

NOTE OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AND TREASURER

TEN YEAR CAPITAL PROGRAMME

1 Purpose of Note

To propose to the Strategy and Resources Committee a Ten Year Capital Programme to be put forward to the Fire Authority as a replacement for the Capital Programme currently contained within the Medium Term Financial Plan 2006/07 to 2008/09.

2 Recommendations

The Group is asked to consider:

- a) The Ten Year Capital Programme, subject to any variations that may be required as a result of the outcome of the current Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP) consultation process;
- b) The employment of consultants to provide a business case for the relocation of Service Headquarters and for the development of the Telford Central site. Also, to provide more accurate financial information on the provision of two new fire stations in Shrewsbury as part of the longer term IRMP process; and
- c) The further development of the existing Capital Reserve to reduce the impact of proposed capital expenditure in 2009/10 and 2010/11.

3 Background

As IRMP moves through its fourth year, the risks faced by the public of Shropshire become much clearer and, as such, the resources required by the Fire Authority to reduce those risks become more readily identifiable. As a result, the longer term needs of Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service can be more readily quantified and the Fire Authority's capital programme more accurately predicted. This paper outlines a ten year capital programme to Members, which, it is proposed, would replace the existing capital programme contained within the current Medium Term Financial Plan (available on the Service website). Whilst the programme is likely to require further amendment as even more accurate risk information is made available, it is proposed that the ten year programme provides a robust strategy for the short, medium and long term planning of capital expenditure.



This paper firstly describes the building requirements of the Service over the next ten years, before moving on to identify the Service's long term needs for fire and special appliances. Finally, the need for capital expenditure on additional resources such as Information Technology, training facilities etc is quantified. A complete breakdown of the proposed Ten Year Capital Programme is attached as an Appendix to this report.

4 Buildings

Retained Fire Stations

Appendix, Line 1 - £65k per annum with the exception of £105k in 2009/10

Through the 2005/06 IRMP process, attendance standards for life risk fires and Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) were established for the whole of Shropshire. By using the Fire Service Emergency Cover (FSEC) software and confirming findings using historical data, it was predicted that these emergency cover standards could be achieved in rural areas of Shropshire without the need for the current Retained Stations at Clun, Baschurch, Prees and Hodnet. In establishing resilience standards to maintain minimum standards of cover during exceptionally busy periods (e.g. spate conditions, New Dimensions incidents etc), however, it was identified that in order to achieve a minimum standard of one fire appliance in 20 minutes anywhere in Shropshire, all existing Retained Stations were required.

Through its asset management strategy the Fire Authority has a long-term plan for renovating, upgrading and maintaining all Retained Stations funded through careful planning and linking of the capital and revenue budgets. The strategy has worked well and currently only three stations, Prees, Craven Arms and Cleobury Mortimer, are in very poor condition and require full renovation. On completion of these three stations the more modern stations at, Albrighton, Minsterley, Baschurch, and Hodnet will be provided with upgraded facilities and the early stations revisited to incorporate lessons learned from the later refurbishments.

The revenue property maintenance budget has been assessed and funded at a level, which will ensure there is no significant deterioration from the new standard. The ongoing provision of £65,000 per annum, for capital expenditure, supplemented when larger projects are required, and combined with planned maintenance expenditure is working well and the draft ten year capital programme reflects this approach. The ongoing commitment will enable continued minor improvements and changes to meet developing needs.

Garaging for Ford Ranger at Oswestry

Appendix, Line 2 - £20k in 2007/08

Through last year's IRMP process and the setting of RTC attendance standards, it is becoming clear that the Service's Heavy Rescue Tender (HRT) is unable to achieve the required 30 minute attendance to all parts of the County. Proposals are currently being developed for the existing Ford Rangers at Whitchurch, Market Drayton, Newport, Bridgnorth and Ludlow to carry RTC equipment to enhance that carried on fire appliances pending the arrival of the HRT. To complete this provision around the perimeter of the County it is proposed that a Ford Ranger be provided at Oswestry (see overleaf) and, as such, minor alterations will be required to existing garaging facilities at Oswestry.



Wholetime Fire Stations - Short/Medium Term

Fire Alarm Installations for Wholetime Stations

Appendix, Line 3 - £120k in 2007/08

The introduction of the Regulatory Reform Order has clarified the fire safety risk assessment process for all businesses, including the Fire Authority. An initial risk assessment has identified the possible need for automatic fire detection systems at all of the Service's wholetime stations. Whilst further work is required to confirm this need, it appears prudent to include provision within the capital programme.

Telford, Tweedale and Wellington

Appendix, Line 4 - £20k in 2007/08

Through the 2006/07 IRMP process a review of fire cover in the Telford area has been conducted and consultation is taking place on the relocation of one wholetime appliance from Telford Central to Tweedale. Although these proposals offer the opportunity for much improved fire cover in the Telford area, the capital expenditure requirements are currently seen to be minimal as follows:

Telford Central

No expenditure required unless proposals for improved use of the Telford site (see below) are agreed.

Tweedale

Capital expenditure of £20,000 to upgrade the current accommodation for use by a wholetime crew is included within the capital plan.

Wellington

The IRMP process identifies that Wellington Fire Station is in virtually the optimum location for providing emergency cover. Planned developments at Telford College of Art and Technology (TCAT) are, however, raising issues with regard to a need to either redevelop or relocate the fire station site. As the proposals do not benefit the work of the Service, no provision has been made within the capital programme for such developments. It should be noted, however, that Wellington Fire Station is currently in poor condition and that, should the TCAT developments not take place, significant investment will be required to achieve the required level of provision.

Wholetime Fire Stations - Medium/Long Term

Shrewsbury

Appendix, Lines 5 and 6 - £1.5 million in each of 2010/11 and 2011/12

The IRMP process continues to identify that the provision of two wholetime and one retained appliance at the current St Michael's Street site does not offer optimum emergency cover for the Shrewsbury area. Proposals through the current IRMP are, however, that these appliances would not be relocated pending the removal of Fire Control from the site, when the new Regional Control Centre (RCC) becomes operational, currently scheduled for 2009/10. Wider issues yet to be resolved, such as the route of the new northern relief road for Shrewsbury, will also clearly impact upon the location of the new fire stations.

These proposals would need to be revisited should the opportunity to move sooner materialise, e.g. should the valuation of the site rise rapidly, or an optimum site for either one or two new fire stations become available. For the purpose of longer term planning, however, sums of £1.5 million have been included within the capital programme for 2010/11 and 2011/12 for the building of two new fire stations.



These amounts do not take account of the fact that capital receipts would also be available from the sale of the current site (see below).

Headquarters

With the relocation of Shrewsbury fire appliances to enhance emergency cover, it would not appear either feasible or desirable to maintain the St Michael's Street site as the Service Headquarters. Further options being considered by officers, which will require more detailed work with regard to their feasibility, are:

- Development of the existing building at Telford should a fire appliance be relocated to Tweedale from Telford Central;
- Construction of a new building on an existing SFRS site;
- Relocation of HQ to rented office accommodation anywhere in the County; or
- Joint accommodation with our partners

It is proposed that consultants be appointed to provide a business case for each of these options and also to consider in more detail the likely costs of relocating the Shrewsbury appliances as described above.

Telford Central Site

Appendix, Line 7 - £300,000 in 2007/08 for top floor improvements

Should the removal of one fire appliance to Tweedale proceed as proposed through the IRMP, the Telford Central site will then be greatly under utilised. Consideration has previously been made for enhanced use of the existing facilities through sharing of the top floor of the fire station, firstly with the Ambulance Service and more latterly with community safety partners in the Borough of Telford & Wrekin. On each occasion the proposals have failed due to a change of heart by our partners.

It would not appear prudent to make decisions on extensive capital expenditure at Telford Central until a full business case (as described above) is made with regard to the relocation of HQ. Opportunities are available, however, to plan capital expenditure on a phased basis, which would enhance the use of the current site without making a full commitment to relocating HQ to this site.

The Service currently has a number of needs, which could be met by better utilisation of the top floor at Telford Central fire station. These include the following:

- Limited conference room facilities within the Service
This results, for example, in Fire Authority meetings having to be held at either Shropshire County Council or the Borough of Telford & Wrekin offices.
- Limited lecture room facilities at the Training Centre
This results in expenditure using external facilities, such as the Telford Business Centre
- Poor facilities for standby Fire Control
Currently located on Shrewsbury fire station and, therefore, not truly remote from problems, which may affect the existing Fire Control. A standby Fire Control at Telford Central could also be used to deal with the so-called out-of-scope issues that will undoubtedly arise when RCCs become operative.
- Non-existent IT training facilities
These could be incorporated in the development of a standby Fire Control.



The proposed ten year capital programme includes the expenditure of £300,000 in the next financial year to make the top floor of Telford Central fire station suitable to meet these needs. Further amounts are then included in each of the following two years to prepare the site for full use as an HQ, should this option be chosen as a result of the study proposed above. If not, the expenditure could clearly be removed from the capital plan at a later date.

Crucial Crew Venue **Appendix, Line 8 - £150k in 2009/10**

Consideration has previously been given with partners in the Borough of Telford & Wrekin to the construction of a purpose built Crucial Crew Venue. Although these proposals do not currently appear to be gaining momentum, it would seem appropriate to include finance within the capital programme for the Fire Authority to be part of any further developments.

Workshops **Appendix, Line 9 – none at present**

The existing vehicle maintenance workshops are based at the Shrewsbury site, which is becoming increasingly crowded and difficult to manage. The noise produced by workshops operations is also not appropriate on a shared site. The accommodation is restricted and the increasing size and weight of appliances is causing difficulties, to the point that the large and precision engineered Aerial Ladder Platforms cannot be maintained under cover and are serviced in the open on the drill yard. The restricted headroom means that vehicle lifts cannot be used and that all work carried out under appliances is done using a pit, which is no longer considered appropriate on access, safety and manual handling grounds.

The condition survey of the Shrewsbury site has also identified that significant expenditure is required on the workshops building. Consideration is now being given to early rental of a vehicle maintenance workshop off site with consideration of incorporating accommodation into a new fire station at a later date, if appropriate.

5 Vehicles

Fire Appliances **Appendix, Line 10 - £510k in 2007/08 then varying in line with the existing appliance replacement programme**

The Fire Authority has for many years operated a twelve year fire appliance replacement programme. This has recently been augmented by the requirements of the Best Value Review of the Retained Service, which has established a need to replace all appliances at single pump retained stations (over time) with eight seater XL Cab appliances. This programme is progressing well with XL Cabs expected to be in place on eleven retained stations by the end of the year, and a further six programmed in the next eighteen months. The capital programme reflects the success of officers in balancing the procurement of new appliances to generally being three per year, although there is clearly room for even further improvement from 2013/14 onwards.



Special Appliances

Ford Rangers (Oswestry, Tweedale and Reserve)

Appendix, Line 11 - £80k in 2007/08

As described above, a need has been identified through the IRMP process to improve RTC equipment provision in the Oswestry area; this will require the purchase and equipping of a Ford Ranger for Oswestry station. Furthermore, it is proposed that, should the movement of a wholtime appliance to Tweedale proceed as planned, there will be a requirement for a further Ford Ranger for use at Tweedale. Finally, it has been identified by officers that the addition of a Ford Ranger to the reserve fleet would reduce the need for an eight seater appliance to be held in the reserve fleet, which could then be made available for operational use.

Replacement for Land Rovers

Appendix, Line 12 - £100k per year from 2008/09 to 2010/11

Through the current year's IRMP, proposals are being progressed for the use of the existing Tweedale Land Rover as a Small Fires Unit (SFU) in a twelve-month pilot study. Should the pilot prove successful, it is envisaged that a dedicated and more appropriate SFU would be purchased to replace the aging Land Rover. Funding is included within the capital programme to facilitate this, and additionally for the purchase of two further such vehicles in following years for possible use in the North Telford and Shrewsbury areas.

Light Pumping Unit

Appendix, Line 13 - £250k in 2009/10

The Service's own Heavy Pumping Unit (HPU) is due for replacement in 2009/10. The recent provision by Government of a virtually identical High Volume Pumping Unit (HVPU), however, means that there is little, if anything, to be gained by replacing this vehicle. The development of a water strategy for the Service has identified the much greater flexibility of our own Light Pumping Unit, and it is proposed that a further such unit should be procured instead of the existing HPU, to allow for the provision of off-road high volume pumping capacity in both the North and South of the County.

Water Carrier

Appendix, Line 14 - £120k in 2011/12 and 2016/17

The existing Water Carrier, based at Bridgnorth, which also forms part of the Service's water strategy, is due for replacement in 2016/17, as reflected in the capital programme. This appliance's use has long been limited by its location, which was selected almost entirely on the basis of available garaging facilities. The capital programme includes an option for the provision of a second water carrier, the garaging for which could be incorporated within the development of new fire stations in Shrewsbury and which would greatly enhance the Service's existing water strategy.

Replacement for Five Ford Rangers

Appendix, Line 15 - £100k in 2014/15

The original five Ford Rangers, which provide the Service with greatly enhanced operational flexibility (at much reduced costs) at Whitchurch, Market Drayton, Newport, Bridgnorth and Ludlow, will be due for replacement in 2014/15.



Heavy Rescue Tender

Appendix, Line 16 - £300k in 2016/17

The Service's Heavy Rescue Tender which, due to extensive use throughout the County, has only a ten year life span, will be due for replacement again in 2016/17.

Aerial Ladder Platform Telford Central

Appendix, Line 17 - £450k in 2016/17

The Service's Aerial Ladder Platform (ALP) at Telford Central has a twenty year life and will be due for replacement in 2016/17. Although the cost of replacement has been included within the capital programme, it is envisaged that by this time the Service will have entered into partnership arrangements for the provision of a reserve ALP, rather than purchasing a dedicated vehicle.

6 Equipment and Personal Protective Equipment

Road Traffic Collision Equipment for Ford Rangers

Appendix, Line 18 - £50k in 2007/08

As described above, the introduction of attendance standards for RTCs through the IRMP process has identified that the Service's only Heavy Rescue Tender (based at Wellington) is unable to achieve an attendance standard of thirty minutes to many areas around the perimeter of the County. The provision of enhanced RTC equipment to those areas can, however, be achieved relatively easily, using the existing five Ford Rangers along with the provision of a further similar vehicle at Oswestry. £50,000 of capital expenditure is included for 2007/08 for the procurement of RTC equipment for use on the Ford Rangers to enhance greatly the Service's RTC response around the perimeter of the County.

Firekit Replacement (Integrated Clothing Project)

Appendix, Line 19 - £250 in 2009/10 and 2010/11

Members will be aware of the Integrated Clothing Project (ICP), which seeks to identify national arrangements for the procurement of firekit and other Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). The replacement of all firekit through the ICP is estimated as costing in the region of £500,000 and provision has been made within the capital programme for this cost to be spread over two years (2009/10 and 2010/11), should the ICP successfully identify PPE, which provides enhanced levels of protection for firefighters.

Gas Tight Suits

Appendix, Line 20 - £34k in 2010/11

The Service's Gas Tight Suits will become life expired during 2010/11 and provision has been made accordingly within the capital programme for their replacement.

Breathing Apparatus Replacement/Upgrade

Appendix, Line 21 - £50k in 2010/11 and £150k in 2015/16

The Service's provision of breathing apparatus equipment has now worked well for many years and the capital programme includes funding for the ongoing replacement and upgrading of this vital equipment.



7 Training

Training Facilities

Appendix, Line 22 - £30k per year

Much investment has taken place over many years to ensure that the most appropriate training facilities are available for our staff, including the provision of remote facilities at many of our Retained Stations. The sum of £30,000 is provided annually within the capital programme for the ongoing maintenance and enhancement of these facilities.

8 Technology and Communications

Information Technology and Communications

Appendix, Line 23 - £50k per year

The capital programme for information, technology and communications (ITC) addresses the planned development and maintenance needs of the Service. The programme includes a projected annual capital expenditure of £50,000 to address the routine replacement and maintenance of local and wide area networks, servers, personal computers (PCs), printers, telephones and fireground radios.

Regional Fire Control Link

Appendix, Line 24 - £10k in 2008/09

In the run up to the Regional Control Centres (RCCs) going live the Fire Authority will need to procure a robust electronic link with the RCCs and procure suitable PCs and software to ensure we can maintain links with the Central mobilising function. We are not clear as yet what level of funding will be available as part of new burdens, so it is felt prudent to identify an amount to procure these links.

Station End Equipment

Appendix, Line 25 - £10k in 2007/08 and then £25k in 2008/09 and 2009/10

In anticipation of the migration to the regional fire control (circa 2008/9) it is anticipated that a station-end equipment replacement programme will be necessary to address risk critical elements of the Service and ensure business continuity pending and post go-live of the RCC.

ITC Equipment Room Relocation

Appendix, Line 26 - £75k in 2008/09

To secure long-term resilience of the Service's communications infrastructure it may be necessary to relocate existing ITC equipment room assets (Airwave Servers etc) to another site (potentially Telford Central, as discussed above). Projected costs to de-install, re-install and commission the existing ITC equipment room assets are circa £75,000. Ideally this programme of activity should take place prior to migration to the RCC. This activity would also facilitate early vacation of the St Michael's Street site.



9 Other

Capital Receipts (HQ site)

Appendix, Line 27 - £500k in each of 2010/11 and 2011/12

During planning a number of years ago to merge Headquarters and Control Room facilities with the Ambulance Service in Shropshire, the value of the St Michael's Street site was established as being in the region of £1 million. Pending a further evaluation as part of the business case proposed above, it seems prudent to allow for the receipt of a similar amount for the purpose of long-term capital expenditure planning. As such, capital receipts of £500,000 have been envisaged for both 2010/11 and 2011/12.

10 Capital Programme Totals Overview

As can be seen within the Appendix, the proposals described above allow for a relatively well-balanced short, medium and long-term capital programme with the exception of the years 2009/10 and 2010/11. During these two years the planned capital expenditure is approximately 55% and 70% respectively above the planned ten year average of £1.22 million. Consequently, Members may wish to consider the continuation and enhancement of the existing Capital Reserve for levelling out these variations, and for reducing the build up of committed financing charges, which may be difficult to manage in later years.

11 Next Steps

The further development of the draft capital programme requires a number of decisions and approvals from Members of the Strategy and Resources Committee and from the Fire Authority as follows:

- Approval of the Ten Year Capital Programme, subject to any variations that may be required as a result of the findings of the current IRMP consultation process;
- Approval of the employment of consultants to provide a business case for the relocation of Service Headquarters and for the development of the Telford Central site. Also, to provide more accurate financial information on the provision of two new fire stations in Shrewsbury as part of the longer-term IRMP process; and
- Approval of the further development of the existing Capital Reserve to reduce the impact of proposed capital expenditure in 2009/10 and 2010/11.

Dependent upon the above, officers will then be required to develop more detailed capital appraisals for each of the schemes planned for 2007/08, including accurate spend profiles for each.

12 Financial Implications

The financial implications are as set out in this report.

13 Legal Comment

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.



14 Appendices

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority – Capital Programme 2007/08 to 2016/17

15 Background Papers

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority:

14 June 2006, Report 8, Medium Term Financial Plan 2006/07 – 2008/09

<http://www.shropshirefire.gov.uk/Docs/Performance/2006/2006-06-medium-term-financial-plan.pdf>

Strategy and Resources Committee:

21 September 2006, Report 7, Service and Budget Planning 2007/08 -2009/10

Implications of all of the following have been considered and, where they are significant (i.e. marked with an asterisk), the implications are detailed within the report itself.

Business Continuity Planning		Integrated Risk Management Planning	*
Capacity		Legal	
Civil Contingencies Act		Member Involvement	
Comprehensive Performance Assessment		National Framework	
Equality and Fairness		Operational Assurance	
Efficiency Savings	*	Retained	*
Environmental		Risk and Insurance	
Financial	*	Staff	*
Fire Control/Fire Link	*	Strategic Planning	*

For further information about this report please contact Alan Taylor, Chief Fire Officer, or Keith Dixon, Treasurer, on 01743 260201.



Appendix to note on
Ten Year Capital Programme
Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority
Budget Working Group
6 November 2006

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority Capital Programme 2007/08 to 2016/17

		2007/08 £'000	2008/09 £'000	2009/10 £'000	2010/11 £'000	2011/12 £'000	2012/13 £'000	2013/14 £'000	2014/15 £'000	2015/16 £'000	2016/17 £'000
BUILDINGS											
1	Building Improvements (Retained Stations)	65	65	105 (CM)	65	65	65	65	65	65	65
2	Garaging for Ford Ranger at Oswestry	20									
3	Fire Alarm Installations (Wholetime stations)	120									
4	Tweedale Improvements	20									
5	New Shrewsbury Fire Station (1)				1,500						
6	New Shrewsbury Fire Station (2)					1,500					
7	Telford Central Improvements (Headquarters)	300	400	400							
8	Crucial Crew Venue			150							
9	Workshops (rented pending HQ move)										
VEHICLES											
10	Fire Appliances	510	680	510	510		510	340	850	850	
11	Ford Rangers (Oswestry, Tweedale and Reserve)	80									
12	Replacement for L4Ps (Small Fires Units)		100	100	100						
13	Light Pumping Unit (replace Heavy Pumping Unit)			250							
14	Water Carriers					120					120
15	Replace 5 Ford Rangers							100			
16	Heavy Rescue Tender Wellington										300
17	Aerial Ladder Platform Telford Central										450
EQUIPMENT & PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT											
18	Road Traffic Collision equipment for Ford Rangers	50									
19	Firekit Replacement (Integrated Clothing Project)			250	250						
20	Gas Tight Suits				34						
21	Breathing Apparatus Set Replacement/Upgrade				50					150	
TRAINING											
22	Training Facilities	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATIONS											
23	Information Technology and Communications	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
24	Regional Fire Control Link		10								
25	Station End Equipment	10	25	25							
26	ITC Equipment Room relocation		75								
OTHER											
27	Capital Receipts (Headquarters site)				-500	-500					
CAPITAL PROGRAMME TOTALS		1,255	1,435	1,870	2,089	1,265	655	485	1,095	1,030	1,015