

COUNCIL

28 MARCH 2012

JOINT AUTHORITY QUESTIONS

Councillor James - Greater Manchester Fire Authority

What is the Greater Manchester Fire Authority doing about the disproportionate allocation of formula grant money to the Metropolitan authorities in comparison to Shire authorities?

A. Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority has expressed all party concern about the impact of recent grant settlements and is working closely with similarly affected metropolitan fire and rescue authorities through the Association of Metropolitan Fire and Rescue Authorities (AMFRA). AMFRA is working hard to persuade the Government that the outcome of the first two years grant settlement was manifestly unfair and that a similar pattern of reduction in years 3 and 4 of the Comprehensive Spending Review will have a profound impact on the ability of the Authority to deliver the fire and rescue service in its current form in Greater Manchester.

Members of Parliament have been very supportive about raising this issue in Westminster which culminated in a recent Adjournment Debate in the Houses of Parliament. Work will continue throughout the year with CLG at a professional and political level to identify ways in which a fairer outcome can be achieved but we will need to sustain the pressure on the Government and continue to make our case on an ongoing basis.

Councillor Tariq – Greater Manchester Police Authority

Given the recent announcement by the Government and West Midlands and Surrey police, to use the private sector to take on some aspects of policing, including investigate crime and patrolling neighbourhoods could we have a firm commitment there are no such plans for Greater Manchester.

- **A. On the whole, the chief officer team in GMP and the Police Authority have reservations about the benefits of outsourcing and want to keep our key activities in house or work in collaboration with other forces or with the local authorities in Greater Manchester.**
- **Some consultants from Ernst and Young are being used to look at options and how this next stage of making savings can be achieved. The aim is to ensure that the maximum possible proportion of force resources are on the front line directly serving the public.**
- **However some contracting out in the future can not be completely ruled out. In November, the Police Authority will be abolished and replaced by a Police and Crime Commissioner who would have a strengthened authority to pursue outsourcing. If other forces achieve savings from outsourcing then GMP will be under pressure to do the same.**
- **Some forces have decided to outsource some of their activities, forces such as Cleveland and Lincolnshire. Others have formed partnerships with private sector companies such as Cheshire and Avon and Somerset. There is one contract on offer at the moment from West Midlands and Surrey which GMP have allowed their name to be added to along with most other forces so that if it does make a real difference they can have a look at it later.**
- **It is believed overall, however, that the great advantage GMP has is the public sector ethos of its staff and their great dedication. We have to challenge everything we do to ask if it is adding value to the public. We need to look for opportunities to collaborate with other forces and the other public sector organisations in Greater Manchester, and be prepared to sell our services to others. We have to be able to say that we are as good if not better than anything in the private sector.**

At the end of the day the functions being talked about such as HR, finance or training are a relatively small proportion of the total budget. Most of the money is spent on day-to-day policing, so rather than a focus on outsourcing there is a

need to concentrate on how we can reduce some of this repeat demand by working in a different way with other agencies who also face the same repeat demand. This is where the big opportunities lie and where the public and victims also get a better outcome.

Councillor Quinn – Greater Manchester Police Authority

Does our representative on the Police Authority agree with me that the decision to purchase patrol cars made in South Korea is scandalous? Does he also agree that when we have nearly 3 million on the dole with one million of that number 16-24 year olds, we should be doing what we can to encourage the “rebalancing of the economy” as stated by the Prime Minister? Does he agree that purchasing Vauxhall Astras made in Merseyside, already used by GMP would have been more morally correct?

A. The National Vehicle Framework agreements were negotiated by the NPIA on behalf of all Forces (as these are done nationally, it is not possible to take account of individual local employment situations). The framework for low performance general purpose vehicles was awarded to Peugeot, Ford, Vauxhall and Hyundai.

Individual Forces were mandated to undertake their own mini-tender process for the procurement of their vehicles and were actively encouraged to collaborate regionally (the contracts were structured to give increased savings to those Forces who did collaborate).

GMP, Lancs, Merseyside, Cheshire and Cumbria jointly undertook a mini-tender process. The evaluation criteria was based on NPIA recommendations and was essentially 50% quality, 50% cost. As well as submitting tenders, all manufacturers were invited to present to the 5 Fleet Managers. Each Fleet Manager scored the tenders and presentations individually and then came together to combine scores. On price, the order was:

- 1. Hyundai**
- 2. Peugeot**
- 3. Ford**
- 4. Vauxhall**

On quality, the order was:

- 1. Vauxhall**
- 2. Hyundai**
- 3. Peugeot**
- 4. Ford**

EU competition rules prevent explicit consideration of local employment issues however, the quality element also takes into account local dealership support. Hyundai are well serviced with support, with at least 5 dealerships (providing local employment) in the Force area. This compared very favourably with the other manufacturers.

Based on the unit price Vauxhall were £3,600 per vehicle more expensive than Hyundai. It would have been very difficult therefore to award the contract to anyone other than Hyundai as they came top in demonstrating VFM when combining scores for price and quality. Had we not done so, the Force would have been at serious risk of challenge which would probably have been indefensible.

There is an option to come out of the contract if the vehicle is not demonstrating VFM (reliability, dealer support etc). However to our knowledge all Forces are happy with the vehicle reliability and levels of support. For information, the Met Police have had significant numbers of Hyundai on their fleet for 2 years and are very happy with them.

Councillor Tariq – Committee for Greater Manchester Transport

Due to some traffic difficulties during match days at Bury FC some residents are concerned about the future of the 494 bus service operated by Rossendale transport which currently runs through the Springs area (Killon Street through to Cornwall Drive). Could the executive member please clarify Rossendale transports intentions for the route in question?

A. TfGM have contacted Rossendale Transport with regard to this matter. I can confirm that TfGM have not been made aware of plans by Rossendale Transport regarding any changes to the Saturday or weekday 494 service, nor do Rossendale Transport report significant traffic-related problems on match days. However, for information, it should be noted that with effect from 15 April 2012 on Sundays, the route will be operated by Arriva North West which will keep to the existing route and timetable.