



Creating a safer
Cambridgeshire

To: Business Coordination Board

From: Chief Constable

Date: 22 June 2017

WHITTLESEY POLICE STATION

1. Purpose

1.1 To seek approval of the Business Coordination Board (the "Board") to the freehold disposal of Whittlesey Police Station.

2. Recommendation

2.1 The Board is recommended to approve the freehold disposal of Whittlesey Police Station to the Town Council at the price of £300,000.

2.2 The Police and Crime Commissioner (the "Commissioner") signs the Decision Notice to approve the freehold disposal of Whittlesey Police Station.

3. Background

3.1 A purpose built police station constructed in the 1960s/70s over 2/3 storeys in a central mixed use location with ample free parking in the locality. The running costs for 2015/16 were £22,000pa



- 3.2 In July 2016 Commissioner responded to rumours that the Police Station was due to close and the following statement was made and sent to the Fens Mag:

It is my responsibility to support the Constabulary to deliver an effective police service within the available budget.

Over the last four years, savings of £16 million have been achieved without reducing frontline office numbers and it is my priority to continue to protect the frontline. We still need to find around £6 million of savings by the end of the financial year 2019/20.

One of the ways I am looking to reduce cost is by reviewing the buildings that we require in order to operate effectively. I have an estate worth around £35 million that costs around £4 million a year to run. If I can save money by selling or leasing police buildings that are underutilised or not needed then it seems sensible to do so.

Whittlesey Police Station is one of the buildings under review and we are currently looking at options for the future of the building, including the option of selling it for development.

I want to reassure the local community that this does not mean policing in the community will diminish. Should the decision be taken to sell the building, Whittlesey will still retain its local policing team who will instead start their shifts from March Police Station, allowing them to receive a pre-shift briefing from a sergeant face-to-face. We are also exploring the use of shared partnership accommodation in Whittlesey, so officers are able to undertake work during their shift, without the need to return to March, maximising visibility and effectiveness. Community contact will also be maintained through street surgeries and other community engagement activity.

- 3.3 The building was vacated in August 2016 as part of a restructure with the local policing team remaining focused on their daily duties and start their day from March, allowing them to receive a pre-shift briefing from a sergeant face-to-face. Community contact is being maintained through street surgeries and other community engagement activity. Local office space of up to four workstations is to be provided with discuss progressing with Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue Service. This is to be regulated by a Memorandum of Occupation and Blue Light signage is being prepared.
- 3.4 On 3rd February 2016 a paper was presented to the Police & Crime Panel and during 2016 the Making Assets Count Programme Board were made aware of the potential sale and partner opportunities and engagement was undertaken with the MP, District Council, Town Council and Business Forum. Comments were received from the Town Council who expressed an interest in purchasing. This was followed with a meeting and heads of terms being agreed for their acquisition. This proposal was confirmed by a joint Police & Town Council press release on 8th May 2017 and published in the Wisbech Standard on the 9th May 2017.

3.5 As part of the disposal due-diligence a planning pre-application submission was made and planning advice received on 17th June 2016. The Local Planning Authority advise that it is likely that, given the variety of uses in the area, including commercial, retail, offices and residential, that a mixed use scheme would be supported. The key consideration for the redevelopment/re-use of this site is the impact on the Conservation Area. This information was shared with the Town Council.

4. Summary

4.1 The asset has been declared surplus to operational requirements and through the engagement process terms agreed for a sale to Whittlesey Town Council at a price of £300,000 for the freehold interest.

5. Recommendation

5.1 The Board is recommended to approve the freehold disposal of Whittlesey Police Station to the Town Council at the price of £300,000.

5.2 The Commissioner signs the Decision Notice to approve the freehold disposal of Whittlesey Police Station.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Document	Cambridgeshire Constabulary Estate Management – Property Files
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