



Strategic Policing and Crime Board

Date of meeting 20th February 2018

Police and Crime Plan Priority: Building a Modern Police Service

Title: Estates Programme 2018

Presented by: Andy Kelly

Purpose of paper

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the board with the proposal for a new Estates Programme from West Midlands Police.
2. This paper is for discussion, with a decision point for the Police and Crime Commissioner after the next board on the 20 March 2018.

Background

3. The current estate comprises of 82 properties consisting of both freehold and leasehold properties, covering over 181,000m² and costs £12.5m per year to run. The vast majority of the estate is in very poor condition with only Health and Safety remedial works being carried out over recent years. The backlog maintenance liability which has built up over that time is now in excess of £20m. Since 2010 the workforce has shrunk by nearly 3,000 officers and staff, and many of the force's buildings are now sitting nearly empty and grossly under-utilised.
4. The previous estates strategy approved by the Commissioner in 2015 was defined in response to austerity measures. The main strategic drivers were to reduce the number of expensive long term leasehold and non-core buildings deemed not essential in the support of service delivery. This resulted in a significant reduction in a number of small properties in the WMP portfolio. The implementation of this programme is nearing completion; with 70% of properties identified for disposal (freehold or leasehold) no longer in the WMP portfolio. The

remaining building reductions will be subsumed within the wider Estates Programme.

5. As part of the previous strategy that was approved in 2015, modern, flexible and agile accommodation has allowed for greater occupational density whilst enabling greater operational resilience by allowing the business to flex its operational needs without the need to change the estate. All this coupled with new agility tools are integral to New Ways of Working (NWoW) as can be evidenced in the new estates solutions at Lloyd House, Perry Barr and Oldbury Custody and Bloxwich.
6. These changes have resulted in a reduction in WMP's outgoings on estates – delivering a revenue spend reduction of £5.6m, reducing exposure backlog maintenance by £13.6m and generating capital receipts of £8.1m.
7. As part of the re-provision solution for some of these closures we are trialling co-location with West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) at four of their sites.
8. Building on the foundations of the previous strategy and the creation of the NWoW brand together with new estates solutions (Lloyd House, Perry Barr & Oldbury Custody and Bloxwich), we can now start to develop the remaining force estate in line with the new NWoW standards of modern, flexible and agile accommodation to support the delivery of WMP services.
9. The programme will support the delivery of a flexible and responsive police service, integrate more effectively with partners and provide a modern, agile estate that WMP's workforce feel pride in. The end state solution meets these ambitions in a way that will secure a more sustainable and efficient future, and supports the maintenance of strong links with the local community.

The New Estates Programme 2018

10. In 2014, WMP embarked on the WMP2020 programme aimed at redesigning the way in which operational policing and the key supporting elements are delivered within WMP. This now requires an update of the previous estates strategy; following the earlier reduction of a number of smaller properties and the NWoW modernisation programme, this refresh will focus on supporting the operational policing model defined by WMP2020. Refreshing the Strategy now also provides the opportunity to look again at WMP's estate cost base with a view to considerably reducing the on-going cost of maintaining the police estate and also consider options for maximising receipts to enable investment in local policing, whilst ensuring there is wider value to the West Midlands. Social value will be an important consideration in this project, through appropriately utilising surplus properties in partnership with other organisations, whilst ensuring value for money is obtained.

11. Much of the existing estate was set up to support former structures and has not changed for many years, despite a number of major organisational structural changes. We have an historic estate which in its present form is in need of essential maintenance and not adaptable for modern day policing. The current estate is huge, spread over a large number of sites, inflexible and dated. We need to move to a smaller, more flexible, well maintained site, working alongside partners where appropriate.
12. The buildings which remain – many of which are ageing and in need of essential maintenance - will be transformed to create modern, energy efficient, open-plan, flexible work spaces for our officers and staff.
13. Some buildings will be knocked down and built again to ensure the space is adaptable for a mix of teams and departments and any 'spare room capacity' could be made available for lease to other partner organisations.
14. These changes are very much an invest to save project. Although there will be some costs incurred at the outset in refurbishing police buildings, in the longer term we can expect to make substantial savings by reducing maintenance and running costs as well as revoking expensive leases.
15. The proposal which includes renovating buildings to make them fit for modern day policing is predicted to save £5m in annual running costs.
16. The force is committed that any change in the use of estate does not adversely impact on service delivery and any savings made will be reinvested back into policing.

The 'core' estate

17. As part of the new strategy each of the current non-specialist owned buildings were reviewed to establish whether it would form part of a 'core' estate. Here the 'core' estate is identified as having one or more of the following 4 key factors:
 - a) Is there a Public Contact Office?
 - b) Is there provision for Force Contact?
 - c) Is there a Custody provision?
 - d) Has provision been made to support the new Response Model?
18. This recognised an initial group of properties as 'core' on the NPU estate. In addition to the 'core' buildings on the NPU estate, there are also buildings for specialist requirements i.e Operations etc. Naturally the core estate gives us a WMP presence on each NPU which when coupled with the retained specialist estate provides a considered distribution model across the 7 local authorities.

Neighbourhood Policing Team co-location

19. In addition to the corporate functions above, the neighbourhood estate has historically housed the Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs). It can be shown that approximately 50% of NPTs can be housed within these 'core' owned buildings, however due to geographical nature of their patrol areas the remaining 50% of NPTs will have to parade from other buildings. In the current solution those NPTs are (in the main) the sole occupiers in large mainly underutilised, poor condition WMP buildings with no other corporate functions. These buildings do not lend themselves to cost effective "open-plan work-style" re-design.
20. It is proposed that we look to local public sector partners to provide the NPT space requirements in the right geographical locations to satisfy this need. Co-locating a significant element of Neighbourhood resources with Partner organisations will support greater integration, deliver operational benefits and enable the disposal of surplus NPU properties. WM Fire Service and local authorities have indicated positive support for such an arrangement subject to mutually acceptable co-location terms. A current successful example of this being Walsall Civic Centre co-location.
21. There is unlikely to be a 'one size fits all' solution, even within a common policy framework, as local partner business requirements will determine the NPU estate solution. Therefore, WMP will also be looking to identify co-location opportunities with potential partners through discussions with the WM Combined Authority One Public Estate forum.

Public Contact Offices

22. There are currently 10 Public Contact Offices (PCOs) which are open to the public where people can raise issues in person with the police. No police building which is currently open to the public will close without first being replaced by a more efficient one nearby. As a result of this proposed strategy ten PCOs will remain.
23. All NPUs will retain at least one PCO (with two at Birmingham East and Birmingham West respectively). The public contact offices at Solihull and Sutton Coldfield will be re-provisioned within partner buildings enabling the sale of both sites. Locations for PCOs in Solihull and Sutton are currently being explored however they will remain within the same locality.

Force Response

24. The estate solution will facilitate the implementation of the agreed six hub response model, ensuring that Response remain an integrated part of the force.

25. The Birmingham Central Response team will be relocated from Newtown to Park Lane enabling the sale of Thornhill Road by decanting the NHTs based at that location to Newtown and Summerfield Road.
26. Other Response hubs will be Wolverhampton, Brierley Hill, Bournville, Coventry and Chelmsley Wood; this mirrors the Force Support model.

Force Contact

27. Force Contact will retain its current total of five call centre locations (which includes resilience sites). There will be relocations from Wednesfield to Wolverhampton and from Willenhall (Chace Ave) to Coventry Central.

Custody

28. Three custody blocks will be retained at Perry Barr, Oldbury and Wolverhampton.
29. A new custody block will be built on the eastern side of the force. This will enable the closure of the blocks and re-provision of services from Bournville, Solihull, Coventry Central and Willenhall (Chase Ave, Coventry). The re-provision of these services will also enable the sale of Solihull, Willenhall (Chase Ave, Coventry) and 50% of the current Coventry Central site.
30. Bloxwich and Stechford will be retained as resilience blocks.

Event Control Suite

31. A new Event Control Suite which is fit for modern policing and ready to manage security around the commonwealth games will also be built as part of these proposals.

Surplus estate

32. Along with the potential social value of any surplus estate, work will be undertaken with the WM Combined Authority One Public Estate forum to determine whether the surplus estate is a priority for a partner. Also rather than disposing of assets through traditional disposal routes (for example, public auction etc), steps will be taken to determine whether there is greater value through other disposal routes (for example, partnering with housing associations etc). This will be dealt with on a site by site basis, recognising each location will potentially have different uses.

33. The following buildings have been identified as surplus estate within the new estates programme:

NPU	Building	Revenue costs pa	NPU	Building	Revenue costs pa
CV	Canley	£59,355	BE	Shard End	£38,397
CV	Foleshill	£72,009	BE	Sutton Coldfield	£272,844
CV	Willenhall (Chace Ave, Coventry)	£341,797	HQ	Edgbaston	£104,850
SH	Solihull	£415,415	HQ	Prouds Lane	£4,341
BW	Digbeth	£135,628	HQ	Princip Street	£142,440
BW	Handsworth	£104,471	DY	Sedgley	£48,623
BW	Harborne	£324,781	SW	Oldbury	£43,238
BW	Nechells	£48,662	SW	Smethwick	£217,724
BW	Quinton	£32,184	SW	Tipton	£45,703
BE	Acocks Green	£64,986	SW	Wednesbury	£100,413
BE	Balsall Heath	£68,384	WS	Aldridge	£221,758
BE	Kingstanding	£44,537	WV	Wednesfield	£285,998

34. The annual running cost savings (revenue) due to the closure of 24 buildings (as shown above) coupled with improved running efficiency of the refurbished retained estate is expected to show a reduction in annual revenue costs of £5m which includes an estimated outlay of lease charges for partner estate.

Communication Strategy

35. West Midlands Police will keep the public, our partners and staff informed of the process via a communications plan. This plan will ensure that the public are sighted on future changes to the police estate and are engaged prior to disposals.
36. Partners across the West Midlands will be briefed on the plans and opportunities to work collaboratively, so as to maximise efficient use of joint estate. Staff and internal users of the estate will be kept informed of project delivery.
37. After consideration by the Board there will follow a period of public engagement (approximately 4 weeks), which will be co-ordinated through Neighbourhood Policing Units. This will encompass a detailed overview of the plans provided to Members of Parliament, Local Councillors, Community & Ward Forums, Neighbourhood Watch, Key Individual Networks, Community Safety Partnerships and other key stakeholders.
38. During the engagement period stakeholders will be asked their views on the plan. There will be an opportunity to comment on perceived service impact and offer ideas around service provision.

39. Nearing the time when WMP are due to vacate a property, engagement will take place to identify any opportunities relating to social value.
40. The current WMP estate has a number of memorial plaques, gardens and dedicated rooms. As part of a planning process, the programme will contact interested parties in order to deal with these locations sensitively in a manner similar to that undertaken for Lloyd House.

Financial Implications

41. The closure of 24 buildings and improved efficiencies of the future retained estate identified in this paper coupled with an estimated outlay of lease charges for partner estate would yield a reduction in annual revenue costs of £5m, a saving in backlog maintenance costs of £20m and potential capital receipts of £40m. Any costs associated with the disposal of these buildings will be met through existing devolved budgets.
42. The programme will be funded from a combination of earmarked reserves and additional long term borrowing. In addition, discussions are beginning in relation to funding and costs relating to the Commonwealth Games in 2022. Decisions on borrowing will be made in line with the Treasury management strategy which is annually approved and timed to achieve the lowest rate available.
43. In comparison to similar size forces the West Midlands has currently low level of borrowing.

Legal Implications

44. Schedule 1, paragraph 14, sub-section 1 of Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 provides for the PCC to do anything which includes by virtue of sub-section 2(b) acquiring and disposing of property including land.
45. In accordance with the Policing Protocol, while decisions relating to the operational use of a police premises rest with the Chief Constable and those under his or her direction and control, decisions relating to the disposal of assets held by the Police and Crime Commissioner rest with the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Recommendations

46. The Board is asked to note the new estates strategy as set out in this paper, subject to a period of public engagement. Information on the outcome of the engagement period will be presented to the March 2018 Strategic Policing and Crime Board.

Author(s): Andy Kelly

Job Title: Assistant Director – Head of Corporate Asset Management