

CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF: ESTATES AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE
DATE: 24TH JANUARY 2022
REPORT OF: DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE AND COMMISSIONING
AUTHOR: ANDREW LEADBETTER

SUBJECT: CREWE FIRE STATION

Purpose of Report

1. To update Members about progress with the project to replace the existing fire station in Crewe.

Recommended: That Members

[1] Note the report

Background

2. This project was last considered by this committee in August 2021. Whilst significant progress had been made, there were still some important matters that needed to be satisfactorily concluded before the project could proceed.

Information

Planning Permissions

3. The planning permission for the temporary fire station was issued in October 2021. The planning permission for the new fire station was issued in November 2021. Both planning permissions contain conditions that the project team believes are acceptable/workable. The planning process was concluded with the minimum fuss and pretty much to the anticipated programme timescale.
4. Images of the approved new fire station and site layout are attached to this report as Appendix 1.

Restrictive Covenants

5. 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.
6. 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

has still not confirmed how it intends to proceed. The project cannot progress until Cheshire East resolves this issue.

Contractor's Proposals

7. The Contractor's Proposals describe how the contractor intends to deliver the project. These were received in mid-December and have allowed the project team to consider a range of matters, one of the most important being the anticipated costs of the project.
8. Unfortunately, as things stand, the project team does not believe that the Contractor's Proposals are acceptable, because the costs currently exceed the allocated capital budget. Whilst acknowledging that there are some cost pressures, e.g. construction inflation running at about 20%, the contractor is working with the project team to bring the project within budget (with some contingency available).
9. It is anticipated that the work with the contractor to refine its Proposals could take up to eight weeks to complete.

Programme

10. The existing programme anticipates a start on-site in March 2021. In view of the delay in securing an acceptable response from Cheshire East and as a result of the continuing discussions with the contractor about its Proposals, the start date will slip. The project team will do all it can to minimise the delay.
11. Once the outstanding matters have been resolved to the project team's satisfaction this Committee will need to meet again. It will determine if the project should proceed, provided that the Contractor's Proposals will deliver the fire station utilising the existing budget.

Financial Implications

12. £7m is allocated for this project. It is contained in the capital programme. The project is to be funded by borrowing. The project team is very keen to ensure that this figure is sufficient.

Legal Implications

13. The Fire Authority is contracted until the end of the pre-construction stage. However, a further contract will need to be entered into in relation to the works. This will not be possible until the Contractor's Proposals have been developed sufficiently to be acceptable to the project team. The issue with Cheshire East will also need to have been resolved.

Equality and Diversity Implications

14. The building design has involved the thorough consideration of equality and diversity issues, with the support of the equality diversity and inclusion officer.

Environmental Implications

15. The project will deliver a new Fire Station that will be a considerable improvement over the existing building which is not environmentally efficient. It will be built to the BREEAM Excellent standard and be a zero carbon development in respect of regulated energy.

**CONTACT: DONNA LINTON, CLEMONDS HEY, WINSFORD
TEL [01606] 868804
BACKGROUND PAPERS: NONE**