



Fire Services Staff Report

Report Title: Project 25 (P25) Voice Radio Service Level Agreement
Report Number: A13-2023
Author: Dennis Aldous
Meeting Type: Committee of the Whole Meeting
Meeting Date: December 5, 2023
File: DM# 98474
Consent Item: No
Final Version: Yes
Reviewed By: David Brenneman
Final Review: Senior Management Team

Recommendation:

That the Council of the Township of Woolwich, considering Report A13-2023 respecting the Project 25 Voice Radio Service Agreement :

1. Approve and support the Corporation of the Township of Woolwich entering a joint P25 Voice Radio Service Level Agreement with the Regional Municipality of Waterloo Police Services Board, the Region of Waterloo, and the Corporations of the City of Kitchener, City of Cambridge, City of Waterloo, and the Townships of North Dumfries, Wellesley, and Wilmot, subject to the satisfaction of the Township Solicitor.
2. That the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to sign the Service Level Agreement on behalf of the Corporation of the Township of Woolwich and any other documents related to this project, subject to the satisfaction of the Township Solicitor.

Background:

In 2014, recognizing best practices and industry standards, the Region of Waterloo (the Region) desired to build a communications system that would provide state-of-the-art communications for emergency responders and various user groups such Grand River Transit. Locally, it was agreed to advance voice radio communications regulations established by the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials International (APCO): Project 25 (P25).

As a result of a competitive bidding process, the Region confirmed Motorola and Partner Employees as the vendor to replace the voice radio system with modern technology (i.e. communication towers and dispatch centre equipment) and user gear (i.e. mobile and portable radios). In 2013, a staff memo was brought forward and approved by Council to

implement the voice radio project and authorize the purchase of user gear and ancillary equipment.

The Fire Department is directly linked to the Waterloo Regional Police Services (WRPS) through the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) for all 9-1-1 calls in the Region and Kitchener Fire Department's Dispatch Centre. From an emergency services lens, the ability to communicate to-and-from locations within the region and beyond the Region, such as concrete buildings, has significantly improved.

The Voice Radio Service Level Agreement (SLA) and Key components:

All user groups are required to enter into an SLA which sets out, among other terms and conditions, the user will:

- Have access to and have the right to use the P25 Voice Radio System throughout the Region of Waterloo; and,
- Have obligations as a result of being connected to the P25 Voice Radio system.

Governance

Various committees will be established to enable responsibilities set out in the Service Level Agreement including:

- Operations Steering Committee - Mandate: Assist the Voice Radio Manager in the day-to-day decisions, operations, provide information, feedback and recommendations.
- Finance Committee - Mandate: Preparation and oversight of the budget and financial decision making, provide information, feedback and recommendations.
- Governance Committee - Mandate: The overall oversight/decision maker regarding the budget and matters that would impact the financial or long-term viability of the collective P25 initiative dispute resolution.

Operation of the P25 Voice Radio Infrastructure (System)

The WRPS is solely responsible for acquiring ownership, leasing rights to or license rights associated with the system including the operation, maintenance and as necessary, replacing infrastructure. The WRPS is further responsible for maintaining system software and security. Of interest, WRPS is not responsible for agency user gear (i.e. mobile and portable radios); this is the responsibility of each user agency.

Obligations of the Agency (Township of Woolwich)

In addition to adequately training staff, the agency is responsible for the purchase, licensing, replacement, and maintenance of user gear. The WRPS will carry out such

inspections, tests, and programming to ensure that the agency's gear is secure and compatible with the system. As set out in the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy act R.S.O. 1990.c.M.56, the agency is required to collaborate with other parties and the WRPS to ensure information that is the property of or intended to be exclusively controlled by another agency is property controlled.

Ownership

The Agency (Township of Woolwich) acknowledges that it has no ownership in or greater rights to the system or system infrastructure than granted in the agreement(s).

Term of the Service Level Agreement

The term of the agreement will commence once it is signed and will continue to be in effect until the date in which it is terminated in accordance with expectations set out in the agreement. Upon the Council's approval, the Township of Woolwich expects to enter into agreement with the Regional Municipality of Waterloo Police Services Board.

Interdepartmental Impacts:

None

Financial Impacts:

Prior to the implementation of P-25 technology the Township was not required to fund the operating and capital costs associated with former EDACs technology that was owned and operated by the Region of Waterloo. The operating budget at that time to maintain Fire Department user gear was \$6,000.00. The Township is responsible for a portion of the total annual cost of Voice Radio operations among regional users.

The Township portion is based on the percentage of radios the Township owns compared to the total number of radios in use across the Region of Waterloo. The Township uses 4.1% of the total amount of radios. For 2022, the Township's budget portion of the cost for the voice radio is \$115,000.00, subject to the final annual number of operating radios.

Strategic Plan Impacts:

Healthy Communities

Enhanced voice radio communications and interoperability during an emergency and non-emergency situation for all users, more specifically the Fire Services, ensures that the response to emergency situations is effective and efficient.

Fiscally Responsible and Sustainable Community

A competitive purchasing process was led by the Region of Waterloo. All voice radio user groups (i.e. police, municipal enforcement and fire services) cooperatively purchased user gear (i.e. portable and mobile radios). In connection with voice radio, ongoing operational

costs are anticipated as a result of the consolidation of communications/dispatching hardware and software.

Best Managed and Governed

Provide exceptional customer service and Commit to Maintaining High Standards for Municipal Service Delivery. This radio system gives the Emergency Services of Waterloo Region the ability to communicate during multi agency incidents, allowing use to better serve our citizens,

Conclusion:

With final stages of project implementation underway, this staff report requests Council's approval to finalize the Service Level Agreement (SLA) that has been prepared by the Regional Municipality of Waterloo Police Services Board.

Attachments:

Appendix 1 - Agreement

Appendix 2 – Staff Memo

Appendix 3 – Chart