



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY held on Wednesday, 14 February 2018 at Lecture Theatre - Fire Service, Sadler Road, Winsford, Cheshire at 10.30 am**

**PRESENT:** Councillors D Bailey, D Beckett, M Biggin, D Flude, P Harris, N Jones, D Mahon, D Marren, J Mercer, G Merry, K Mundry, S Nelson, S Parker, R Polhill, B Rudd, J Saunders, T Sherlock, M Simon, M Tarr, J Weatherill and S Wright

**1 PROCEDURAL MATTERS**

**A Recording of Meeting**

Members were reminded that the meeting would be audio-recorded.

The Chair also pointed out that the press were in attendance at the meeting and he understood that they intended to film during the meeting.

He stated that the Authority had a protocol in respect of filming, photography and audio-recording by third parties and explained that whilst it was obviously reasonable for members of the Fire Authority and officers to be filmed, other attendees may object to being filmed. This applied, in particular, to others participating in the meeting as there were some people asking questions and they were asked if they had any objections to being filmed. There were no objections raised.

**B Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Dirir and E Johnson and the Police and Crime Commissioner D Keane.

**C Chair's Announcements**

The Chair asked Members to note the content of the Chair's announcements, which included details of the Authority's achievements and events that Members had attended since the last Fire Authority meeting in December 2017.

**D Declaration of Members' Interests**

The Director of Governance and Commissioning reminded Members that dispensations had been granted to all Members in relation to the setting of the Council Tax precept and the approval of the Members' Allowances Scheme. He also explained that Members intending to rely upon the dispensation would still need to declare their interests in the relevant items at this point of the meeting.

Members indicated that they had Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in relation to the following items (but intended to rely upon the dispensation in order to take part in the

debate and vote):

Item 4 – Draft Budget, Council Tax Precept and Medium Term Financial Plan 2018-19

All Members present (with the exception of Councillor Bailey).

Item 5 – Members’ Allowances Scheme 2018-19

All Members present.

Councillor T Sherlock declared a non-pecuniary interest as he was a director of ENTEP a non-profit making organisation set up for training and employment purposes.

**E Minutes of Fire Authority**

**RESOLVED:**

**That the minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2017 be approved as a correct record.**

**F Questions from Members of the Public**

Questions submitted by members of the public from within the area covered by the Fire Authority were dealt with at this point in accordance with procedural rules 4.47 to 4.54. The questions and responses are annexed to these minutes. Supplementary questions were also posed and the Chair committed to providing a written response. The supplementary questions and responses are also annexed to the minutes.

Laura Smith MP for Crewe and Nantwich Constituency was in attendance at the meeting and made a statement as follows:

‘I urge Cheshire Fire Authority to keep the number of wholetime firefighters employed at Crewe Fire Station and to keep the second fire engine staffed on a 24/7 basis.’

She informed the Fire Authority that the online petition in support of the statement had over 4,100 signatures and there were also thousands of signatures on the hard copy of the petition that had been collected by Crewe and Nantwich Labour Party members. She asked that the Fire Authority took account of the petition and the strength of feeling that had been portrayed when making a decision in respect of the second fire engine at Crewe Fire Station.

The Chair thanked the MP for her statement and added that the Authority had received notification that there were 4,146 online and over 1,200 hard copy signatures on the petition. He added that Members should take the petition into account when making the decision on Item 7.

**G Minutes of Estates and Property Committee**

**RESOLVED:**

**That the minutes of the Estates and Property Committee meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2017 be received, for information.**

**H Minutes of Brigade Managers' Pay and Performance Committee**

**RESOLVED:**

**That the minutes of the Brigade Managers' Pay and Performance Committee meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2018 be received, for information.**

**I Minutes of Governance and Constitution Committee**

**RESOLVED:**

**That the minutes of the Governance and Constitution Committee meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2018 be received, for information.**

**J Notes of the Member Training and Development Group**

**RESOLVED:**

**That the notes of the Member Training and Development Group meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2017 be received, for information.**

**2 CONSULTATION ON POTENTIAL INCREASE IN PRECEPT OF 2.99% FOR 2018-19**

The Policy and Transformation Officer presented this report which provided an update on the consultation on the potential increase in precept of 2.99% for 2018-19. He explained that, on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2017, the Government announced that the threshold set regarding increases in council tax above which a precepting authority would be required to hold a public referendum had been raised from 2% to 3%.

As this announcement was made at a very late stage in the Authority's regular consultation process, and the proposed increase for 2018-19 was explicitly stated as 1.99% in the draft IRMP, the Authority deemed it prudent to consult further on a specific proposal to increase the precept by 2.99%.

The Policy and Transformation Officer provided Members with the final figures: 64% of the public supported the proposal with 34% against; and 60% of staff in support of the proposal with 30% against. He also explained that copies of the full consultation report had been provided for Members and made available on the website once the consultation was concluded on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2018.

A Member stated that he supported the 2.99% increase and that the outcomes of the

consultation showed that there was public support for the increase. He recognised that the increase would be county-wide but highlighted the fact that in South East Cheshire residents were being asked to pay more in Council Tax for a downgraded service. He also sought clarification that decisions on this Item and Item 4 would not hinder deliberation of and decisions in relation to Item 7. Others confirmed that Members would not be impacting upon the ability to make decisions on Item 7 by concluding this Item and Item 4.

**RESOLVED: That**

**[1] the report be noted.**

### **3 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND PRACTICES 2018-19**

The report of the Joint Head of Finance sought Members approval for the Fire Authority's Treasury Management Strategy and Practices for the year 2018-19. This was a requirement of guidance issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government, the 2009 CIPFA Treasury Management Code and the CIPFA Prudential Code. It also assisted the Authority in demonstrating its compliance with requirements contained in the Local Government Act 2003.

The Treasury Management Strategy comprised of three main elements: Borrowing Strategy; Annual Investment Strategy; and Minimum Revenue Provision Strategy. It was proposed that the Authority continued to set the Minimum Revenue Provision at 6.7% of the opening Capital Financing Requirement, as it was considered to be a prudent and sustainable approach. The Authority's approach to treasury risk management and its treasury management practices, which had been published on the Authority's website with the agenda, were also detailed in the report.

The Joint Head of Finance drew Members attention to the changes to the Borrowing Strategy to reflect the fact that the Authority had approved the use of borrowing to fund its training centre project (and associated works) in order to preserve reserves for other matters requiring capital expenditure.

A Member made reference to the 2016 budget meeting and queried what the approx £15m of capital investment spend with revenue funding of £12.144m in the 2016/17 budget consisted of and also sought clarification on the difference between reserves and revenue contributions.

The Joint Head of Finance explained that a reserve was funding set aside for a specific purpose and revenue contributions either came from reserves or external sources. She committed to review the 2016/17 budget and provide further detail.

A Member asked why the particular borrowing method with the Public Work Loans Board (PWLB) would continue to be the preferred source of borrowing rather than an annuity loan. The Head of Finance explained that the PWLB (equal payments) provided certainty to plan as the annuity method was linked into interest rates.

**RESOLVED: That**

- [1] the Authority's Treasury Management Strategy for the year 2018-2019 be approved;**
- [2] the Authority's approach to treasury risk management and its Treasury Management Practices be approved; and**
- [3] the Authority's prudential indicators included the Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary be approved.**

**4 DRAFT BUDGET, COUNCIL TAX PRECEPT AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2018-19**

Cheshire Fire Authority was required to approve its budget and set the Council Tax precept for the financial year commencing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018. In determining a budget that it considered reasonable, the Authority was required to have regard to all relevant factors, including the likely impact of policy options on the achievement of the Authority's objectives and uncertainties associated with the economic scenario.

The Treasurer presented the report which sought Members' approval for the Authority's budget for 2018-19, the Authority's precept, as required by law, for 2018-19 and its Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for 2018 to 2021. This was the second budget report, with the first being presented at the Fire Authority meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2017. Members had also considered the Authority's financial information at their Planning Days, most recently in January where Members had the opportunity to challenge the assumptions and proposals being put forward by officers as part of the draft budget and MTFP.

The report asked Members to consider three budget proposals, based on:

- a) Increasing the Council Tax precept by 2.99% (£75.48 for a Band D property);
- b) Increasing the Council Tax precept by 1.99% (£74.75 for a Band D property);  
or
- c) Maintaining the Council Tax precept at its 2017-18 level (£73.29 for a Band D property).

The three budget proposals were detailed in Table 1 of the report. Appendix 1 of the report presented the MTFP modelled on the effect of existing assumptions and showed how the Authority would produce a balanced budget in 2018-19 based on the three budget proposals. In each case there was still a requirement to make savings for 2018/19. The medium term position, looking forward up to 2021, showed that the Authority would still be required to make savings despite further increases in Council Tax in future financial years. The MTFP was based on a number of assumptions including savings relating to proposed changes at Crewe and Ellesmere Port in the base budget. These savings would have to be funded from other compensating savings identified or future contributions from reserves if they were not delivered as planned. The current reserves strategy took account of the

fact that reserves could be used to fund the second fire engines at Crewe and Ellesmere Port.

The Treasurer informed Members that the Government consultation on the Fire and Rescue National Framework made reference to reserves and the need for Fire Authorities to have a policy on reserves. It also stated the level of General Reserve would need to be justified if it was over 5% of the revenue budget. This figure was broadly accepted by Local Government Finance officers as being an appropriate level. He proposed that the general reserve be set at 5% as a minimum level and maintained at that level for the medium term. The current reserves strategy, including the forecast level of reserves, was attached as an appendix to the report and assumed that reserves would be used to support the capital programme and also the fact that reserves could be used to fund Crewe and Ellesmere Port, if necessary.

He concluded by stating that a 2.99% increase in precept would provide a better basis for financial planning for future years and a prudent medium term position but reiterated that the Authority would still need to make further savings to balance the budget.

A Member asked for clarification as to why the budget proposed a £40k revenue contribution to capital and also if the level of reserves over 5% had to be justified could the Authority not reduce them further.

The Treasurer explained that there was not a nationally prescribed reserves level but finance officers across Local Government thought it prudent to have a 5% minimum. However this was a decision for each precepting Authority to make. He was satisfied that a general reserve of £2.2m (5% net revenue budget) was prudent.

The Joint Head of Finance explained that the £40k revenue contribution had been used to fund part of the annual replacement programme on short life items such as IT equipment and vehicles. These items had an average lifespan of 3 to 5 years so it was too costly to borrow short term and, as there was no longer capital funding provided by the Government, the Authority put a pot of money aside each year to cover short life capital expenditure.

A Member stated that he was disappointed that no figures had been provided about revenue underspend in previous years and where it was being spent despite him raising this issue on a number of occasions. He sought clarification on whether it was still the policy of the Authority to use revenue underspend to support capital projects and asked how much of the Authority's underspend had been redirected to capital projects since 2010. He drew attention to the IRMP reserve and queried if this was being whittled down by capital spend when it could be used to fund the revenue budget. He stated that he was not questioning officers but rather the political decisions made by the Authority over the last few years and added that, in his opinion, some of the capital expenditure such as new stations and firefighter equipment was welcome but some such as the new Safety Centre was not.

The Treasurer confirmed that he would obtain more detailed information in respect of the previous underspends and would provide a written response to all Members.

The Chair thanked Members for their input and proposed a further recommendation (No 9) to be added to the report for Members to consider:

That Cheshire Fire Authority should ask officers to write to the Government as follows:

After eight years of austerity, Cheshire Fire Authority have found £12 million in cuts to their budget, the policy to reduce the Revenue Support Grant to zero by 2020 whilst imposing a cap on council tax is not sustainable.

We call upon the Government to lift the cap to enable local government to have the choice of continuing to make cuts or to increase council tax to balance the budget.

Capital Finance Grants ceased to Cheshire Fire Authority in 2014/15 and so we have had to self finance capital projects. We ask the Government to re-introduce the Capital bid scheme that allows Fire Authorities to bid for capital finance for large capital projects.

The Group spokesperson for the Conservative Party stated that she was pleased to support this additional recommendation and also a 2.99% increase in Council Tax. She added that she did not believe making this decision would pre-determine any other decisions as this was the budget and any decisions made later on the agenda would not change the budget decision.

The Chair concluded that Members had expressed their views and Members were asked to vote on the proposal to increase the council tax by 2.99%. The proposal to increase the Council Tax precept by 2.99% was carried with 20 Members voting in support of the increase (1 Member abstained). The other recommendations were approved (including the additional recommendation).

**RESOLVED: That**

- [1] the budget for 2018/19 (reflecting a 2.99% increase in Council Tax precept) shown in Table 1 to the report be approved;**
- [2] the Council Tax precept increase of 2.99% for 2018/19 as set out in Table 3 to the report be approved;**
- [3] the Medium Term Financial Plan shown at the top of Appendix 1 be approved (2.99% increase in Council Tax precept);**
- [4] the revenue growth proposals for 2018-19 as set out in Appendix 2a be approved;**
- [5] the revenue one-off proposals for 2018-19 set out in Appendix 2b be approved;**
- [6] the revenue savings proposals for 2018-19 as set out in Appendix 2c be approved;**
- [7] the proposed capital programme for 2018-19 set out in Table 2 (para 24)**

**be approved together with its associated financing;**

- [8] the Reserves Strategy set out in Appendix 4 be approved;**
- [9] the Statement on Robustness of Estimates set out in Appendix 3 be noted;**
- [10] the Financial Health Targets (paragraph 27) be adopted for 2018-19; and**
- [11] officers be instructed to submit the following statement to the Government on behalf of Cheshire Fire Authority:**

**After eight years of austerity, Cheshire Fire Authority have found £12 million in cuts to their budget, the policy to reduce the Revenue Support Grant to zero by 2020 whilst imposing a cap on council tax is not sustainable.**

**We call upon the Government to lift the cap to enable local government to have the choice of continuing to make cuts or to increase council tax to balance the budget.**

**Capital Finance Grants ceased to Cheshire Fire Authority in 2014/15 and so we have had to self finance capital projects. We ask the Government to re-introduce the Capital bid scheme that allows Fire Authorities to bid for capital finance for large capital projects.**

## **5 MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2018-19**

The Director of Governance and Commissioning introduced this report which provided details of the Members' Allowance Scheme for 2018-19 and Members were asked to determine the level of Members' allowances for the coming year.

Councillor Merry stated that, in these times of austerity, she could not support the increase in the Members' Allowances for 2018-19 as proposed in recommendation 2 of the report. Members voted on the recommendation, the vote was lost (9 for and 10 against) and the proposed increase in allowances for 2018/19 was not approved.

**RESOLVED: That**

- [1] the Members' Allowance Scheme for 2018-19 (contained in appendix 1) be approved.**

**Note: The Scheme would reflect the fact that no annual increase would be applied for 2018-19.**

## **6 INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN 2018-19 (IRMP 15) - ANNUAL ACTION PLAN**

The Policy and Transformation Officer presented the report which sought Members'



approval to publish the Authority's annual action plan for 2018-19 (IRMP 15), following the conclusion of a formal 13 week consultation programme.

He provided Members with an overview of the consultation programme and a summary of the key issues highlighted in the full consultation report. A total of 832 members of the public completed the formal consultation survey, compared to 632 in the previous year. This response level provides a margin of error of plus or minus 3.44% at a 95% level of confidence.

The final draft of IRMP 15 had been distributed with the agenda having been updated to reflect issues raised during the consultation and considered by Members at the Planning Day on 12<sup>th</sup> January.

Members discussed the IRMP proposals and welcomed the report which demonstrated the support the public had for the Service. A Member wished to thank the FBU for their responses to the IRMP consultation and noted that it had been agreed that the recommendations contained within the FBU response would be considered further through the relevant Fire Authority committees.

**RESOLVED: That**

- [1] the publication of the annual action plan for 2018-19 (IRMP 15) by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 be approved; and**
- [2] the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive be authorised to make any final drafting changes to the annual action plan (IRMP 15), including the addition of final performance and financial information.**

**7 REVIEW OF THE AUTHORITY'S PLANS TO CHANGE THE DUTY SYSTEM FROM WHOLETIME TO ON-CALL FOR THE SECOND FIRE ENGINES AT CREWE AND ELLESMERE PORT FIRE STATIONS**

Before discussion of the report commenced, the Chair proposed a motion in respect of the duty system for the second fire appliance at Crewe Fire Station. The motion was seconded by Councillor Nelson and was as follows:

'The introduction of the Nucleus Duty system for the second fire engine at Crewe'.

The Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive then presented the report which provided detailed information on the findings of the review into the Authority's plans to change the duty system from wholetime to on-call for the second fire engines at Crewe and Ellesmere Port Fire Stations; and to agree a timescale for any changes to be implemented. Michael Wright, Greenstreet Berman was in attendance at the meeting and summarised the outcomes of the independent assessment.

Councillor Merry stated that she could not support the motion proposed and proposed an amendment to the motion presented at the meeting as follows:

'Members consider the findings of the review and determine that the future duty system for the second fire engine at Crewe Fire Station should be wholetime, 24

hours a day, 7 days a week.' The amendment was seconded by Councillor Marren.

Note: as this had the effect of negating the original motion it was subsequently treated as an alternative motion.

Members held detailed discussions and a lengthy debate on the content of the report and a number of comments were made. A number of questions were raised including:

A Member raised concerns over the on-call availability figures provided and the proposal to use the same model to improve availability that was used at Wilmslow. He asked officers about the projected figure of 85% availability and the appliance average attendance time of 4 minutes 27 seconds for the second fire engine at Crewe.

The Head of Service Delivery informed Members that the Service had committed to meeting the 85% availability target for the on-call appliance at Wilmslow and it was proposed that the same commitment would be given at Crewe. He referred to the details in the report which demonstrated that the availability figures for Crewe were based on using the same model as that at Wilmslow which would ensure that the target would be achieved. He added that the availability figure for Ellesmere Port was modelled on the actual availability at other similar on-call stations. He also explained that response times for the second fire engine, as shown in the report, were based on the premise that, if the second fire engine at Crewe changed to on-call it would be mobilised from Crewe Fire Station. Currently the response times for the second fire engine at Crewe were an average of 7 mins 38 seconds due to the fact that the second fire engine was often from one of the surrounding fire stations (rather than Crewe Fire Station).

A Member was concerned about COMAH sites and what would happen if there was a major incident: What level of support would be required from CFRS and neighbouring fire services?

The Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive explained that the Service had national mutual aid arrangements in place for major incidents and the Section 13/16 agreements provided additional support from neighbouring services. The Service worked closely with COMAH sites and there were regular tests of the major incident arrangements.

A Member stated that there was no need to continue the debate about having an on-call duty system at Crewe as it was obvious there was little support for this. There were two proposals to consider; Nucleus or Whole Time and he asked for the Chief Fire Officer's advice on the operational consequences of the two proposals and also the budget implications.

The Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive explained that the position he held meant that he had a legal responsibility to ensure that Members had the information they need to make the decisions required. He explained that the wholetime duty system did provide the best response. However it was also his responsibility to ensure that the Authority set a legal budget. The report stated that the plan to change the duty systems from wholetime to on-call at Crewe and Ellesmere Port was still

appropriate. Whilst he understood the views expressed and the alternative proposals, officers were trying to present the least worst option to balance the budget which would be to implement the changes previously agreed as part of the Emergency Response Review to change the duty systems for the second fire engine at Crewe and Ellesmere Port. If the changes were not implemented then the savings of £900k, already reflected in the MTFP, would need to be found from elsewhere. Alternatively Members could look at the option to hold a referendum to increase the Council Tax by more than 2.99%.

Members discussed the proposal in respect of the Nucleus crewing duty system for Crewe and it was stated that Cheshire East Councillors would not support any change to the duty system for the second fire engine at Crewe. Members were urged to look again at other alternatives for savings and, in the meantime, the wholetime duty system would continue to be funded from reserves.

Members then moved to vote on the motion and alternative motion.

In accordance with paragraph 4.44 of the Authority's constitution a request was made that the voting should be recorded to show how each Member present, and voting, cast their vote or whether he/she abstained. The voting was recorded as follows:

Motion proposed by Chair (seconded by Councillor Nelson)

'The introduction of the Nucleus Duty System for the second fire engine at Crewe'

For: Councillors Beckett, Biggin, Harris, Mercer, Mundry, Nelson, Polhill, Rudd, Tarr and Wright.

Against: Councillors Bailey, Flude, Jones, Mahon, Marren, Merry, Parker, Saunders, Sherlock, Simon and Weatherill

The motion was lost by 10 votes for to 11 votes against.

Alternative motion proposed by Councillor G Merry (seconded by Cllr D Marren)

'Members consider the findings of the report and determine that the future duty system for the second fire engine at Crewe Fire Station should be wholetime 24 hours a day, 7 days a week'.

For: Councillors Bailey, Biggin, Flude, Jones, Mahon, Marren, Merry, Parker, Saunders, Sherlock, Simon and Weatherill

Against: Councillors Beckett and Rudd

Abstained: Councillors Harris, Mercer, Mundry, Nelson, Polhill, Tarr, Wright

The amendment was carried by 12 votes to 2 with 7 abstentions.

Following the vote Councillor Sherlock proposed a motion, which was seconded by Councillor Bailey, in respect of the future duty system for the second fire engine at

Ellesmere Port:

'Continue 24/7 52 weeks of the year with two pumps at Ellesmere Port'

The Chair proposed an amendment to the motion, seconded by Councillor Nelson:

'Instruct officers to determine if the second fire engine at Ellesmere Port could be relocated to another area or station in order to satisfy the sustainability question and value for money challenge presented by the review'

Members discussed the two options proposed and then moved to the vote. The motion proposed by Councillor Sherlock was lost (3 for, 15 against) and the amendment proposed by the Chair was carried by 18 votes to 3.

**RESOLVED That:**

- [1] the findings of the review be noted;**
- [2] the future duty system for the second fire engine at Crewe Fire Station remains wholetime 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; and**
- [3] officers be instructed to determine if the second fire engine at Ellesmere Port could be relocated to another area or station in order to satisfy the sustainability question and value for money challenge presented by the review.**

**Note: Resolution No [3] followed a vote intended to secure the continuation of the existing wholetime duty system for the second fire engine at Ellesmere Port. The vote was lost.**

## **8 FIRE AND RESCUE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR ENGLAND - CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

The Policy and Transformation Officer presented this report to Members and explained that the report provided an outline of the Government's consultation on a revised Fire and Rescue National Framework for England. Members were asked to consider the proposed response (attached as Appendix 1 to the report) for submission.

Members discussed the proposed response and were satisfied that it should be submitted to the Government subject to the addition of text to highlight the benefits of the combined authority governance model.

**RESOLVED: That**

- [1] the consultation response detailed in appendix 1 (subject to the addition of a reference to the combined authority model) be approved for submission to the Home Office.**

## **9 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2018-19**

The Director of Transformation presented this report to Members which sought approval to publish the Pay Policy Statement for 2018-19 as detailed in appendix 1 to the report. She explained that the publication of the statement was an annual requirement and that the statement must be published by 31<sup>st</sup> March immediately preceding the financial year to which it relates.

The Director of Transformation drew Members attention to paragraph 16 of the report and highlighted that there was an outstanding issue in relation to the introduction of the Public Sector Exit Regulations that may necessitate changes to the Pay Policy Statement during the course of the financial year 2018-19.

### **RESOLVED: That**

- [1] the Pay Policy Statement attached as Appendix 1 be approved; and**
- [2] the Director of Transformation in conjunction with the Director of Governance and Commissioning be authorised to make any in-year changes to the Pay Policy Statement necessitated by new legislation or guidance.**

## **10 CAPITAL FUNDING FOR A REPLACEMENT FIRE STATION IN CHESTER**

The Director of Governance and Commissioning introduced this report which provided details of the capital funding required to build a replacement fire station on part of the existing site at St Anne Street, Chester. He added that the Fire Authority had previously confirmed its intention to replace the existing fire station in Chester at the current site at St Anne Street in December 2017. Members had also agreed to market part of the existing site that will be surplus to requirements.

He provided an update on a number of outstanding issues that had now been clarified and the Authority's external advisers had confirmed that the anticipated budget for the replacement fire station was very similar to the figure previously reported. The funding allocation required was £5.51m plus a 5% contingency of £275,500. Members were asked to note that there were also some potential costs that were not factored in to the budget which included any costs associated with moving and accommodating staff elsewhere and any possible delays and costs associated with any archaeological activities that may arise.

### **RESOLVED: That**

- [1] a capital allocation in the sum of £5.51m plus a 5% contingency of £275,500 to allow the delivery of a replacement fire station at St Anne Street, Chester be approved.**

**11 SALE OF TARPORLEY MUSEUM BUILDING**

The Director of Governance and Commissioning presented this report which provided details of the proposal to sell the building that previously housed a Fire Service Museum at Tarporley. He explained that the museum was no longer open to the public and the volunteer curator confirmed that he did not wish to continue to operate the fire museum.

A Member queried what was happening to the surplus fire service equipment and memorabilia. The Director of Governance and Commissioning confirmed that the building had been emptied in recent months and that the contents did not belong to the Service.

**RESOLVED: That**

**[1] Officers be authorised to arrange for the sale of the building formerly operated as a fire service museum in Park Road, Tarporley.**