

**LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY
RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

Meeting to be held on 28 November 2018

SERVICE TRAINING CENTRE CAPITAL INVESTMENT

Contact for further information:

Keith Mattinson - Director of Corporate Services – Telephone Number 01772 866804

Executive Summary

The report sets out capital works required at Service Training Centre (STC) in order to address some of the concerns about the current facilities.

It recommends investment in:-

- A refurbishment of the Fire House;
- An extension to the existing Fleet Workshop to provide a number of enhanced facilities;
- A refurbishment of Astley House to provide improved Incident Command Training facilities;
- An enhanced conferencing facilities and disabled access at Lancaster House, subject to agreement on the long term future of this facility.

Decisions Required

The Committee is asked to:-

- Approve the refurbishment of the Fire House at an estimated cost of £350k;
- Approve the extension of Fleet Garage at an estimated cost of £3,900k or consider whether Members wish to set up a separate working group to review this alongside SHQ options;
- Approve the refurbishment of Astley House at an estimated cost of £350k (or consider referring this to the member working group referred to above);
- Note the potential cost of £360k associated with refurbishing the conference facilities at Lancaster House, and consider this alongside any decision relating to SHQ relocation.

Current facilities at STC

STC comprises a number of dedicated buildings covering a variety of functions:-

- Lancaster House: this was constructed in the 70s and has had various refurbishment works done, the most recent being 2011.
- Astley House: this was constructed in 1988 and had various refurbishment works done in 2011, with temporary extensions added last year to accommodate changing regulations.
- Minerva/Incident Command Suite, this is a porta-cabin type building dating back to the 90s and has had minimal works done to it since this date.
- Fleet Garage: this was constructed in 2012.

- Alf Ramsey House: this is a pre-fabricated concrete framed building dating back to the 40s and has had minimal works done to it since this date.
- Drill Yard Classroom – this was replaced in 2017.
- Fire Ground Classroom – this is being replaced in the current financial year.
- Moira’s rest: this is a porta-cabin type building dating back to the 80s and has had minimal works done to it since this date (there is no proposal to amend this).
- Midgeley House: this is a porta-cabin type building dating back to the 90s and has had minimal works done to it since this date.

In addition the following practical training facilities exist:

- Fire house.
- Main Drill Yard: two single drill towers, two joined drill towers.
- Open Water Dam.
- Road Traffic Collision training pad.
- External Large Animal Rescue training area.
- Gallery 1: rope rescue, breathing apparatus crawl gallery with attached silo.
- Gallery 2: two storey compartment firefighting prop constructed from shipping containers (dated and in need of repair).
- Fire Ground 2: Individual fire behaviour galleries constructed from shipping containers, utilised for compartment firefighting, flash over and back draft demonstrations and attack exercises.
- Fire Ground 3 – Fire Investigation (FI) units and other fire demonstration units. Plus the UCLAN FI and fire behaviour testing rig.
- External extinguisher training area.
- USAR training props.
- Multi Compartment Fire Fighting prop.

Due to a lack of historical investment a number of these facilities have/are reaching the end of their economic life and either need replacing or refurbishing, and the following significant issues have been identified:-

- The Firehouse is in need of refurbishment in order to extend its life and ensure it remains fit for purpose.
- The current conference facilities in Lancaster House are of poor quality, situated in a gymnasium, wasteful of space and do not provide adequate disabled facilities.
- There is no facility to allow disabled access to the first floor of Lancaster House.
- The current BA School in Astley House is not currently fit for purpose. Due to the publication of recent reports into the effect of contaminated P.P.E. and other equipment, the layout of Astley House doesn’t lend itself to the Service discharging its responsibilities under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regs. as it does not adequately separate out dirty PPE and BA Kit from occupied space.
- There is a requirement to provide new equipment workshop facilities as the current provision is contained in an unsuitable “borrowed” space.

- There is the potential to provide secure space for training school vehicles and spare vehicles.
- There is the potential to create a suitable fitness and training facility as a part of the requirement for fire fighters to maintain fitness levels.
- There is a requirement to expand the BA Servicing facility as it is no longer adequate as a result of an increase in workload of the facility.
- The Portacabin known as Midgely House, previously used as sleeping accommodation, now being used for trainers office accommodation is beyond the end of its economic life, is expensive to run and does not meet modern sanitary, space or environmental standards.
- The Portacabin known as Minerva Building used as the Incident Command Training Suite is towards the end of its economic life, is expensive to run and does not meet modern sanitary, space or environmental standards. In addition, it does not allow a full provision of Incident Command Training Scenarios.

Required Investment

Required investment can be broken down into four distinct areas:-

- Fire House;
- Fleet Garage Extension;
- Astley House Refurbishment;
- Lancaster House.

No allowance has been made for the potential relocation of SHQ to the site. Members will recall that this project was previously approved in 2012/13 at a capital cost of £10m, however this was put on hold in 2013 and remains so, pending the outcome of discussions with the Police about shared estates strategy. It is worth noting that even if the relocation of SHQ project was live it would have minimal impact on these proposals, as the only facilities' included in these proposal which also featured in the HQ project were the relocation of the Incident Command Training facility and the development of conferencing facilities replacing those in Lancaster House.

It is also worth noting that the type of buildings that are referred to in the following options would not be suitable for a HQ or main training facility, as they are a simpler more cost effective portal construction, similar to the existing Fleet garage facility.

Furthermore in the five years that has elapsed the cost of relocating HQ will have changed significantly due to inflationary impacts and also changing requirements.

Fire House

The Fire House has been in situ for almost 30 years. The Condition Survey of the Fire House undertaken in November 2017, confirmed the following "The Fire House was constructed in the 1980's and has been well used, with only minimum maintenance undertaken and this is reflected in its overall condition. "

Overall it is in good condition with some repairs being necessary to prevent further deterioration. These repairs if undertaken in the next 12 months will prevent further deterioration of the structure and the building should, if correctly maintained remain in good condition without requiring major expenditure on the fabric for a further 20 years.

The Building Services systems are in a much poorer condition and are well beyond their replacement cycle. Failure to replace these, whilst not affecting the fabric of the building will hinder and slow a safe evacuation of the building in an emergency, therefore replacement of safety critical systems such as the lighting system is recommended. Given the conditions found in a fire house, it is expected that the average life expectancy of the building services systems will be ten years, rather than the 20 years of a typical office or fire station premise

As part of any refurbishment additional works could be undertaken. This will provide more versatility in terms of the range of scenarios on offer in this facility. During the review of National Operational Guidance it has been identified that currently LFRS has a very limited provision for basement firefighting training. Therefore the proposal replaces two of the existing raking ladders with staircases, providing a better range of options for typical firefighting scenarios. It will also provide an option for a realistic basement scenario, albeit the entry will be from the roof terrace area on the second floor.

It is not possible to amend the design of the building to provide an effective High Rise Training facility, hence provision of that training facility will need to be sourced elsewhere.

The estimated capital cost of the proposed refurbishment is £350k, and the works are currently planned for April-June next year. The cost of this work can be met from the capital budget identified for 2019/20, as set out in the draft capital programme presented last year.

Fleet Garage Extension

This project initially started as an extension to provide an enhanced workshop facility for the Fleet and Engineering Services maintenance team, who have relocated to STC to work alongside BA recovery colleagues and provide a more integrated service, thus delivering staffing efficiencies.

Changes to BA training/servicing, including the need to separate out dirty and clean areas and therefore avoid cross contamination, and the need to expand the size of the servicing area to accommodate increased work as maintenance is no longer carried out on station, has led to an increased scope.

Further scoping works were undertaken to identify any other requirements that STC had for this type of building, an element of which was considering how the requirement was currently met and what the long-term viability of existing facilities was. This led to a proposal to include the provision of a number of additional facilities within the new build:-

- Provision of suitable accommodation for trainers, which is currently provided in Midgeley House, including enhancement of female facilities.
- Provision of suitable “dirty” welfare facilities/lockers for recruits/students, at the present time the only facilities are provided in Astley House and are not separated into clean and dirty facilities, and thereby don’t lend themselves to the Service discharging it’s responsibilities under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regs.
- Provision of gym facilities, replacing those in Alf Ramsey House and enabling this building to be returned to its original use, as a storage facility.
- Provision of Driving School accommodation, replacing that included in Lancaster House which will could be re-utilised as an enhanced ICT resilience facility as well as ICT training suite (no costings have been allowed for this pending a decision on what equipment is required for this).
- Provision of a Training Area, enabling amongst other things improved fitness testing and providing enhanced outdoor training facilities for inclement weather.
- Provision of a new secure vehicle compound, as the site is now more accessible as it is used by other parties.

The estimated capital cost of this work, including the demolition of the old Midgeley House building, is £3,900k.

A summary of the benefits of these proposals is set out below:

- Enhanced facilities for Fleet and Equipment Services;
- Breathing Apparatus Classrooms;
- Breathing Apparatus Cleaning (internal and External) and Storage area;
- Breathing Apparatus Cylinder Charging and Storage Facilities;
- Enhanced Breathing Apparatus decontamination facilities;
- Additional Space for Breathing Apparatus Recovery;
- P.P.E. Storage and Management Facilities;
- Enhanced EDI facilities;
- Additional dedicated Student Locker Rooms, Changing Area and Shower Facilities;
- Trainer and Trainer Support Locker Room, Changing Area and Shower Facilities;
- Trainer Office and ICT Facilities;
- Dedicated Gym Facility;
- Covered External Area for Physical Fitness Testing;
- Teaching and Office Facilities for Driving School;
- Relocation of the Fire Brigades Union Office;
- Relocation of the existing ICT Suite from Astley House.

Astley House Refurbishment

The move of BA training from Astley House to the Fleet Garage extension provides an opportunity to re-utilise the top floor (the bottom floor will remain as it is at present providing welfare/locker facilities for clean training that takes place). In order to maximise this opportunity it is proposed to redesign the top floor to incorporate an

upgraded Incident Command facility, thus enabling the Minerva building to be demolished. This work was included in the original HQ proposals, hence should this option be pursued the original HQ relocation would need to be amended (however it is worth noting that this accounted for less than 5% of the original plan and therefore would have fairly limited impact on costings.)

The estimated capital cost of this work, including the demolition of the old Minerva building, is £350k.

Combined Business Case Fleet Garage Extension and Astley House Refurbishment

A business case in respect of this combined change has been produced looking at four options:-

- Option 1: Do Minimum using existing buildings only;
- Option 2: Do Minimum using existing buildings and extending them as required;
- Option 3: Structural refurbishment and extension to provide all requirements and a full twenty five year life expectancy;
- Option 4: New Build and limited refurbishment of existing (the option outlined above).

A summary comparison is set out below:-

Option	Total Built Floor Area	Capital Cost	Annual Life Cycle Cost	Twenty Five Year Whole Life Cost
Option 1: Existing Buildings only	1244sm	£1,023,990	£80,975	£3,048,365
Option 2: Do Minimum	2677sm	£4,140,127	£128,396	£7,350,027
Option 3: Full Refurbishment	2756sm	£5,201,340	£84,073	£7,303,165
Option 4: New Build	2575sm	£4,256,830	£69,706	£5,999,480

Whilst Option 4 has the least built area, it does have the second highest capital cost requirement, but this is offset by the lowest life cycle cost of the options, combining to create the lowest whole life cost of the three site development options (Options 2, 3 and 4).

Option 1 clearly identifies that there is a considerable cost requirement to simply retain the existing buildings on the site as a number of them are reaching the end of their useful lives and require considerable expenditure. Expenditure of this magnitude on portable buildings beyond the end of their design life is ill advised and will have no effect on their asset value, which will continue to decline.

When viewed against this consideration, Option 4, represents an additional capital cost of £3.2m (over and above the base option), which will provide:

- a reduction in revenue costs of £11k per annum (£282k over 25 years);

- a net increase of 1,331 square metres of floor space;
- an increase in the asset value of the property;
- address the business need for a compliant building;
- provide modern fit for purpose office and training environments;
- relocate the Incident Command Suite and Command Team to Astley House providing a more suitable facility.

Lancaster House

Members will recall that two options were considered in respect of the proposals to relocate HQ to this site:-

- Construction of a new facility replacing that at SHQ, but maintaining Lancaster House in its current format;
- Demolishing Lancaster House and constructing one new combined facility.

At the time of the proposal Members agreed the second option, in order to provide a new combined facility. This new building would include conferencing facilities, and hence would make the following proposal redundant. However should Lancaster House remain in its current guise in the long term then some improvements are required.

In 2011 some refurbishment work was undertaken to improve facilities and extend its usable life, pending any decision on the potential relocation of SHQ. At that time the old gymnasium was converted to a large open space which has been used as a conferencing facility, but it is clearly far from ideal. Further to this the toilet facilities for this is extremely poor, with no disabled facility. Nor is there any facility to allow disabled access to the first floor of Lancaster House, and hence this does not comply with the “access for all” agenda. (It doesn’t currently contravene legislation, but it would do if LFRS had a disabled employee or visitor trying to access the space).

To address these issues and enhance the environment with suitable facilities for a modern conference venue two options have been reviewed:-

- Option A - Create a “fit for purpose” modern, flexible conference space with associated upgraded toilet facilities including the provision of a disabled toilet. This will ensure that the ground floor and conference facility comply with current legislation, which they currently do not. The conference facility will be capable of division to create two medium sized meeting rooms or one large room for pass out parades and authority meetings. Costs are estimated at £320k;
- Option B - As above but with the addition of creating disabled access to the first floor. Costs are estimated at £360k. It should be noted that this option will not fully comply with disabled access requirements as there will still be no disabled access to the office accommodation on the mezzanine level.

Until such time as a decision on the long-term future of Lancaster House is reached it is not proposed to pursue this option further. However should Lancaster House be retained in its current usage, option B is the preferred option, i.e. providing enhanced conferencing facilities and some disabled access to classrooms.

Summary

Approval of this work would future proof the site and address some of the under-investment that has historically occurred, although it should be recognised that changing training requirements may impact on this.

With the exception of Lancaster House works none of this will be impacted by the potential relocation of SHQ, nor will it impact on the likely site for any relocation. It is also worth noting that the potential relocation of Police Civil Disorder training will not impact on this works either.

Timing

If supported this work will need to be considered alongside the other capital programme items to agree a draft timetable for construction/refurbishment. However in terms of current thinking the fire House is scheduled for refurbishment in April-July 2019, and this timing is currently reflected in next year's training plan. The new Fleet Garage extension could commence in 19/20, although it is likely to span 19/20 and 20/21. Changes to Astley House would be scheduled after this work is completed (late 20/21). Conferencing facilities at STC are dependent on other decisions, hence a realistic timeframe appears to be late 20/21, but it should be recognised that we will not comply with disability requirements until such time as works are undertaken.

Financial Implications

The capital budget approved last year includes the

Fleet Workshop Extension (18/19)	£2,400k
Fire House Refurbishment (19/20)	£750k
Minerva Replacement (19/20)	£1,250k
Lancaster House Refurbishment (19/20)	£500k
	£4,900k

Based on the above options estimated costs are

Fire House Refurbishment	£350k
Fleet Workshop Extension	£3,900k
Astley House Refurbishment	£350k
Lancaster House Refurbishment	£360k
Total	£4,960k

As such estimated costs are broadly in line with budget, but will be subject to change dependent upon inflationary pressures and any future revision to plans.

Business Risk Implications

None

Environmental Impact

Separation of clean and dirty areas will enhance compliance with environmental issues.

Equality and Diversity Implications

Current facilities do not meet equality and diversity requirements, and the plans for the Fleet workshop extension and Lancaster House will address the majority of these.

Human Resource Implications

None

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact
SHQ Relocation Business Case	2012	Keith Mattinson
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate:		