

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

DATE: 23 JUNE 2015



REPORT OF: MS DENISE LE GAL, CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS SERVICES AND RESIDENT EXPERIENCE

MR RICHARD WALSH, CABINET MEMBER FOR LOCALITIES AND COMMUNITY WELLBEING

**LEAD OFFICER: JOHN STEBBINGS, CHIEF PROPERTY OFFICER
RUSSELL PEARSON, CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**

SUBJECT: NEW BUILD SPELTHORNE FIRE STATION

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

A decision was taken by Cabinet on 4 February 2014 to close Sunbury and Staines fire stations and to build a new fire station at a suitable location in Spelthorne.

This paper relates to the building of a new fire station in Spelthorne and seeks approval to release capital funds from within the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that, subject to the agreement of the detailed financial information for the project, as set out in agenda item 14 in Part 2 of this agenda, the business case for the provision of a new fire station in Spelthorne be approved.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

A new build fire station in Spelthorne will achieve the outcomes desired in the Surrey Fire and Rescue Authority's Public Safety Plan 2011 – 2020 by providing modern, efficient, low cost premises that are Disability Discrimination Act compliant and meeting equality and diversity needs with suitable operational training facilities to meet modern fire service duties. In addition, it will enable the Service to achieve the associated efficiency savings built into the MTFP resulting from the consolidation of the two fire stations into one.

DETAILS:**Business Case**

1. Cabinet approved the commissioning of a new fire station in an appropriate location subject to a further business case setting out the delivery costs of the new station in February 2014.
2. Following a detailed property and land search, in collaboration with Surrey Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS), and under delegated approval given in September 2014 the council acquired freehold land at the Fordbridge Roundabout. This site met the search criteria for a new fire station in Spelthorne for location, size, adjacencies, topography, access and availability.
3. In addition to the acquisition of land for this station a secondary access is required to allow SFRS to obtain quicker access to the site when travelling in a West to East direction. Without it, the route could cause delays for returning fire appliances. The secondary access will enable a quick 'turn around' ready for the next incident. Thames Water owns a private access road suitable as a secondary access which they are willing to grant SCC a right to use.
4. Property Services has appointed professional services to assist with the design and delivery of the fire station. The designs have progressed considerably with the internal layout having been approved by SFRS and various options produced for accessing the site based on discussions with the Planning and Highways Authority internally at SCC. Work is now ongoing to submit a detailed planning application for approval.
5. As part of the Emergency Services Collaboration Programme, Property Services and SFRS have engaged in discussions with South East Coast Ambulance Service. It has been agreed that the new Fire Station will include an Ambulance Community Response Post, a location where Ambulance crews can park up and rest between calls. This supports the shared estates vision set out in the Public Service Transformation Network blue light collaboration programme.

CONSULTATION:

6. A number of consultation processes have been carried out with officers from SFRS, the Fire Brigades Union, Spelthorne Borough Council and a public consultation between August and November 2013. Details of the consultation can be found within the Cabinet paper for changes to fire deployment in the Borough of Spelthorne decision taken on 4 February 2014.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

7. Common to all construction projects, there are risks associated with the project and a project risk register has been compiled and is regularly updated. A contingency allowance appropriate to the scheme has been included within the project budget to mitigate potential unidentified risks.
8. Planning permission will be required for the fire station and due to the land being in the Greenbelt this is higher risk than normal but pre planning application meetings have been had with Spelthorne Borough Council and SCC Planning and Highways.

9. During the site search and due diligence carried out on the acquired land, it was identified that parts of the site had fuel pipelines and electrical power cables that supply Terminal 5 at Heathrow Airport running through it. The scheme has been designed with these in mind and mitigates any potential risk.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

10. The project will be subject to robust cost challenge and scrutiny to drive optimum value as it progresses. Further financial details are set out in the report circulated in Part 2 of the agenda. These details have been circulated separately to ensure commercial sensitivity in the interests of securing best value.

Section 151 Officer Commentary

11. The Section 151 Officer confirms that the reported costs and estimated savings are provided for in the current Medium Term Financial Plan. The capital costs will be met from the Fire Reconfiguration budget and although this budget is sufficient for this scheme it may not be adequate for the remaining projects. The budget will be reviewed as part of planning considerations for the MTFP.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer.

12. Under section 120 of the Local Government Act 1972, the county council has the power to acquire any land by agreement for the purposes of any of its functions or for the benefit, improvement or development of its area. The acquisition of land includes the acquisition of a right of way over another party's land. The acquisition of a right to use the private access road owned by Thames Water as an access to the new Spelthorne Fire Station is therefore a proposal which complies with s120 of the Act. If the land is not immediately required for that purpose and, until it is required for that purpose, the right may be used for the purpose of any of the county council's functions, subject to the agreement of Thames Water in the relevant deed.

Equalities and Diversity

13. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) was included within the 4 February 2014 Cabinet paper regarding fire deployment in the Borough of Spelthorne which supported the decision that was taken. There are no known changes since then that would affect this.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- If approved, to proceed to complete tenders and subsequent contract award through delegated decision
- A detailed planning application is to be submitted with a view to a decision in August 2015

Contact Officer:

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Consulted:

Kay Hammond, Cabinet Associate for Community Safety Services

Tony Samuels, Cabinet Associate for the Built Environment

David McNulty, Chief Executive

Julie Fisher, Strategic Director for Business Services

Susan Smyth, Strategic Finance Manager

Sources/background papers:

Cabinet decision taken on 4 February 2014 – Changes to Fire Deployment in the Borough of Spelthorne
