

6. Update on the 'Total Place' initiative

Purpose of report

1. To inform Members of the change in title of the Total Place initiative, and H&WFRS involvement in the new Capital and Asset Pathfinder initiative.

Recommendations

The Chief Fire Officer recommends that:

- i) the Policy & Resources Committee notes the change in name from Total Place and supports the contribution being made to the newly titled Capital and Asset Pathfinder (CAP) initiative.***
- ii) the Policy & Resources Committee supports the initiative to collaborate with strategic partners with regard to building usage and sharing resources and supports ongoing work with the CAP Steering Group.***

Introduction and Background

2. In early 2010, the Worcestershire Partnership submitted a report to government as part of a pilot exercise looking at opportunities for better public sector asset usage, NEETS, and management of services in areas of highest needs. At this time the initiative was referred to as Total Place. Following this and the election of the coalition government, the Partnership was awarded Pathfinder status for the property work stream, one of only 11 areas in the country. This was subsequently upgraded to Accelerated Pathfinder status in August 2010, (one of only 6 areas nationally), with a specific instruction to develop ideas around better asset usage.
3. The initiative is now referred to as Capital and Asset Pathfinder.
4. The objective of the accelerated Pathfinder work was to develop a small number of Outline Business Cases which would quickly establish the potential for joint and collaborative use of public assets. These would then be used by Cabinet Ministers to assess the value to be gained from investing in this area of work. In addition, Pathfinder's were asked to identify any barriers which might prevent such collaboration so that Ministers could seek to remove these wherever possible.
5. The early stages of the Worcestershire Capital and Asset Pathfinder work identified a number of collaborative opportunities in support of evolving service development and delivery across the whole of the public sector in Worcestershire. Three of these were subsequently progressed to outline business cases, and submitted to DCLG in December 2010.

6. The three submissions were:

- **Community Asset Model:** This explores the prospect of all public sector partners maximising co-location opportunities to (a) reduce the amount of property needed to deliver services, (b) streamline and reduce required support services, and (c) align direct service delivery. The Community Asset Model is a property orientated analysis of the potential benefits that can arise as a result of implementing the work being led by service delivery colleagues. This is a radical approach to service delivery which relies on organisations collaborating much more effectively to maximise customer benefits while minimising resource inputs.
- **Joint Police and Fire Stations:** This submission focuses on the development of joint Police and Fire Stations, and is illustrated using proposals for Bromsgrove and (at a very early stage) Redditch, that was proposed in the previous FRA paper. This project explores the potential for a wider roll-out across the West Mercia region over time. This delivers advantages from an operational and public accessibility perspective, resulting in efficiencies and financial benefits for both partners.
- **Collaborative Use of Training:** This explores the reduction and shared use of training facilities across the public sector, which could ultimately avoid/reduce the need to hire private sector venues and training resources. There is the potential to improve asset utilisation rates, streamline resources, reduce the unit cost of training and keep 'training spend' within the public purse.

7. The format of the business cases required a two level approach. Option 1 explored the potential of joint and collaborative use of assets measured against a do nothing model. Option 2 represented a more visionary approach, and indicated the level of aspiration that might be achieved if some of the difficulties and barriers preventing such an approach could be overcome. This option is therefore of a more speculative nature and has not yet had the benefit of a full and detailed analysis by partners. To progress any of these options would need wide consultation and development with all stakeholders in order to fully establish what might be an appropriate and acceptable level of change.

Current Position

8. The Worcestershire Partnership was the only Accelerated Pathfinder to submit three business cases, and early feedback is that these are of particular interest to DCLG and the Secretary of State because they are cross boundary and represent initiatives that could easily be applied on a national scale. Most of the other Pathfinder submissions are focussed around large scale single regeneration projects and are not directly replicable elsewhere in the country.
9. The proposals are currently being analysed by service departments across Whitehall, and feedback is expected from government between now and the end of March. The Partnership is now required to consider ways in which it will go about implementing the individual proposals. This is likely to be subject to a phased project approach, with changes being physically implemented as quickly as opportunities can be developed.

10. The next stage of the Pathfinder is to develop a long term strategic plan for the initiative across Worcestershire, including a wide cross section of public sector partners, including H&WFRS. This work will be developed by the Worcestershire CAP Property Steering Group (on which 16 public sector bodies are represented, including H&WFRS) with a draft due in March 2011.
11. Any such plan developed over such a short timeframe will, of necessity, be in outline, and will have to acknowledge the need to respond to other emerging strategic and financial plans. Arrangements are being made to identify an outline programme to develop a draft strategic plan and the outcome will be referred back to the Policy and Resources Committee, as well as other partner executive bodies over the next two months.

Conclusion/Summary

12. The Capital and Asset Pathfinder initiative will propose more efficient methods of working on a collaborative basis. Specifically, the project proposing more collaboration with West Mercia Police will ensure better use of our Fire Station assets, proving efficiency for public assets in both Herefordshire and Worcestershire as well as potential income for H&WFRS.

Financial Considerations

| Consideration | Yes/No | Reference in Report i.e. paragraph no. |
|---|--------|---|
| There are financial issues that require consideration | No. | |

Legal Considerations

| Consideration | Yes/No | Reference in Report i.e. paragraph no. |
|---|--------|---|
| There are legal issues e.g. contractual and procurement, reputational issues that require consideration | No. | |

Additional Considerations

13. The table below sets out any additional issues arising from the proposals contained in this report and identifies the relevant paragraphs in the report where such issues are addressed.

| Consideration | Yes/No | Reference in Report i.e. paragraph no. |
|--|--------|---|
| Resources (e.g. Assets, ICT, Human Resources, Training & Development, Sustainability). | Yes. | Throughout whole document. |
| Strategic Policy Links (e.g. IRMP, Authority Plan, Equality & Diversity, Partnerships, Environmental Impact). | No. | |
| Risk Management/Health & Safety (e.g. risk management and control measures, risk register score). | No. | |
| Consultation with Representative Bodies | No. | |

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