

Report to Cabinet Member for Community Support, Fire and Rescue

January 2022

West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service Estates Improvement Plan

Report by Deputy Chief Fire Officer

Electoral division(s): All

Summary

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services report on West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (WSFRS) in 2018/19 identified areas where the service requires improvement.

A number of the findings are in areas where there may be asset-based solutions required, to address physical conditions in order to facilitate improvements in areas such as:

- Use of resources and affordability of services
- Promote the right values and culture
- Ensure fairness and promote diversity

The Orange Fire Stations Guide was subsequently commissioned (See Appendix) to establish and record the requirements of WSFRS for all fire stations. This was not intended to replace current Building Regulations, British Standards, Codes of Practice, Building Bulletins or any other statutory legislation but does set out the expectations of West Sussex County Council (WSCC). Upon completion, a survey report of all fire stations was undertaken against these requirements to establish current building conditions at each facility and to develop an improvement plan for the service's estate.

The Estates Improvement Plan clearly sets out the prioritisation of work to address the gaps between current condition of stations and that recommended through the Orange Guide(See Appendix). That plan has identified the improvement schemes which require the most urgent attention. The next step is to commission the work required to deliver the projects which have been prioritised.

Recommendations

The Cabinet Member for Community Support, Fire and Rescue is asked to approve;

- (1) the prioritised set of asset improvement projects as described in section 2 of this report;

- (2) the commencement of the procurement of £1.85m of works to enable prioritised works on welfare improvements, contamination remediation, accessibility & community/training areas to be undertaken at Bognor, Haywards Heath, Littlehampton, Selsey & Shoreham Fire Stations; and
 - (3) the delegation of authority to the Chief Fire Officer to award contracts for the works on completion of the procurement process.
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Proposal

1 Background and context

- 1.1 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) undertook an inspection of West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service in 2018. The subsequent report in 2019 identified specific areas where the service was deemed inadequate and some areas where it requires improvement.
- 1.2 The National Fire and Rescue Services Framework requires fire authorities to undertake an assessment of all foreseeable fire and rescue related risk every three to five years in an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). The fire authority then puts measures in place to address the identified risk to protect the public and its staff. This IRMP assessment of risk includes the location of emergency resources within the county and addresses the health, safety and welfare of its firefighters and staff as well as the service it provides to local businesses and the residents.
- 1.3 The identified risk combined with the Home Office improvements require WSFRS to undertake works across the fire station locations within West Sussex to address the welfare facilities for its firefighters and in particular the facilities for our female firefighters. We are also required to address the growing issues surrounding the contaminants our firefighters are exposed to at fires that may be carcinogenic and the way in which our fire stations help prevent the spread of these contaminants into the accommodation areas of these stations.
- 1.4 The IRMP also indicates that some fire stations may need upgrading. Some may need to be expanded to house new fire engines, more firefighters or the relocation of equipment and training facilities. This is due to the growing population and increased risk in specific areas of the County.
- 1.5 As a result of the HMICFRS improvement plan and IRMP the service secured funding to address these issues identified in 2020-21.
- 1.6 In December 2019 the original strategic outline case for the allocation of £5m capital funding for the West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service Improvement Plan was added to the 20/21 – 24/25 Capital Programme.
- 1.7 In May 2020 the updated strategic outline case was circulated virtually to Capital Assets Board (officer group) and approval followed for £252,065 in revenue 'feasibility' funding to enable Faithful & Gould (F&G), our capital delivery partner, to assess viability.

- 1.8 The viability report was produced by F&G in June 2021 and included costs for condition surveys, whole lifecycle costings and running and operational costs. Detail was also provided around grading of each station compared to the design guides F&G produced.
- 1.9 Subsequent pressures on the capital programme and the need to prioritise another Fire and Rescue service critical capital project has meant a need to prioritise schemes identified in the strategic outline case considered most pressing in terms of the objectives the schemes were intended to achieve. This led to the list of schemes identified for funding in this report. A full business case was then developed to set out the objectives and benefits of the selected schemes and how they would be funded and implemented.

2 Proposal details

2.1 WSFRS has agreed 7 over-arching principles which capture the Service's intentions and aspirations for their estate. It is the Service's intention that FRS buildings and facilities should be:

- Provide modern, professional working environments
- Encourage greater diversity and inclusion
- Improve opportunities to work better with partners
- Be designed to meet the needs of the community and the service
- Be operationally efficient and effective
- Be sustainable and environmentally friendly
- Offer flexible space

2.2 It is recommended that works are progressed up to the value of £1.85m to enable prioritised works on welfare improvements, contamination remediation, accessibility & community/training areas to be undertaken at Bognor, Haywards Heath, Littlehampton, Selsey & Shoreham Fire Stations.

2.3 Full details of the prioritisation exercise are within the Full Business Case and are summarised as Work Package 1 as follows:

Station Name	Crewing Model	Welfare Improvements	Contamination Remediation	Accessibility Works	Community / Training Area	Total Cost
		Budget Cost	Budget Cost	Budget Cost	Budget Cost	Budget Cost
Bognor	Wholetime Crewed	£161,000	£194,000	£65,000	£39,000	£459,000
Haywards Heath	Day Crewed	£286,000	£211,000	£18,000	£44,000	£559,000
Littlehampton	Wholetime Crewed	£79,000	£70,000	£9,000	£25,000	£183,000
Selsey	Retained	£58,000	£118,000	£19,000	£24,000	£219,000
Shoreham	Day Crewed	£221,000	£191,000	£9,000	£24,000	£445,000
						£ 1,865,000

2.4 Following the prioritisation exercise additional capital investment will be requested for allocation to address the estates improvements required on a further 18 fire stations. This future work will need to come through in a further business case.

3 Other options considered (and reasons for not proposing)

- 3.1 There are other Fire and Rescue Service Buildings that need Estates improvements, there is a clear plan this within phase two and three of the programme.

4 Consultation, engagement and advice

- 4.1 This paper has been reviewed through the Asset Hub and the Capital and Assets Board.
- 4.2 The initial feasibility studies were undertaken to understand the proposed changes and the financial implications on each station.

5 Finance

- 5.1 The funds have been secured through the Capital programme and were approved at Capital Assets Board on 1st December 2022.

5.2

	22/23	Total
	£m	£m
Capital Programme (WSFRS)	1.85	1.85

6 Risk implications and mitigations

Risk	Mitigating Action (in place or planned)
Funding does not meet the requirements of all buildings due to Brexit and other price increases	A pilot station will be undertaken to ensure that buildings are fully completed before the next ones are started. The funding will be closely monitored to ensure that the contingencies are used in the most effective way and maximum impact is achieved with the allocated funding.
More work is required beyond these stations	This will be under phase 2 and 3 as the estate of fire stations requires a significant amount of work but this will form part of the Community Risk Management Plan 2022 Estates improvement plan and will need an independent approval.

7 Policy alignment and compliance

- 7.1 WSFRS has jointly developed an 'Orange Guide' for Fire Stations as seen in the appendix. The purpose of this document is to provide guidance on the level of provision and specification within new build and refurbished fire stations for West Sussex County Council. These station amendments are to bring this in line with the guide, subject to the feasibility study of the viable amendments.

Equality requirements to incorporate diversity, inclusion & dignity

- 7.2 In order to comply with Equality duty and human rights assessment this decision is to improve the accessibility(Appendix):
- 7.3 Community areas should comply with all necessary welfare provisions in including hearing loops, accessible toilet & baby changing, multi-faith room, tea point etc.
- 7.4 To meet our targets in these areas we need to ensure that we embed sustainability into the design and construction of our buildings. This is addressed in section 16 on page 36 of the Appendix.

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Appendix 1– The Orange Fire Stations Guide

Background papers

None