

REPORT TO THE FIRE AUTHORITY	
DATE: 26 th October 2009	REFERENCE:

SUBJECT: All Wales PPE procurement

SUMMARY
 The three Welsh Fire Services have completed a detailed evaluation for the procurement of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Lion Apparel finished top in the mini competition, as they not only offered the most economically advantageous tender for the provision and managed care of PPE across Wales, but also the most technically advanced currently available. The capital finance for its purchase is already contained within the current budget allocation, which should enable the best possible protective equipment to be available to our fire-fighters by the end of the financial year.

OBJECTIVES		IMPLICATIONS	
More than an Emergency Service		Operational Risk Management	X
Trusted & Respected by our customers	X	Community Risk Reduction	
Saving Lives, Protecting Communities	X	Service Control	
Managing within Budget	X	Civil Contingencies & Resilience	
Allocate Resources to Priorities	X	Finance & Procurement	X
Efficiency savings		People and Organisational Development	
Alternative funding & resources		ICT	
Managing People		CCMS	
Risk Reduction Planning	X	Transport	
Partnership Working	X	Corporate Risk	
Effective & Empowered People	X	Estates	
		Sustainability & Environment	
		Welsh Language	
		Legal	
		Governance	
		Equality & Diversity	X
		Representative Body Consultation	

COMMENTS/OBSERVATIONS ON THE ABOVE OBJECTIVES/IMPLICATIONS:
 Operational Risk Management will manage the project implementation plan.
 Capital Finance for this project has already been secured within our Service.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
 Members note the contents of this paper and support the process as required.

BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT:
 All Wales PPE Evaluation report

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Report to the Fire Authority Procurement of Fire Fighting Personal Protective Equipment

The project to replace the Personal Protective Equipment in the three Fire and Rescue Services in Wales is finally nearing completion, having been beset with difficulties from the outset.

This has resulted in a number of significant changes in direction over the last twelve months due in the main to factors outside of the three Services' direct control.

The changes in direction have all been necessary to protect the Services' commercial interests, to mitigate procurement risk, to provide best value and are all set against a genuine desire to provide the best possible protection for our firefighters. Put simply, doing the project right has been more important than doing it quickly.

The ability in Wales to not follow the CLG directed national procurement route by way of the Integrated Clothing Project, has provided significant opportunities for Wales to pursue a different procurement methodology and technically advanced solution for the purchase of PPE.

The benefits of economy of scale can be secured in Wales through alternative procurement routes, in this case the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation (YPO) framework, and by working collaboratively as we have on this project, a genuine all Wales solution can be achieved.

The mini-competition and extensive all Wales PPE evaluations detailed in this report have identified that the best procurement route is via the YPO with the outright purchase of the Lion Apparel Pro Max suit with Rosenbauer Heros helmet, with a managed care solution being provided by the same company.

Whilst this option carries with it some risk in that it proposes a move away from Wales' long standing provider of PPE and managed care systems (Bristol Uniforms), it proposes a move to a major multi-national company who we are confident has the expertise and capacity to provide for the PPE and care requirements across Wales.

The Lion Apparel product is the most technically advanced currently available, offers the highest level of protection to frontline staff, without trading off thermal protection against flexibility and ergonomic features and was very popular with staff during the evaluations carried out.

Furthermore, when the advanced features to reduce revenue expenditure on repairs and care are taken into account, coupled with a fixed managed care cost over the course of a year (highly desirable for budget planning) is taken into account, the Lion solution offers the best value financial package for the three Services.

Finally, once the procurement route and preferred solutions are finalised, the project can move to the implementation phase in a far shorter period of time than the other two suppliers, which should enable the best possible protective equipment to be available to Welsh firefighters by the end of the financial year.