

**TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**Item No. 7**

**MEETING: FIRE AUTHORITY 13 DECEMBER 2021**

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**SUBJECT: UKRO 2021 FESTIVAL OF RESCUE; PROJECT CLOSURE  
SUMMARY REPORT**

**JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER/CHIEF EXECUTIVE (THE CLERK  
TO THE AUTHORITY) THE FINANCE DIRECTOR AND THE PERSONNEL  
ADVISOR TO THE AUTHORITY**

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This paper provides Fire Authority members with an outline of the deliverables of the UKRO Festival of Rescue event held by TWFRS over the weekend of 16-18 September 2021. A full debrief / lessons learned report is in final stage draft and will be shared across the Service, UKRO and West Midlands FRS whom are planning the 2022 UKRO event. FA members are asked to note the report.
- 1.2 The paper seeks to formally record the closing of the UKRO project and report on the key deliverables of time, cost and quality as well as outline areas of success and learning for the Service.
- 1.3 Overall the UKRO Challenge 2021 'Festival of Rescue' was a success, receiving very positive feedback from competitors, attendees and members of the public whilst also being nominated and shortlisted in two categories for the Excellence in Fire and Emergency Awards. The UKRO Festival of Rescue was by any measure, a great success and brought the Fire sector and many others back together after a long period of remote working and cancelled events due to coronavirus.

## **2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 TWFRS were due to host the UKRO Challenge, Festival of Rescue in 2020, however due to the COVID pandemic this was postponed until 2021. TWFRS desire was to host an event in a public area to further engage with business and the community to showcase the rescue work of the fire and rescue service whilst also promoting Tyne and Wear and the North East as a destination of choice.
- 2.2 For over 30 years, the UKRO has, and continues to be, at the forefront of development and innovation in the field of professional rescue, ensuring that rescue and trauma professionals both in the UK and internationally, are able to adapt and respond to existing and emerging risks. During this time, the UKRO has acquired a wealth of knowledge and expertise. Supported by the UKRO Board of Trustees, the UKRO ensures that it remains at the cutting edge of rescue developments and that its services and products are as applicable to managing organisational risks, as they are to rescue and trauma professionals putting them into practice at an incident scene.

- 2.3 A long-standing product of the UKRO is the 'Rescue Challenge' which provides for a safe and controlled environment in which rescue and trauma professionals can trial innovative techniques and procedures and test new equipment that could ultimately be used at real incidents. The rescue challenges are open to all rescue and trauma professionals, irrespective of background, governance, etc. the priority is providing a platform to allow for information exchange, peer learning and effective feedback. Rescue challenges are delivered in a variety of scales, including at local (Single organisation), Cross-organisational, Regional and National levels, and across five Rescue Disciplines: vehicle extrication; rope; water; urban search and rescue (USAR), and; trauma care.
- 2.4 The project, UKRO Challenge 2021 'Festival of Rescue' was created by TWFRS and responsibility to deliver it placed with the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) and a project manager (John Pratt) was appointed in March 2021 with a brief to design, create and host the event in a public area whilst also complying with latest government and local authority COVID guidelines.
- 2.5 Project management principles were used to facilitate the project and a Project Board chaired by the DCFO was established along with terms of reference and regular monitoring meetings. This led to a project management structure being created along with roles and responsibilities for each Key Discipline Lead (KDL) and regular monitoring meetings scheduled. Project Update and Assurance meetings were also held with members of UKRO and the DCFO and project Manager.
- 2.6 In normal circumstances a UKRO Challenge is a minimum of 12 months in the planning with key project staff liaising with previous host services. Due to the COVID pandemic position along with the uncertainty of how and how quickly the country would emerge from this, a brief was given to the project manager to create a project within budget parameters, design the event to be held in a public arena based around the five rescue challenges. Work commenced to create a project structure, identify appropriate Key Discipline Leads (KDL) to be done as part of their current role, identify event dates, secure an external venue(s) and provide a 'stop/go' date to which all planning assumptions would be based around. A design freeze date was also agreed.
- 2.7 Once the scope and scale of each of the rescue challenges was understood approaches were made to local authorities to identify an appropriate site(s) that would be available on the proposed event dates. The Service also took the opportunity for each of the five local authorities to work in partnership with a particular challenge; Extrication Challenge – Newcastle City Council, Rope Rescue – South Tyneside Council, Trauma Challenge – Gateshead Council, USAR Challenge – Sunderland City Council, Water Challenge – North Tyneside Council. Through productive partnership working appropriate pieces of land were secured mid-June 2021 and event dates were set as 16-18 September 2021.

- 2.8 A 'stop/go' date was set as end June 2021 as this was the most appropriate time that planning work could be postponed without having a detrimental effect and minimising any budget expenditure. Leading up to that time much background internal work was undertaken to enable the detailed planning work to commence for each challenge discipline once sites and dates had been confirmed. This position was unique to this event given the pandemic situation however worth considering for any future host service.
- 2.9 In delivering the UKRO Festival of Rescue the Chief Fire Officer allocated an initial budget provision to cover costs and the salary of the fixed term project manager. In addition, the timescales for delivering the event were clear as was the level and standard of event that the Service aspired to deliver. These were set out as objectives within the project manager's role.
- 2.10 A key objective was to minimise financial costs as far as could be achieved and seek sponsorship and support for the event through both corporate sponsors and support from our partners and other FRS. Given the very short and tight timescales from commissioning the project to delivery created challenges in terms of time to engage with potential sponsors and partners. However, the work of the project manager and key discipline leads as well as across all departments of TWFRS ensured that we maximised this as far as could be achieved and returned a very positive response.

### **3 Delivery to time, cost and quality**

- 3.1 COST: The project was delivered well under the allocated budget for assets and facilities as well as salary costs. The finalised budget position is still to be confirmed and agreed with one or two outstanding queries on some invoicing however, at this stage even taking account of these elements, the project will deliver well under the allocated budget. A budget of £150,000 was earmarked for the event and project management costs. This is off set against a £30,000 contribution from UKRO to support hosting of the event and sponsorship in cash of over £30,000 was achieved from third party trade sponsors.
- 3.2 Through effective engagement from the project manager with sponsors, costs associated with items such as scrap vehicles of which around 80 were required as well as a number of other consumables to support the event were provided in kind. This significantly reduced the spending profile and overall cost of the event to TWFRS.
- 3.3 TIME: The project was delivered on time for the start of the UKRO event. As the start date was fixed, there was no opportunity for this to slip and significant planning in a very short timescale ensured that the event was delivered exactly as planned in terms of time. It is worth adding that this required the whole of the TWFRS workforce to get behind the project and it is pleasing to report that this team approach ensured that TWFRS found a way to achieve what many thought was an impossible challenge and in doing so create a first class city centre event showcasing both TWFRS and the North East as a destination and as key trusted partners in communities.

- 3.4 Quality: The project was delivered to the quality standard that is set by UKRO for hosting services and also by the high standards that TWFRS set for itself in delivering the project. The ambition of UKRO is that the five key disciplines are able to be run as challenges for the participating FRS and that opportunities through workshops are held on vehicle technology. All of this was easily achieved and exceeded.
- 3.5 As a hosting service, TWFRS set out to deliver a world class event in city centre locations that would engage both competitors and the public and involve the Local Authorities across our area. A key ambition was to make this event the most memorable UKRO event for competitors and for the public to create an event that would seek to highlight the role and position of the FRS in communities and create a festival feel to it. Key to this was providing both business and community safety information, education and interactions between TWFRS and the communities they serve. From feedback from participants, letters of thanks and appreciation from those supporting the event, the service is confident that it can claim to have exceeded the level of quality that was expected from the delivery of the event and produced many lessons learned for the service and for those whom aspire to host UKRO in future years.

#### **4 RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 4.1 There are no risks identified to the Fire Authority as a result of this paper. All risks were considered and actioned during the planning, delivery and closing down of the project.

#### **5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no additional financial implications in respect of this report.

#### **6 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no equality and fairness implications in respect of this report.

#### **7 HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no health and safety implications in respect of this report.

#### **8 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 The Authority is recommended to:

- a) Note the report.
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#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The under mentioned Background Papers refer to the subject matter of the above report:

None