

MERSEYSIDE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	URGENCY COMMITTEE		
DATE:	19 SEPTEMBER 2019	REPORT NO:	CFO/052/19
PRESENTING OFFICER	IAN CUMMINS		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	IAN CUMMINS	REPORT AUTHOR:	IAN CUMMINS
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	NICK MERNOCK, JANET HENSHAW, SHARON MATTHEWS		
TITLE OF REPORT:	EXTENSION OF CURRENT CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF FINANCE, HUMAN RESOURCES, PROCUREMENT AND PAYROLL ICT APPLICATIONS		
APPENDICES:			

Purpose of Report

1. That Members approve the request to extend the current arrangement with Advance for the provision of Finance, People & Payroll, and Procurement applications for a period of 2 years, up to 2023.

Recommendation

2. That Members approve the extension of the current arrangements with Advance for the provision of Finance, People & Payroll, and Procurement applications for an additional 2 years.

Introduction and Background

3. The provision of Finance, People & Payroll, and Procurement applications (**FPPP**) is currently facilitated via a managed outsourced contract with Advance. The Authority does not own the applications and must seek alternative providers when the contract ends. The current contract comes to an end in August 2021, and this defined period reflects the procurement conditions of that chosen route, (a maximum 8 year period).
4. Over the last 6 years a substantial investment of staff time and resources has gone into the current FPPP applications to ensure they are working effectively and efficiently, meet the needs of the system users and are deemed fit for purpose. In addition further upgrades are now available to allow the application to be developed to meet new regulatory and system demands in the coming years.
5. Based on previous FPPP applications projects the replacement process ideally should commence circa 24 months before the existing contract end date. This long lead in period reflects the complexity and size of the replacement project, and the various stages of the process that must be established and completed before the existing application is switched off. Significant staff and financial resources would

need to be committed to the project over this period. Once the preferred replacement application was chosen a period of parallel running of the old and new applications would be required and staff trained on how to use and access the new applications. After the new application has been fully implemented it would be followed by a number of years of fine tuning the various application processes and systems.

6. Given the current application is fit for purpose and is likely to remain so up to at least 2023, officers therefore felt it was reasonable to try and extract the most from the investment in the current FPPP. Over the last couple of months negotiations have been held with Advance and an agreement has now been reached over an option for a new contract with Advance to cover the Service needs up to 2023, at the same price and performance criteria as the Service currently pays Advance for the existing contract.
7. The current staff training and management application, STARS, is also due to end in 2021 and will need to be re-tendered in the coming months. Currently officers are not aware of a suitable application that can meet the People & Payroll and training and management information needs of the Service. If the STARS application contract was also extended to run over the same period as the extended Advance contract, it may be possible that new products may offer a single application that meet all the Service's information needs in the future. Once the negotiations with the STARS application provider have been concluded a report will be brought back to Members for consideration about extending the STARS contract.
8. Extending the current arrangements with Advance until 2023 will delay the Service committing to a new 5 to 8 year FPPP application contract. The benefit of this is that it provides a period of flexibility over how the FPPP system needs are met, at least until 2023, should the Authority face any changes in the near future to the current Governance or Service arrangements.
9. If Members support the report's recommendation officers would commence a full FPPP (and staff training and management application) replacement project early in 2021. As part of any future procurement process officers would consult with neighbouring authorities, including Merseyside Police, the Combined Authority and Councils, on their willingness to share systems or a joint procurement approach for these applications.
10. Members are recommended to support the request to extend the existing contract arrangements for FPPP and Staff Training and Management systems. If Members do not feel they can support this request then the FPPP replacement project must commence in the coming days and weeks.

Equality and Diversity Implications

11. Not applicable

Staff Implications

12. At this point not applicable (any procurement route for replacement applications will require a significant staff investment).

Legal Implications

13. As the proposal from Advance is to utilise an existing procurement framework for a new 2 year contract it will meet the requirements of the Public Procurement Regulations 2015 (as amended).
14. Members are requested to approve this contract award as the contract value over a two year period exceeds £250,000, the threshold over which any contract must be approved by the Authority pursuant to Article 22 paragraph 14 of the Authority's Constitution.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

15. The contract price for the new 2 year contract at £223k p.a. is consistent with the current payments and budget provision.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

16. To ensure the proper financial administration of the Authority's affairs, management of staff and procurement of goods and services it requires applications that perform efficiently and effectively and meet all users' needs. Any delays in a decision about the future application provision may put at risk the Service's ability to deliver a replacement system within the required timeframe.

Contribution to Our Mission: *Safer Stronger Communities – Safe Effective Firefighters*

17. Having a robust Financial and People management information system is a core requirement in the management of the financial and staffing resources of the Service and key to achievement of the Authority's Mission.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

FPPP FINANCE, PEOPLE & PAYROLL, AND PROCUREMENT APPLICATIONS