



**Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority**

**Decision Report**

**Report reference number:** 003-23

**Government security classification:** Official

**Title of report:**  
**Property and Estates Consultancy Contract Extension - ECFRS Training Centre**

**Area of county / stakeholders affected:** Service wide

**Report by:** Karl Edwards, Director of Corporate Services

**Date of report:** 15 March 2023

**Enquiries to:** Karl Edwards, Director of Corporate Services

**1. Purpose of the report**

The purpose of this report is to gain approval from the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) to use reserve funding to extend the Property and Estates Consultant contract for a further 24 months. This is to continue the utilisation of their subject matter expertise in delivering the completion of the Full Business Case (FBC) to relocate the Live Fire training facilities from Wethersfield to the Fire Service Headquarters site, Kelvedon Park.

**2. Recommendations**

The recommendation is to extend the contract with MRG. This will allow ECFRS to proceed with and complete the FBC for the new ECFRS training facilities. The current contract is due expire on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2023. The FBC is at RIBA Stage 2 and the recommendation is to extend the contract by a further 24 months. This would allow time for the land surveys, planning permission building design works and commencement of construction to take place.

The initial PO amount was £117,240.00 plus VAT [REDACTED] to cover the entire 12-month engagement, which ran from 17th March 2022 to 17th March 2023 inclusive and ECFRS is seeking approval to renew on the same terms for a further 24 months. [REDACTED] totalling £234,482.00 plus VAT. This is to be funded from the Innovation and Transformation Earmarked Reserve.

### 3. Benefits of the proposal

The core benefits of extending the contract for the property and estates consultant are to achieve some of the outcomes identified below for the following milestones:

Milestone	Outcome	Core Tasks	Statutory Processes	Procurement	Information Exchange
0. Strategic Case	Determine ECFRS requirements	Develop the Business Case (SOC) for feasible options. Review project risks and project budget. Ratify the options that best deliver ECFRS requirements. Review feedback from previous projects. Undertake site appraisals.	Undertake a strategic appraisal of planning considerations	Appoint the client team.  Determine the procurement route	Finalise SOC Prepare PID
1. Preparation and Briefing	Project Brief developed and approvals sought by ECFRS. Confirm that the requirements can be accommodated on the preferred site	Prepare Project Brief including project outcomes and sustainability outcomes, quality aspirations and spatial requirements. Undertake feasibility studies. Agree project budget. Source site Information and commission site surveys. Prepare project programme. Prepare project execution plan.	Source pre-application planning advice. Initiate collation of health and safety pre-construction Information	Appoint design team	Project Brief Feasibility studies Site information Project budget Project programme Procurement strategy Responsibility matrix Information requirements
2. Concept Design	Concept approved by ECFRS and aligned to the Project Brief	Prepare Architectural Concept incorporating Strategic engineering requirements and aligned to cost plan, project strategies and outline specification. Agree Project Brief Derogations. Undertake reviews with ECFRS and project stakeholders. Prepare stage design programme.	Obtain pre-application planning advice. Agree route to Building Regulations compliance. Submit outline planning application	Appoint contractor	Project Brief. Derogations. Signed off Stage Report. Project strategies Outline Specification Cost plan Prepare and issue Outline Business Case
3. Spatial Coordination	Architectural and engineering information spatially coordinated	Commission design studies, engineering analysis and cost exercises to test Architectural Concept resulting in spatially coordinated design aligned to updated cost plan, project strategies and Outline Specification. Initiate change control procedures. Prepare stage Design Programme	Review design against Building Regulations. Prepare and submit planning application	Engage PCSA  Establish preferred bidder status	Signed off Stage Report. Project strategies. Updated Outline Specification. Updated cost plan. Planning application.
4. Technical Design	All design information prepared for manufacture and	Develop architectural and engineering technical design. Prepare and coordinate design team. Prepare and integrate specialist subcontractors.	Submit Building Regulations. Application Discharge Pre-commencement Planning Conditions. Prepare Construction Phase Plan.	Appoint contractor	Manufacturing information. Construction information. Final Specifications. Residual project strategies.

	construct of the project.	Building systems information Prepare stage Design Programme	Submit form F10 to HSE		Building Regulations application. Prepare and issue Full Business Case
5. Manufacturing and Construction	Manufacturing, Construction and Commissioning completed	Finalise site logistics. Manufacture Building Systems and construct building. Monitor progress against construction programme. Inspect construction quality. Resolve site queries as required. Undertake commissioning of building Prepare Building Manual	Carry out Construction Phase Plan Comply with planning conditions related to construction		Building Manual including Health and Safety File and Fire Safety Information Practical Completion certificate including Defects List Asset information
6. Handover	Building handed over. Aftercare initiated and building contract concluded	Hand over building in line with Plan for Use Strategy. Undertake review of project performance. Undertake seasonal commissioning Rectify defects Complete initial aftercare tasks including light touch Post Occupancy Evaluation. BREEAM if applicable	Comply with planning conditions as required		Feedback on project performance Final Certificate Feedback from light touch Post Occupancy Evaluation
7. In-use	Building used, operated and maintained efficiently	Implement facilities management and asset management. Undertake Post Occupancy Evaluation of building performance in use. Verify project outcomes including sustainability outcomes	Comply with planning conditions as required	Appoint Facilities Management and Asset Management teams, and strategic advisers as needed	Feedback from Post Occupancy Evaluation. Updated Building Manual including Health and Safety File and Fire Safety Information as necessary

#### **4. Background and proposal**

The training venue at Wethersfield (WTC) is leased from the Ministry of Defence (MOD). The MOD plans to sell the land by 2025 as part of its estate disposal strategy.

The MOD provided written notice to ECFRS advising of the need to find an alternative location for the delivery of Live Fire training. It should be noted that the timescale is unlikely to decrease and that it could be likely to extend past that of 2025. Regular meetings are held to establish whether the timelines have adjusted. The last meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> February advised that 2025 was still the target date.

ECFRS commissioned, through an external agent, MRG, a property and estate consultant, to undertake a feasibility study to assess cost, timeframes, and planning requirements. MRG is an international group of specialist recruitment businesses focused on leadership appointments across real estate and facilities management, development, and infrastructure.

The development and potential expansion of Service Headquarters (KP) to host the training currently delivered at WTC has been identified by the Senior Leadership Team as the preferred option.

It should be noted that the original contract was established for a 12-month period in the first instance to enable ECFRS to assess what activity and associated actions were required to commence with the development to full business case. The renewal of this contract for a further 24 months will take ECFRS up to the submission of full business case and onwards to commencement of construction.

There are also other elements such as the Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP), with regard to which ECFRS is utilising the knowledge and skills of the incumbent property specialist to ensure we are maximising our investment.

It is recognised that the request for this decision approval has exceeded the end date of the contractor. The reason for this is that ECFRS have been awaiting the outputs of the RIBA Stage 2 report. ECFRS did not wish to renew before this date as it may have been prohibitive if the KP Land survey results had prevented us from moving to RIBA Stage 3.

#### **5. Alternative options considered and rejected.**

The alternative option is to discontinue with the current arrangement regarding the property consultant, but this is rejected on the grounds that ECFRS does not currently have the in-house expertise and capacity to manage a programme of this capital value.

#### **6. Strategic priorities**

This proposal supports the resourcing required to deliver one of the ECFRS Estates Strategy's key deliverables, which identifies that there is a requirement to relocate the current training facilities based at Wethersfield to an alternative location.

#### **7. Operational implications**

There are no direct implications associated with this proposal, however this is linked to the project delivery of ensuring that ECFRS has adequate training facilities to deliver operational competence.

ECFRS's training department has appropriate business continuity arrangements in place to facilitate offsite Breathing Apparatus (BA) training should it be required.



## 12. Risks

Inconsistent or lack of adequate expert project resource such a Property and Estates Consultant could result in delay in project delivery, the project exceeding agreed scheduled tolerance, and / or the project failing to deliver target outcomes.

## 13. Governance Boards

The strategic plans and early findings were presented at Strategic Board on 8 June 2022.

The proposal was discussed and approved at Portfolio Management Board (PMB) on 16 August 2022 to progress through to a further discussion at Strategic Board in September 2022 for approval to move to FBC. Following this the PFCC agreed the project moving to RIBA stage 3 via decision report 032-22.

## 14. Background papers

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Decision Process (#)**

**Step 1A - Chief Fire Officer Comments**

(The Chief Fire Officer is asked in their capacity as the Head of Paid Service to comment on the proposal.)

.....I support this recommendation.....

.....



Sign: .....

Date:.....14/03/2023.....

**Step 1B – Consultation with representative bodies**

(The Chief Fire Officer is to set out the consultation that has been undertaken with the representative bodies)

.....N/A.....

**Step 2 - Statutory Officer Review**

The report will be reviewed by the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority’s (“the Commissioner’s”) Monitoring Officer and Chief Finance Officer prior to review and sign off by the Commissioner or their Deputy.

Monitoring Officer

Sign: .....DHorsman.....

Print: ..Darren Horsman - Deputy Monitoring Officer.....

Date: ..18.4.2023.....



Chief Finance Officer

Sign: .....

Print: .....Neil Cross.....

Date: ... 14/02/2023 .....

**Step 3 - Publication**

Is the report for publication?      **YES**

If 'NO', please give reasons for non-publication (Where relevant, cite the security classification of the document(s). State 'none' if applicable)

.....Appendix 1 not for publication.....

If the report is not for publication, the Monitoring Officer will decide if and how the public can be informed of the decision.

**Step 4 - Redaction**

If the report is for publication, is redaction required:

- 1      **Of Decision Sheet**                              **YES**
- 2      **Of Appendix**                                      **YES – do not publish**

If 'YES', please provide details of required redaction:

**Redact consultant's daily rate within decision sheet. Do not publish Appendix1 – IR35 Report/Assessment**

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Date redaction carried out: **20/04/2023**.....

If redaction is required, the Chief Finance Officer or the Monitoring Officer are to sign off that redaction has been completed.

Sign: .....  .....      Print: **Neil Cross** .....

Date signed: **15/03/2023** .....

**Step 5 - Decision by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner or Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner**

I agree the recommendations in the report:

Sign:  ..... (PFCC)

Print: **ROGER HIRST**

Date signed: **19th April 2023**