



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE**

TRAINING CENTRES STRATEGIC HIGHLIGHT REPORT

Strategic sponsor	ACO Jill McCrae, Director for Service Support
Period covered	December 23 – July 24

OVERALL PROJECT STATUS	Slippage
SUMMARY	<p>The project timeline has continued to be delayed. This has been due to work undertaken to engage and resolve, the minor objections, raised by external agencies, in relation to our Weymouth planning application.</p> <p>To meet and resolve these minor objections additional key external specialist assessment reports have required revisions and the site design has been adjusted to meet the planning conditions.</p> <p>The Service continues to await the outcome of the Weymouth planning determination, which we believe will now be provided in August 24.</p> <p>Internally the Service has continued to progress the project, with internal preparations to support building regulations and procurement.</p>

PROGRESS	<p>The planning application for the Weymouth site was submitted to Dorset Council Planning team in October 23. Following the public consultation process the Service has been advised that no public objections were raised. However, during the external agency consultation two minor objections were raised. This has resulted in the Service engaging closely with the Environment Agency and Wessex Water to design agreeable drainage solutions and with the Highways Agency, to agree the route that Car Transporters visit the site, delivering/collecting cars for road traffic collision training, and providing start and end times for courses along with student numbers.</p> <p>The Service understands that all agencies has been provided with the design updates and information and the Planning Officer is working to tie up the paperwork to allow for a determination.</p> <p>It is understood that is likely that the Service will be provided with a decision in August 2024.</p>
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	<p>The Service’s project team is continuing to develop the documentation for building regulations and preparing for the procurement process, aligned the revised designs proposed for Weymouth and those agreed for Devizes. Procurement for both sites will begin once planning approval has been received for the Weymouth site. This is now expected to commence in September 24.</p> <p>Whilst considerable project work continues the original timeline has inevitably slipped. A revised timeline will be further developed following the Weymouth planning decision. This will enable a more accurate timeframe to be produced. It is anticipated, however, subject to any further delays, that site work will commence at both sites in Spring 25.</p> <p>Further stakeholder communication will be undertaken later in the Summer, following the planning decision. This will include an update to all local councillors and members of the public. The Service will also organise a session with all new Fire Authority Members to be provided with an overview of the project.</p>
<p>BUDGET</p>	<p>Members are aware that the initial budgetary provision, agreed for the project, was approved in September 2022. Since this initial budget agreement, time, construction and material costs had increased by an average of 40%.</p> <p>Due to this, a preliminary review of the costs and budget requirements was undertaken in Summer 2023, which highlighting a predicted a budgetary increase of 16.5%. Following this a further comprehensive examination of the pre-tender designs was undertaken in October 2023 by an independent Quantity Surveyor, with input from key project leads and the Head of Finance & Treasurer. This robust and comprehensive budget review was undertaken, considerate of the designs at this stage, including enhancements, increased construction materials and labour costs and future inflationary rises.</p> <p>The revised predicted budgetary requirement to deliver the two training centres was reviewed by the Finance & Audit Committee at their meeting in December 23, with the committee supporting a recommendation to the Fire Authority to increase the budgetary provision for the project.</p> <p>The Authority approved this recommendation, at their full Authority meeting later in December 23, and approved the delegation to the Chief Fire Officer and Treasurer, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair, to award contracts for works following the procurement process, subject to the overall project cost not exceeding an agreed value.</p> <p>Funding for the project is mainly through the use of earmarked capital development reserves. Further earmarked reserves are available that can be used to support the increased costs of the project. Dependent on the final procurement outcome, there may be a need for some additional long-term borrowing, particularly if the final cost is towards the upper cost range. The Treasurer continues to be content that the project remains affordable and in our prudent approach to revenue expenditure. Furthermore, as appropriate the Treasurer will recommend to the Authority when underspend should be used to support the capita programme, to avoid additional borrowing.</p> <p>To date the Service has spent £149,212.91 on specialist consultancy fees to support the planning stage of the project. This includes the Planning Application fees and external reports for biodiversity, air monitoring, acoustic engineering and drainage strategies. In addition, external specialist consultants have been engaged for structural engineering, mechanical and electrical design works, and cost estimate</p>

		<p>reviews with Quantity Surveyors. This spend is aligned to the £232K forecasted costs budgeted for.</p> <p>The Service continues to deliver cost savings to the project, by utilising the skills of our internal staff, including our current Estates Manager and Senior Building Surveyors.</p> <p>Whilst the budgetary review and agreement in December provides a more accurate cost estimate, certainty over the requirements will only be known upon completion of the procurement process, when tender bids are received.</p>
RISKS		<p>This project covers all of the mitigations identified for reducing strategic risk 'Sustainability of Operational Training'(risk number 529).</p> <p>As part of the project management governance the project has a detailed risk register that is reviewed on a monthly basis by the Project Manager and Project Sponsor.</p> <p>A summary of the overall project risk is provided in the table within the report. There are no strategic issues or risks to be brought to the attention of Members at this stage.</p> <p>The budgetary requirement has increased, and the Authority agreed a budgetary provision at their meeting in December 23, reflective of the current economic climate. In support of this final design requirements will continue to be closely monitored. The revised costing includes a 20% design and risk contingency, along with a further inflation allowance.</p> <p>Whilst the project has been impacted by slippage there are no significant barriers to raise at this time. Although, these delays do have a financial impact on the project, as detailed within this report. This also includes protracted lease costs, as the use of the currently leased sites are extended.</p>

NEXT STEPS	<p>An update paper was presented to the Fire Authority at their meeting on the 12 December 2023, where Members approved the delegation to the Chief Fire Officer and Treasurer, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair, to award contracts for works following the procurement process, subject to the overall project cost not exceeding a defined value.</p> <p>Due to external agency requirements, the design for the Weymouth site required some adaption which has delayed a planning permission determination. This has resulted in the formal procurement process for both sites, initially proposed for Spring 24, being delayed. It is now anticipated to commence after the Summer. Officers continued to prepare for the procurement process, in anticipation of a positive planning decision, to ensure a smooth and timely process. In addition, detailed drawings and calculations are being produced for the Building Control applications and mechanical and electrical schemes.</p>
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RISK STATEMENT

Strategic Risk. This Strategic Risk will be reduced following positive approval of planning permission applications.

Strategic Risk No.	Risk Name	Risk Description	Residual (Current) Risk Score	Risk Mitigations	Mitigation progress	Direction of Risk
529	Sustainability of operational training provision.	The Service must have tenable and appropriate operational training, with sufficient resources and provision to ensure a safe and suitable response to emergencies. Furthermore, this must be flexible to meet future challenges and need, whilst also meeting environmental responsibilities.	16	Continued positive relations and contract management of leased sites.		→
				Delivery of a training provision review to identify opportunities to meet future needs.		
				Ongoing awareness and development of environmental opportunities to meet organisational expectations.		

Overall Project Risk Position

Overall risk rating		Direction	→
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Failure to deliver	Residual (Current) Risk Position	Issues	Mitigations
On-time		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delayed Planning Application timeframe increase Supply issues Delay to the commencement of the procurement process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project governance and oversight Procurement & contractual arrangements Site management and oversight Positive engagements and relations
To budget		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant inflationary rises for material and labour Supply chain issues Project delays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project governance and oversight. Budget reviews with Quantity Surveyor and Head of Financial Services & Treasurer
With quality		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time pressures Budgetary pressures Expertise of external contractors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project governance and oversight. Procurement & contractual arrangements Site management and oversight