



**Friday,
9 December 2022
10.00 am**

**Meeting of
Estates and Property
Committee
Clemonds Hey,
Winsford,
CW7 2UA**

Contact Officer:
Emilie Salkeld
Democratic Services

Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service, Clemonds Hey, Winsford, Cheshire, CW7 2UA

Tel: 01606 868804
E-mail: emilie.salkeld@cheshirefire.gov.uk

Cheshire Fire Authority

Notes for Members of the Public

Attendance at Meetings

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Access to Information

Copies of the Agenda will be available at the meeting. A copy can also be obtained from the contact officer named on the front of the Agenda. Alternatively, the Agenda and individual reports are available on the Authority's website (www.cheshirefire.gov.uk)

The Agenda is usually divided into two parts. Most business is dealt with in the first part which is open to the public. On some occasions some business may need to be considered in the second part of the agenda, in private session. There are limited reasons which allow this to take place, e.g. as confidential information is being considered about an individual, or commercial information is being discussed.

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**MEETING OF THE ESTATES AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE
FRIDAY, 9 DECEMBER 2022**

Time : 10.00 am

**Fire Conference Room - Fire Service HQ, Clemonds Hey, Winsford,
Cheshire, CW7 2UA**

AGENDA

PART 1 - BUSINESS TO BE DISCUSSED IN PUBLIC

1 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1A Recording of Meeting

Members are reminded that this meeting will be audio-recorded.

1B Apologies for absence

1C Declarations of Members' Interests

Members are reminded to disclose any interests that are relevant to any item on the Agenda.

1D Minutes of the Estates and Property Committee

(Pages 5 - 6)

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Estates and Property Committee held on Tuesday 1st March 2022.

ITEMS REQUIRING DISCUSSION/DECISION

2 Fire Station Modernisation Programme

(To Follow)

3 Crewe Fire Station Project

(Pages 7 - 10)

4 Wilmslow Duty System Transition

(Pages 11 - 14)

5 Service Housing Project

(Pages 15 - 18)

PART 2 - BUSINESS TO BE DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE

NONE

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ESTATES AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE held on Tuesday, 1 March 2022 at Lecture Theatre - Training Centre, Sadler Road, Winsford, Cheshire CW7 2FQ at 1.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Karen Mundry (Chair), Marilyn Houston, Stef Nelson, Stuart Parker, Peter Wheeler and independent (non-elected) member Derek Barnett

1 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

B Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Rob Moreton and Norman Wright.

C Declarations of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of Members' interests.

D Minutes of the Estates and Property Committee

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Estates and Performance Committee held on Monday 24th January 2022 be confirmed as a correct record.

2 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

That under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Order 2006, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the items of business listed below on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A to the Act in the paragraphs indicated:

Item 3 – Crewe Fire Station Project

Paragraph 3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding the information).

3 CREWE FIRE STATION PROJECT

The Director of Governance and Commissioning introduced the report concerning the project to replace the current fire station in Crewe with a new building on the same site.

He updated Members about the progress with the project, provided information about proposals from the contractor and gave a commentary about risks associated

with the project. Members were also informed of the 11-week lead time of the temporary fire station. In light of the information, Members agreed that the project should proceed.

RESOLVED: That

- [1] the report be noted; and**
- [2] the Director of Governance and Commissioning be authorised to enter into a design and build contract with ISG Construction Limited.**

CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF: ESTATES AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE
DATE: 9th DECEMBER 2022
REPORT OF: HEAD OF SERVICE IMPROVEMENT
AUTHOR: IAIN GAMMACK

SUBJECT: CREWE FIRE STATION PROJECT

Purpose of Report

1. To provide an update about the work that has taken place on the Crewe Fire Station Project following agreement to proceed with the Project on the 6th May 2022.

Recommended That Members:

- [1] Note the report.

Background

2. Members will recall that approval to enter into the building contract and proceed with the project was given at the Estates and Property Committee of the 1st March 2022. The Contract Sum was subsequently increased due to the inflation issues experienced in the early half of the year on the 6th May 2022.
3. The project comprises three phases:
 - a. The demolition of the former smoke house, and the provision of a temporary fire station on the cleared site. The Community Bungalow will be utilised as Contractor's Site Offices.
 - b. The demolition of the old fire station and the erection of the new building.
 - c. The clearance of the temporary fire station, completion of external works and a "light refurbishment" of the Community Bungalow.

Information

Progress

4. Following the approval to proceed on the 6th May 2022, the build contracts with ISG Construction Limited were immediately signed and the orders placed for the delivery of the Temporary Fire Station.
5. The Temporary Fire Station is made up of two components, namely the accommodation block and the appliance bay.

6. Works commenced on site as scheduled on the 11th July 2022.
7. Subsequently, the provision of the new electrical power supply onto the site was delayed by Scottish Power due to them having obtained an incorrect road closure permit from Cheshire East Council to undertake connection works in the highway. Also, there were delays experienced in the delivery of the Temporary Appliance Bay components. Overall, these two delays led to the Temporary Fire Station being completed on the 14th October 2022, some three weeks later than planned.
8. Following completion the Operational Response crews were relocated to the Temporary Fire Station on the 19th October 2022. The relocation was undertaken without incident and the temporary fire station is now in full use.
9. Works to demolish the old Fire Station commenced on the 24th October 2022 and are largely completed to ground floor level at the time of writing, with foundation removal commencing shortly.
10. The three week delay to the Temporary Fire Station has unfortunately resulted in a three week delay to the remainder of the construction programme, with completion of the site works now scheduled for the 22nd December 2023.
11. Relocation from the Temporary Fire Station into the new building is due to take place on the 11th October 2023.

Restrictive Covenants

12. Members will recall that the title documentation includes a covenant that restricts the height of any construction on the site. The training tower needs to be higher than the height restriction. The covenant was intended to protect a proposed airport (in the deeds a reference is made to an aerodrome) and it dates back to the 1930s. It is clearly of no relevance now. Cheshire East Council and the Crown both benefit from the covenant
13. The Crown has entered into an agreement which will allow the training tower to be erected without it being in breach of the covenant. Cheshire East Council still has not done so. There has, however, been positive progress on this in recent weeks with the document finalised and due to be completed.

Design Development

14. As normal, during a design and build contract of this nature, detailed design development work has continued following contract signature. Whilst this has largely been routine detail development work, considerable time has been spent to review the performance of the low carbon installations at Chester Fire Station, and to subsequently incorporate any lessons learned from that project into the Crewe Fire Station build.

15. This has now resulted in improvements to the Building Management System, changes to the lighting installation in the Appliance Bay and a revised specification of thermostats.
16. An investigation also took place into an alternative method of heating the building using VRF Technology instead of Underfloor Heating, which had the potential to use less energy. Detailed energy modelling, however, showed increased running costs combined with increased capital costs and this resulted in this idea being rejected.

Risks

17. As might be expected with a project of this nature there are risks that need to be considered and which the Project Team seeks to address. Risks involve events that might occur and are assessed for likelihood and severity. Efforts are made to avoid, or at least mitigate them.
18. Members were made aware of these risks in the report of the 1st March 2022, with a further update given on the 6th May 2022. The risks that remained at that time are noted below and updates are provided against each item.

Specific Financial Risks

Utility Supplies and Planning Condition Discharge

15. There is a Provisional Sum of £80k included within the ISG Contract Sum for the provision of all the new utility supplies and the disconnection of the redundant supplies to the old building. This is normal practice as the utility companies will not provide fixed quotes until final orders are placed. To-date the disconnections and new supply costs are considerably lower than was expected. In addition, a saving has been made on the water supply as we have been able to reuse the existing connection and pipework. We therefore believe that the £80k Provisional Sum will be adequate for the all of the new service supplies.
16. There was also a requirement to discharge Planning Condition 4, which relates to rapid electric car charging provision. This may have required more powerful car chargers than originally included in the Build Contract and this would have impacted on the above service supply quotations, potentially requiring a larger supply than planned. Cheshire East have now discharged the planning condition with the original proposals being agreed. This item is no longer a risk.

Staffed Security

17. Whilst it is the Contractor's responsibility to ensure the security of the site at all times. The costs associated with the provision of staffed security are not included within the ISG Contract Sum, as it is not deemed necessary due to the on-site presence of the firefighters. This has been normal practice for all of the previous "new build projects",

and to date has only been required on two short term occasions to cover specific threats. The risk associated with this will vary during the build period, with the highest risks during demolition and when the new building is nearing completion, though it will be low for the majority of the build period. A sum of £27k has been included to cover this. This remains a risk item.

COVID

18. ISG will accept the risk of complying with regulations in force at the time of contract signature. However, should additional restrictions be introduced in the future, then the Authority is required to cover additional costs incurred. With the recent changes in the COVID public health rules, this remains a low-risk item.

BREXIT

19. ISG will accept the cost and delays associated with the current known import regulations and tariffs. However, should new costs or restrictions be applied to the import of materials, then the Authority is required to cover the additional costs incurred. The implementation of the trade agreement with the EU has now given much more certainty around this risk which is now rated as low, however the ongoing discussions around the Northern Ireland Protocol could result in further issues arising. General Project Contingency
20. Included within the overall budget is a General Contingency of £141k to cover the discovery of unknown general risk items. This might include unexpected ground conditions or hidden asbestos underneath the existing building.
21. At present very little of this Contingency has been expended with the only unforeseen ground conditions being found under part of the temporary fire station. Though it should be noted that the major risk remains under the existing building and yard areas which have yet to be excavated.
22. The Authority's Project Management processes require that a risk register is reviewed at monthly intervals. These risks are now included on the Project Risk Register and are being reviewed jointly with ISG and the Project Team each month.

Financial Implications

23. The approved budget is £7.375m. At this time, this remains the expected final cost.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None.

CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF: ESTATES AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE
DATE: 9TH DECEMBER 2022
REPORT OF: HEAD OF SERVICE IMPROVEMENT
AUTHOR: PETER HAYES

SUBJECT: WILMSLOW DUTY SYSTEM TRANSITION

Purpose of Report

1. To provide an update on the project to transition the current Wilmslow nucleus duty system to a day crewing duty system

Recommended: That Members;

- [1] Note the report

Background

2. The IRMP 2022-2023 outlined the plans to change staffing arrangements at Wilmslow, changing from the existing nucleus crewing system to a day crewing system (DC1).
3. The DC1 system is in place at other fire stations in Cheshire. It has proven to be efficient and effective and provides guaranteed 100% availability of the fire engine 24/7 without the need to bring in supplementary resources. Furthermore, it will remove the inefficient and costly backfilling of staff in the evening to ensure appliance availability at Wilmslow.
4. In February 2022 the CFA agreed to proceed with day crewing proposal and with the delegation of authority to the Chief fire Officer, Treasurer and monitoring officer to purchase 9 properties in Wilmslow to house the Firefighters coming onto the new duty system.
5. It was highlighted that the draft capital programme contained £4.5m to facilitate the significant capital investment in houses, with the majority, or potentially all of this sum being funded by borrowing. The new duty system is expected to see a reduction in staffing costs that will be sufficient to cover the cost of the borrowing.

Information

6. The project officially commenced in following the decision by the CFA on the 9th February 2022 and was split into 2 main workstreams. 1) the purchase of the required houses, 2) the redeployment and transition of staff to the new day crew duty system.

Purchase of houses in Wilmslow

7. The purchase of houses was driven by 3 key criteria
 - a. House Type – a 3-bedroom family property, with parking for one car and a garden
 - b. 3-5 mins travel time to the station or nearer – to ensure response times can be met
 - c. Good liveable condition – ensuring that properties would not require much refurbishment work prior to occupation.
8. Working closely with the Estate Agents, Business Intelligence and the Wilmslow crews, a perimeter around the station was established within which houses would be a viable journey time to the station. Properties in South Wilmslow were highlighted as the most likely candidates. Commuting from properties North of the station would prove difficult with busy roads and junctions to traverse delaying response times.
9. From March to September the housing market was extremely buoyant, and this saw the price of houses rising steadily. This also meant that houses were not on the market for long with many going for over asking price.
10. In May the Service had its first offer accepted and in October the Service finally had offers accepted on the final 3 properties required. All 9 properties are 3 bed properties, located in South Wilmslow and in a good state of repair.
11. As at time of writing the Service has completed on 5 properties and is expecting to complete on the remainder by the end of January 2023.
12. The total cost of the 9 properties (including stamp duty and legal fees) is £4,036,447.
13. The securing of the properties was essential to be completed prior to the commencement of the new duty system.

Redeployment and Transition of staff

14. The Wilmslow staff have been kept informed on a regular basis throughout the project in relation to the purchase of the houses
15. The transition and redeployment process was presented to the JCNP in September. Following completion of a review by the group, the process was finalised on the 19th October.
16. Staff briefings took place between the 15-17th November with all Nucleus staff attending during the day and the on-call staff at their drill nights. Additional catch-up sessions took place with 2 staff members who could not make either meeting,
17. A consultation period began on the 17th November with the impacted staff. This consultation period will run for 30 days to the 17th of December 2022.

18. Staff have also been informed that their line management team, FBU, and HR are available for a 1 to 1 discussion should they wish to discuss any queries or concerns they may have on an individual basis during the consultation process.
19. Once completed a further 7 days will be offered to provide the opportunity for staff to complete their preference forms and state their intentions. A return date for the 24th December has been given for this.
20. The Assignment and Redeployment Panel will meet on Wednesday 4th January 2023 to look at the preference forms and will then arrange a series of 1 to 1 meetings to look at individual preferences. These preference forms and meetings will also allow the Service delivery team to look at house allocation and best fit for each individual.
21. The Service is working towards having the Fire Fighters ready to go on the new Duty system by the 1st April 2023.

Legal Implications

22. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

Equality and Diversity Implications

23. The transition and redeployment process has been designed to ensure a fair and unbiased process for selection of staff and allocation of houses.

Environmental Implications

24. Purchasing 9 new houses will increase the carbon footprint of the Service. Work may be required on the houses to ensure they are as energy efficient as possible. New insulation, boilers and windows will be considered initially.
25. Having 9 firefighters locally will reduce commuting for the Fire fighters helping them to driving down their carbon footprints. It will also negate the need for evening cover at the station, again reducing the amount of travel to and from the station.

CONTACT: DONNA LINTON, CLEMONDS HEY, WINSFORD

TEL [01606] 868804

BACKGROUND PAPERS: NONE

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CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF: ESTATES AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE
DATE: 9TH DECEMBER 2022
REPORT OF: HEAD OF SERVICE IMPROVEMENT
AUTHOR: PETER HAYES

SUBJECT: SERVICE HOUSING PROJECT

Purpose of Report

1. To provide an update on the Programme to refurbish the Service houses.

Recommended: That Members;

- [1] Note the report

Background

2. A report was brought to the Estates Committee in January 2022 detailing the background of the Programme and progress made.

Whilst the list below is not exhaustive it provides a good overview of the work completed as part of the refurbishment programme to January 2022

- Lofts of all houses insulated (including loft ventilation)
 - Full refurbishment of 2 houses in Knutsford (including new boilers, kitchens and bathrooms as well as roofing work)
 - Full refurbishment of 2 houses in Congleton (including new boilers, kitchens and bathrooms as well as roofing work)
 - All flat and pitched roofs replaced on Northwich houses (including asbestos removal, soffits sealed, cladding on porches and replacement of steel posts)
 - Pitched roofs replaced on 9 houses in Knutsford (including asbestos removal)
 - Pitched roofs replaced on 2 houses in Stockton Heath
 - 18 boilers replaced
 - 19 new kitchens installed
 - 10 new bathrooms installed
 - 3 further flat roofs replaced
 - Several domestic misting systems isolated and made secure
3. Additional asbestos removal, new garage doors, fencing, boilers, internal and external doors, new soffits and fascias and other improvements have also been made.

4. The report also highlighted that an estimated further £1.4 million would need to be spent on the houses over the next 3-5 years, beyond and above what had been spent in the 2021-2022 programme (Phase 3).
5. Spend each year, however, continues to be restricted by the requirement to keep under a VAT exemption threshold. If it is exceeded there is a significant financial impact.

Information

6. Phase 4 of the Programme commenced in June 2022 and concluded in September. The bulk of the work this year was focussed in Winsford replacing the pitched roofs for all the properties. Approximately £300K has been spent this year.
7. In total, across the portfolio of 49 properties the following has been completed to date.
 - 35 Pitched Roofs (70% of Roofs)
 - 12 Flat Roofs
 - 31 Kitchens (60% of Kitchens)
 - 22 Bathrooms (almost 50% of bathrooms)
8. Phase 5 of the Programme is due to commence in April 2023 and the prospective work packages are currently being worked through. It is expected that the replacement of the remaining pitched roofs to the houses in Congleton will form the bulk of the work programme.

Financial Implications

9. Spend on the programme to-date is approx. £1,109,000 (although some other works will have been carried out on the Service houses, funded from the repairs and maintenance budget).
10. We are working on the premise that works to be carried out in the next financial year cannot exceed £300k (due to the VAT restriction mentioned earlier).
11. The current estimate for the outstanding works that are required (to be delivered over the next 3 to 4 years) is approximately £1.1m.

Legal Implications

12. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

Equality and Diversity Implications

13. There are no direct equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

Environmental Implications

14. The work conducted over the last 4 years will positively impact the environment as improved glazing, additional insulation and better heating have been fitted.

New appliances will also be more energy efficient with the move from gas hobs to electric.

CONTACT: DONNA LINTON, CLEMONDS HEY, WINSFORD

TEL [01606] 868804

BACKGROUND PAPERS: NONE

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