

WYFRA	FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE	1 FEBRUARY 2008	ITEM No
--------------	--	----------------------------	----------------

REPORT OF: DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

PURPOSE OF REPORT: TO OBTAIN APPROVAL TO PURCHASE FIREGROUND
RADIO BATTERIES

RECOMMENDATION: THAT APPROVAL BE GIVEN FOR A SCHEME FOR THE
PURCHASE OF REPLACEMENT BATTERIES TO BE
FUNDED BY VIREMENT FROM THE SCHEME FOR LIFTING
EQUIPMENT

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT DETAILS

Exemption Category: None

Contact Officer: Station Manager G Crossley

Background Papers: None

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At the Authority meeting 17/02/2006 a capital plan for operational equipment expenditure was approved. Included in that approval was £16,000 to provide equipment to enable crews to move bariatric (obese) patients both safely and effectively at operational incidents. The spending on this project has been limited to £8,000.
- 1.2 Therefore, it is proposed to purchase the radio batteries by virement of the remaining £8,000, which will require committee approval.

2. INFORMATION

- 2.1 An evaluation of the various types of fireground radio available on the market was completed early in 2007. The result of that evaluation was that the current radio deployed in WYFRS, the Motorola GP340, was still the favoured make and model.
- 2.2 Notwithstanding 2.1 above, it has become apparent that many of the fireground radio batteries in use are approaching the end of their working life and are in need of replacement. Many do not hold an electrical charge for a useful period of time.
- 2.3 A capital bid has been submitted to purchase radio equipment next year, including batteries. However, in addition to this, it has been identified that approximately 400 batteries are in need of urgent replacement to maintain efficient communications at incidents and, therefore, operational effectiveness.

3. ORGANISATIONAL RISK FACTORS

- 3.1 If the batteries are not replaced, a breakdown of fireground communications due to dysfunctional radios may occur. As radio communications play a vital role in ensuring the safety of personnel at operational incidents this could mean that the Authority may be unable to fulfil its obligations under Health and Safety legislation.

4. EQUALITIES AND FAIRNESS ISSUES

- 4.1 None identified.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 There is a requirement to protect the interests of the Authority by providing suitable and sufficient communications equipment to ensure the health and safety of operational personnel.
- 5.2 Provision of the equipment will address the need to provide operational crews with the right equipment, in the right place, at the right time. This, in turn, will assist the FRA in continuing to provide a high level of operational service to the communities of West Yorkshire.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 As detailed in the body of the report there is no provision within the capital plan for this expenditure and it is proposed to fund it from savings in the scheme for the purchase of lifting equipment which is underspent by £8,000. The revenue implications of this expenditure will be £300 in the current financial year rising to £3000 in a full financial year. This funding is included within the approved revenue budget.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 That funding for this equipment is provided by means of virement from the capital scheme for bariatric patients.