

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	AUTHORITY		
DATE:	23 OCTOBER 2025	REPORT NO:	CFO/23/2526
PRESENTING OFFICER	CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, NICK SEARLE		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	AREA MANAGER DAVID WATSON	REPORT AUTHOR:	STATION MANAGER PETER JONES
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	HEAD OF PROCUREMENT HYWYN PRITCHARD, GROUP MANAGER PAUL HITCHEN, GROUP MANAGER MARK BALDWIN, USAR CAPABILITY OFFICERS, STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM (SLT)		
TITLE OF REPORT:	ND2 PROCUREMENT: TELESCOPIC HANDLER		

APPENDICES:	NONE
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Purpose of Report

1. To inform Members of the outcome of the procurement exercise and to seek authorisation to procure 4 x Telescopic Handlers as part of the New Dimensions 2 (ND2) Programme that supports National Resilience.

Recommendation

2. It is recommended that Members;
 - a) note the contents of the report; and
 - b) approve the award of the the contract to P. Tuckwell Ltd T/A Tuckwells for four telescopic handlers, at a total cost of £423,000.

Introduction and Background

3. ND2 is a national capability uplift programme that supports National Resilience (NR). The programme is authorised and funded by UK Government via the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), and Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority (MFRA) are the Lead Authority for NR. Part of the national capability provides assets for Urban Search & Rescue (USAR).
4. The original New Dimension programme identified and delivered national assets which enhanced the Fire & Rescue response to a range of catastrophic incidents, including natural and deliberate events, and specifically included response to large scale structural collapse and serious transport incidents.

5. The USAR Capability currently have a fleet of Multi-Purpose Vehicles (MPVs) in service that operate to fulfil a diverse number of strategic outcomes. These include, but are not limited to, the loading and unloading of USAR modules, the transportation of equipment at an incident ground, and the lifting and moving of rubble at a USAR incident.
6. The current USAR MPVs are made up of 20 x Bobcat Toolcat 5600, which has now been discontinued by the manufacturer. Subsequently it has become increasingly difficult to maintain the current fleet of vehicles. The current fleet has now been deemed as unsustainable and unlikely to meet emerging needs. A Telescopic Handler, as part of a holistic solution, provides greater capability:



7. The procurement of 4 x Telescopic Handlers forms part of a wider project for ND2.
8. The procurement of the Telescopic Handlers will add to a more varied capability at different incident types, that are strategically located around the country and will enhance National Resilience.
9. Several key variables have been considered to determine the most effective vehicle types and their distribution across the 20 USAR Teams. These include, but are not limited to:
 - Operational Risk Factors: Such as the prevalence of high-risk incidents (e.g, wildfires, flooding) in specific regions.
 - Strategic Deployment Considerations: Including the proximity to, and interoperability with, other National Resilience assets, such as High-Volume Pumps (HVPs).
 - Geographical Positioning: Ensuring national coverage by considering geographical placement rather than adhering strictly to the existing four USAR Zones.
 - A framework for the provision of ground maintenance and plant equipment was identified and a mini competition was undertaken. One bid was

received as part of the process which met all of the Authority's requirements. The bid includes all supplementary equipment to be included within the costs.

Equality and Diversity Implications

10. There are no identified equality or diversity implications related to the procurement of Telescopic Handlers. The Telescopic Handler specification ensures that the vehicles purchased must meet current UK safety regulations to be road legal. This ensures that the vehicles are designed to ensure safe operation in USAR environments, prioritising safety across all personnel roles regardless of background, identity or physical characteristics.

Staff Implications

11. All staff will be required to complete a conversion or initial course in the operation of the new vehicles. This training will include vehicle safety checks, vehicle rules and regulations and vehicle operations.

Legal Implications

12. Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service Procurement Department have identified the route to market as the NEPO214, Ground Maintenance Equipment and Plant Framework. This ensures a fair and transparent route to market for all suppliers on the framework.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

13. Funding for the Telescopic Handlers is provided by MHCLG as part of the ND2 USAR project. This will enhance the current USAR Capability.
 - The procurement of four Telescopic Handler vehicles is £423,000.

Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications

14. Risk management for the procurement and implementation of telescopic handlers is monitored and addressed by the ND2 Programme. Standard operating procedures will be developed and assured along with training, and risk assessments completed.

Environmental Implications

15. The procurement of Telescopic Handlers aligns with sustainability goals by replacing an existing fleet of vehicles, which have reached end of life and are no longer sustainable.
16. Equipment specifications account for how the vehicle is manufactured and operated with consideration to the effects on the environment. This includes, but is not limited to, offsetting the carbon footprint of the manufacturing process or powering the vehicle via renewable energy. This reduces the environmental

impact associated with replacing vehicles and promotes responsible environmental practices within the procurement process.

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.*

17. The recommendation supports the Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service's vision and purpose by allowing crews to respond faster, more effectively, and contribute to the saving of lives. It ensures responder and public safety during complex rescues thereby reducing the risk of injury or fatality and improves resilience and readiness for major incidents.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NONE

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ATV	A ll- T errain V ehicle
MFRA	M erseyside F ire and R escue A uthority
MFRS	M erseyside F ire and R escue S ervice
MHCLG	M inistry of H ousing, C ommunities and L ocal G overnment
MPV	M ulti- P urpose V ehicle
ND2	N ew D imensions 2 Programme
NR	N ational R esilience
USAR	U rbain S earch A nd R escue