



Creating a safer
Cambridgeshire

To: Business Coordination Board

From: Chief Constable

Date: 03 September 2020

SOUTHERN POLICING HUB UPDATE

1. Purpose

1.1 To update the Business Co-ordination Board (the “Board”) on the public consultations and next steps in the Southern Police Station project.

2. Recommendation

2.1 The Board is recommended to note the contents of the paper.

3. Background

3.1 Initial public engagement was held in June and July 2019 when the public were invited to comment on proposals to build a new police station on the outskirts of Cambridge next to the Milton Park & Ride site whilst retaining a City Centre Police Station.

3.2 A total of 371 responses were received as part of the 2019 engagement. Of those responses, 58.2% supported the proposal, 41% expressed concerns with the proposal and 0.8% or were neutral. Cambridgeshire Constabulary (the “Constabulary”) looked at the feedback received and made changes to the scheme where possible and then consulted on the revised proposals in July 2020.

3.3 It was agreed at the 2019 meetings that we would consult on these revised plans and to this end a specialist communications consultant, the Built Environment Communications Group (BECG) were appointed to advise and run consultation programmes for the project.

- 3.4 The Consultation was undertaken in two phases:
 - a. Service Change Consultation
 - b. Site Specific Consultation

4. Service Change Consultation – February 2020

- 4.1 Following the July 2019 survey, the Constabulary held a consultation in February 2020 on proposals to enhance its service for the south of Cambridgeshire by replacing the facilities at Parkside Police Station with both a new city centre police station and a police hub on the outskirts of Cambridge.
- 4.2 The consultation sought feedback on the need for service change and involved a series of drop-in events across the county. A total of 803 responses were received to the consultation.
- 4.3 It is clear from the responses that there is significant public support for both the concept of the hub and for maintaining a police station in the city centre. There is also very little opposition to either part of the proposals, indicating that should the Constabulary progress with the proposals for service change they would receive public support. This includes a recognition that a hub would be suited to meeting the challenges of modern crime and policing, while the city centre station would be welcomed. The Service Change Consultation Report will be published on the Acting Police and Crime Commissioner’s (the “Acting Commissioner”) website.

5. July 2020 Consultation on Proposal for the Hub

- 5.1 To support a planning application for the preferred site public consultation was held in July 2020 on the specific proposals for the site.
- 5.2 The consultation was well publicised and reached all sections of the community with promotion through a comprehensive range of digital and non-digital forums, taking into account the area around the site and interest in the impact of the changes at Parkside in Cambridge City Centre.
- 5.3 To inform community stakeholders about the proposals, a dedicated stakeholder briefing session was organised on 29th June 2020.
- 5.4 In order that the Milton and surrounding community were made aware in advance of the consultation, a newsletter was distributed to approximately 8,500 households, businesses and stakeholders in the local area advising them of the proposals, as well as details of how to get involved in the consultation. An advert was also placed in both the Cambridge News and Cambridge Independent.
- 5.5 A second press release was distributed on Thursday 23rd July 2020 to remind the community of the consultation and encourage responses for the final week.
- 5.6 Two radio interviews were conducted during the first week of pre-consultation publicity, a number of local news outlets ran the story during the consultation and eCops bulletins were used twice to build momentum and ensure that the public were kept aware of the consultation. The core Constabulary platforms of Facebook, Twitter & Instagram were also used to highlight the consultation and the dates of the live chats. In addition, a

dedicated phone line was set up for those not able to join online and hard copy information packs were posted on request.

- 5.7 Given that the consultation period for this scheme fell within the Coronavirus pandemic, amid social distancing guidelines from government, the Constabulary was unable to hold events in public to provide information on the proposals. A decision was made instead to hold a digital consultation, with members of the public encouraged to use the dedicated project website to find out more information and respond to the consultation. This took the form of a virtual public exhibition which was available from Monday 1st July 2020 to the end of the consultation on Friday 31st July 2020. The virtual public consultation allowed all functionality of a traditional face-to-face exhibition event to be migrated to an online format, with virtual exhibition boards displaying all the necessary information.
- 5.8 As there was no opportunity to hold physical events six live chat sessions were held throughout the month via the website. These sessions provided members of the public with the opportunity to discuss the proposals further with the project team and ask questions, as would usually be possible at a physical exhibition event.
- 5.9 This method of engagement proved to be successful and with over 2,090 ‘visits’ of the project website to view the proposals. This figure is in excess of similar in-person attendance rates that you would usually expect for a public exhibition. Furthermore 120 GDPR compliant feedback forms were received, a level which can be considered robust in light of the number of consultations that were underway in the Milton area during a similar time frame.
- 5.10 Of the 120 feedback forms received, results indicate that 70% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the police hub would be a good use of the site (39% strongly agree, 31% agree) against 16% who disagreed (8% strongly disagree, 8% disagree).
- 5.11 The main issues raised were:
- Impact on the A10 and local roads
 - Noise pollution, particularly from police sirens
 - Custody release into Milton
 - Lack of a public-facing enquiry desk at the new hub
 - Environmental and sustainability in the design
 - Cycling and public transport use
 - City centre police station
- 5.12 A full analysis of the feedback received and responses is detailed in the Statement of Community Involvement which will be published on the South Cambridgeshire Planning portal and on the Acting Commissioner’s website prior to a planning application.
- 5.13 All comments received have been reviewed by the project team and where possible amendments were made to the proposal.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1 The issues raised during the consultation will be covered in the planning application documents and upon submission a two-page briefing note will be sent to all attendees of the public exhibition and other interested parties to alert them to the submission of the planning application. This will include details of how to provide comments on the South Cambridgeshire District Council planning portal. Members of the public and

stakeholders and register for updates via the consultation website www.cambspoliceconsultation.co.uk.

6.2 The Constabulary will undertake further meetings with stakeholders following the submission of the planning application before determination by South Cambridgeshire District Council if required.

7. Recommendation

7.1 The Board is recommended to note the contents of the paper.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Document	Cambridgeshire Constabulary Estate Management – Project Files
Contact Officers	Colin Luscombe, Director of Estates Jon Lee, Director of Finance & Resources