

MEETING: 12 OCTOBER 2020

**SUBJECT: IMPROVEMENT OF OPERATIONAL RESPONSE AND RESILIENCE – AERIAL
LADDER PLATFORM [ALP]**

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

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report seeks the Fire Authority's approval to implement a pilot ahead of the full outcome of the Integrated Risk Management Planning [IRMP] process relating to increasing the Service Delivery establishment allowing for additional resilience in the operational response by primary staffing an Aerial Ladder Platform [ALP].

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Service is working to review the current IRMP 2017-2020 as it is required to do so and will bring the outcomes of this forward for Fire Authority Members consideration during quarter 4 of 2020-2021.
- 2.2 The existing response model allows for our special appliances, of which our ALP is included, to be dual staffed. This means that if a special appliance is required then a pumping appliance is placed unavailable and staff from that appliance crew the special appliance. This practice was implemented through previous IRMPs at times when there was successive requirements to save money as a result of a prolonged period of reducing finances available to the Fire Authority.
- 2.3 This has resulted in occasions where a pumping appliance has been at an incident and the special appliance requested has not been readily available, resulting in a delay of attendance.

3 CURRENT RESOURCES

- 3.1 The Fire Authority operates the fire and rescue service from seventeen community fire stations of which fourteen are wholtime, one on-call and two staffed using the Day Crewing Close Call (DCCC) duty system.
- 3.2 These stations are the base for twenty-four frontline appliances (pumps). Fourteen of these operate from seven two-pump stations; the remaining ten stations have one pump each. Appendix A shows the current disposition of all appliances including specialist appliances and the associated station staffing.

- 3.3 Across the stations where specialist appliances are located, services on station are delivered through a four-watch duty system, ninety two operational staff are on duty between the hours of 09:00 to 00:00 reducing to eighty six between the hours of 00:00 – 09:00. The total wholetime operational frontline establishment is currently:

Firefighters	344
Crew Managers	86
Watch Managers	60
Total	490

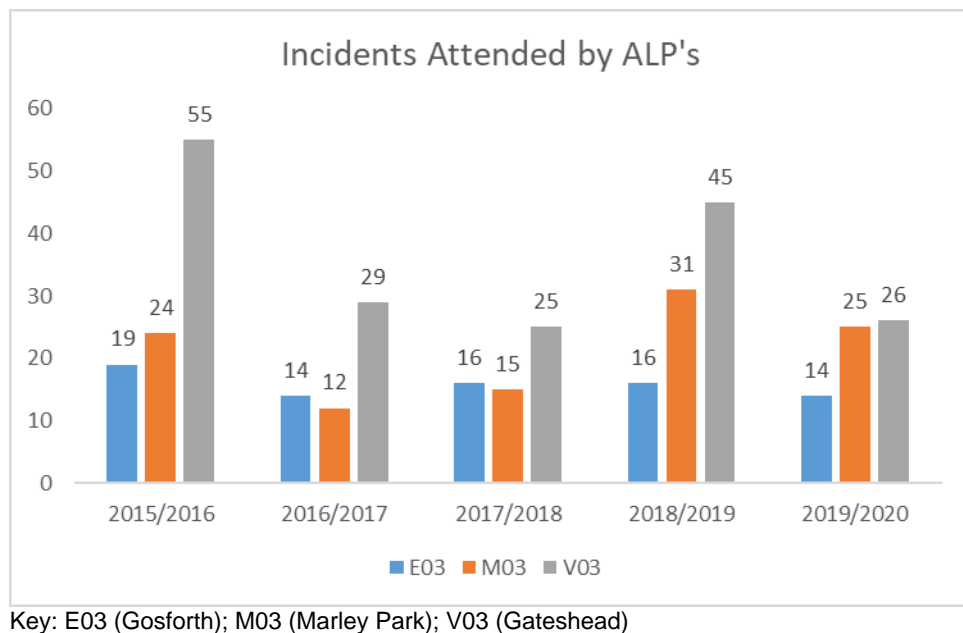
- 3.4 The Service currently has three Aerial Ladder Platform (ALP) stationed at Marley Park, Gateshead and Gosforth fire stations.
- 3.5 The ALPs are dual staffed by a crew taken from a pumping appliance. Due to this they are only dispatched for identified premises in Tyne and Wear on request from the Incident Commander or if a pre-determined criteria is met upon receipt of information taken by fire control.
- 3.6 Following significant national Incidents involving fires in tall buildings, it would support community and firefighter safety to have an ALP readily available at all times and reduce the risk that the crew which would staff the appliance are already in attendance at an incident.

4 PROPOSALS

- 4.1 To increase the Services establishment by twelve people to enable additional resilience in the operational response by primary staffing an ALP. The Fire Authority are asked to consider two options:
- 4.2 Option 1 – Recruit an additional four Crew Managers and eight Firefighters; or,
- 4.3 Option 2 – Recruit an additional twelve Firefighters.
- 4.4 Option 1 is the preferred option as it offers greater command resilience by introducing the Crew Manager role which provides the necessary level of supervisory cover for deployment of the ALP without adding increased pressure on existing Crew Managers.
- 4.5 Marley Park fire station is the preferred location as Gateshead fire station is a two pump station, Marley Park also has the higher risks in its surrounding area over Gosforth fire station. If for some reason the ALP at Marley Park was unavailable then either Gateshead or Gosforth would primary staff their ALP on that occasion to ensure operational resilience.
- 4.6 Should the proposal be supported by the Fire Authority, the Service would utilise existing Firefighters and Crew Managers to staff the ALP through the use of shift swaps and where

necessary, the use of overtime as recruitment of new staff does include a lag period of a number of months. This would align with the review and presentation of the revised IRMP 2020-2023.

- 4.7 The graph below shows the number of attendances per ALP per year to incidents within Tyne and Wear.



- 4.8 By having an ALP primary staffed, this would enable the pre-determined attendances of high risk premises to be amended to include the ALP. This would include high-rise premises, which already have four pumping appliances responding to a confirmed fire. The ALP attending at the initial stages of an incident could prove invaluable to firefighter safety and casualty outcomes.

5 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 5.1 Risk implications have been considered in reviewing this proposal. The Chief Fire Officer will ensure that any risk to communities and firefighters is monitored to ensure the impact of these proposals is minimised so far as reasonably practicable. The risks associated with the proposals are considered acceptable.

6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The cost associated with Option 1 would be £576,056 for the 12 month period. Assuming an implementation date of 1 November 2020, £238,399 would fall into 2020/21 financial year and £337,657 into 2021/22.

- 6.2 The cost associated with Option 2 would be £555,208 for the 12 month period. Assuming an implementation date of 1 November 2020, £229,770 would fall into 2020/21 financial year and £325,438 into 2021/22.
- 6.3 These costs include an estimated 2% provision for the grey book pay award which will be due from 1 July 2021.
- 6.4 The 2020/21 cost will be met from the Strategic Contingency provision in the 2020/21 revenue budget, and the 2021/22 impact will be considered during the budget setting process for the 2021/22 revenue budget.

7 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS IMPLICATIONS

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

8 HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

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

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Members are recommended to:
- a) Endorse the contents of this report
 - b) Consider the proposals and endorse option 1 within the paper to primary crew the ALP at Marley Park fire station with an additional 4 Crew Managers and 12 Firefighters.
 - c) Approve a pilot period of implementation from 1 November 2020 until the reviewed IRMP 2020-2023 is presented to the Fire Authority, which will be by the end of Quarter 4 2020-2021 at the latest.
 - d) Receive future reports as required.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

Appendix A: Current disposition of appliances and associated staffing

Stations Call Signs		Appliances			Special Appliance	Stn. Staffing
A	Cat. 01			Command Unit		24
C	Cat. 01	Cat. 02	TRV	TRV		44
E	Cat. 01			Aerial Ladder Platform (ALP)		24
F	Cat. 01	Cat. 02		Swift Water Rescue – Fire Boat		44
G	Cat. 01					24
J	Cat. 01	Cat. 02		Mass Decontamination Unit		40
H	Cat. 01					11
K	Cat. 01	Cat. 02		Special Rescue Tender – Line Rescue		44
M	Cat. 01			Aerial Ladder Platform (ALP)		24
N	Cat. 01	Cat. 02	TRV	TRV		44
Q	Cat. 01	Cat. 02				40
S	Cat. 01			Operational Support Unit		24
T	Cat. 01					24
V	Cat. 01	Cat. 02		Operational Support Unit Aerial Ladder Platform (ALP)		44
W	Cat. 01			DIM Vehicle		11
Y	Cat. 01			High Volume Pump		24
Z		Cat. 02	TRV			12 (RDS)
					Total Establishment	490 (12)

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