



Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority

Decision Report

Report reference number: 011-24

Government security classification: Not protectively marked

Title of report: Trench Rescue and Chainsaw Capabilities

Area of county / stakeholders affected: Service wide

Report by: Colette Black (Director of People Services) / Andy Smith (Director of Operations)

Date of report: 19/3/24

Enquiries to: Marc Diggory / Ryan Ainger

1. Purpose of the report

To seek approval to utilise and estimated £109,000 of funding from the operational training reserve for specialist training and equipment to maintain the trench rescue and chainsaw capability for our Technical Rescue Team. All the relevant training will be delivered from within the existing training scheduled and will therefore not incur any additional pay costs.

2. Recommendations

That funding is released to enable training and equipment to be purchased to ensure that the Technical Rescue Team is compliant with the requirements of the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) in relation to trench rescue and chainsaw capability.

3. Benefits of the proposal

The benefit of the proposal is that ECFRS will be able to continue to provide trench rescue capability and respond to incidents that involve a tree(s) that has fallen on a person(s) and / or vehicles, are in a precarious / dangerous position resulting in imminent danger to the public, or blocking the highway which may cause delays to emergency vehicles locally and in support of the region, if required.

If we do not proceed with this recommendation, our operational crews will be exposed to known risks and hazards and potentially work outside of standard practice and procedures without the mitigation of specialist training.

4. Background and proposal

ECFRS's Technical Rescue Team is required to align to the NFCC compliancy framework. A gap analysis has been completed and a number of recommendations have been made to ensure that ECFRS is fully compliant. Fully accredited training courses and appropriate additional equipment are required in support of this activity. This is not part of the base budget as the requirements were not determined and shared in time for budget setting.

5. Alternative options considered and rejected

The 'do nothing' option has been considered and rejected as it would mean that the service is not compliant with the requirements of NFCC guidance and statutory requirements within health and safety legislation in respect of training and responding to known risks i.e. trench rescues.

6. Strategic priorities

The Operational Training Strategy meets the requirements of the Fire and Rescue Plan in the following ways:

Prevention, Protection and Response – We train our people to deliver their roles in protection, prevention and response.

Develop and broaden the roles and range of activities undertaken by the service – Specialist training provided by our training team delivers an excellent platform for staff and trainers to develop further and evidence their learning.

Collaborate with our partners – Specialist training offers the opportunity to integrate activities with the service's partners and to provide joint training opportunities to help build reciprocal relationships and development.

Make the best use of our resources – Forming such a key part of our activities, investment into appropriate and fit for purpose training and training facilities will help the Authority meet its legislative and operational obligations.

7. Operational implications

ECFRS's Technical Rescue Team provides specialist support at operational incidents in line with NFCC requirements. This capability requires maintenance via specialist training to ensure ongoing operational competency.

8. Financial implications

To support the ongoing NFCC compliance requirements, the following investment from the Operational Training Reserve is needed:

Specialist training from a third-party supplier (Trench) -	£46,000
(Chainsaw) -	£10,000
Specialist equipment (Trench)-	£53,000
Total	£109,000

These costs are indicative only and subject to procurement processes.

The requirements for this specialist provision and associated plan are more than currently budgeted. It is anticipated that the investment will be funded via reserves.

All the relevant training will be delivered from within the existing training scheduled and will therefore not incur any additional pay costs.

9. Legal implications

This proposal will ensure that ECFRS aligns to and can deliver its responsibilities under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.

10. Staffing implications

There are no staff implications.

11. Equality and Diversity implications

The actions being taken will not have a disproportionate impact on individuals with protected characteristics (as defined within the Equality Act 2010), when compared to all other individuals, and will not disadvantage people with protected characteristics.

Race	N	Religion or belief	N
Sex	N	Gender reassignment	N
Age	N	Pregnancy & maternity	N
Disability	N	Marriage and Civil Partnership	N
Sexual orientation	N		

The Core Code of Ethics Fire Standard has been fully considered and incorporated into the proposals outlined in this paper.

12. Risks

There are no risks arising as a result of this proposal. However, as set out at section 3 above, if we do not proceed with this recommendation, our operational crews will be exposed to known risks and hazards and potentially work outside of standard practice and procedures without the mitigation of specialist training.

13. Governance Boards

N/A

14. Background papers

N/A

Decision Process (011-24)

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:.....19/3/24.....

Step 1B – Consultation with representative bodies

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

NA

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:



Print: P. Brent-Isherwood

Date: 21 March 2024

Chief Finance Officer

Sign:



.....

Print:Neil Cross.....

Date: .. 19/3/24

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)

None

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 | NO |
| 2 | Of Appendix | NO |

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

N/A

Date redaction carried out:

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

Sign: Print:

Date signed:

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

I agree the recommendations to this report:

Sign:  PFCC

Print: Roger Hirst Date signed: 22/03/2024