

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

9. Hindlip Transformation Bid

Purpose of report

1. To update Members on progress on the project to relocate the Fire Authority Headquarters to join West Mercia Police at Hindlip Park near Worcester and to provide assurance that Officers of the Service are fully engaged with their counterparts in the Police to ensure that this project is delivered successfully with the appropriate resources.

Recommendations

It is recommended that

- i) a further report be submitted to the Authority for approval prior to entering into any contractual arrangements or committing major financial resources.*

Introduction and Background

2. In December 2014, a report was brought to the Authority confirming that the Policy and Resources Committee had authorised Officers to carry out the necessary work (including incurring professional fees, where necessary) to prepare detailed schemes and proposals for implementation of Transformation Bid funding the Service had received from central Government. This funding supports two speculative submissions made by the Service in 2014, one of which proposes the relocation of Fire Authority Headquarters to join West Mercia Police at Hindlip. The Authority noted this action and proposed that a further report would be submitted to the Authority for approval prior to entering into any contractual arrangements for land purchase or building construction.
3. The Authority requested that an update report would be brought to this FRA meeting regarding progress with the Hindlip proposal.

Hindlip

4. The Hindlip proposal explores an option to move the Fire Service Headquarters from its present location on the outskirts of Worcester to join West Mercia Police at their headquarters at Hindlip Park, near Worcester. This co-location of headquarters functions of both police and fire services will be supported through a new building being constructed to support joint Police / Fire operations. This potential move is designed to foster a closer working relationship between the two blue light services as well as potentially realising revenue benefits against borrowing and on-going running costs. The scheme may also work as a catalyst

for future savings and efficiencies through greater collaboration, especially around support services.

5. The Hindlip project will be part of a Police initiative already in existence to provide a new operational support 'hub' at the Police Headquarters. The Police have established a large Project Management team and the Fire Service has established a dedicated Project Manager to ensure that the Service can engage fully in the transformation process.
6. Week commencing 19th January 2015 saw a series of workshops which Officers of the Service attended with the Police. These workshops examined the overall scope of the project and established a number of separate work-streams which will need to be considered. For the Fire Service, there are two key elements that will be explored, the physical move of Fire Control from the current Service Headquarters to Hindlip Park, and the relocation of key HQ support services.
7. In the initial scoping of the project, a number of subsidiary opportunities for 'blue light' collaboration have also been identified. These have the potential to enhance our joint operational response activities in the future. These were considered, and approved in principle, in a meeting between the Chief Constable and Chief Fire Officer as well as other senior managers held on 26th January 2015.

Conclusion/Summary

8. It is anticipated that the relocation of the Service's Command and Control and HQ functions to the Police headquarters site at Hindlip will be delivered in the latter part of 2017. It is recommended that the Authority note the progress to deliver the proposal and to be assured that Officers of the Service are fully engaged with their counterparts in the Police to ensure that this project is delivered successfully with the appropriate resources.
9. A further report will still be submitted to the Authority for approval prior to entering into any contractual arrangements or committing major financial resources.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	The Authority has received £1.9 million from the Fire Transformation Fund which is currently the only source of capital funding available to the Authority for this project.
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	This proposal will generate closer partnership working efficiencies which will contribute towards the cost savings the Authority will need to make as part of the next round of comprehensive spending reviews for the period to 2020.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	Not at this stage. Detailed schemes and proposals have yet to be developed.
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	Partner organisations have been consulted on this bid and West Mercia Police have supported this bid. There will need to be consultation with staff and representative bodies at the appropriate time.
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	Not at this stage. Detailed schemes and proposals have yet to be developed.

Background Papers

Report of the Chief Fire Officer: Transformation Bids from FRA Meeting, 10th December 2014.

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