Infrastructure, in consultation with Chief Fire Officer and the Cabinet Member for Fire, Community Safety and Libraries to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Conduct two mini-competition processes under the National Fire Chiefs Council Emergency Response Vehicle Framework Agreement (managed by Devon and Somerset FRS) in respect of two call-off contracts. Each such contract shall be for the supply of one specialist vehicle (HIAB Vehicle & Aerial Ladder platform) with a Euro 6 and greener technology engines which will be used to replace the current fleet of more polluting Euro 3/4/5 engine vehicles during the two-year period commencing September 2022.2. Conduct a mini competition process under the YPO 960 Specialist Vehicle Framework Agreement in respect of a call-off contract for the supply of a full specification Incident Command Unit (ICU) vehicle. Such vehicle shall be equipped with a Euro 6, greener technology engine which will be used to replace the current polluting Euro 3/4/5 engine ICU vehicle during the two-year period commencing September 2022.3. Award such call-off contracts to the preferred tenderer(s).

<p>Reasons for recommendations</p>	<p>The GFRS Fire Engine Fleet is ageing and includes three specialist vehicles which have been identified as needing to be replaced over the next 2 years. Already secured capital funding will enable GFRS to purchase these three vehicles over the next 2 years.</p> <p>It is anticipated as part of the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) the disposition of appliances will be reviewed and potentially further vehicles will be required during the following 2-year period commencing July 2024 in order to replace further specialist vehicles in GFRS's fleet of vehicles currently in use. Given that the procurement of such vehicles will require funding in addition to that referred to above, a separate Cabinet decision to procure such vehicles will be sought at the relevant time.</p>
<p>Resource Implications</p>	<p>£2.410 million of capital funding for the procurement of light fleet vehicles budgeted at £1.160 million and specialist vehicles budgeted at £1.250 million has already been secured through the 22-23 MTFS process as approved at the February 2022 Full Council meeting.</p> <p>The three specialist vehicles to which this report relates include equipment such as Aerial Ladder Platform (Aerial), Incident Command Unit (ICU), Hiab Crane Unit (HIAB) to include chassis, bodywork, and equipment.</p> <p>This paper relates to the specialist vehicles replacement programme with an approved budget of £1.250 million for the purchase of the three specialist vehicles described above.</p> <p>No additional resource implications exist.</p>
<p>Background Documents</p>	<p>Fire and Rescue Services Act (2004)</p> <p>Medium Term Financial Strategy - Council 16.02.22</p> <p>https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2113388/final-approved-mtfs-document-february-22-council.pdf</p> <p>Vehicle Asset Management Plan</p>
<p>Statutory Authority</p>	<p>Statutory duties and functions under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.</p>
<p>Divisional Councillor(s)</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Officer</p>	<p>Name: John Townsend (Corporate Fleet Unit Manager) Tel. no: 07557 213424 Email: john.townsend@gloucestershire.gov.uk</p>
<p>Timeline</p>	<p>2022 through to 2024.</p>

Background

1. Statutory Requirement

The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 sets out the responsibilities of Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs). There are four key responsibilities for FRAs that they must ensure that they make provision for including:

- Extinguishing fires in their area
- Protecting life and property in the event of fires in their area
- Rescuing and protecting people in the event of a road traffic collision, and
- Rescuing and protecting people in the event of other emergencies.

These four key responsibilities are underpinned by a duty to:

- Secure the provision of the personnel, services, and equipment necessary efficiently to meet all normal requirements;
- Make arrangements for dealing with calls for help and for summoning personnel;
- Make arrangements for obtaining information needed for the purpose of extinguishing fires in its area and protecting life and property in the event of fires in its area.

2. The Service has an ongoing Vehicle replacement programme to ensure that the fleet does not exceed its useable life as per the vehicle asset management plan.

3. It has been identified that there is a need for three new Specialist Vehicles (HIAB, AERIAL, ICU) over the next 2 years to maintain an effective operational response: these new vehicles (HIAB, ICU and AERIAL) can be purchased now with already secured capital funding over the next 2 years 2022/23/24. Subject to the outcome of the proposed CRMP any further specialist vehicles required will require further capital funding.

4. All the proposed specialist Vehicles will be maintained in house at the Tri Centre Workshops by a dedicated trained workshop team, following industry standard best practice. The equipment on each vehicle will also be inspected and maintained at the Tri Centre with trained equipment technicians

5. Based on previous Fire Engine Appliance purchase costs and allowing for index linking the breakdown for the three specialist vehicles is as follows:

- Aerial Ladder Platform is approximately £750,000 per vehicle
- HIAB Vehicle is approximately £150,000 per vehicle
- The ICU vehicle is approximately £350,000 per vehicle

Total £1,250,000

6. A further capital bid will be required to continue with the 5-year plan and replace further specialist vehicles during the period July 2023 to Dec 2026. As previously stated, this will be achieved through the usual process for developing the MTFS/Capital Programme and will follow the production of the CRMP 2022-2025 and the subsequent independent fire cover review.

7. GCC will ensure that due diligence is applied throughout. These are specialist vehicles however there is sufficient fleet related knowledge within GFRS and the Corporate Fleet Unit to draw up vehicle specifications based on user requirements. This will ensure that the level of specification for these vehicles meets both the operational needs of the service and the aim to deliver this service as effectively and as efficiently as possible. Business case justification for their replacement was prepared by GFRS as part of the MTFS process prior to funding approval at Full Council in February 2022.

Business Options

8. Alternative options considered and why they were rejected

a) Option 1 - Do nothing

To not purchase new Specialist vehicles. This option was discounted because the current GFRS fleet of Specialist vehicles are ageing. The Chief Fire Officer must, in exercising their functions, ensure that GFRS meets the requirements of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 – notably section 7.2a secure the provision of the personnel, services and equipment necessary efficiently to meet all normal requirements. The provision of suitable fire vehicles enables this.

b) Option 2 - Use of open competitive procedure

This would mean that any supplier could submit a bid for the work. This would enable us to aggregate our requirement over this financial year and next. However, due to the value of the project this would require a regulated procurement process which would necessitate greater resource and add additional time and expense than would be required if the proposed specialist vehicles were to be procured using a framework agreement.

c) Option 3 - Use an alternative Fire Sector Frameworks to the NFCC Devon and Somerset Framework Agreement Framework and YPO 960 Specialist Vehicle Framework

A number of frameworks were assessed for their suitability. It was determined that they were not appropriate for the proposed three specialist vehicles given that they offered unsuitable specifications and/or were cost prohibitive due to fees and levies.

d) Option 4 - NFCC Devon and Somerset Framework Agreement (the preferred option for the HIAB & Aerial Vehicles) & YPO 960 Specialist Vehicles Framework Agreement (the preferred option for the ICU Vehicle)

The National Fire Chiefs Council Emergency Response Vehicle framework agreement, managed by Devon and Somerset FRS, has been specifically developed by 49 Fire and Rescue Services. Using the NFCC framework promotes collaboration between fire and rescue services nationally.

The YPO 960 Specialist Vehicles Framework Agreement provides procurement solutions for public sector organisations to set up or renew contracts for a wide range

of services. Established in 1974 by a group of 13 local authorities, YPO is one of the largest public sectors buying organisations in the UK and still 100% publicly owned today.

Carrying a mini competition from the NFCC framework and YPO 960 Framework provides economies of scale, that GFRS may not be able to achieve in isolation if we were to run our own competitive tender process. Using the framework reduces procurement timescales whilst complying with the relevant public sector procurement regulations.

9. Option 4 is the preferred option because:

Option 4 provides the best value for money and is public procurement law compliant. The proposed Devon and Somerset framework agreement has been developed by Fire and Rescue Services nationally and also supports the Home Office aims of best value and increased collaboration to achieve greater efficiencies. The YPO 960 Framework Agreement has been set up by local authorities (for use by local authorities) who work closely with their suppliers and collaborate with other public sector buying organisations to achieve efficiencies and value for money.

10. The National Fire Chiefs Council Emergency Response Vehicle Framework Agreement (managed by Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Services) was identified as being the most suitable framework agreement for the procurement of the AERIAL & HIAB vehicle for the following reasons:

- The framework agreement was established in response to the Government's aim for greater collaboration across Services. It was delivered through a Project Board comprising specialist resources with significant market experience in engineering, procurement and financial and legal matters from several Fire and Rescue Services nationally.
- It is fully compliant with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.
- It is available for use by all UK fire and rescue services and their agents.
- It is free of any framework fees, levies, charges or rebates.
- It is supported with dynamic contract management, this includes supplier audits, compliance to certified testing regimes, a review of financial health, ownership, key personnel, mergers and compliance with general terms and conditions.
- It contains a list of quality assured suppliers who have demonstrated their ability to supply to UK requirements.

11. YPO 960 Specialist Vehicles Framework Agreement was identified as being the most suitable framework agreement for the ICU vehicle for the following reasons:

- YPO can fully manage the customers further competition (call-off) process if required.
- Reduced timescales – customers do not need to run a full OJEU procurement if procuring via the framework agreement.
- Assured supplier standards – suppliers/providers are ‘pre-qualified’ as to their general suitability.
- Aggregation of spend – customers will receive the benefits of the aggregated spend volume and increased leverage in the market.
- Pre-defined terms and conditions – when awarding contracts customers have the option to use YPO’s standard framework agreement terms and conditions as established or use their own terms and conditions.

Risks

12. Under the Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004, the Fire Authority has a legal requirement to provide responses to fires, road traffic collisions and promote fire safety.
13. If Cabinet are unable to support the replacement of fire appliances, these vehicles could suffer a terminal failure due to their age exposing the Service and the public to unacceptable levels of risk.
14. Not replacing the vehicles would be at odds with our vision & values and will not align with our strategic aims for response and resilience whereby we aim to respond promptly and efficiently to deal with fires and others emergencies when they occur.
15. Procurement of fire appliances through a bespoke framework minimizes the risk to GCC and GFRS by maintaining legal compliance with Public Sector Procurement Regulations.
16. Delays in procurement of these vehicles could reflect in higher prices through price index rises

Financial implications

17. Funding has already been approved at Full Council in February 2022 as part of the 22-23 MTFS process. The total fund available is £1,250,000 for the proposed three specialist vehicles to include chassis, bodywork, and equipment.
18. There are no charges for using the **Devon & Somerset Fire and Rescue Service Framework nor the YPO 960 Specialist Vehicle Framework Agreement**. There are efficiency savings derived from their use in relation to resources, time, and the management of the tender process. Also, they satisfy GCC standing orders and procurement regulations.
19. All obsolete vehicles will be disposed of as per GCC Asset disposal Policy & Procedure, however large capital receipts are extremely unlikely on very old vehicles and can range from approximately £2,000 to £20,000. Blue light obsolete vehicles must be disposed using

an approved auction method. The vehicles are asset stripped prior to auction for anything that is reusable including ladders and equipment.

Climate change implications

20. By removing three very old more polluting euro 3/4/5 engine vehicles, over the next 2 years and replacing them with more efficient Euro 6 vehicles, reduces the Nitrogen oxides (NOx), Carbon monoxide (CO), Hydrocarbons (HC), particulate matter (PM) emissions produced across our fleet.
21. Prior to any vehicle being disposed, they will have all necessary equipment and identified parts removed for potential reuse within the GFRS, including ladders and ICT equipment.
22. New larger HGV vehicles are just starting to be developed in terms of alternative fuel such as electrification/hybrid, however there are very few choices available currently and initial costs for these are significant and incur additional infrastructure costs. This will be explored each year as part of a fleet strategy review to understand industry direction and cost implications to see if and when this becomes a viable alternative. Officers are exploring alternative ways to reduce carbon emissions such as using hydrogenated vegetable oil diesel (HVO) and GFRS has been piloting the use of TRAILAR vehicle mounted solar charging on one of its vehicles over the past year.

Equality implications

23. An Equality impact assessment has been completed, with no major issues identified and do not believe there are any equality implications. Cabinet Members should read and consider the Equalities Impact Assessment to satisfy themselves as decision makers that due regard has been given.
24. The working group to establish the user requirements leading to the specification of the new vehicles has been formed from a diverse and fully inclusive group of staff members.

Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) implications

25. Having identified that no personal data is processed as part of this procurement, it has been established that there is no requirement for a Data Protection Impact Assessment
26. All vehicles are business vehicles and not for personal use and will be fitted with a Tracker to identify their location for vehicle security aspects.

Social value implications

27. Procurement of new Specialist Fire and Rescue Vehicles demonstrates continuous investment in the county's fire and rescue service by the Fire Authority. New Specialist Vehicles will help improve the economic, social, and environmental wellbeing of their local areas and their ability to respond when required. The council's invitation to tender document will include GCC social value consideration questions as appropriate. As detailed earlier environmental social value benefits will be achieved through the use of cleaner Euro 6 engines and other measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the GFRS fleet.

Consultation feedback

28. Consultation has been received through GFRS Operational Fire Fighters, through organised workshop groups on Vehicles and Equipment, in relation to size of vehicles, water capacity, crew capacity, safety, storage and equipment.
29. The FRS's Transport Operator Group (TOG) has been contacted on best practice and what standardisation of Fire Engine Appliances exists
30. The Strategic Procurement team have confirmed that it is wholly appropriate to utilise the compliant agreement to run a mini competition to procure replacement fire appliances.

Officer recommendations

31. The Chief Fire Officer, based on all the available evidence and subsequent analysis, supports the recommendation that Cabinet should approve/endorse the proposal to procure These Three Specialist vehicles to replace the ageing vehicles in GRFS, approve the proposed level of expenditure and the identified procurement route.

Performance Management/Follow-up

32. Regular Project performance management is conducted by GFRS Project Management Group. The project team meet regularly and it is regularly reviewed and discussed, including highlight reports showing status with actions.
33. The contract that will be drawn up under the NFCC Framework will include a number of Service Level Agreements held with the Supplier.
34. Performance will be monitored and discussed at regular meetings with the designated Customer Relationship Manager. Underperformance is highlighted and reviewed with resolution sought and remedial measures put in place by the Supplier as and when necessary.