

CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF: ESTATES AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE
DATE: 6TH NOVEMBER 2020
REPORT OF: DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE AND COMMISSIONING
AUTHOR: ANDREW LEADBETTER

SUBJECT: WILMSLOW EMERGENCY SERVICES FACILITY

Purpose of Report

1. To provide a brief update about work to-date arising from the decision to introduce a day crewing duty system at Wilmslow Fire Station.

Recommended: That Members

[1] Note the report.

Background

2. In July 2020 the Fire Authority approved the Integrated Risk Management Plan 2020-2024. The Plan included the proposal to introduce a day crewing duty system at Wilmslow Fire Station.
3. A day crewing duty system operates with firefighters accommodated in service houses either adjacent to, or close to the fire station. This means that nine service houses need to be provided in Wilmslow if the day crewing duty system is to be introduced.

Information

4. Wilmslow Fire Station is situated directly adjacent to the ambulance and police stations. A plan is attached to this report as Appendix 1.
5. Discussions with colleagues from North West Ambulance Service and Cheshire Constabulary identified the potential to create an emergency services facility in Wilmslow. Further discussions have taken place recently involving the Chair and the Police and Crime Commissioner and the parties are keen to press ahead with feasibility work. As a result a project has been commenced which is focused on testing out the feasibility of creating an emergency services facility in Wilmslow.
6. The project would need to deliver a number of outcomes and the respective inputs of the parties would need to be acceptable to each of them. The outcomes would include: a fit for purpose emergency services facility; lower running costs; capital receipts from the sale of surplus land; nine service houses; and closer working relationships. The parties might provide land, an interest in land, or a financial payment.

7. The project is expected to be delivered in three stages:

Stage One: Feasibility, Decision-Making; Legal Arrangements and Formal Commitment

Stage Two: Planning, Land Transactions, Procurement, Building Work

Stage Three: Moves, New Staffing Arrangements

8. It is hoped that Stage One can be completed by the end of March 2021, but it is acknowledged that this is ambitious and will depend, very much, on the project being adequately resourced. To this end officers are currently procuring some advisers to assist with key aspects of the feasibility work. A working group has also met and is beginning to consider the activities that need to be completed during Stage One.

Financial Implications

9. At this point, the financial implications of pursuing the project are not known. However, it is believed that the costs associated with Stage One will be no more than £50,000 and this can be funded from within the overall currently approved 2020/21 revenue budget. As this project is being driven by the Fire Authority's requirement to introduce a new crewing system in Wilmslow the costs associated with the feasibility work are expected to be funded by the Fire Authority. However, if the project proceeds the costs of the project will be shared by the participating parties.

Legal Implications

10. At this stage there are no legal implications. It will not be possible for the Joint Legal Team to advise both fire and police. Therefore, the Director of Governance and Commissioning is procuring external legal advisers to represent the Fire Authority.

Equality and Diversity Implications

11. The project will deliver a building that will take into account equality and diversity requirements.

Environmental Implications

12. The project will deliver a building that will be a considerable improvement over the existing buildings which are not environmentally efficient.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: NONE