

**POLICE AND CRIME
COMMISSIONER FOR
THE WEST MIDLANDS**

NON-CONFIDENTIAL

NOTICE OF DECISION

[001/2020]

Contact Officer: Corinne Brazier

Telephone Number: 07867166162

Email: C.Brazier@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk

Title: Disposal of items from the West Midlands Police Museum

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The police museum has inherited numerous items over the years that have nothing to do with policing and will never form part of a future display. As we plan for the relocation to the Lock-up, it has become apparent that these items should be reviewed and decisions made over whether they can be disposed of and how.

This paper outlines a potential future process to be undertaken for all such items agreed for disposal by the Museum Committee (or relevant future museum governing body) and highlights the first such items recommended for disposal – two Terence Cuneo paintings.

DECISION

To approve the new process for items suggested for disposal from the Police Museum and to agree on suggested disposal of the Terence Cuneo paintings, following Museums Association guidance for any money gained from the sale to go towards the long term preservation of the museum collection.

Police and Crime Commissioner for the West Midlands

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 Police and Crime Commissioner of the West Midlands. Any interests are indicated below.

Signature.....

Date.....21.1.20.

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

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Police Museum has inherited various items since it began in the 1960s, several of which have nothing to do with policing and will never form part of future displays or exhibitions at the Lock-up. Importantly – they do not fit within the West Midlands Police Museum collection as specified by the WMP Museum Collection Development Policy, which outlines the basis of the collection and what should and shouldn't form part of it.

The suggested process for disposal of such items in the future is that they are approved for disposal first by the Museum Committee (or whatever governance replaces that Committee in the future) in line with the collections policy, after ownership has been proven (or demonstrated as far as possible and efforts made to trace any potential owner).

Subsequently approval will be sought from Legal Services and the OPCC via a decision paper. Then, following guidance from the Museums Association (MA), the item(s) would be valued and advertised to other museums on the MA's 'find an object' section of their website for a period of three months. Any interested party would be able to make an offer to the museum in line with the valuation previously obtained. If no interested party comes forward the item(s) would be sent to an auction deemed to be able to get best value for them. Any money obtained from a sale would be ring-fenced for use by the museum, in line with clear instruction from the MA which states if a museum sells an item, the money must be spent on the long term benefit and preservation of the remaining collection. Not following this guidance could mean the museum is unable to gain accreditation when it applies in the near future which will have an impact on funding.

The first items the Museum Committee have agreed should be disposed of as they do not fit within the remit of the collection, are two Terence Cuneo paintings. These were donated to Coventry City Police in the late 1960s/early 1970s and would therefore have been 'owned' by Coventry Police Authority or Watch Committee, whichever existed at the time. Ownership would have subsequently transferred to West Midlands Police Authority and now the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) of the West Midlands.

Documentation is attached to this paper which confirms they were donated to the new police station in Coventry from Peugeot and have subsequently been given to the museum and on loan to Coventry Transport Museum and latterly the Herbert Art Gallery, who have stored them for a number of years. They have now been retrieved and are being stored at the Lock-up.

It is recommended that the paintings are placed on the MA website for a period of three months for other museums to express an interest in them, and if this fails to identify a buyer then the most appropriate auction will be identified for them. Any money made from the sale is requested to be ring-fenced for the museum and would support the relocation to Steelhouse Lane.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

In 1998 the paintings were valued at £6,500 each. It is recommended a further valuation is completed immediately to identify the current estimated value.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Comprehensive efforts have been made to confirm that ownership sits with the OPCC. Paperwork has been located which states in 1998 it was confirmed that Peugeot donated the paintings to Coventry Police Station, which would mean they were owner by the Coventry Police Authority.

The MA guidance is not legally binding and the force's museum is not currently accredited so does not have to follow it, however with our intention to become accredited over the next few years (starting as soon as the funding decision is made in March), not following the guidance could see the MA deciding not to accredit the museum. The penalty for accredited museums not following the guidance can be having their accreditation removed.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS - NA

Schedule of Background Papers

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.

