

## Agenda Item no. 4

**TO:** Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority  
**FROM:** Deputy Chief Executive Officer (DCEO) - Matthew Warren  
**PRESENTING OFFICER(S):** DCEO - Matthew Warren  
Telephone 01480 444619  
[matthew.warren@cambsfire.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.warren@cambsfire.gov.uk)

**DATE:** 22 October 2020

---

### PROPERTY UPDATE

#### 1. Purpose

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

#### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Authority is asked to;
- note the progress made to date,
  - approve the next steps.

#### 3. Risk Assessment

- 3.1 **Political** – there is now a requirement for emergency services to collaborate. The sharing of land and property assets have been identified as a key aspect of fulfilling this requirement by both Cambridgeshire Constabulary and Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service.

#### 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 Authority, after talking legal advice, decided to challenge the Home Secretary's decision.

- 4.3 In November 2015, the Authority approved a business case to re-locate its headquarters, training centre and fire station in Huntingdon to a new site in the town. It was intended that the new site would 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 Authority chose to accept this offer and requested that Officers undertake an appraisal of the site, with emphasis on the training centre. However owing to the likely development of the current police training site at Alconbury for commercial or residential purposes, the practical use of Monkswood for both police and fire was deemed unworkable in early 2020.
- 4.4 In March 2020, the Chairman, in consultation with the wider Authority, used his executive powers to approve the alternative fire station/training centre scheme to be based on land currently owned by St John's College in Huntingdon. A number of additional collaborations are on-going with the constabulary; updates are provided at Paragraphs 6 and 7 below.

## **5. Fire Station/Training Centre Update**

- 5.1 Formal planning has been submitted for the new fire station and training centre, with approval scheduled before Christmas. If approval is forthcoming within this timeframe, work on site should commence March/April 2021.
- 5.2 Once formal work on the site begins, the Service will seek to formally market the current Huntingdon site and also to explore the options for St Ives. The Service continues to have dialogue with the NHS regarding St Ives, as they own land adjacent that may also be sold for development.
- 5.3 The Service has communicated current timescales to all those impacted by the fire station and training centre development, including those living in service accommodation at The Brow in Huntingdon. The Service has committed to working with those affected to assist in finding alternative accommodation as the scheme develops.

## **6. St Neots Community Fire and Rescue Station**

- 6.1 The police and fire property teams have worked collaboratively to fully understand the requirements for the police station to be incorporated into the fire station at St Neots. Plans have finally been agreed between the organisations, with the police now seeking to submit these for planning. The station has been involved throughout the process. Like Huntingdon, it is expected that work on site will begin early in the next financial year. The final plans are attached at Appendix 1 for Members information, with Option B being taken forward to planning.

## **7. Cambridge Community Fire and Rescue Station**

- 7.1 Both police and fire continue to assess whether there is scope to accommodate an operational policing function at our site on Parkside in Cambridge. It is anticipated that a joint assessment of viability will be concluded by the end of the calendar year.

## **8. Combined Property Team**

- 8.1 The Authority initially approved that the Service produce an outline business case for a combined property team with the police in February 2018. This piece of work was paused whilst the PCC business case was challenged. With the challenge now coming to an end, work on the business case has re-commenced and an outline business case is expected to be completed in time to present the findings to the Policy and Resources Committee in December 2020. If approved, a full business case will then be completed and presented for decision to the Authority in February 2021.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Document	Location	Contact Officer
Fire Authority Minutes February 2018	Fire Service HQ Hinchingsbrooke Cottage Brampton Road Huntingdon	Matthew Warren <a href="mailto:matthew.warren@cambsfire.gov.uk">matthew.warren@cambsfire.gov.uk</a> 01480 444619