

Report of Head of Strategic Change and Collaboration

Relocation of Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters to the Hindlip Park Estate

Purpose of report

1. To update Members on the current position of the Headquarters relocation project and to request the granting of delegated authority for grant expenditure and to enter into appropriate lease arrangements.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- i. Officers proceed with the proposed building and refurbishment works to enable the relocation of Service Headquarters to the Hindlip Park estate, to be funded from the Government's transformation grant award;***
- ii. the Authority enters into appropriate legal arrangements to support the relocation of Service Headquarters to the Hindlip Park estate on terms to be agreed by the Head of Legal Services and Chief Fire Officer in consultation with the Chairman of the Authority; and***
- iii. a further report on the future sale or lease of Kings Court be brought back in due course.***

Introduction and Background

2. Following an application for government transformation funding by Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS), supported by West Mercia Police (WMP), a grant award was received of £1.886m to enable the co-location and appropriate integration of HWFRS Headquarters functions with West Mercia Police at Hindlip Park.
3. The HWFRS bid built upon a previous Police Innovation Fund (PIF) award to West Mercia Police and Warwickshire Police for the delivery of a joint Operations and Command Centre (Southwell House) at Hindlip Park, within which, HWFRS Fire Control and Operational Policy departments will be located.
4. The successful delivery and occupation of Southwell House, will release further accommodation at Hindlip for refurbishment, and enable the HWFRS Headquarters relocation project to be implemented.

5. The relocation project forms part of the suite of projects within the HWFRS 2020 vision programme and has the following agreed deliverables:
 - a. The co-location of members of the HWFRS Senior Management Board with the WMP Executive Team within Hindlip Hall, to enable a closer proximity of command and their support functions (such as the staff office and service secretariats).
 - b. The appropriate co-location and alignment of identified Fire & Rescue Service and Police Headquarters functions within the Hindlip Park estate.
 - c. The appropriate integration of HWFRS within the existing branding across the site.
 - d. To support the identification of appropriate integration opportunities for processes and systems within functional business areas.

Current Position

6. The Southwell House build was completed on 22 December 2017. The police ICT systems within the building are currently being fitted and tested to enable occupation of the building by police staff from mid-February 2018.
7. HWFRS's Operational Policy department and Fire Control will move into Southwell House once Fire Service ICT systems have been fitted and tested. This will be carried out in conjunction with the police to support Fire Service occupation within Southwell House from mid-February 2018.
8. Officers are currently exploring the options for sale or lease of the existing Service Headquarters at Kings Court and are currently in discussion with a potential lessee. In order to support these discussions, a completion date of 31 August 2018 has been set for the relocation project.
9. Place Partnership Ltd have been working with the project team and police colleagues to identify suitable options to accommodate the sixty staff and the associated departmental needs within Hindlip Park taking into account the additional space created by the occupation of Southwell House.
10. As part of this process, departmental heads and staff from both services have been fully engaged to enable them to inform the design requirements and options. This is in addition to the imminent commencement of the formal consultation processes necessary due to the relocation of staff from Kings Court to Hindlip Park.
11. Accommodation has been identified for the relocation of current Fire Service Headquarters' teams (except Community Risk, which will be moving to Worcester Fire Station along with the local Police Command Team) onto the Hindlip Estate, with some teams being able to be co-located (wherever possible) with their respective police teams (such as ICT and HR). A large meeting room in Hindlip Hall is also being refurbished in order to facilitate future Fire Authority business and meetings.

12. Whilst the exact 'Heads of Terms' have yet to be agreed, it is envisaged that the accommodation provided will be rent free, with HWFRS contributing to the running costs of the areas occupied.
13. To enable the design work for the identified options to progress, an 'urgent decision process' was undertaken on 22 December 2017. The process approved the allocation of £100,000 from the grant award to cover the accommodation design fees.
14. Outline costs and estimates have been received for the building work and refurbishment necessary to accommodate HWFRS staff, as well as for the ICT provision, to enable access to HWFRS ICT systems and infrastructure within Southwell House and the wider estate as necessary. See Appendix 1: Outline costs & estimates (**Confidential Members Information only**).

Next Steps

15. The project team are now approaching the end of the design phase of the project and, in order to secure the appropriate tenure, will need to develop the appropriate Heads of Terms for the areas being occupied.
16. In order to meet the project completion date, it is necessary for tenders to be progressed for the building works at the earliest opportunity. This is to accommodate the timescales for the tender process and to enable the work to be programmed and co-ordinated appropriately with other projects being undertaken at Hindlip Park.
17. To enable the progression of the project beyond its current position, delegated authority is now needed to enable the required legal processes to proceed and for expenditure to be released.

Conclusion/Summary

18. The Southwell House build at Hindlip Park has now been completed and should be occupied from mid-February 2018.
19. The Operational Policy department and Fire Control staff from HWFRS will form part of the occupancy of Southwell House.
20. The occupancy of Southwell House by West Mercia Police will release accommodation that will enable the Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service's Headquarters relocation project to be implemented.
21. Fire Service and police staff are involved in the design of the areas being occupied and Fire Service staff will be entering into a period of formal consultation regarding the move from Kings Court.
22. To progress further with the project, delegated authority is needed to enable the required legal processes and expenditure to be progressed.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	Forms part of Service 2020 vision programme. Funding from transformational grant award. Legal requirement for Heads of Terms. PPL for property works. Human resource impact due to contractual changes associated with change in work location.
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	Project Support to Our Strategy through: Building and infrastructure, Resourcing for the future, People and Services priorities.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	Existing governance arrangements via 2020 programme in place to ensure appropriate risk management processes are undertaken
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Staff consultation over design requirements undertaken. Formal consultation process initiated with staff associated with change in work location.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	An Equalities Impact Assessment will be undertaken as part of the Human Resources work stream of the project.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1: Outline costs & Estimates (**Confidential Members Information only**).

Background Papers

None

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