

## **Report of Head of Asset Management**

### **5. Disposal of Worcester and Bromsgrove Fire Station Sites**

#### **Purpose of report**

1. To gain approval for the disposal of Worcester and Bromsgrove fire station sites.
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#### **Recommendations**

##### ***It is recommended that:***

- i) the Policy and Resources Committee authorise the disposal of Worcester Fire Station and Bromsgrove Fire Station for the best consideration reasonably obtainable; and***
- ii) on terms to be agreed by the Chief Fire Officer, Treasurer and Head of Legal Services, in consultation with the Chair of the Fire Authority.***

#### **Introduction and Background**

2. The Policy and Resources Committee will be aware of the project to replace Worcester fire station with a new building at the Great Western Business Park. This project will commence with the purchase of land to facilitate the new fire station at which point, construction will commence. Planning approval has already been gained for the new fire station.
3. The new Police and Fire station is nearing completion in Bromsgrove and staff are due to transfer from the old station into the new building during the Spring.

#### **Disposal of Worcester and Bromsgrove Fire Station Sites**

4. It is proposed that the existing Worcester site is marketed for sale once the land transfer for the new site has been completed. This will allow time for alternative uses for the site to be considered by developers, with the aim of achieving a capital receipt within a reasonable time period.
5. Informal discussions with Worcestershire County Council (WCC), who manage properties adjacent to Bromsgrove fire station, have highlighted a potential opportunity to include the sale of the fire station site in with the sale of the surrounding council owned sites, to form a larger development opportunity. Worcestershire County Council have identified that a larger site would make a more attractive retail opportunity for a developer so that the overall combined capital receipt, and therefore the fire service proportion of this receipt, may potentially be greater than an individual receipt for the fire station site alone.

6. The capital receipts of both sites were included in the cost estimates to fund the current fire station replacement programme, as part of the Asset Management Strategy presented to the Policy and Resources Committee in March 2011.
7. For both Worcester and Bromsgrove, the next stage is to obtain valuations which would be part of a marketing campaign for the sale of the sites via an agent. Therefore a selection process for an agent would need to progress, which upon award would lead to marketing of the sites and hopefully result in the sale of both sites. As a disposal of any site over £100,000 requires Fire Authority approval, it is recommended that the Policy and Resources Committee give this approval to enable officers of the Service to proceed with the disposal of both Worcester and Bromsgrove fire station sites.
8. As it is difficult to provide an accurate valuation of either site in the current economic climate, due to the variable nature of potential development opportunities at both sites, it is recommended that the Policy and Resources Committee authorise the Chief Fire Officer, Treasurer and Head of Legal Services, in consultation with the Chair of the Fire Authority, proceed with the marketing of both sites with the aim of selling both sites for the best consideration reasonably obtainable.
9. For the Bromsgrove site, it may be the case that joint disposal with Worcestershire County Council may not be the most economically advantageous option, or that the timescales are unacceptable. It is proposed that decisions arising from these issues are resolved by the Chief Fire Officer, Treasurer and Head of Legal Services, in consultation with the Chair of the Fire Authority.

### **Conclusion/Summary**

10. It is recommended that The Policy and Resources Committee authorise the disposal of Worcester Fire Station and Bromsgrove Fire Station for the best consideration reasonably obtainable, on terms to be agreed by the Chief Fire Officer, Treasurer and Head of Legal Services and in consultation with the Chair of the Fire Authority.

## Corporate Considerations

<b>Resource Implications</b> (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	Financial relating to income through capital receipts and Legal through transfer of properties title.
<b>Strategic Policy Links</b> (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	This paper supports the Authority's Asset Management Strategy
<b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	None
<b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	None
<b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	None

## Supporting Information

None.

Background papers – Asset Management Strategy – Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority, Policy and Resources Committee, 24<sup>th</sup> March 2011.

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