

Report of Assistant Chief Fire Officer/Director of Prevention and Assets

Property Update

Purpose of report

1. To provide an update for Members on the current property programme.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the property update and progress is noted.

Background

2. Due to the number of property projects that are now moving forward and the significant expenditure that will be incurred, the Committee will continue to be provided with regular updates on progress.

Budgets

3. Recent reports to the Committee have referenced the UK construction tender price index, and the associated inflationary pressures being seen across the building sector. Taking this into account the Treasurer is building in contingency funds in anticipation of our current capital build programme. Members will be updated as the projects develop, with particular regard to the largest projects, notably Redditch and Hereford fire station builds.

Property Update

4. **Broadway Fire Station:** Following the previous update, construction work has now commenced on-site, with an estimated programme of 52 weeks. As part of health & safety obligations and as a courtesy, the main contractor has issued introductory letters to neighbouring properties before commencing the works. To date, no feedback from local residents has been received. Works are progressing well, with foundations now complete, and the steel frame is planned to be erected w/c 30 January.
5. **Redditch Fire Station:** A separate paper concerning Redditch Fire Station was noted at the Fire Authority meeting on the 13 February. The paper advised Members of an urgent decision that had been taken since the last meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee in relation to the redevelopment of Redditch Fire Station.

6. A contractor has been selected, and enabling works commenced on-site in late January 2023, with an estimated main contractor programme of 86 weeks, from the 6 March 2023.
7. **Hereford Fire Station:** It was reported to the Fire Authority in October 2022 that final surveys and assessments had been completed during August, and a formal planning application was submitted in September. Staff at the site have already been extensively consulted and as the planning application progresses staff will continue to be engaged, as well as ensuring that all other appropriate local stakeholders are briefed on the proposals.
8. The ACFO attended Hereford City Council (24/01/23) to present proposals for the new fire station, and the CFO attended to take questions concerning the project. As expected with any largescale redevelopment we are working closely with the design team, and local authority planners, to answer queries that have arisen during the formal planning application stage.
9. A main contractor has been appointed via the Pagabo procurement framework and is working with the design team to develop the detailed designs and specifications, as we await a decision on the submitted planning application. The team are also reviewing alternative sites that have been identified as potential temporary locations for the fire station during the construction works at St Owen Street.
10. **North Herefordshire Strategic Training Facility:** At the last Fire Authority meeting it was reported that the design team were eager to submit a full planning application by late October. Due to some design challenges, and engagement with the Environment Agency, the submission was delayed. However, a full planning application was submitted 20 December 2022.
11. Detailed design proposals are progressing, and a tender process via a construction procurement framework has commenced to identify a suitable contractor to build the training facility, as we await the decision on the submitted application.
12. **Relocation of Training Centre to Wyre Forest Fire Station:** The last property update confirmed that the architects who completed the Wyre Forest scheme had visited the existing Training Centre in Droitwich and met with the centre managers to commence initial scoping works, and formulate accommodation schedules for the proposed requirements of a new facility. A number of layout options have been received, and comments returned.
13. The design team have now prepared final spatial layouts, and these have been shared with the DCFO and training centre managers. We will update the Committee on progress as final options are determined.
14. **Planned and reactive property maintenance:** General maintenance and building works continue across the Service's estate. In the previous update to members it noted progress on the proposed design for a front extension and refurbishment of Leintwardine Fire Station. Additional surveys have been completed on site in December following engagement with Severn Trent

concerning a potential pumping main crossing the site. The design team is aiming to submit a detailed planning application in early March.

Site Disposals

Former Kidderminster Fire Station

15. The last property update noted that the previously agreed sale of the site is no longer proceeding, and Officers were arranging for a ground investigation survey to be undertaken in order to provide greater certainty to prospective purchasers and the site will then be re-marketed. Consultants have now been engaged and site surveys commenced, and members will be updated when reports are issued.

Conclusion/Summary

16. The property, development and maintenance programme is extensive and complex, but is moving at pace. Members will need to be mindful of the volatile and changing construction industry, combined with rapidly increasing costs of materials. Officers are progressing all property related matters as quickly as resources permit in order to mitigate these costs wherever possible.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues).	Note reference to the UK construction tender price index, and the associated inflationary pressures being seen across the building sector.
Strategic Policy Links & Core Code of Ethics (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	Details underpin a number of key property priorities for the Authority.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	None.
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter).	None.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?).	None.

Data Protection Impact

Assessment (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling).

None.