

**WEST MIDLANDS POLICE
AND CRIME
COMMISSIONER**

NON-CONFIDENTIAL

NOTICE OF DECISION

015/2013

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Central Birmingham Estate

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper seeks approval for the proposed changes to the police estate in central Birmingham. This follows an extensive review of the central Birmingham estate given the financial challenges facing the Force and accommodation required following significant staff reductions. The proposals include the refurbishment of Lloyd House, disposal of a number of other sites and exits from leased premises. The proposals also affect the previous agreement on custody facilities.

DECISION

That the changes to the police estate in central Birmingham as outlined in the paper be approved

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in this decision and take the decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct for the West Midlands Office for Policing and Crime. Any interests are indicated below.

Signature.....Bob Jones.....

Date.....20 March 2013.....

NON - CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE TO THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

West Midlands Police currently operate from a number of buildings in central Birmingham. These are a mixture of owned (freehold) buildings and leased buildings. The police force headquarters is Lloyd House, which is a building where the leasehold is owned by the PCC.

As part of the overall financial challenges facing the police it has been regrettably necessary to reduce the number of people employed by the force. By the end of 2011/12, the number of staff in the force had reduced by around 13%, but our overall estate had not reduced in line with this. The financial outlook remains very challenging and therefore it is necessary to reduce the amount spent on day to day running costs of buildings to enable resources to be prioritised to front line services.

A major review of accommodation needs in central Birmingham has been undertaken over the last few months and this has concluded that it would be possible to exit from expensive leased buildings and relocate staff in Lloyd House when the leases expire or have contractual break points in 2015. This would require Lloyd House to be refurbished and modernised. Alternative options, including relocating out of Lloyd House, have been examined but discounted on the grounds of cost, timescales and operational constraints.

Refurbishing Lloyd House would also give the added benefit of being able to include within Lloyd House a new Central Birmingham Police station. This would ensure a strong police presence and public access point is maintained in the heart of the city centre and allows the current site at Steelhouse Lane to be disposed of. Steelhouse Lane is currently a custody site but will no longer be required for this purpose as changes to the way custody is provided are implemented over the next few years. The relocation into Lloyd House of HQ departments currently at Edgbaston Police Station would also enable that site to be subject to disposal when the existing Neighbourhood Policing Team and limited hours enquiry office facility there have been re-provisioned locally.

In addition to the changes at Lloyd House, a change to the previously agreed custody facilities scheme is proposed. This would entail additional office accommodation being added to the central custody site to enable the force to exit a further leased building in 2015 when the lease expires. This would also allow the current Aston Police Station to be disposed of when the new accommodation is operational in 2015 subject to satisfactory re-provisioning arrangements being made locally for the limited hours enquiry office there.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The cost of the refurbishment of Lloyd House can be met from existing capital resources. There is currently a maintenance liability of £10.8m due to the need to replace key infrastructure items. In addition to this, the refurbishment element is estimated to cost £12.2m. Exiting leased and other buildings will save £2.6m per year, giving a payback period on the refurbishment element of 5.3 years, or 8.8 years on the total scheme cost of £23m. There will also be some capital receipts resulting from the disposals but these are difficult to assess with accuracy at this stage as the market conditions may be different in two years time when the disposals are scheduled to happen.

The cost of the additional office space on the custody site is budgeted to be £4.3m and can

be met from existing capital resources. This will save £0.9m per year and create a capital receipt from the sale of the Aston Police Station site.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Section 1, Sub-section 6 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (PRSRA 2011) requires the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) to secure the maintenance of the police force for the West Midlands area and secure that the police force is efficient and effective.

Schedule 1, paragraph 14, sub-section 1 of the PRSRA 2011 provides for the PCC to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the exercise of the functions of the PCC which includes by virtue of sub-section 2(b) acquiring and disposing of property including land.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no equality implications arising directly from this report.

Schedule of Background Papers

Property Board Central Birmingham Estate Outline Business Case (Restricted).

Public Access to Information

Information contained in this decision is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and other legislation. This decision will be made available on the Commissioner's website.