DORSET & WILTSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Item 18/13

MEETING	Finance, Governance & Audit Committee
DATE OF MEETING	8 March 2018
SUBJECT OF THE REPORT	Assets Department Resourcing Update
STATUS OF REPORT	For open publication
PURPOSE OF REPORT	For Information
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	The Assets Department has taken on a large-scale alignment of processes and procedures over the last two years and significant progress being made fully aligning four of the five software systems by the end of the financial year 17/18. As a result of recent recruitment campaigns there is now stability in the department and the capacity of the teams has been restored. As a result, we are now in a strong position to work towards full implementation of recognised asset management systems that were always planned to be delivered.
RISK ASSESSMENT	There has been good progress in recruitment in the last six months across the Assets Department, with only a few vacancies remaining in Estates. The continued roll out of important software systems continues and their success is critical to creating a single Assets offering.
COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT	None for the purposes of this report
BUDGET IMPLICATIONS	None for the purposes of this report
RECOMMENDATIONS	Members are asked to note the contents of this report.
BACKGROUND PAPERS	None
APPENDICES	Appendix A: PAS 55 alignment mapping

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1.   Introduction

1.1   Since Combination a vast amount of work has been undertaken to ensure that the Assets department is able to function and undertake what is normal business whilst, at the same time, delivering reductions in spend.

1.2   This was mainly achieved by reducing managerial roles at the most senior level in the department e.g. one Asset Manager, one Estates Manager, one Equipment Manager and one Fleet Manager. However, it was also recognised that the maintenance of the combined estate, Fleet and Equipment would require the numbers of technicians to largely remain the same if they were to operate efficiently, economically, competently and safely.

1.3   All management roles within the department have now been filled as of Quarter 1 (Q1) 2018/19.

1.4   Throughout this time individuals and teams have continued to ensure that all the key elements of their work with our estate, Fleet and Equipment are maintained and fit for purpose has continued through some very challenging times. This is to everyone's credit.

1.5   Members will be aware from previous updates that there are five separate management information systems in existence within the Assets Department, of these the Estates system and Hydrant management systems are now the sole systems across the Service in their areas and they were completed in 2016/17. The Fleet (Tranman) and purchasing (Agresso) systems will be in place by the end of March 2018, leaving the asset tracking system to be procured and rolled out Service wide during 2018/19.

1.6   The approach to harmonising the Service's Property, Fleet, Water & Foam, Stores and Equipment is being tracked and managed through our performance management system known as Sycle. This work is also being aligned to the requirements and principles associated with Primary Authority Scheme 55 (PAS 55) -1:2008. This has been achieved by building our plans in SYCLE. These plans allow us to fully integrate with and inform the Service Delivery Plan.

1.7   In terms of long term capital planning, the Estates team will follow the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) guidance for Public Sector Property Asset Management. Fleet are developing a risk assessed approach to replacement that will be fully integrated into all departments through the Service Support team meetings.

2.   Estates

2.1   To support the combination, a condition survey of the property assets of both the former authorities was undertaken in December 2015 and January 2016 to establish a common baseline. It is intended that this is repeated every five years in line with RICS recommendations.

2.2   Maintenance plans and asset registers are already in place and are actively monitored to make sure our estate remains fit for purpose.

2.3   Following an external audit by the British Standards Institute (BSI – 18001 process), the structure of the Estates team was strengthened to ensure legal compliance. At present there are two vacancies, one for a Property Surveyor and one for a Mechanical and Electrical Engineer. These positions are currently being advertised, but in the meantime, the work is being outsourced to ensure that essential compliance work is being dealt with.

2.4   The recent audit by the BSI has also indicated that they are satisfied with the current situation and the control measures that have been put in place. We comply with BS 18001 in the South and are working on developing this in the North with a corporately agreed target of achieving full accreditation by the end of March 2019.

2.5   Opportunities to share property assets have also been actively discussed and pursued with key partners in Wiltshire (for example as part of the Wiltshire One Public Estate) and more work is underway to strengthen this approach across the whole Service.

2.6   Work to develop the Integrated Property Asset Management Strategy (IPAMS) continues and the initial draft report from the specialist consultants is complete. This strategy will inform the Medium Term Finance Plan and further strengthen the approach to sharing assets with our key partners, and particularly in conjunction with other internal plans such as Community Safety Plan and the Integrated Risk Management Plan. It will also be a vital element in helping us to make judgements and potentially produce business cases associated with our communities' programme.

2.7   In terms of management information systems, significant progress has been made to align the systems across the Service and there is now a single estates management system in place.

3.   Fleet

3.1   Vehicle life cycles replacement programmes are now in place, which support a harmonised approach across the new Service, and is being challenged through our Integrated Risk Management Plan process.

3.2   The department has now implemented a new software system across the Service called TRANMAN. This enables better management of Fleet costs, servicing and lifecycle management and effective pool car distribution, and performance management across the Service.

4.   Equipment

4.1   A considerable amount of work has been undertaken to ensure that the team has been sufficiently supported, and that they have received additional training, so that they are clear on how to follow revised and agreed procedures.

4.2   The department is now fully staffed and able to maintain our safety inspection regime. The Equipment Manager post was advertised and successfully recruited This important role will further strengthen our commitment to the harmonisation of procedures and good practice from legacy methods.

4.3   In order for the Service to meet its legal obligations, there is a necessity to use an electronic asset management system. The existing systems currently track and record around 50,000 items of equipment.

4.4   An asset management system review has taken place to determine which systems are best able to meet the needs and requirements of the team. This includes the safety 'critical management' of equipment defects. As a result of this we are specifying a new asset management software system for procurement to tender in Q1 2018/19.

4.5   A technical specification has been developed and officers will soon to seeking costs through a procurement exercise. It is anticipated that a full roll out of this system will be undertaken by March 2019.

5.   Water & Foam

5.1   This team is now fully and competently staffed and who have been working on aligning the two legacy management information systems. This work is now complete and we have one system in operation.

6.   Supplies & Distribution

6.1   The Agresso finance system is being used for the alignment of both stores systems and this should be in place by the end March 2018.

7.   Summary and key points

7.1   The Assets Department has been subject to much change since Combination, mainly due to new opportunities for staff and retirements, with only two of the original seven senior managers remaining in post following Combination. It is to the department's credit that they have maintained safety critical systems whilst dealing with establishing new teams, and having to use legacy management systems. With the further recruitment of a Head of Assets, an Equipment Manager and Workshops Manager, the management challenges should be reduced and progress toward integration of procedures and good practice will be greatly advanced.

7.2   The department uses five software systems and two have been successfully aligned in the past year. Two more will be aligned during this financial year, with the last one being fully functional by the end of March 2019. The software migration system is a key control measure in the strategic risk register and as such will continue to be reviewed on a regular basis.

March 2018