

**TO:** Policy and Resources Committee

**FROM:** Director of Resources - Matthew Warren

**PRESENTING OFFICER(S):** Matthew Warren

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**Relocation of Huntingdon Fire Station, Training Centre and Fire Service Headquarters (Huntingdon Hub)**

**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 To present a progress update on the Huntingdon Hub project to the Policy and Resources Committee.

**2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note the report.

**3. Risk Assessment**

- 3.1 **Economic** – the original options appraisal highlighted a funding shortfall of £4.284m. The Service will work to manage and reduce this risk as far as possible.
- 3.2 **Legal** – the Service has engaged LGSS Law to represent the Authority in developing a formal development agreement to ensure that all legal risks are properly understood.

**4. Background**

- 4.1 In November 2015, the Fire Authority approved an option to rationalise its property portfolio in Huntingdon and relocate to an amalgamated site located on St Johns Business Park just off Spittals Way on the edge of Huntingdon.
- 4.2 The maximum cost of the entire build is forecast to be at £7.54 million, with the sum to be offset by the sale of both existing Huntingdon sites. The Service is now working to maximise the value of these sites to reduce the funding gap as far as possible.

## **5. Progress to Date**

- 5.1 The formal work began with developers in January 2016, after we fully understood the implications of the Comprehensive Spending Review. To date this work has concentrated on building design and legal agreements.
- 5.2 Attached at Appendices to 1 to 3 are the latest designs of the building. Additional work continues on the internal layout to ensure the best possible solution for all those that will be based at the site. All staff groups have been engaged in the process and where possible, all suggestions have been included within the design.
- 5.3 After formal review by LGSS Law, the Heads of Terms have now been agreed with the developer setting out the principles to the development. In addition, work has now begun on a formal letter of engagement that will further formalise the arrangements as we move towards the development phase.
- 5.4 The Service is currently going through a formal tender process to appoint an expert adviser to ensure that we achieve a building at the correct specification and that we are paying the appropriate amount.

## **6. Next Steps**

- 6.1 The next stages of the project will be focussed on ensuring we develop a robust legal contract and securing the land purchase. It is anticipated that these will happen in June 2016 and will both be subject to planning permission being achieved.
- 6.2 When the formal letter of understanding is approved, the developer will begin surveying the site to ensure that development can begin once planning permission is received. It is anticipated that this should happen in September 2016.
- 6.3 Whilst work on the new site is on-going, the Service will be focussing on how it can maximise the value of the existing sites. Marketing recommendations, disposal options and strategies for the sites can be found at Appendices 4 to 6; the Authority will be kept informed of its progress.
- 6.4 The timescales have slipped slightly compared to those presented to the Authority in November 2015. At that time, we were looking to relocate in Quarter 3 of 2017. This is now Quarter 1 of 2018.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Documents	Location	Contact Officer
Background documents relating to the report are Exempt under Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and are not available for inspection by the public	Fire Service HQ Hinchingsbrooke Cottage Huntingdon	Matthew Warren 01480 444619 <a href="mailto:matthew.warren@cambsfire.gov.uk">matthew.warren@cambsfire.gov.uk</a>
Fire Authority Relocation Paper 20 November 2015	Fire Service HQ Hinchingsbrooke Cottage Huntingdon	Matthew Warren 01480 444619 <a href="mailto:matthew.warren@cambsfire.gov.uk">matthew.warren@cambsfire.gov.uk</a>
Appendix 1 – Office Accommodation Strategy Appendix 2 – Artisan Developments Proposal Appendix 3 – Urban and Civic Proposal Appendix 4 – ORH Risk Modelling Report Appendix 5 – Huntingdon Fire Station – Planning Advice Appendix 6 – Headquarters Site – Planning Advice Appendix 7 – Valuation Report for Huntingdon Appendix 8 – Valuation Report for Headquarters Appendix 9 – Cost Appraisal	Fire Service HQ Hinchingsbrooke Cottage Huntingdon	Matthew Warren 01480 444619 <a href="mailto:matthew.warren@cambsfire.gov.uk">matthew.warren@cambsfire.gov.uk</a>