

**POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR
WEST MERCIA**



RECORD OF DECISION

TITLE: Forensics Building Refurbishment

Ref: PCC/D/2018/28

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The original specification for the refurbishment of the Forensics building has been refined to reflect the evolution of forensic work, tougher accreditation standards and improved service resilience.

A significant element is a much higher capacity uninterrupted power supply (UPS) that is now required with associated additional building and enabling works. The UPS and updated specification will require additional budget.

PROPOSAL

The Police and Crime Commissioner approves the additional budget and financing to finalise the works to the Forensics Building.

**APPROVAL OF
West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner**

I hereby approve the above proposal.

Signed


Date: 7th December 2018

PART 1 – NON-CONFIDENTIAL REPORT OR EXEMPTION FACTS AND ADVICE

BACKGROUND

The Digital Forensics Unit (DFU) has been located on the ground floor of the Hindlip CID/Forensics Building for many years. In that time the complexity of work, increased demand, numbers of staff and specification of forensic hardware and software have increased almost beyond recognition.

Throughout DFU's occupancy at the Hindlip site it has suffered from lack of protection from an uninterrupted power supply (UPS). Key elements of Forensic Imaging and Fingerprints have been and continue to be covered by UPS. However, the most critical and largest team dealing with the highest levels of digital data and reliant 100% on digital technology has not had UPS protection.

The refurbishment originally had provision for a UPS system to provide protection for the DFU. However, upon review it is clear that the UPS capacity originally planned would not be sufficient to deal with current and future requirements of the evolving DFU service.

Whilst the site is covered by generators, a power surge or power cut is instant and quicker than a generator can ever compensate for. This would almost certainly result in data and analysis processes being severely compromised.

The overall project specification has been further developed to support a modern DFU and ensure that the ISO 17025 accreditation is retained. A number of design consultation meetings were held with DFU to challenge and review the UPS requirements and the proposed system is designed to cover core operational requirements. The proposed system only covers those critical processes and equipment that ensure business continuity in the event of a loss of power.

The costs submitted by the contractor have been appraised and substantiated by consultant quantity surveyors and confirmed to represent value for money.

The refurbishment works will ensure the built environment meets the requirements of the Forensic Science Regulators Codes of Practice and Conduct. This is regulated by the Forensic Science Regulator who is anticipated to get mandatory powers in the next Parliament.

FINANCIAL COMMENTS

An original budget was approved of £1.54m by the previous West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner for works to the Forensics building and was duly included in the capital programme. A subsequent review of the specification led to some slippage of the scheme but works are now well underway, with costs being incurred. The latest revised valuation for the scheme is £2.293m which includes all the necessary upgrades and a small contingency. This requires additional financing of £800k which can be covered by the affordability envelope for WM Capital Estates Projects. Costs will continue to be monitored to identify any efficiencies, and to ensure that the work is completed within the revised budget provision.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

By virtue of schedule 11, paragraph 14 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 the Police and Crime Commissioners may do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the exercise of the functions of commissioner. That includes: entering into contracts and other agreements (whether legally binding or not) and acquiring and disposing of property (including land).

PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Information in this form is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI Act) and other legislation. Part 1 of this form will be made available on the West Mercia Commissioner's website. Any facts and advice that should not be made automatically available on request are not included in Part 1 but instead in a separate Part 2 report.

OFFICER APPROVAL

Chief Executive Officer

I have been consulted about the proposal and confirm that financial and legal advice have been taken into account in the preparation of this report. I am satisfied that this is an appropriate request to be submitted to the West Mercia Commissioner.

Signature *Adey A. Cooper* Date: 7th December 2018

