

NHS GRAMPIAN

Infrastructure Investment

North East Scotland and Northern Isles Mortuary

1. Actions Recommended

The Board is asked to approve the following recommendations:-

- Confirm NHS Grampian's agreement, in principle, to the development of a new build multi partner integrated mortuary facility for the population of the North East of Scotland and the Northern Isles;
- Confirm the allocation of land on the Foresterhill Health Campus to develop the proposed facility in line with the preferred site option explained in 3.3. below; and
- Delegate authority to the Board's Director of Finance to lead negotiations with all partners on behalf of the Board with regard to the proposed arrangements for financing, design, construction and operational management of the new facility in order to inform a detailed business case to be presented for consideration at the February Board meeting.

In considering the above, the Board is asked to note that this proposal complements and does not replace the established requirement to maintain a mortuary facility at Dr Gray's Hospital in Elgin.

2. Strategic Context

The Infrastructure Investment Plan approved by the Board in April 2019 sets out an ambitious programme of investment in infrastructure linked to NHS Grampian's clinical strategy and supporting the strategic theme of delivering high quality care in the right place through providing safer, effective and sustainable services.

The matters outlined for Board approval in this paper relate to planned investment in infrastructure, consistent with strategic themes that will deliver the following benefits:

- improvements in patient experience and environment (person centred),
- improved access, quality and efficiency of key diagnostic processes (effective), and
- reduction in the level of backlog risks and enhance statutory compliance (safe).

3. Key matters relevant to recommendation

3.1 Background and Case for change

Under the Public Health (Scotland) Act 2008, NHS Boards and Local Authorities have a duty to co-operate in the provision of mortuary facilities. This provision includes a repository for post mortem examination facilities. Mortuary provision may be located within an NHS or Local Authority building or provided by a third party.

The design and functionality of both the existing facilities located on the Foresterhill Campus, built in 1935, and on Queen Street in Aberdeen City Centre are in poor physical condition with a range of issues in terms of compliance with statutory standards including the most recent Health planning notes, space utilisation and functional suitability. The ability to upgrade the existing facilities is also significantly limited due to space constraints.

3.2 Proposal for an Integrated Mortuary

Recognising the issues with the existing facilities, the various agencies who use mortuary services across the North East of Scotland have developed a multi-partner strategy to the provision of modern mortuary services. The strategy was informed by a strategic assessment and option appraisal process which concluded that the preferred way forward was the construction of a new build mortuary facility on the Foresterhill Campus that will serve the population of the North East of Scotland and Northern Isles.

Development of the new facility will result in the replacement of the two existing Aberdeen based mortuaries with a purpose built state of the art facility. This new facility will be operated as a single integrated multi-partner, multi-purpose mortuary serving all providers including NHS Grampian, Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Moray Council, Orkney and Shetland Island Councils, the University of Aberdeen, Crown Office Procurator Fiscal Service and Police Scotland.

The services located in this new integrated mortuary will not only ensure clinical accreditation through compliance with all technical and clinical standards but also deliver an innovative design that will meet expectations of the bereaved, provide dignity for the deceased, support growth in the scope and nature of locally delivered forensic and educational activity, and improve resilience through additional capacity to support civil contingencies.

3.3 Site Selection

A feasibility study was commissioned to help identify a preferred site for the proposed facility. The aim of this study was to ensure that the specified footprint was a good fit on a preferred site and that the site option was feasible in terms of a) number of access points into the building b) proximity to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary and c) ability for an articulated lorry to access the road to the site during any incidents of mass fatalities. The potential site options were then considered at an options appraisal workshop, involving representatives from our key partners.

A greenfield site located between the New Foresterhill Health Centre and the Warehouse on the Foresterhill health Campus (see figure 1.0 below) was selected as the best site location for the new facility. This decision was then reviewed and endorsed by the Board's Asset Management Group (AMG) in May 2019 and the University of Aberdeen, as joint owners of the Foresterhill Campus, have recently confirmed their agreement to the use of this site for the purpose of Mortuary provision. The site is adjacent to the development of the Greenspace project previously approved.

Figure 1.0



3.4 Next Steps

Aberdeen City Council (ACC) have prepared a business case for consideration by their Growth and Resources Committee on 5th December 2019. This case proposes a governance structure for the project with ACC the key project sponsor, responsible for liaising with other partners, pending agreement of the delivery model, in order to secure the capital financing necessary for the project. It is proposed that NHS Grampian provide the land, valued at £0.95m, as our capital contribution to the project, subject to the outcome of the business case and proposed financial delivery model. It is also proposed that NHS Grampian will assume responsibility for the operation of the facility following practical completion and that all running costs (including lifecycle and maintenance costs) will be recharged to partners/service users in line with an agreed process to be confirmed once the detailed finance and delivery model is agreed.

A more detailed business case incorporating firm proposals on the financing, design, construction and operational management of the new facility will be submitted to the February Board meeting for approval.

4. Risk Mitigation

The proposed development to provide access to a quality mortuary and post mortem service in the North East of Scotland and Northern Isles, which meets the expectations regarding dignity for the deceased, experience for the bereaved and the clinical demands on the service is dependent on the ability to improve the existing premises. Both facilities in Aberdeen are no longer fit for purpose, do not lend themselves to modernisation and have been highlighted as requiring improvement by clinicians, service managers and by members of the public who have had occasion to attend the existing mortuaries.

Approval of the recommendations as outlined will assist in mitigating the Board's strategic risk number 2155 "that our infrastructure will not be fit for purpose nor compliant with statutory requirements if we do not have an adequate medical equipment, information technology and backlog maintenance programme and plan for redesign and transformation of services."

5. Responsible System Leadership Member and contact for further information

If you require any further information in advance of the Board meeting please contact:

Responsible System Leadership Team Member

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