Agenda Item No. 133

EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

Date:	**7 June 2007**
Title:	**Driver Training Vehicle – Variation to Capital Programme 2007/08**
By:	**Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive**
Purpose of report:	**To seek approval for a variation in the 2007/08 Capital Programme for the acquisition of a new Driver Training Vehicle.**

RECOMMENDATION: The Fire Authority is asked to:

a) approve a variation in the 2007/08 Capital Programme as set out in the report; and

b) note the significant environmental and potential annual efficiency savings from the purchase of a new vehicle rather than sourcing a pre-owned vehicle.

MAIN ISSUES

1. East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service trains operational personnel and selected non-operational support staff to drive fire appliances through the use of in-house instructors. The current driver-training vehicle no longer meets the legislative changes in specification for this type of training vehicle.

2. The Fire Authority agreed within the approved 2007/08 Capital Programme to replace the existing Driver Training Vehicle with a newer pre-owned vehicle at an estimated cost of £28,000, in line with the previous replacement policy for this particular vehicle.

3. The new appliance fleet, to replace those lost at Marlie Farm, in addition to those already due for replacement in 2007/08 will be built on the new Volvo FLH 280 chassis with a Euro 5 engine. Due to the size of orders placed, East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service has been offered negotiated volume discounts to purchase a similar vehicle to undertake the in-house driver training rather than replace the current vehicle with a newer preowned vehicle as previously intended.

4. There are driver-training, environmental and efficiency benefits to be gained from this type of new vehicle along with an associated reduction in maintenance of what is the highest mileage vehicle in the fleet.

5. The new vehicle will cost £54,000, requiring a variation to the Capital Programme of an additional £24,000 which will be funded from the capital resources set aside for some of the 1 in 7 foam provision on the replacement appliances which are no longer required.

DES PRICHARD
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER & CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Previous Reports

P&R 25 May 2007 – Marlie Farm update

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Currently, East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service trains operational personnel and selected non-operational support staff to drive fire appliances through the use of in-house instructors. Legislative changes now require the driver training vehicle to meet new specifications.

1.2 The Fire Authority agreed within the approved 2007/08 Capital Programme to replace the existing Driver Training Vehicle with a newer pre-owned vehicle at an estimated cost of £28,000, in line with the previous replacement policy for this particular vehicle.

1.3 The negotiations to secure the replacement appliances in 2007/08 have resulted in volume savings being offered due to the size of order being placed as reported to the Policy & Resources Panel at its meeting on 25 May 2007 (Marlie Farm update). Consequently, an opportunity has arisen to purchase a new vehicle for driver training of the same model as the new pumping appliances, rather than a pre-owned vehicle of a different model.

2. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

2.1 £28,000 is included within the approved 2007/08 Capital Programme for a replacement Driver Training Vehicle with a newer pre-owned vehicle. An entirely new vehicle will cost £54,000, requiring a variation to the Capital Programme of an additional £24,000. The variation can be funded from the capital resources set aside for some of the 1 in 7 foam provision on the replacement appliances which are no longer required. In overall terms, the latest policy decisions made arising from the replacement of the pumping fleet following Marlie Farm have achieved a reduction to the approved Capital Programme of £98,500, less the additional £24,000 now proposed for the driver training vehicle, leaving £74,500 saved from the initial estimated cost.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL AND EFFICIENCY BENEFITS

3.1 The daily use of the driver-training vehicle is such that it has the highest mileage within the fleet. Therefore, environmental considerations are an important factor within the business case for its replacement/whole life cost. The original presumption within the approved 2007/08 fleet replacement programme was to purchase a pre-owned vehicle with the Euro 3 standard engine. The variation proposed within this report would result in the replacement driver training vehicle being fitted with a Euro 5 standard engine. This coupled with the use of synthetic lubricants and a more efficient fuel usage supports the Authority's wish to reduce our 'carbon footprint' and meets the City of Brighton and Hove's clean air policy. The provision of a new vehicle with a whole life warranty and the consequential reduction in servicing frequency and latest specification will realise modest annual efficiency savings in relation to this vehicle.

4. TRAINING BENEFITS

4.1 The proposed new driver-training vehicle which will be identical to the new fleet appliance and, therefore, will provide an enhancement to the Service's driver instruction by providing the opportunity to staff to learn utilising the latest technology.