

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	COMMUNITY SAFETY AND PROTECTION COMMITTEE		
DATE:	4 SEPTEMBER 2025	REPORT NO:	CFO/08/2526
PRESENTING OFFICER	CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, NICK SEARLE		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE, DEB APPLETON	REPORT AUTHOR:	HEAD OF DATA AND TECHNOLOGY, PAUL TERRY
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM (SLT) HEAD OF PROCUREMENT, HYWYN PRITCHARD HEAD OF FINANCE, JAMES CAMPBELL DATA AND TECHNOLOGY DELIVERY MANAGER, LYNDSEY KILLEEN		
TITLE OF REPORT:	ICT MANAGED SERVICE AWARD		

APPENDICES:	APPENDIX A: EIA ICT MANAGED SERVICE
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Purpose of Report

1. To inform Members of the outcome of the procurement exercise for ICT Managed Services following a fully compliant tender procedure using Crown Commercial Service (CCS) Technology Services 3 framework agreement (RM6100) Lot 4.
2. To seek approval from Members to award a five-year contract to Telent Technology Services Ltd on the basis of the outcome of the procurement exercise.

Recommendation

3. It is recommended that Members approve the award of the contract for the provision of ICT Managed Service Provision to Telent Technology Services Ltd for a period of 5 years with effect from 1st March 2026 (with the option to extend the term for a further 2-year period) for the 5-year contract price of £13.740m.

Introduction and Background

4. The current ICT Managed Services contract had an initial term of 5 years plus an option to extend for up to a further 5 years. The Authority executed the contract extension in September 2018 for 3 years and again in March 2023 for a further 2 years with the contract due to expire on 31st March 2026. With no further option to extend the existing contract beyond March 2026, and following an extensive period of internal planning with relevant departments, the procurement process began in June 2024.

5. The ICT Managed Services provision is defined and maintained within the ICT Service Catalogue and includes Fire Control services, ICT services including email and internet access, cloud services, managed networks, managed servers, managed devices, service desk, ITIL (Information Technology Infrastructure Library) services and supporting services.
6. The Crown Commercial Service (CCS) Technology Services 3 framework agreement (RM6100) Lot 4 was selected as an appropriate route to market. RM6100 was the most appropriate framework available that covers all the services required by MFRA and included thirty-nine prequalified potential suppliers.
7. Crown Commercial Service (CCS) Technology Services 3 framework agreement (RM6100) establishes a fully transparent process, providing suppliers with all tender documents, including full requirements specification, evaluation criteria and contract terms at the start of the ITT process, allowing them to make a more informed decision on whether to participate.
8. CCS is the biggest public procurement organisation in the UK. It uses its commercial expertise to help buyers in central government and across the public and third sectors to purchase a range of goods and services from locum doctors and laptops to police cars and electricity.
9. The collective purchasing power of its customers, plus its procurement expertise, means CCS can efficiently obtain cost effective commercial deals in the interest of UK taxpayers. Prior to the commencement of the procurement process an independent consultant was commissioned to provide an objective view of the benefits or otherwise of outsourcing this vital service. It was advised that continuing to outsource ICT managed services remained the most cost-effective way to deliver these services to the Authority. The independent consultants were also engaged throughout the procurement process to review and scrutinise tender documentation including the ICT Service Catalogue and provide strategic advice and guidance ensuring the robustness of the process.
10. Prior to the procurement process commencing, the ICT Service Catalogue underwent a thorough review, undertaken by members of the MFRS internal Data and Technology team with oversight and scrutiny provided by the independent consultant. The outcome of the review resulted in the introduction of a small number of additional services ensuring MFRA continues to mitigate the risks associated with modern ICT delivery and cyber security. The additional services include enhanced cyber security services; support for National Resilience (NR) and International Search and Rescue (ISAR); support for the new incident command training suite and enhanced audio visual (AV) services across the MFRA estate.

Procurement Process

11. Expressions of interest were invited at the initial Request for Information (RFI) stage of the procurement process. The RFI was published on 12th June 2024 and closed on 3rd July 2024 and aimed to encourage uptake in the forthcoming tender process. Despite thirty-nine suppliers being approved onto the framework, only four registered an interest, acknowledging they could provide the high-level services required.
12. On 25th September 2024 all four suppliers were invited to attend the supplier engagement session. Additional information was provided to those suppliers about MFRA and the services that were required, with an opportunity for questions and answers. Two out of the four suppliers attended this session.
13. On 12th November 2024 the detailed Invitation to Tender (ITT) was published to the four suppliers who expressed an interest and passed the RFI stage.
14. Feedback was subsequently sought from suppliers who registered an interest at the RFI stage but declined the opportunity to submit a tender, to try to determine the markets position. The following reasons were cited:
 - “Unable to meet the requirements”
 - “Insufficient resources at this time”
 - “Not in a position to submit a response”
 - “On review of your requirements, we do not believe that we are best placed to provide the required services”
15. The ITT stage concluded on 13th February 2025 with one response received from the incumbent provider, Telent Technology Services Ltd.
16. Technical evaluation and moderation of the tender response was completed between 14th February and 18th March 2025

Value for Money

17. Along with the review as to value for money to continue to outsource this service or bring in house other aspects of the framework and contract were reviewed as to the benefit to MFRA.
18. The recommended contract brings additional benefits to MFRA over and above those provided in the current contract in the form of an improved Service Level Agreement (SLA) bringing faster response and fix times; priority out of hours response to incidents reported by the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT); enhanced cyber security services; support for National Resilience (NR) and International Search and Rescue (ISAR); support for the new incident command training suite and enhanced audio visual (AV) services across the MFRA estate.

19. An additional severity level has been included into the SLA to account for the incidents that have a moderate adverse impact on the activities of the Service. This has allowed for faster fix times to be guaranteed, providing a greater level of service to MFRS staff. Furthermore, the fix times for work order requests has also been reduced by 10 days.
20. The need for cyber security has significantly increased over the past decade due to a rise in cyber attacks, the expanding digital landscape, and the sophistication of threats. This trend is driven by factors such as the increasing reliance on technology, the growing sophistication of cyber criminals, and the expanding attack surface. This has been acknowledged by MFRS as part of the review of its service catalogue and the requirements in this area have been strengthened to mitigate the increased risk.
21. The reliance on technology has also grown in the area of incident command and enhanced AV. The new Training and Development Academy houses a state-of-the-art incident command training suite containing a vast array of ICT equipment. Enhanced AV equipment is now available in conference rooms, meeting rooms and classrooms throughout the estate with the proposed contract including essential support and maintenance of this technology ensuring it remains available and fit for purpose.

Equality and Diversity Implications

22. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed and is available in Appendix C.

Staff Implications

23. Following feedback from staff within varying roles in the organisation, it was recognised that through the incumbent supplier a great deal of goodwill in terms of accelerated response times had been accrued. In order to ensure staff continued to receive services which can support the fast-paced environment in which we operate, irrespective of the outcome of the tender process, service level agreements for response times and work order requests have been shortened.
24. Feedback from employees of the service has indicated a high level of service being provided by the on-site engineering team currently based at Vesty Road. The move to a fully remote service provision was discussed which identified that the current level of service could not be replicated via a fully remote service provision. It was agreed that removal of an off-site engineering team would be detrimental to employees of the service, therefore the requirement for this remains an important element of the service catalogue.

Legal Implications

25. A compliant procurement process has been undertaken through the use of the Crown Commercial Service framework.

26. Subject to Authority approval a contract awarded pursuant to this process would comply with its Contract Standing Orders and be compliant with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

27. The recommended solution incurs an increase in fixed service costs of £0.381m, per annum and will be subject to annual inflation by the percentage increase or changes in the Average Weekly Earnings (AWE) as per the terms of the framework agreement. In addition to this MFRA will incur a one-off transition cost of £0.062m in year 1. The Authority had increased the budget for ICT Managed Service by £0.240m from 2026/27 as part of the 2025/26 budget setting process. The contract will require an additional £0.141m growth from 2026/27 onwards. The additional growth will be included as part of the 2026/27 budget setting process and Medium-Term Financial Plan.
28. Variable charges of circa £0.709m per annum will be incurred as payment for pass-through (voice and data charges) and 3rd party contract charges. These contracts can be subject to indexation as per the individual contract terms. Contracts are reviewed periodically to ensure value for money remains and where efficiencies and greater value for money is identified, can be brought 'in-house' to realise these benefits.

Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications

29. The failure to procure a robust and experienced ICT managed provider to deliver the required services would impact on MFRS's ability to deliver its usual standard of service and day to day business operations. As the incumbent, supplier is also the proposed supplier under the new contract the day one services would continue to operate during the transition into the new contract.
30. MFRA will benefit from a minimal risk, collaborative service transition based on the following principles:
- Ensuring service continuity: continuity of existing services will be maintained as the incumbent supplier of service, whilst the planning and preparation for the new services is underway.
 - Retained service performance: no reduction in the overall service delivery during the transition.
 - Knowledge-led: transfer of documents / knowledge will be conducted in a controlled and timely manner within an agreed mechanism for approval processes.
 - Defined key success criteria, assured by the verification of requirements and acceptance testing for new services and introduction of changes.
 - Communication of changes and improvements to service operation will be clearly communicated to both key stakeholders within MFRA and to end users as part of a joint communications plan for the MFRS re-launch.

Environmental Implications

31. Throughout the contract, the supplier will support carbon reduction by:
- Continuing to reduce scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions in-line with their science-based targets, carbon reduction plan and net zero pledge; in-turn reducing MFRA's indirect footprint.
 - Provide verified scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions data at a corporate level to MFRA.
 - Collaborate with MFRA to complete a design carbon appraisal to evaluate embodied carbon from third party goods and services and co-develop carbon reduction initiatives.
 - Engage with suppliers to improve transparency, accountability and reporting.

Contribution to Our Vision: *To be the best Fire & Rescue Service in the UK.*

Our Purpose: *Here to serve, Here to protect, Here to keep you safe.*

32. Ensuring the Authority has access to sufficient ICT services to assist in the delivery of its services to the best of its ability to its community is critical. The supplier's expertise and experience within ICT services and through the use of technology within the sector will enhance various aspects of the service provided by MFRA to the communities it serves.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NONE

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

MFRA	M erseyside F ire and R escue A uthority
MFRS	M erseyside F ire and R escue S ervice
D&T	D ata and T echnology
ICT	I nformation and C ommunication T echnology