

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	AUTHORITY		
DATE:	15 OCTOBER 2020	REPORT NO:	CFO/055/20
PRESENTING OFFICER	CHIEF FIRE OFFICER		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	CFO PHIL GARRIGAN	REPORT AUTHOR:	IAN CUMMINS
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM HEAD OF ESTATES		
TITLE OF REPORT:	TDA DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL (CONDITIONAL)		

APPENDICES:	
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Purpose of Report

1. To seek Members indicative support for the development of a Training Development Academy ('TDA') and fire station on a new site rather than develop the existing site.
 - Members will recall the possibility of building a new training facility/station as part of the 2021 -2024 Integrated Risk Management Planning cycle was discussed at the recent Members Strategy Day
 - Any proposal would be subject to Member's receiving a detailed proposal including a full business case and funding statement, before any final commitment to a new site was agreed.

Recommendation

2. That Members;
 - a. Approve the deferral of the refurbishment of the current TDA site and instruct the CFO to look for a new site for the TDA, and
 - b. Instruct the CFO to report back to Members' with a proposal for a new site including a full business case and funding proposal, and
 - c. Approve the use of the capital reserve to fund any pump priming work ahead of the detailed proposal, and
 - d. Delegate power to the CFO to make **conditional** bids for potential sites if the deadlines for bids means that it is not possible to get members' formal approval beforehand (*note part of any condition associated with a bid is that Authority approval would be required if the bid is successful*), and
 - e. Note that a conditional bid (**non-binding**) has been made in consultation with the Chair of the Authority on a preferred new site as the deadline for bids was 25th September 2020 and a number of competitive bids had been received in relation to the site.
 - f. Request a more detailed report subject to the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review and following any response to the conditional bid which would ultimately indicate the feasibility of the proposal.

- g. Note that any progress would be subject to public consultation and Authority approval.
- h. Note that any proposal would be captured within the 2021-2024 Integrated Risk Management Plan

Introduction and Background

3. The current TDA and Croxteth Fire Station (Station 19) sites are co-located on Storrington Avenue, Croxteth, L11 9AP. The TDA provides the central location for the provision of operational training to front line firefighting crews, as well as commercial training delivery to a number of external clients and stakeholders. In addition, the TDA site provides a venue for meetings, conferences and non operational training course delivery and supports the Prince's Trust and Fire Cadets programs. Furthermore, the site hosts courses that form part of the National Resilience training programme and has been utilised as a venue for large scale major exercises for national and international stakeholders.
4. Station 19 is the permanent location of the Service's Search and Rescue Team and houses 2 front line appliances in addition to a number of additional assets associated with their role with the National Resilience response framework.
5. The NWAS HART team is also based at Station 19.
6. The current TDA and Croxteth Fire station was opened in the 1970's. This existing site is landlocked with no site expansion possible and is restricted on all boundaries, by a cemetery, a secondary school, a main road and local housing. Consequently, the existing site offers limited means in regards to providing enhanced training facilities with significant financial investment being required in the short, medium and long term in order to ensure the existing site remained fit for purpose.
7. Given the limitations arising from the site's physical location, there is potential for other facilities/locations needing to be acquired to support training delivery for operations that are not available at the current location, for example Inquiry high rise training (Grenfell Tower Inquiry) and Marauding Terrorist Attack Training (Kerslake Report).
8. The site is in need of significant re-development and continuing refurbishment works. A project board was set up to develop and manage a programme of planned works and progress the proposals. A decision was taken to submit a full planning application to Liverpool City Council in 2019 and the application was successfully approved in January 2020. The works proposed are outlined below, and a cost appraisal for the proposals was carried out and the forecast spend was estimated at +£4.8M.
 - a. Demolish existing Fire Training Building.
 - b. Extend the 1st floor of the existing fire station.
 - c. Refurbishment of Croxteth Fire Station (which is currently shared with NWAS)

- d. Refurbishment of the TDA Building.
 - e. Construct new Fire Behaviour Unit.
 - f. Modify the external training provision to the north of the site.
 - g. Increased car parking provision.
 - h. Access / egress requirements enhanced.
 - i. New dirty classrooms and training facilities.
 - j. New staff and visitor's welfare facilities.
 - k. Relocation of existing training tower
 - l. Extension to TDA & USAR garages.
 - m. Planning permission is also granted to continue with live fire burns.
 - n. Planning permission is granted up to January 2023, with conditions.
9. The current 5 year capital programme contains a £4.509m provision for the refurbishment of the existing Training and Development Academy (TDA), with a further £2.1m funding within the capital investment reserve, a total provision of £6.609m.
10. It is acknowledged that enhancing and refurbishing the existing TDA site is feasible; **however**, the geographical and physical limitations of the current site would not enable the provision of the more modern facilities the authority requires to train all staff and external stakeholders.
11. Given the constraints of the existing site, and that MFRA are the lead authority for national resilience, together with our ongoing training commitments it is felt that it is prudent to review other possible development sites in the Merseyside area that may offer more flexibility and scope for future expansion to meet the Service's training needs now and for the future. Officers are seeking Members support to look at the possibility of building a new TDA at an alternative site.
12. This report outlines the opportunity, reasons and challenges to produce a single fit for purpose training site.
13. A new site with a larger footprint would enable the facility to include
- a. a bespoke training facility with scope to include a Fire Behaviour Unit, this will incorporate varied training scenarios for the modern day fire fighter
 - b. TDA Building including offices,
 - c. Indoor Training Facility, for use in adverse weather and for demonstration purposes for the local community
 - d. a new 5 bay Fire Station,
 - e. provision of external training which will also incorporate added provision for National Resilience (NR) focused training requirements as a minimum.
 - f. the proposed new scheme will mirror as a minimum the existing provision.
 - g. an opportunity to provide training facilities that are currently only accessible via provision from external partners, e.g. high rise.
 - h. the new site will provide a world class training facility with the possibility of expansion in the future

- i. it would also deliver upgraded facilities for the North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) Hazardous Area Response Team (HART) and
 - j. the opportunity for further collaboration with Merseyside Police (MP).
 - k. Reduced annual reactive maintenance costs associated with the current site
 - l. enhanced facilities available to staff in terms of training, changing and office facilities.
 - m. Modern fire station
 - n. MFRA will be able to maintain all demands put upon it for training at the existing site whilst the new scheme is developed.
 - o. Potential to explore shared training provision with partner agencies
 - p. a Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant, sustainably designed and operating facility that meets all current regulations
 - q. new gym facilities, incorporating locker space and gender neutral washrooms/disabled access toilet facility.
 - r. flexible training rooms that for varying delegate numbers.
 - s. dirty classrooms.
 - t. storage for personal equipment as well as training equipment.
 - u. diesel fuel station (Alternative Fuel - electric?)
 - v. scrap car compound for 6 cars and a forklift truck.
 - w. increased car parking spaces
 - x. potential for Secondary Fire Control
 - y. potential site for Information Communication & Technology (ICT) Disaster Recovery.
 - z. many of the support functions for both the TDA building and proposed new fire station facility can be shared if the facilities are co-located on a single site. This will avoid replication of elements such as storage, kitchens, offices, server rooms and changing facilities and will result in reducing build and running costs.
14. Officers have identified several potential sites for a new TDA/Station development and based on operational demands and performance criteria have chosen a preferred site. Bids for the preferred site had to be in by the 25th September 2020, and to ensure the Authority was in a position to consider this site as a possible option a **conditional** offer was submitted. Part of the conditions attached to the offer were:
- a. Authority approval would be required to ratify any bid, and this would only be possible once a full business case and confirmation of funding had been determined, and
 - b. Subject to the relevant consultations and planning approval being received.
15. If the bid is successful more detailed building and site plans will be produced as part of the next stage of the feasibility process. Public consultation will be a key factor in the development of the plan, and this will commence in the coming weeks. In addition, officers would seek some direction from the relevant local authority planning officers on the feasibility of the proposals. Costs associated with the development of plans and required consultations will be met from the current TDA reserve.

16. The cost of the new development and the long term proposals will be a key consideration of any development plan and the affordability of the scheme is a key risk factor.
17. Officers are aiming to bring the detailed proposals to Members' for consideration at the 2021/22 Budget Authority meeting, when the level of future Government funding and an updated medium term financial plan will also be known. Indicative costing have been included within the finance section of this report.
18. In summary if a suitable site can be found the development will be subject to a full business case supporting such a proposal including confirming the required funding is in place, and would be subject to a public consultation process and planning consent, and this will be brought to Members' for approval.

Equality and Diversity Implications

19. A full EIA will be completed as part of the detailed development proposals.

Staff Implications

20. None at this point in the process.

Legal Implications

21. Any development of a new site could only be executed upon approval by the Authority and subject to officers providing a comprehensive report to allow Members to consider any such proposal.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

22. At this point in time only indicative estimates are available. Including the purchase of land, the total cost of the development is expected to be in the region of **£25m**.
23. The estimated level of specific funding is:

a. NWAS capital contribution for HART building	£3.0m
b. Sale of TDA/ Stations	£2.5m
c. TDA Capital Reserve	£5.6m
d. Use of one-off revenue savings 2020/22	£3.0m
	<u>£14.1m</u>
24. The current capital programme includes schemes for the TDA, Croxteth and Aintree premises funded by borrowing that would no longer be required if the new site goes ahead. This would free up approximately £1.4m of planned borrowing.

25. Therefore, **new additional borrowing of £9.5m** would be required, (£25m - £14.1m - £1.4m).
26. In terms of the impact of £9.5m of new borrowing on the revenue budget, this would require £0.6m of budget to be identified. In addition the new site would see a net increase in business rates and running costs associated with a larger and more valuable site, of approximately £0.3m.
27. Therefore the Authority would need to consider an increase of just under £1m in its revenue commitments once the new site has been built, 2023?.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

28. None at this point in the process.

Contribution to Our Mission: *Safer Stronger Communities – Safe Effective Firefighters*

29. None at this point in the process.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

GLOSSARY OF TERMS