

CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF: CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY
DATE: 6TH DECEMBER 2017
REPORT OF: DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE AND COMMISSIONING
AUTHOR: ANDREW LEADBETTER

SUBJECT: REPLACEMENT OF CHESTER FIRE STATION

Purpose of Report

1. To formally update Members about the situation concerning the creation of a new fire station on the existing Chester Fire Station site.
2. To allow the Fire Authority to confirm its intention to create a new fire station on part of the existing Chester Fire Station site.

Recommended: That Members

- [1] Restate the Authority's intention to create a new fire station on the existing Chester Fire Station site; and
- [2] Agree to the marketing of the Authority's land to be released from the redevelopment of the Chester Fire Station site.

Background

3. Members have received numerous reports in recent years concerning the creation of a new fire station on the existing Chester Fire Station site.
4. The existing fire station is too large and in need of replacement (rather than refurbishment). A replacement fire station can be built on part of the existing site, providing the potential to sell the surplus land to help fund the replacement fire station. The existing fire station site is in the correct location.
5. The most recent proposal from Watkin Jones could not be progressed once the company found a better site and concentrated its efforts there. Members will recall that the Watkin Jones proposal involved the development of student accommodation on the land that would have been released.

Information

6. Officers have had some informal discussions with developers, but nothing firm is currently under consideration.
7. As Chester Fire Station has been the subject of various proposals in recent year it is fair to say that there has been limited investment in the building. This situation cannot continue and it is reaching a position where the Authority needs

to consider pressing ahead with its plans to deliver a replacement fire station on part of the existing site, with or without the sale of any surplus land.

8. Officers have worked with the Authority's external advisers to produce a marketing brief. This is a relatively simple document which describes the Authority's aspirations and which is intended to promote a dialogue with prospective developers. Given the delays associated with the various abortive previous proposals, the brief only covers the potential sale of surplus land rather than concerning itself with the potential use of adjoining land outside the ownership of the Authority.
9. Whilst officers believe that Members have been very clear about their expectations for a replacement fire station in Chester, it seemed sensible to bring this update report prior to the marketing taking place. Members have already instructed officers to arrange clear communications about the future of the fire station on the existing site prior to the marketing of surplus land.
10. If proposals are forthcoming officers will report to Estates and Property Committee in the first instance. Any firm proposal would need to be considered by the Fire Authority. If there are no proposals worthy of consideration within the next three calendar months officers intend to press ahead with the Authority's plans for a replacement fire station. Thereafter, Members would be presented with details of the design, costs etc. of the replacement fire station and be asked to allocate the necessary funds.

Financial Implications

11. At this stage, there are no financial implications.

Legal Implications

12. At this stage, there are no legal implications.

Equality and Diversity Implications

13. There are no equality and diversity implications associated with this report.

Environmental Implications

14. There are no environmental implications associated this report.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: NONE