



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland

PUBLIC SPECIAL MEETING - SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE BOARD

THURSDAY 30 JULY 2020 @ 0930 HRS

BY CONFERENCE FACILITIES

PRESENT:

Kirsty Darwent (Chair) (KD)
Lesley Bloomer (LBI)
Marieke Dwarshuis (MD)
Sid Patten (SP)
Primrose Stark (PS)
Tim Wright (TW)

Brian Baverstock (BB)
Anne Buchanan (AB)
Bill McQueen (BMcQ)
Malcolm Payton (MP)
Fiona Thorburn (FT)
Mhairi Wylie (MW)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Ross Haggart (RH)	Deputy Chief Officer
Liz Barnes (LBa)	Director of People and Organisational Development
John Dickie (JD)	Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Training, Safety and Assurance
Sarah O'Donnell (SO'D)	Director of Finance and Contractual Services
Mark McAteer (MMcA)	Director of Strategic Planning, Performance and Communications
Stuart Stevens (SS)	Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Service Delivery
Alasdair Cameron (AC)	Group Commander Board Support
Debbie Haddow (DH)	Board Support/Minutes

OBSERVERS:

Heather Greig	Board Support Executive Officer
Vlad Valiente	Legal Services Manager

1 CHAIR'S WELCOME

1.1 KD opened the meeting and welcomed those present and participating via video conference.

2 APOLOGIES

2.1 Nick Barr	Board Member
Martin Blunden	Chief Officer
Paul Stewart	Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Service Development
Richard Whetton	Head of Corporate Governance

3 CONSIDERATION OF AND DECISION ON ANY ITEMS TO BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE

3.1 No private items were identified.

4 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

4.1 None

5 WEST ASSET RESOURCE CENTRE (ARC)

- 5.1 SOD presented a report to the Board seeking approval to proceed with the delivery of the West Asset Resource Centre at Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) Headquarters/National Training Centre, Cambuslang, noting the following key points:
- Initial project paused due to complications/increased costs with proposed site.
 - Work was undertaken to identify and assess alternative sites, however the findings concluded that there were no significant cost savings compared to progressing with the original site.
 - Original business case was still valid and the existing workshops/stores continues to deteriorate.
 - Revised costings for the project have increased due to higher build costs, additional energy/environmental items, inflation and risk/contingency allowance. Revised costings do not allow for any contingency relating to potential COVID-19 issues.
 - Current 3-year capital programme anticipated £6 million for this project therefore an additional £4.3 million would need to be identified. It was anticipated that the 3-year capital programme, with the recent addition of £4 million received from Scottish Government and projected future capital receipts, would be flexible enough to accommodate this increase.
- 5.2 The Board noted their concerns that no risk/contingency allowance had been made within the original project costings.
- 5.3 The Board requested further information on the capacity within the capital programme to accommodate the increased project costs. The Board were reminded of the additional £4 million recently received from Scottish Government, anticipated capital receipts of existing sites and that as the capital programme was a 3-year programme the rephrasing of other projects could be adjusted as required ie straddled over 2 years.
- 5.4 IM informed the Board that the increased project costs were also attributable to changes to the enhanced scope and specification of the project.
- 5.5 The Board asked whether there was confidence that the costs would not further increase. SO'D stated that this was a cost estimate, therefore may be subject to change but these estimates had been produced by industry professionals and a contingency allowance has been built in. The uncertainty faced by both the manufacturing and construction industries were noted. SO'D informed the Board that, if necessary, there would be an option to adjust the project specification to remain within budget.
- 5.6 The Board asked whether there were any further anticipated implications from the ground contamination of the proposed site. IM confirmed that the proposal included costing for the removal and controlled disposal of ground contamination from the site.
- 5.7 The Board asked why leasing of prospective properties was not considered an attractive option of the Service. IM informed the Board that these properties would require extensive capital investment to ensure that they were fit for purpose, in particular reinforcing floor standings to HGV heavy goods workshop standards. There was also the potential for the leaseholder to request the Service to make good the property if/when the lease came to an end, the potential periodic review of the lease and any future legal issues arising from the extraction of the lease. IM stated that the long-term commitment and high demand for fleet maintenance within the West service delivery area, made leasing an unattractive option for the Service.
- 5.8 IM stated that access to the proposed site would be via the back entrance to the Headquarters complex and earlier consultation with the local authority planners have indicated that this would be a positive approach.

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

- 5.9 In regard to the reduced resource costs, IM reminded the Board of the current condition of the aging Cowcaddens premises. He noted that the new premise would provide a modern, safe and efficient working environment which would be consistent with the existing ARC's in the North and East service delivery areas. Additional benefits of the proposed site would be the increased support available to maintain training vehicles on site and the potential future alignment of scheduled training courses and vehicle maintenance.
- 5.10 In regard to any future proposals for accommodation within the Headquarters complex, the Board were informed that there would still be capacity within the site however no business case had been produced at this time.
- 5.11 The Board noted concerns regarding the original business case which was based on the Cushman and Wakefield report, the extent of the contamination which was not initially identified despite there being a remediation notice on the site and the unpredictability of dealing with contaminations. SO'D stated that the business case remains valid as there was still a requirement for an asset resource centre in the West service delivery area. SO'D further stated that since the initial report, further intrusive investigatory work has been undertaken on the site to identify the level of contamination and remediation work necessary which has informed the additional cost profile.
- 5.12 IM reiterated that the original business case, as part of Strategic Intent, was still valid. IM noted that the condition of the existing Cowcaddens premises and the options available for the disposal of the site. IM noted his opinion of the original Cushman and Wakefield report, the subsequent intrusive testing and the proposals for removal and remediation work to ensure the site was clean and safe.
- 5.13 The Board requested reassurance that risk and contingency were factored into other projects and the impact of COVID-19 on the disposal of the Cowcaddens site. SO'D stated that there were no clear indications post COVID-19, however the city centre location of the Cowcaddens site would be attractive to prospective buyers/developers. IM acknowledged that risk and contingency were not build into early projects, however, lessons learnt have resulted in this being included in all projects.
- 5.14 The Board were informed that contingencies had been built into the Newbridge project, the lessons learnt and the overall successful delivery of the project.
- 5.15 In regard to the option for shared facilities, discussions have taken place with Police Scotland and Scottish Ambulance Service to discuss partnership opportunities, including vehicle maintenance however, this would not impact on the overall specification of the site.
- 5.16 In summary, the Board had noted their concerns on the increased capital costs, implications and impact of COVID-19, ongoing risks associated with the contamination on site and associated removal and the opportunities and interdependencies on the release of the existing Cowcaddens site. The Board were content that appropriate assurances had been provided in connection to these concerns.
- 5.17 **The Board approved the West Asset Resource Centre project to be developed within the SFRS HQ/National Training Centre site at Cambuslang.**

6 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 6.1 The next meeting of the Board is scheduled to take place on Thursday 27 August 2020 at 1000 hrs.
- 6.2 There being no further matters to discuss in public, the meeting closed at 1020 hours.