

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	AUTHORITY		
DATE:	23 OCTOBER 2025	REPORT NO:	CFO/22/2526
PRESENTING OFFICER	CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, NICK SEARLE		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	AREA MANAGER, PHILLIP BYRNE, CHRISTOPHER MAN	REPORT AUTHOR:	STATION MANAGER, MICHAEL BROADLEY
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	AREA MANAGER PHILLIP BYRNE, AREA MANAGER DAVE WATSON, GROUP MANAGER JON ROSCOE, GROUP MANAGER CHRISTOPHER MAN, STATION MANAGER MICHAEL BROADLEY, DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT MIKE REA, HEAD OF PROCUREMENT HYWYN PRITCHARD, STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM (SLT)		
TITLE OF REPORT:	APPROVAL OF EXPENDITURE FOR PPE LAUNDRY		
APPENDICES:	NONE		

Purpose of Report

1. To provide an overview of the current Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) laundry provision.
2. To seek approval for expenditure which is projected to exceed £300k during the existing contract term.

Recommendation

3. It is recommended that Members;
 - a) note the contents of the report; and
 - b) approve the additional expenditure with Elis UK Ltd in line with the current contract framework.

Introduction and Background

4. The existing laundry contract between Elis UK Ltd and Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority commenced on 24th September 2022 and was extended, in line with the contract provisions, until 23rd September 2026. (Contract FRS 2223-34)
5. During the contract period, there has been a significant increase in the number of garments sent for cleaning. This has arisen from our positive health and safety

cultural and educational changes across the sector aimed at reducing exposure to contaminants ensuring the overall firefighter health and wellbeing remains paramount.

6. In addition to increased usage, contract costs have risen by approximately 20% over the last two years.
7. It is anticipated that demand for the service will remain high and laundry costs may increase further prior to the contract expiry in September 2026.
8. At the end of the current contract period, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service ('the Service') will re-tender to secure the most economically advantageous arrangement available.

Equality and Diversity Implications

9. None identified in relation to increased expenditure

Staff Implications

10. There are no direct staffing implications arising from the continuation of this contract.
11. Service couriers will commence collection and distribute laundry as part of their routine journeys to stations as part of business as usual.

Legal Implications

12. The procurement route is fully compliant with the Public Contracts Regulations and the Authority's Constitution.
13. MFRA has a legal duty to provide and maintain PPE in line with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

14. Expenditure under the contract is forecast to exceed £300k over its lifetime and requires Authority approval.
15. Current spend to date is £278k (as of 10th October 2025).
16. Average monthly laundry costs range between £6k and £9k.
17. The estimated expenditure up to the 23rd September 2026 is between £347k and £382k, excluding any specialist decontamination required as a result of hazardous material incidents.
18. Whilst expenditure is projected to surpass the original approval threshold, efficiency measures identified are expected to deliver savings across the current Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), which runs until 2028/29.

19. Transport efficiencies will be achieved by utilising the internal service couriers to collect and deliver laundry from all MFRA locations creating a single collection and drop off location. This approach removes the need for third-party transport services and is expected to generate annual savings of approximately £50k.
20. Current structural firefighting kit has a maximum wash life of 40 cycles. The Service is currently considering the introduction of a full technical rescue ensemble. Technical rescue PPE has no wash life limitation, and its introduction, in addition to the operational benefits would reduce washing frequency of structural firefighting kit meaning that kit replacement would be reduced. These lifecycle efficiencies are anticipated to contribute a further £20k in replacement expenditure.
21. Taken together, transport and PPE lifecycle efficiencies are projected to deliver savings in the region of £70k annually. These measures provide confidence that, although contractual expenditure will surpass the initial threshold, the Service is proactively managing costs and ensuring longer-term value for money. Therefore, it is recommended to Members to approve the additional expenditure during the remaining term of the contract to exceed £300k as detailed within the financial implications.
22. Additional expenditure will be funded from current budgets.

Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications

23. The supplier will comply with the Health & Safety measures implemented by the Authority as part of the contractual arrangements.
24. The continued use of the laundry service during the term of the contract ensures the Authority is able to manage its risk in respect of the use of PPE.

Environmental Implications

25. The removal of external transport arrangements will reduce vehicle movements, albeit by a third party it contributes to supporting the Authority's carbon reduction commitments.

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.*

26. The contract ensures PPE is cleaned and returned within required timeframes, maintaining operational readiness and ensuring staff are equipped with safe and appropriate kit and available to respond at all times.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NONE

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

MFRA	M erseyside F ire and R escue A uthority
MTFP	M edium T erm F inancial P lan
PPE	P ersonal P rotective E quipment