

## **Report of the Chief Fire Officer**

### **11. Proposed New Hereford Fire Station ('One Herefordshire Hub')**

#### **Purpose of report**

1. To update Members on developments in relation to the proposed new fire station in Hereford and proposals for a joint use building with Police and Herefordshire Council, to be known as the 'One Herefordshire Hub'.
- 

#### **Recommendations**

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

- (1) the development of a multi-agency facility, to include a new Fire Station, on land at Edgar Street, Hereford in conjunction with the Police & Crime Commissioner for West Mercia and Herefordshire Council (and/or others) be approved, subject to:***
  - (i) the cost to this Authority not exceeding the provision within the existing capital programme; and***
  - (ii) the estimated running costs being no more expensive than a stand-alone fire station;***
- (2) officers be authorised to incur all necessary expenditure to progress the above development up to tender stage, on such terms as may be agreed by the Chief Fire Officer in consultation with the Treasurer, Head of Legal Services and Chairman of the Authority; and***
- (3) a further report be brought to this Committee for approval once discussions have taken place with regard to:***
  - (i) the apportionment of all costs and fees between the relevant partners;***
  - (ii) the future ownership structure; and***
  - (iii) land swap of the existing Hereford Fire Station site (if appropriate)***

#### **Introduction and Background**

2. Members will be aware that the Authority has been seeking to provide a replacement fire station in Hereford for more than a decade. The current Fire Station is in poor overall condition and does not provide the modern welfare facilities that support a 21<sup>st</sup> century Fire Service.

3. It was reported to this Committee in March 2016 that the Police were no longer in a position to proceed with the proposal for a joint Police/Fire Station on land at Edgar Street, Hereford. As a result, officers were tasked with progressing a scheme for a stand alone Fire Station on the site instead. However, following the election of the new Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) in May this year it became apparent that there was renewed interest from the PCC in having a joint facility in Hereford.

### **‘One Herefordshire Hub’ Proposal**

4. The Chairman of the Authority and Chief Fire Officer met with their opposite numbers from the Police and Herefordshire Council in June, when the principle of a new Hereford city centre multi-agency hub building was mooted and strongly supported by those present.
5. Some areas of the building such as the appliance bay, sleeping/rest accommodation, Firefighter practical training facilities and Police custody suite will need to be distinct but all of the political leaders were keen to see as much shared space in the new building as practicable, so as to facilitate joint working. This would include office space, meeting rooms, kitchen facilities, and parking (for example). This will inevitably result in some changes to the previous proposals but there is clearly an appetite to be more challenging of pre-conceived ideas of space usage and adopt a more radical approach than, for example, the Bromsgrove joint Police/Fire Station.
6. Place Partnership have undertaken an initial study of the proposals and have confirmed that the development of the proposed multi-use building on the existing Edgar Street site is feasible, although there are no costs available at this time. The next stages will be to appoint scheme architects to advance the design, develop an overall project budget and agree the funding mechanism.

### **Capital Financing**

7. The Authority’s capital programme already contains provision for building a new fire station in Hereford. Although the costs of the proposed ‘One Herefordshire Hub’ have yet to be determined, the stipulation is that neither the Fire Authority’s capital contribution nor the running costs must be more than a stand-alone fire station would have cost.
8. In order to progress with the scheme as quickly as possible, each of the partner agencies is being asked to devolve authority to a senior officer to proceed with the preparatory design stages of the scheme. A further report will be brought to Members for approval once details of the cost apportionment and future arrangements with regard to land ownership have been determined.
9. It is likely that the eventual scheme will involve a land swap of the existing Hereford Fire Station site as part of this Authority’s contribution, in order to assist Herefordshire Council with city sites for economic growth and/or housing.

## Conclusion/Summary

10. The requirement for a new Fire Station in Hereford is now very overdue, with the operational staff having been promised a new station for over 10 years. There is therefore an urgency to deliver options as soon as possible. A joint location with shared facilities will bring benefits in operational response as well as great efficiencies created through the use of shared space.

## Corporate Considerations

<b>Resource Implications</b> (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	The provision of a new fire station in Hereford is already included in the Authority's capital programme
<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).	'Our Strategy' is to provide appropriate premises in the right locations that enable our staff to carry out their roles effectively
<b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	
<b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	
<b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	None identified

## Contact Officer

Nathan Travis, Chief Fire Officer  
(01905 368202)  
Email: [ntravis@hwfire.org.uk](mailto:ntravis@hwfire.org.uk)