

Use of Capital 2010 to 2013

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

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1 Purpose of Report

This report advises of capital investment made over the last three years and the benefits, which have been obtained from this investment.

2 Recommendations

The Committee is requested to note the benefits achieved and consider these when deciding upon future capital funding requests.

3 Capital Expenditure

The paper looks back at investment over the last three years to ensure that benefits, which may not be immediately apparent, are identified.

4 Financial Implications

This report is an update on how previous expenditure has impacted the Service and has no direct financial implications.

5 Legal Comment

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

6 Initial Impact Assessment

This report is purely an update on scheme delivery. An initial impact assessment has not, therefore, been completed.

7 Appendix

Use of Capital

8 Background Papers

There are no background papers associated with this report.

Use of Capital

Project	Investment in year (£000)			Benefits anticipated	Benefits achieved	Process and lessons learnt
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13			
Fire Kit Replacement			500	Improved protection for firefighters Reduced heat stress	<p>A new and innovative protection system has been developed and introduced, which meets the identified performance standards.</p> <p>A new supplier and material manufacturer has been introduced into the UK market.</p> <p>Kit issue processes have been revised to improve the fitting process.</p> <p>Wearer information and care arrangements have been improved.</p>	<p>Considerable time was spent researching the physiological issues around wearing fire kit, and the effect of an aging workforce. This provided a sound basis for the specification development and clear performance criteria. The evaluation process included both formal (measured) and informal (perception) assessments of the kit.</p> <p>A full review of performance and user satisfaction is still to be carried out, but informal feedback is positive.</p>

Project	Investment in year (£000)			Benefits anticipated	Benefits achieved	Process and lessons learnt
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13			
Workshops and Stores Vans			50	Replacement of life expired vehicles with new better suited to their specialist role	3 Vehicles have been replaced.	The vehicles were purchased through a national framework with stowage works carried by a specialist supplier. Stores vans, with a higher initial purchase cost, but better future resale value, were purchased in the anticipation of greater flexibility about replacement dates.
Road Traffic Collision Equipment			35	To form part of a general upgrade to appliances	Upgraded equipment on 1 appliance.	This project was moved to 2013/14, using central government funding after initial spend at Bishop's Castle.

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Breathing Apparatus Set Upgrade		330		Provide improved communications for firefighters	Training is currently being carried out on the sets, with an anticipated introduction before the end of the year	The set was effectively introduced and provided the opportunity for valuable training and exercises on a safety critical item of equipment. A number of teething issues were identified around the introduction of a totally new communications system integrated in to the set. A decision was made to minimise the number of other changes introduced at the same time and these opportunities will be reviewed to identify the most appropriate time for introduction.

Project	Investment in year (£000)			Benefits anticipated	Benefits achieved	Process and lessons learnt
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13			
Four Wheel Drive Vehicles (3)		80		Replacement of incident support units at the end of their operational life	As anticipated. The use of an alternative vehicle has enabled further upgrade of these units to carry water and a demountable pump for off-road firefighting as a separate project.	The use of a specialist supplier to the utility industry enabled purchase of the chassis and equipping to our needs at a lower cost than direct purchase or use of traditional emergency services suppliers.
Appliance replacement		600		To maintain the current level of appliance availability, reliability and maintainability through their regular replacement in accordance with the defined lifing policy of 12 years (15 years in future) for pumping appliances	As anticipated. A review of the use of GRP (glass fibre reinforced polymer) bodies has enabled the development of a hybrid pump / water carrier for use at Oswestry and 3,000 litre tanks at Cleobury Mortimer, Bishop's Castle and Newport.	The use of GRP bodies, while more expensive, improves design flexibility and enables construction of vehicles with greater water and/or equipment capacity.

Project	Investment in year (£000)			Benefits anticipated	Benefits achieved	Process and lessons learnt
Retained station building works	65			To continue the current programme of improvements to buildings, so that they meet the changing needs of the Service	Has contributed to Retained Review benefits through the provision of suitable facilities. Compliance with gender equality requirements	Careful selection of the architect or surveyor managing the works is essential, along with close contractual management of these teams.
Incident Training Facilities	50			To provide suitable and appropriate training facilities on Retained Stations	Construction of drill towers at Bishop's Castle, Wem, Bridgnorth, and Craven Arms	The design of the new towers has been successful and popular with users. Planning permission was granted at a number of sites, where we had anticipated difficulties. Identification of suitable contractors able to progress the schemes effectively was difficult.

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Shrewsbury HQ	1,500	1,500		<p>A costed options appraisal, carried out in 2008, identified that full internal and external refurbishment and extension of the fire station, refurbishment of the existing workshops and demolition of the office block was the most cost-effective way to provide the modern, dignified and efficient station, workshops and office facilities, required by the Service</p>	<p>The scheme has delivered the requirements placed on it, and has been well received by site users.</p> <p>Operating costs for the building were assumed to be cost neutral as a result of this project. They are still being assessed, but the information set out on the following page is available.</p>	<p>This project was well resourced with specific resources allocated to management of service delivery and people / staffing issues. A private, commercially focussed, architect was used with contractual support from Telford & Wrekin Council.</p> <p>Officers are still developing the operating systems, which should drive further efficiencies.</p>

Operating Costs relating to Shrewsbury Headquarters

Energy consumption has been reduced by 35% through a combination of more efficient systems, insulation and replacement of desk top printers with centralised printer / copiers. The introduction of a cooling system has increased summer energy usage, and its operation continues to be reviewed. The cash saving (seasonally adjusted) is approx. £5,000 (16%) due to the higher cost of electricity compared to gas.

Business Rates have been assessed at £139k on the current building, an increase of £55k on the previous level. This appears to underestimate the reduced floor area and the compromises associated with reusing the existing building. These costs are subject to appeal.

Servicing and maintenance costs have increased due to a number of new systems (heating and ventilation, sprinklers etc.). This is, however, partially offset by other activities no longer required (e.g. annual asbestos surveys). Reactive maintenance costs have reduced but it is not possible to analyse these figures, as the property maintenance budget has been reduced, affecting the type of work, which would have been carried out. Major expenditure on structural repairs, services and internal finishes has been avoided, but the completion of this work would also have been affected by maintenance budget cuts.