

# WEST MIDLANDS POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

NON-CONFIDENTIAL

## NOTICE OF DECISION

[2018/003]

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**Title: WMP Estates Programme**

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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The proposed West Midlands Police Estates Strategy was discussed at the Strategic Police and Crime Board (SPCB) in February 2018. The strategy outlines the approach for the rationalisation of WMP estate to meet the future requirements of the force.

By a combination of new-builds, re-builds, refurbishments and disposals, the programme of work will deliver a fit-for-purpose, modern, flexible estate supporting operational policing into the future. In doing so, the cost of running/maintaining the force estate will reduce, occupancy levels of police buildings will be increased and land which has potential to be used for community benefit will be released. The plans also include the commissioning of a new firearms unit and development of a new Event Control Suite.

A period of initial engagement was undertaken, co-ordinated through Neighbourhood Policing Units ensuring that an overview of the proposals was provided to key stakeholders. During the initial engagement period stakeholders were asked their views on the outlined proposals. The exercise was an opportunity to provide the community with information in relation to how the various services are provided across the Force area and how the estate is currently used. More detailed local engagement will be undertaken as the plans develop.

Senior officers have been addressing points raised and they will engage further with all stakeholders as the programme progresses.

The outcomes of the engagement exercise were then presented to the Strategic Police and Crime Board on the 20 March 2018. The report outlined a timeline for the disposal of buildings, the financial and legal implications.

In accordance with the Policing Protocol, while decisions relating to the operational use of 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.

All individual changes to the estate will only take place following individual decisions by the Police and Crime Commissioner. Sign off will only take place once the PCC is satisfied that the following has taken place:-

- Further engagement with local communities

- Full consideration of social value that can be generated
- Retention of public accessible front desks
- Full consideration of the maximisation of returns from the surplus asset rather than a traditional disposal
- Local policing presence protected in impacted areas, including full consideration of partnership opportunities with other local agencies

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The releasing of the 24 buildings detailed in the report to the board in March 2018 detailed improved efficiencies of the future retained estate identified 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 now significantly in excess of £20m and potential capital receipts of £44m. Any costs associated with the disposal of these buildings will be met through existing devolved budgets. However, it is recognised that may be additional costs of completing assessments of social value.

The release of buildings and extensive refurbishment/re-build of the remaining estate, together with the effective elimination of the current backlog maintenance will have a net cost of approximately £56m. The programme will be funded from a combination of earmarked reserves and additional long term borrowing. As at March 2017, the usable reserves for the force were £94m. In comparison to similar size forces the West Midlands currently has a very low level of borrowing.

Decisions on borrowing will be made in line with the Treasury management strategy which is considered annually by the Joint Audit Committee and timed to achieve the lowest rate available. The current long term borrowing rates (i.e. 50 year) are at 2.61%. The annual revenue cost of borrowing will be factored into the WMP medium term financial plan and offset against the reduced property running costs.

In addition, discussions are taking place in relation to funding and costs relating to the Commonwealth Games in 2022, in particular in relation to the building of a new Event Control Suite (ECS).

The estates strategy is designed to pay for itself, with a payback period estimated at 12 years. The revenue savings realised by this programme will be used to preserve Police Officer Numbers. Capital cost outlay will not impact on the protection of 100 officer posts.

**DECISION**

Where applicable to authorise the implementation of the estates strategy as detailed in this decision. Further individual decisions will need to be made by the Police and Crime Commissioner in regards to disposing of particular properties and / or the non-renewal of particular property leases and / or investments / new buildings proposed in the strategy. The Police and Crime Commissioner will satisfy himself the considerations set out in this decision have been followed. . This is decision is in accordance with schedule 1, paragraph 14, sub-section 1 of the 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.

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

Signature.....*David Davis*.....  
Date.....*20.03.18.*.....

