

GWENT POLICE AUTHORITY

Date: 29 May 2009

Item No: 7e

Heading: Update on the Costs Associated with the microwave downlink for the Force Helicopter

Report Author: Chief Constable

SUMMARY

In February 2008 the Police Authority approved £157,603 to upgrade the microwave downlink infrastructure to accommodate the needs of the new helicopter by providing wider access as well as a higher level of encryption.

Since then the IT departments of both South Wales Police and Gwent Police have identified a mechanism to reduce this cost by making best use of the existing IT infrastructure in both Forces. As a result the cost to Gwent Police has reduced to £85,680.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

The report is submitted for noting by the Authority

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In February 2008 the new contract for the provision of Police Helicopter services commenced having been awarded to Bond Air Services. Within the new contract there was a requirement for the provider to utilise the highest levels of encryption for the transfer of the camera images from the helicopter to receivers in the two Force areas.
- 1.2 The initial quote from the only available provider was £378,700 with £157,603 being the contribution for Gwent Police. Within this costing was the provision of two mobile receivers in ruggedised cases, receivers in the two new command vehicles and an upgrade to the system in the force control room. The Police Authority approved the budget for the Gwent element of the contract.
- 1.3 In the interim a considerable amount of work has been carried out to reduce this cost by making best use of the existing IT infrastructure in both Forces. As a result the overall cost has now been reduced with the costs for Gwent Police reducing to £85,680.
- 1.4 South Wales Police are the lead authority for procurement and have approved the single tender contract based on the new budget.

2. PROPOSAL FOR CONSIDERATION BY COMMITTEE AND CURRENT POSITION

2.1 For information only

3. STAFFING/PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no staffing or personnel implications.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There is a reduction in the overall cost to Gwent Police of £71,923.

5. CONSULTATION

5.1 Consultation has taken place between the IT departments of both Forces and the Air Support Consortium which is chaired by ACC Horne.

6. PROJECT ASSESSMENT FOR EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY MATTERS

6.1 This project/proposal has been considered against the general duty to promote equality, as stipulated under the Force's Equality Schemes, and has been assessed not to discriminate against any particular group.

7. RISK ASSESSMENT

7.1 There will be an increase in the availability of encrypted imagery from the helicopter across the Force area. As a result the risk will be reduced.

8. STAYING AHEAD (2011 REVIEW)

8.1 There are no implications for the 2011 review.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 The new arrangement will provide the same level of coverage from the helicopter at the a highest level of encryption with a considerable reduction in the overall cost.

10. CONTACT OFFICER

10.1 Superintendent Nigel Russell, Operational Support

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 Report from Inspector Gary Smart, Unit Executive Officer, South and East Wales Air Support Unit.

11.2 Minutes of previous Police Authority meetings re original approval.

12. APPENDICES

12.1 Nil