

CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH FIRE AUTHORITY POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Date: 25 March 2021
Time: 2.00pm – 2.38pm
Place: Virtual Meeting
Present: Councillors: B Ashwood, S Bywater, D Giles, W Hunt, M Jamil, K Reynolds (Chairman), M Shellens and M Smith
Officers: Jon Anderson, Tamar Oviatt-Ham, Chris Strickland, Deb Thompson, and Matthew Warren.

160. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from Councillor David Over.

161. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

162. POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MINUTES – 17 DECEMBER 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 2020 were confirmed as a correct record and would be signed by the Chairman on the return to the office.

163. ACTION LOG

Verbal updates were given to on the following actions;

- Action 156 Fire Authority Programme Management - Monitoring Report:
 - Training Centre review - Shift system review completed and negotiations were taking place around the shift change.
 - Incident Command Unit - Options for an upgrade were still being developed

The Action Log was noted.

164. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES – 7 JANUARY 2021

It was resolved to note the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 17 January 2021.

165. RELOCATION OF HUNTINGDON FIRE STATION AND TRAINING CENTRE

The Committee received a report that provided an update on the relocation of the current fire station and training centre site based in Huntingdon to a new site at St Johns Business Park, also in Huntingdon. The report also sought to gain approval to proceed with and fund specific options for the site that had materialised through the planning process and the development of detailed plans for the training centre.

Introducing the report, the Deputy Chief Executive Officer explained that some revised figures for the project has been circulated and published ahead of the meeting, and that, if approved, they would form the final contract figures. He explained that he did not envisage any further changes to figures, however if there were changes, he would come back to Committee for approval.

Members noted the following points from the report:

- The drainage costs for the site had increased by £350,000 over that originally estimated to ensure planning conditions were met. The additional conditions relate to storage tank that are required to regulate the water flow off the site into the main drains in Huntingdon.
- A further cost of £20,000 for noise repression for the standby generator was required.
- A commercial sprinkler system was advised for the site at a cost of £160k.
- Additional functionality in the training centre was advised with additional gas burners to create flash overs in order that scenarios could be as life like as possible.
- An archaeological survey and dig had been undertaken and artefacts of local significance had been recovered. Officers were seeking advice from Huntingdonshire District Council on the next steps but aimed to keep the costs to an absolute minimum.

Arising from the report:

- Members questioned whether there would be an annual maintenance costs for the drainage tanks. The Deputy Chief Executive Officer explained that in the short term there would be no maintenance costs . A Member commented that the tanks may need to be de-sludged at some point. Officers confirmed that desludging would take place as part of ongoing maintenance.
- Members agreed that the commercial sprinkler system was a necessity and that it was important to lead by example for new fire service developments
- A Member queried whether the payback of between 5-9 years on the additional solar panels could be more specific. The Deputy Chief Executive Officer explained that the payback was dependant on how much electricity was used at source. He agreed to refer back to the Energy Consultant for further detail. **ACTION – DCE**
- A Member sought assurances that the consultants being used for the project were value for money. The Deputy Chief Executive Officer stated that the authority aimed to keep the use of consultants to a minimum. He explained that he had regular meetings with the consultants, Artisan Developments, and that the project was also being supported internally by the authority's project governance structure. He clarified that the project was open book and all documentation was available to view.
- A Member queried if there was contingency built into the budget. The Deputy Chief Executive Officer clarified that a contingency had been built in and that he would provide the Committee with the figure and make this clear in any future reporting. **ACTION MW**
- A Member commented that no corners should be cut and that they fully agreed with the figures for the additional functionality and sprinkler system.
- A Member commented that they looked forward to the project coming into fruition but queried why the costs for the sprinkler system and archaeology were being brought at a late stage. The Deputy Chief Executive Officer commented that additional costs were added at a later stage due to recommendations from the surveyor in relation to requiring a commercial grade sprinkler system due to the size of the building.
- The Chairman commented that it was important to future proof the training centre. The Deputy Chief Executive gave assurances that the design would allow for the use of various appliances in the future including Turn Table Ladders.

- He stated that if the authority had been able to proceed with the project four years ago then the cost for the project would have been much less. He commented that the project was well overdue.

In bringing the debate to a close the Chairman requested that an additional recommendation be added to note the late additional costs in relation to the archaeological survey and findings.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) approve the proposal to invest in additional training equipment and renewable energy, noting the assumed payback period for both;
- b) approve the additional cost for drainage on the site associated with the planning consent;
- c) approve the investment in a commercial sprinkler system;
- d) approve the revised plans as attached;
- e) approve the revised budget and funding proposal for the additional cost items.
- f) Note the update of historical artefacts on the site with the possible implications in relation to the budget.

166. POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

It was unanimously resolved:

To note the Work Programme

The Chairman thanked all Members of the Committee and officers for their input and diligence over the last four years. Members thanked the Chairman for his excellent chairmanship and cross party working.