

CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF: ESTATES AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE
DATE: 13TH MARCH 2020
REPORT OF: DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE AND COMMISSIONING
AUTHOR: ANDREW LEADBETTER

SUBJECT: CHESTER FIRE STATION – ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE

Purpose of Report

1. To present options to Members about the enhancement of the environmental performance of the building.

Recommended: That

- [1] Members determine whether to recommend to the Fire Authority an option to enhance the environmental performance of the building.

Background

2. The Fire Authority decided to replace Chester Fire Station with a new building in December 2017.
3. Planning permission was obtained in June 2019. The permission included a condition requiring the Fire Authority to meet a higher environmental standard than was achieved at Lymm, Penketh and Powey Lane. The standard covers a broad range of environment-related matters; it is not just about the fabric of the building.
4. Since the Fire Authority gained planning permission and entered into the contract for the construction of the fire station the climate change agenda has led to a much greater interest in achieving carbon neutrality.
5. The project team was asked to consider whether the fire station could be changed in order to deliver enhanced environmental performance.

Information

6. A report prepared by the external project manager has already been shared with members of the committee. A slightly redacted version is attached to this report as Appendix 1. The information that has been redacted is contained in the report at Item 5. The information is not being published as there is some commercial sensitivity about it at this time. Should Members wish to discuss the figures in detail they should do so in private session.

7. Members will see that the proposals fall into two main elements. Firstly, improvements to the building fabric (e.g. insulation and window systems) leading to better air tightness; and secondly, the fitting of photo voltaic panels to generate electricity.
8. Members will see that it is expected to cost around £270k to achieve a zero carbon building. This will only deliver a small reduction in annual running costs; they are already expected to be very low if the building is constructed without the environmental enhancements.

Financial Implications

9. The capital approval for the project was £5.51m. Members agreed that a contingency of 5% (£275,000) could also be utilised. There have been a variety of issues that have had an impact on the budget, e.g. the planning appeal and second planning application as well as the archaeological investigations. As a result there are no funds available to cover the environmental enhancements described in this report. Should the committee determine that it wishes the environmental enhancements to be included in the contract for the new fire station the Fire Authority will need to allocate additional capital funding.

Legal Implications

10. Some of the environmental enhancements will require planning approval. An application would be required to amend the existing planning permission. Ultimately, the Fire Authority is expected to be required to meet environmental targets, including one relating to carbon emissions. The environmental enhancements will obviously benefit the Authority in relation to a target to become carbon neutral.

Equality and Diversity Implications

11. None of the matters in this report have an impact upon equality and diversity.

Environmental Implications

12. The report is about environmental matters.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: NONE**