

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

In the opinion of the Proper Officer, the discussion relating to Appendix 1 of this report is likely not to be open to the public on the grounds that it would be likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, namely

- information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority
Policy and Resources Committee
4 May 2022

Report of Deputy Chief Fire Officer/Director of Prevention and Assets

Property Services Update

Purpose of report

1. To provide an update for Members on the current property programme.
-

Recommendation

It is recommended that:

- (i) *the property update and progress is noted, and*
- (ii) *the budget allocation for redevelopment of Broadway Fire Station be increased to the amount shown in Appendix 1 [CONFIDENTIAL - Not For Publication].*

Background

2. It was reported to the committee meeting in January 2022 that the Fire Authority entered into an agreement for the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) to deliver our property management functions as part of a joint property team, as a result of the wind down of PPL. The new service became operational on 1st April 2021 and is now well established and delivering against our planned property programme.

Budgets

3. Recent reports to the committee have referenced the UK construction tender price index, and the associated inflationary pressures being seen across the building sector. Taking this into account the Treasurer is building in contingency funds in anticipation of our current capital build programme. We

will update Members as projects develop, notably Redditch and Hereford fire station builds.

Property Update

4. **Broadway Fire Station:** Broadway is a single fire engine on-call station. It has been recognised for some time as being in a very poor state of repair and lacking the facilities necessary for a modern fire station. The existing site is constrained but, following several unsuccessful attempts to identify a suitable alternative location, the Fire Authority gave approval for the redevelopment of a new station on the existing site.
5. A detailed planning application was submitted in May 2021, and planning approval has now been granted by the local authority. The project team advertised the approved plans and detailed designs via the Bluelight procurement portal. Evaluation of tenders and interviews with prospective contractors took place in January, and a preferred contractor has been selected.
6. The original budget allocation for this scheme was made in 2018. There has been no adjustment for inflation since then. The estimated cost of the current proposals is shown in Appendix 1 (**confidential - Members only**) leaving a shortfall compared to the existing allocation. The Treasurer advises the estimated shortfall can be financed, and has already been factored into existing budgets.
7. **Redditch Fire Station:** The replacement of Redditch Fire Station has been part of the Authority's approved capital programme for several years. In collaboration with West Mercia Police, the Service is developing plans to provide a joint Fire and Police facility, building upon the concept of the Bromsgrove joint Fire / Police station.
8. The property update to Members in January 2022 noted that a detailed planning application was submitted on the 17th December 2021 to the local authority. It also confirmed that interviews were being completed with four potential contractors in January via a construction procurement framework. These were completed, and a contractor is currently working with the design team to develop the detailed designs and specifications, as we await a decision on the submitted application.
9. **Hereford Fire Station:** Following approval to progress the redevelopment of Hereford Fire Station at St Owen Street, a high-level feasibility options appraisal of the existing fire station site has been completed, along with a number of surveys of the site. The preferred option proposes a new four bay fire station with associated accommodation, improving access and egress from the site and enhancing car parking.
10. It was reported to the committee in January that completed feasibility drawings and surveys would form the basis of a tender pack to appoint architects who would develop the proposals. As reported, tenders were advertised in January, with evaluations and interviews being completed at the

end of March. Architects have now been selected, and have commenced the next design stage to enable a planning application to be submitted to the local authority within the next six months. Their work includes consultation with staff, and the appointment of specialist consultants where required.

11. **North Herefordshire Strategic Training Facility:** At the last committee it was reported that site surveys and feasibility drawings would form the basis of a tender pack to appoint architects to progress the scheme to completion. Tenders were released in February, and architects have now been selected to progress the project feasibility plans. Their work includes consultation with staff and the completion of additional surveys on-site to enable a full planning application submission within the next six months.
12. **Relocation of Training Centre to Wyre Forest Fire Station:** The architects who completed the Wyre Forest scheme have visited the existing Training Centre in Droitwich and met with the centre managers to commence initial scoping works, and formulate accommodation schedules for the proposed requirements of a new facility. This work will continue throughout the new year and we will update the committee on progress as options start to formulate.
13. **Planned and reactive property maintenance:** General maintenance and building works continue across the Service's estate. Notably, refurbishment of Tenbury Wells, Whitchurch and Fownhope fire stations has been completed. Other upgrades to Pershore, Ledbury and Leominster fire stations is on-going. The contract for routine repair and maintenance works has recently been re-tendered and has been awarded to CBRE, who are a major property services company.

Site Disposals

Windsor Street, Bromsgrove

14. This is the site of the former Bromsgrove Fire Station which has been vacant since the new joint Police / Fire Station was opened in 2014. The site is complex in that the building adjoins the former County Council library and the buildings overlap.
15. We reported previously a sale with Bromsgrove District Council was being negotiated, and can now confirm that a sale was completed on the 31st March 2022.

Former Bewdley Fire Station

16. Contracts were exchanged in August 2020, subject to planning permission for a mixed retail and residential use. We can now report that the sale was completed February 2022.

Former Kidderminster Fire Station

17. We previously reported that the Authority has accepted an unconditional cash offer for the site. Despite the purchaser's initial commitment to complete the transaction quickly, contracts have still not yet been exchanged. It now looks unlikely that sale will proceed in its current form and officers are taking further advice with regard to the possible remarketing of the site.

Former Stourport Fire Station

18. The former fire station is adjacent to the County Buildings which are due to become vacant later this year. We previously reported that discussions with the County Council regarding the possibility of them purchasing the site were on-going. We can report that a sale was completed in March, and the site has now been handed over.

Conclusion/Summary

19. The Fire Authority has entered into an agreement for the OPCC to deliver our property management functions as part of a joint property team. The new service became operational on 1st April 2021 and is now established and delivering against our property programme.
20. There are currently four new build schemes being planned / developed, including; Broadway Fire Station, Redditch Fire Station, Hereford Fire Station, and a Strategic Training Facility in north Herefordshire. Planned and reactive property maintenance continues across the Service's estate. Site disposal of the former fire station sites at Windsor Street Bromsgrove, Bewdley, and Stourport have been completed, and Kidderminster continues to be progressed.

Corporate Considerations

Resource Implications (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues).	None.
Strategic Policy Links (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	Details underpin a number of key property priorities for the Authority.
Risk Management / Health & Safety (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	None.
Consultation (identify any public or other consultation that has been	None.

carried out on this matter).	
Equalities (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?).	None.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Redevelopment of Broadway Fire Station - Estimated Project Costs
[CONFIDENTIAL - Not For Publication]