

TO: Policy and Resources Committee

FROM: Deputy Chief Executive Officer (DCEO) - Matthew Warren

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PROPERTY UPDATE – JULY 2018

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Policy and Resources Committee with an update on progress against police and fire collaborative property schemes.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to;
- a) note the progress made to date.
 - b) approve the next steps.

3. Risk Assessment

- 3.1 **Political** – there is now a requirement for emergency services to collaborate. The sharing of our land and properties has been identified as a key aspect by police and fire of fulfilling this requirement.

4. Background

- 4.1 Enabling legislation requiring the police, fire and ambulance services to collaborate to improve efficiency and/or effectiveness was passed in January 2017. In addition, the new legislation gave Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) the powers to take over responsibility for fire and rescue services, if a local business case was approved.
- 4.2 The PCC for Cambridgeshire submitted a business case to the Home Office in September 2017; the case was approved by the Home Secretary in March 2018. Subsequent to this approval the Fire Authority, after talking legal advice, has decided to challenge the Home Secretary's decision.
- 4.3 In November 2015, the Fire Authority approved a business case to re-locate its Headquarters, training centre and fire station in Huntingdon to a new site in the town. The new site was going to accommodate all three facilities however subsequent to this decision the newly elected Cambridgeshire PCC offered the potential of utilising existing police land to locate both the fire station and training

centre. The Fire Authority chose to accept the offer from the PCC and requested that Officers undertake an appraisal of the site, with emphasis on the training centre.

- 4.4 There are also a number of additional property collaborations in progress. Wisbech fire station is currently at the planning stage, where approval on revised plans is expected imminently. This project will deliver a combined police and fire station.

5. Training Centre Update

- 5.1 The core fire training facilities are currently located at Huntingdon fire station and on land within Marshalls Airport in Cambridge. Both sites are in need of significant investment if they are to deliver the training scenarios required for today's fire and rescue service. In 2018, as part of the budget process, Members acknowledged the challenge of training and the investment required to ensure firefighters retained competency at a time when calls have reduced.
- 5.2 The police training centre at Monkswood was offered as a potential option for re-location of the fire training centre. Extensive work has been undertaken to assess the viability of using this site as a training centre. This work included seeking pre-application advice from Huntingdonshire District Council, who sought to consult with key stakeholders and in particular English Nature.
- 5.3 The formal pre-application advice was received in March 2018 and whilst it highlighted the need to undertake a significant number of reports for the formal planning application, no issues were identified that would prevent the Service moving towards submitting a full planning application.
- 5.4 At this stage, it is anticipated that all reports required for the planning application will be complete by August 2018, although weather will be a dependency. Once all of the reports are completed without issue, a full application will be submitted in September 2018; approval is anticipated by the end of the year.

6. Huntingdon Fire Station

- 6.1 The police are currently undertaking an assessment on land within their Headquarters site to establish whether a fire station can be accommodated. A full report will be prepared in the autumn detailing whether it is a viable project, or not.

7. St Neots Fire Station

- 7.1 The police and fire property teams continue to work collaboratively to fully understand the requirements for the police station to be incorporated into the fire station at St Neots. Any improvements to the facility at St Neots will also include enhancements for the fire service. Once all the requirements for police and fire are agreed, building plans will be produced. At this stage it is anticipated that these plans will be available by the end of the calendar year.

8. Wisbech Fire and Police Station

- 8.1 The police developed a scheme to extend Wisbech fire station to enable the creation of a joint facility. A planning application was submitted in late 2017

however the planning process was delayed owing to issues around specific utility services on the site. To resolve this particular problem, a revised plan has been submitted to Fenland District Council for approval. It is expected that planning approval will be received over the coming weeks.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Documents	Location	Contact Officer
Fire Authority Minutes 2017/18	Fire Service HQ Hinchingsbrooke Cottage Brampton Road Huntingdon	Matthew Warren matthew.warren@cambsfire.gov.uk 01480 444619