

# Essex Fire Authority

## Essex County Fire & Rescue Service



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MEETING

AGENDA ITEM

**Policy and Strategy Committee**

**5**

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MEETING DATE

REPORT NUMBER

2 November 2016

**EFA/120/16**

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SUBJECT

Fleet Workshops Redevelopment – Update Report

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REPORT BY

Mike Clayton - Finance Director & Treasurer

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PRESENTED BY

Mike Clayton - Finance Director & Treasurer

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### **SUMMARY**

In December 2015 Members approved funding for the initial design and planning phases of a project to build a new Fleet Workshops at Kelvedon Park to replace the existing facility at Lexden in Colchester. The need for a new facility is because the condition of the Service's vehicle workshop at Lexden has been deteriorating for a number of years and significant expenditure on either the existing or a new facility was required.

This paper brings forward summary information on the activities carried out since December 2015 and seek approval to pause the project until there is a better understanding of alternative uses for the Kelvedon Park site and alternative options for the location of Fleet workshops.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members of the Essex Fire Authority are asked to:

1. Note the potential for alternative uses for the Kelvedon Park site;
2. Note the on-going work to consider options for the structure of the fleet management arrangements; and
3. Agree that the project is paused until there is greater clarity for these issues.

### **BACKGROUND**

The current Fleet Workshops site occupies a corner position to the south west of Colchester town centre. The local area is mainly residential although the site itself is adjacent to a school and an ambulance station and the Authority's total site includes the Urban Search and Rescue base. The recent relocation of Stores and the Breathing Apparatus Workshop to the site assisted in the vacation of Hutton. The site comprises a

main building with a series of outbuildings with a concrete yard area providing parking and testing areas.

Although serviceable as a site and layout the utilisation is hampered by the building construction. Most of the buildings are constructed of clad steel frame, with a high proportion of the construction materials containing asbestos. Standard maintenance items such as roofs and windows cannot be replaced without a significant safety risk. Elements of all the buildings have been patched repaired to the point that there is a significant risk of failure in the next few years. Dated design elements such as a single entry door on the main building greatly restrict the effective use of the current facilities, hampering the fleet workshops performance. The continued use of the existing buildings for the long term is not a feasible option.

In December 2015 three options were identified as available to the Authority regarding the facility:-

- 1 Relocation of the Fleet Workshops facility;
- 2 Demolition and rebuild of the current facility; and
- 3 Outsource vehicle maintenance.

The preferred option at that time was the relocation of the Fleet Workshops to Kelvedon Park. This option ensures that workshop service can continue whilst the design and building parts of the programme are undertaken.

Previous discussions with Essex Police had established that there was little overlap with their maintenance requirements and concluded there would be little benefit in the development of a joint facility. Since then further work on the potential for the joining up of fleet management has been undertaken, and this is one strand of the on-going work on potential areas for collaboration that is supported by PA Consulting. No decisions concerning whether this would be of benefit to either the Police or Fire services have been made.

As part of the same collaboration reviews the potential for the Kelvedon Park site to be developed to provide office accommodation for the Police management team has been considered. Such a development would preclude the use of the site for the Fire Authority's Fleet Workshops. Again, no decision or firm proposals have been made or developed at this point in time.

Given the above factors there is a risk that further work on the design phase of the project, based on the Kelvedon Park site, could prove to be abortive with little scope to carry the design over to a new site.

### **Design to tender stage Proposal**

The Programme to develop a new fleet workshop has two phases. The first phase will procure the support for the design of the new workshops and progress until the tender for the construction. At this point a full business case will be completed and approval sought from the Authority. When the design and the specification for the build are completed the Authority will be in a position to consider whether to progress the development on the strength of a tender proposal from a contractor.

The initial procurement has resulted in the appointment of Focus Consultants as the Project Manager / Quantity Surveyor. The second stage for the procurement of the design team has been delayed pending a decision by Members on this paper.

## Outline Programme

The outline timescale proposed is as follows:-

Work Item	Outline delivery date
Members agreement to design fees	December 2015
Product descriptions agreed for the construction	January 2016
OJEU process starts for design team	February 2016
Design Team appointed via European regulations	September 2016
Completion of design	June 2017
Tender and adjudication of construction works	December 2017
Construction contract agreement	February 2018
Construction completion	May 2019

As with all significant contracts there could be some timescale slippage in either direction.

## RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

This paper has arisen because of the development of a risk, concerning the availability of a suitable site at Kelvedon Park, into an issue. To manage the issue it is proposed that the project is paused until there is alacrity around both the future structure of the management team for the Fire Authority's fleet and the potential alternative uses of the Kelvedon Park site.

The risk of a significant failure in the buildings at the existing Lexden site remains high.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The costs incurred on the project were £11k at the end of September 2016 with a further £11k of committed expenditure.

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no significant legal implications from a decision to pause the project.

## USE OF RESOURCES

The Fleet and Equipment and Stores functions based at Service Workshops are all key parts of this Authority's delivery obligations for an operational service. Combined with the implications of a dated and deteriorating facility the programme could be considered as an imperative use of resources.

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

A decision to pause the project will delay any environmental improvements from a new facility.

## EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

A decision to pause the project will delay improvements to our facilities.

<b>LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985</b>	
<b>List of appendices attached to this paper:</b>	
<b>List of background documents (not attached):</b>	
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