

## CHESHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

**MEETING OF:** CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY  
**DATE:** 20<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2017  
**REPORT OF:** DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER  
**AUTHOR:** STEWART FORSHAW

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**SUBJECT:** TRAINING CENTRE PROGRAMME AND  
SADLER ROAD SITE REQUIREMENTS

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### Purpose of Report

1. To update Members on activities that have taken place since the decision in September 2016 concerning the training centre and the decision in December 2016 concerning the vehicle workshop.
2. To confirm the requirements for the replacement of the Incident Command Training Suite (ICTS).
3. To clarify the requirements at the Sadler Road site which are not directly related to the training centre/ICTS (vehicle workshop and security).
4. To set out the business case for the training centre.
5. To provide a consolidated budget requirement for the training centre, ICTS and Sadler Road site works.

### Recommended: That Members

- [1] Confirm that the training centre programme and Sadler Road requirements should be delivered subject to successful procurement being undertaken;
- [2] Approve the following sums (for the activity indicated alongside):  

£7,500,000	– Training Centre (already earmarked and including the £0.5m approved in September 2016)
£300,000	– Vehicle Workshops Renovation
£1,000,000	– Incident Command Training Suite Reprovision
<u>£250,000</u>	– Sadler Road Site Security
£9,050,000	– Total
- [3] Approve an overall general contingency of 5% (to be applied as necessary and appropriate); and

- [4] Ask Estates and Property Committee to identify Members to engage in procurement, contract award and contract management
  
- [5] Note the requirement for further funding to ensure continuity of operational training during the redevelopment of the Sadler Road site. This will be confirmed as part of the 2018-19 and 2019-20 annual budget setting process. Latest estimates are that the requirement will total around £100,000 per year to be funded from reserves.

## **Background**

- 6. Members considered a paper concerned with Blue Light Collaboration (BLC) at the Fire Authority meeting in September 2016. At the same meeting they also considered a report entitled 'Provision of Training Facilities – Future Options'.
- 7. The BLC Programme originally envisaged that all operations delivered from Sadler Road would be recreated at Clemonds Hey, including operational training (with the Sadler Road site being sold once vacated).
- 8. In September 2016 it had become clear that it was necessary to retain the Sadler Road site and that operational training would need to continue to be delivered from Sadler Road.
- 9. In December 2016 Members agreed a further change to the scope of the BLC Programme – they decided to retain the vehicle workshop at Sadler Road due to concerns about the level of capital investment required to deliver a joint facility and the limited revenue savings that would be achievable.
- 10. Retention of the vehicle workshop (a sizeable part of the site) clearly has had an impact on the development of the proposal for a new Training Centre on the site.
- 11. When Members considered the future options for training facilities in September 2016 the report sought to compare and contrast options for operational training provision at Clemonds Hey and Sadler Road.
- 12. The report showed that there were significant doubts about delivering all operational requirements at Clemonds Hey. For both sites, assessments were set out in the report of options to create 'as is' and enhanced facilities.

13. Members supported the retention of the Sadler Road site with a view to developing facilities that were a significant improvement and had capacity to expand to meet future needs.
14. Members also agreed to officers expending up to £500,000 to take the preferred option to the next stage of a detailed business case with detailed design brief and professionally costed options.
15. This paper explains what has happened since September 2016. It also explains the business case for proceeding with the Training Centre project.

## **Information**

### **Activity since September 2016**

#### Decision to Retain Vehicle Workshop at Sadler Road.

16. This decision has had an impact upon the training centre programme as the vehicle workshop is a substantial building which reduces the space available to build the training centre facilities.

#### Adjacent Land

17. The above decision led officers to carry out an assessment of the land adjacent to the Sadler Road site.
18. There was a consideration of land owned by the police (the police station and unused land to the rear) and land owned by Cheshire West and Chester Council (the fields behind and adjacent to the existing site).
19. After some discussions and deliberations it became clear that the training centre would need to be contained within the existing Sadler Road site. It was felt that the adjoining land was either too problematic, too expensive, or would have potentially significantly extended the timescales of the programme.

#### Research

20. Following the endorsement by the Members in September 2016 to use up to £500,000 to develop a detailed business case, the programme team have developed a detailed design brief and plan drawings for a new training centre which will provide an excellent standard of training, development and assessment for the next 25 years.

21. The design brief and plan drawings have been developed by the programme team during the research phase of the programme. This research phase also included the participation from Service staff through workshops and briefing sessions.
22. The programme team also visited several fire and rescue service (FRS) training centres across the UK and engaged with suppliers of specialist FRS training props and equipment, to identify best practice and modern training props and facilities.
23. The ideas generated during the research phase of the programme have also included the contribution of several Fire Authority Members, who accompanied the programme team during visits to FRS training centres in Scotland, London, Durham and Darlington, South Yorkshire and Greater Manchester.
24. Accordingly, the new training centre design brief has been researched robustly with both CFA Members and CFRS staff interaction and support.

#### Design Brief

25. The new training centre design brief would, if delivered, provide the Authority with a realistic and modern day training centre, where firefighters will learn and practice the skills needed to respond safely and effectively to fires and other emergencies in the communities of Cheshire.
26. This will be achieved with the new training centre simulating all types of emergency incidents which fire crews are likely to encounter in Cheshire, using a themed approach and including:
  - An urban zone including four terraced houses with the ability to conduct carbonaceous fires, a 3 storey fire house, realistic fire behaviour training units and a confined space sewer system;
  - A rural zone including a barn, farm yard area and an animal rescue area e.g. slurry pit;
  - An industrial zone including a petrochemical rig, rail track with chemical tanker rolling stock and foam training area;
  - A transport zone which will include a motorway section, road traffic collision training classroom and a scrap vehicle storage area. The roads interconnecting the zones will also reflect the types of roads commonly found in those environments.

- A conventional firefighter training area to practice pump operation and hose running, including firefighter entrance selection tests.
27. The new training centre will also include a new indoor training area which will include the use of sound, light, noise and visual effects to help create a sense of realism for firefighters whilst training indoors. This building will also provide secure parking for fire appliances during out-of-hours.
  28. The new training centre design also includes new teaching classrooms, shower/changing facilities and a separate entrance to a training centre reception which is expected in a modern and sector leading training centre.
  29. The design brief also includes a detailed plan drawing of the final proposals. It has been a challenge for the programme team to fit all the requirements on the existing site. This has impacted upon the current location of the incident command training suite (ICTS) which cannot be retained in its current position and has led to additional expense which is detailed below.

#### Budget

30. Following the previous reports of September and December 2016, the proposed project has been subjected to a detailed review of build costs.
31. This firstly involved a full review of the proposed project requirements and the site area to be utilised for the project, including the preparation of draft site plans and building layouts to confirm the operational feasibility of the proposals.
32. The finalised requirements, project scope and drawings were then subjected to a build cost review by the appointed Project Quantity Surveyors.
33. This initial project cost review was then subjected to further scrutiny to ensure that the Authority's requirements had been correctly interpreted and comparisons made with other similar and recently procured schemes.
34. Finally, at the conclusion of the process in July 2017 a final review was undertaken against a recent tender return to ensure that the cost model presented is robust and accurate. Whilst officers are satisfied that this is the case, a number of risk items which cannot at this time be fully confirmed have been identified. Where possible provisional allowances have been made for these items within the budget. However, there remain

items which cannot be quantified at this time. These unquantifiable items would be funded from the requested 5% general contingency allowance.

### **Clarification of Situation Concerning Incident Command Training Suite (ICTS)**

35. The ICTS continues to provide an excellent training and assessment environment for incident commanders and will therefore still be required in the future to provide incident command operational assurance.
36. In September 2016 a report to Members noted that the financial implications for any upgrade/refurbishments of the ICTS software or hardware were not included in the estimated costs for a new training centre. This is because it was felt that the standard and cost of technology could be inaccurate if estimated too early before delivery of the project.
37. The report did not include any building alteration costs for ICTS which are now a requirement following the decision to retain workshops on the Sadler Road site.
38. Following extensive research by the programme team which has included a review of other FRS ICTSs , discussions with specialist suppliers of the technology and the appointed building consultant, the budget required to build the ICTS is estimated to be £1,000,000 and includes:
  - £575,000 – refurbishment and remodelling of main building
  - £425,000 – hardware / ICT
39. It is anticipated that the tender brief for the new training centre will include the works required for the new ICTS build works, so the main contractor awarded with the contract completes all of the works on site.

### **Vehicle Workshops and Associated Areas**

40. Following the Members decision for the vehicle workshops to remain at Sadler Road as part of the BLC plans, the Service Transport Manager and new training centre programme team have undertaken a detailed review of the current workshops facilities.
41. The aim of the review was to identify what improvements could be made to the working environment, workshops equipment and the health and safety for the members of staff working in the workshops team.

42. As a result of previous BLC plans to move workshops to the Police HQ, the investment required for the renovation of the current workshops and associated areas was not defined. This work has now been undertaken.
43. It is estimated that the budget costs required for the necessary building works to the Service workshops and associated areas will be £300,000.
44. It is anticipated that the tender brief for the new training centre will include the works required for the workshops renovation so that the main contractor awarded with the contract completes all of the works on site.

### **Site Security**

45. The security of all Authority buildings is currently under review and is relevant to the new training centre building, as security of the site both internally and externally is a priority to the programme team.
46. The external perimeter of the new training centre will need to be fully secure to deter trespassers and any potential criminal acts on Authority property or to its equipment. With a rise in terrorist activity which has included large vehicles as weapons or 'Trojan horses' it is also imperative that Service vehicles are stored securely on site.
47. It is proposed that as part of the new training centre programme a full review of security arrangements is completed on the Sadler Road site including the new training centre building and the operational training site which will require an estimated budget of £250,000 for the works identified.
48. It is anticipated that the tender brief for the new training centre will include the works required for site security, so the main contractor awarded with the contract completes all of the works on site.

### **Relocation Plan**

49. The Service will need to temporarily move its centrally delivered training courses from Sadler Road during the build phase to other locations (some minor building works will be required at those locations which have been identified as suitable training venues).
50. Proposals include building and upgrading training facilities at some fire stations to facilitate centrally delivered courses e.g. breathing apparatus refresher courses. These upgraded facilities will also be available in the future to deliver locally led training courses. This provides enduring value for the Service after the new training centre is built.

51. The ICTS will also need to be relocated to a fire station so incident command training and assessments can continue, again requiring a financial investment in facilities which can be utilised in the future.
52. Provision for the necessary upgrade of current facilities has been included in the overall project budget requested. However, there will also be a requirement to temporarily outsource some courses during the build phase to ensure continuity of essential training provision. These additional revenue costs are currently forecast at around £100k per year but will be considered as part of the 2018/19 and 2019/20 budget setting process.

### **The Business Case for the new Training Centre**

53. The Service undertook a detailed review of its operational training requirements and facilities that included options to relocate and develop Clemonds Hey or remain at the current site.
54. In order to do so the Service brought together a project team of experienced officers and an external consultant (who has supported the Authority with its new fire station build programme and built a number of fire service training centres).
55. The review identified five options which were presented to Members in September 2016 during BLC discussions, with option 2A to develop a new training centre to meet the future needs of the Service at the current Sadler Road being the preferred option.
56. This preferred option not only provides the Service with new and enhanced realistic training facilities but also provides the best value for money over a 20-25 year lifespan of the site.
57. The refurbishment cost of the existing facilities is estimated at £4.33m. It is projected that the subsequent total revenue costs of the site over a 20-year period would be £3.86m. Therefore, the whole life 20-year costs are estimated to be £8.19m. However, it is anticipated that the existing facilities would need major refurbishment or replacement in 10 years. This would add at least an additional £1.6m in costs making a comparative whole life cost of £9.79m.
58. The capital cost of building new training facilities is estimated to be £7.5m with revenue costs over 20 years being £3.86m giving a whole life 20 year cost of £11.4m. However, whilst the new facilities may require some refurbishment after 20 years its anticipated minimum lifespan is 25-30 years.

59. The design brief which has been produced following extensive research will accommodate a new, modern and realistic training environment for operational training on the current site that will lead to an enhanced training offer for staff.
60. The new training centre will also allow almost all core training to be delivered locally avoiding costs and the disruption associated with sending staff elsewhere for training e.g. to the Fire Service College. This provides potential revenue savings of up to £100,000 per annum.
61. The detailed design brief costs have been assessed by the project Quantity Surveyor in order to provide confidence that the requirements in the design brief can be delivered with the funding outlined in this report.

## **Procurement**

62. Officers debated the potential procurement options and were understandably influenced by the experiences of the recent fire station and safety centre builds.
63. The value of the contract means that a full European process is necessary. Members may recall that this was the approach pursued initially for the new build fire stations and safety centre. Unfortunately, the process essentially failed to deliver a tender that was considered to be value for money. As a result framework contracts were considered and the North West Construction Hub was chosen.
64. The Service's engagement with the Hub was not entirely typical as its earlier procurement efforts meant that it began with a clear indication of the potential cost of the builds and it also had progressed further with design development. This had the benefit of reducing risk, but may have reduced the potential benefit of closer working between the Authority and the contractor on the design.
65. The Service's experience of the Hub approach has been a positive one with: the engagement of the contractor being quick and relatively simple (reducing the draw on internal resources); the builds largely being completed on time; and costs of the builds (just) being contained within the approved budget (and 5% contingency).
66. Officers also discussed the merits of a traditional construction contract versus a design and build contract. They concluded that the risk allocation associated with a design and build is more favourable.

67. In summary, the choice of a framework and appointment of a design and build contractor should allow: the fastest appointment process; a favourable (to the Authority) risk transfer; early dialogue about the design; and control over exposure to cost as it allows a staged approach.
68. A range of advisers will be needed by the Authority, e.g. employer's agent and quantity surveyor and some of them have already been engaged (via a framework using some of the £500,000 funding already approved by Members).

## **Financial Implications**

69. The initial options appraisal approved by Members in September 2016 endorsed option 2a, retention of the Sadler Road site with development to significantly improve current facilities and with capacity to expand the facilities to meet the future needs of the service. The indicative capital cost of this option was £7.457m of which up to £0.5m was approved to further develop the proposals.
70. This report now presents the outcomes from this work including a detailed and robust proposal that will deliver a realistic and modern day training centre, where firefighters will learn and practice the skills needed to respond safely and effectively to fires and other emergencies in the communities of Cheshire and beyond.
71. The estimated capital cost of the proposed scheme is £7.5m, very much in line with the initially endorsed options appraisal. Estimated whole life costings are discussed in paragraphs 57 and 58 above.
72. The new facility will also enable the realisation of around £100k per annum revenue savings from 2020-21 as training currently undertaken by officers at Fire Service College will be delivered 'in house' at the Sadler Road site.
73. Following the later BLC decision for vehicle workshops to remain on the Sadler Road site and the increasing importance of building security arrangements, it is now proposed to combine these additional requirements into the recommended capital scheme increasing the proposed capital cost by an estimated £300k (Workshops) and £250k (Sadler Road Site Security Measures).
74. Finally incorporating the planned replacement and renewal of the existing Incident Command Training Suite into the overall recommended project can be achieved at an estimated cost of £1m.

75. The total recommended Capital costs recommended for approval and funding from reserves can therefore be summarised as follows:

Scheme Element	Capital Cost
Core Training Centre Facility	£7.5m
Vehicle Workshops Renovation	£0.3m
Sadler Road Site Security	£0.25m
Incident Command Training Suite	£1.0m
Total Capital Project cost	£9.05m

76. Although the £9.05m project cost above includes provision for some specific contingency items, experience has demonstrated the need for an additional overall general contingency sum. In view of the robustness of the work already carried out, it is hoped that any additional costs can be kept to a minimum. However, as has been the case previously on capital projects, it is proposed to earmark a general contingency and in line with our experience from the recent programme of new station builds 5% is proposed. Every effort will be made to ensure that use of this contingency is minimised, and its use will be subject to the approval of the Land and Stations Working Group, chaired by the Director of Governance and Commissioning.
77. Members should note that if this £9m programme is approved, the Authority's remaining useable financial reserves will be substantially committed.
78. The Authority's Medium Term Financial Plan and overall reserves position is currently being reviewed to inform the annual (2018/19) budget setting process and will be presented to Members as part of this process and to inform future decisions.
79. As highlighted in the initial options report there is some risk to VAT recovery on the project build. The Authority has since taken specialist professional advice on these risks and will continue to monitor the position closely. Action to mitigate any risks will be taken as the scheme progresses.

### **Legal Implications**

80. The Authority must have robust processes (which involve Members' where appropriate) when dealing with important programmes and decisions.
81. Given the considerable sums associated with the decisions covered in this report officers intend to engage Members in the procurement process and

contract award and contract management. The Authority may wish to ask the Estates and Property Committee to identify Members to fulfil these roles.

## **Equality and Diversity Implications**

82. There are equality and diversity issues to be considered within the building and the operational training area. All implications have been addressed in the programmes Equality Impact Assessment completed by the programme team working alongside the Service Equality and Inclusion Officer.

## **Environmental Implications**

83. There are environmental considerations in developing the new training centre site, which have been addressed in the risk register of the programme and Project Initiation Document (PID).
84. A full ecological appraisal of the Sadler Road site has also been conducted by Ecus Environmental Consultants.
85. The new facilities (training centre and workshops) will incorporate modern materials and approaches which are expected to deliver environmental benefits e.g. reduced emissions and lower running costs.

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