



**RECORD OF DECISION**

**TITLE: Relocation of MASH to Wilson House**

**Ref: PCC/D/2022/17**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

An operational decision was made to relocate the Major Investigation Unit (MIU) South from Wilson House, Hereford to Hereford Police Station in order to create the space needed for the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) The initial proposal was for the MASH facility to be moved to Herefordshire Council offices, however, after review, it was confirmed the space is not sufficient.

The MASH service requires 23 desks which can be accommodated on the first floor of Wilson House and, as the property is in a good condition, there will be no requirement for capital investment to be made by the PCC However, any rise in running costs for the premises will have to be covered by the PCC. A recharge mechanism cannot be put in place due to the Fair User Agreement in place.

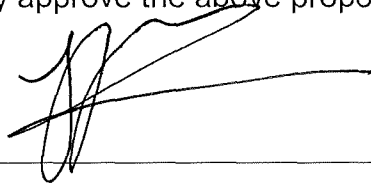
**PROPOSAL**

The proposal is for the PCC to allow the negotiation of a lease for the premises with the MASH service.

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

I hereby approve the above proposal.

Signed



## PART 1 – NON-CONFIDENTIAL/EXEMPT FACTS AND FIGURES

### SUPPORTING REPORT

Wilson House is located on Ross Road in Hereford (HR2 7RJ) and is currently used both as a Joint Authority Interview Facility and a base for the Major Investigation Unit (MIU) South.

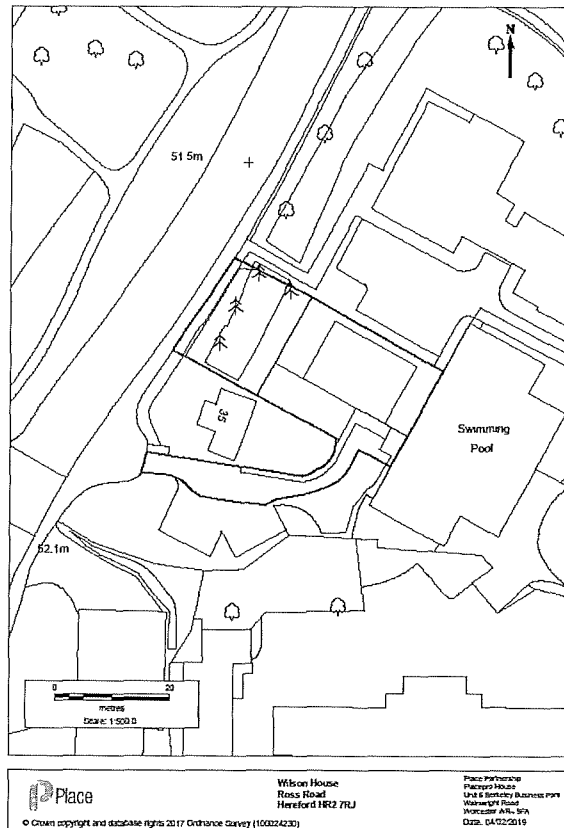


Figure 1 Existing ownership bounded in red

The property is owned freehold by the PCC under title number HE25767. The title (bounded in red on Figure 1 above) comprises of an access way off Ross Road, a 2-storey building, GIA around 334m<sup>2</sup> and 2 parking spaces to the front of the building. The land was acquired by Herefordshire County Council in 1952 and later vested in the West Mercia Police Authority by virtue of the West Mercia Police (Amalgamation) Order 1966.

Until 2003, the premises served as South Wye Police Station. In 2004, £630,000 was invested in the asset - the structure was demolished and Wilson House was built. As the premises are deemed suitable for the required use, it is recommended the property be retained.

Herefordshire Council were originally hoping to accommodate the Herefordshire Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) in their offices in Plough Lane, Hereford, however, following a review, this was not possible.

MASH is a multi-agency team which identifies risks to vulnerable children. The MASH is the first point of contact for new safeguarding referrals and has significantly improved the sharing of information between agencies, helping to protect the most vulnerable children and adults from harm, neglect and abuse.

The Herefordshire service is provided by Herefordshire Council, West Mercia Police and the CCG/NHS. The Fair User Agreement was drawn up back around the same time where all parties agreed to the arrangement that no partner would charge each other. In accordance with this agreement, it is the intention to honour the arrangement going forward at Wilson House and all costs are to be borne by the PCC. Following on from discussions had with John Roberts, who was involved in the setting up of MASH's across the West Mercia Police jurisdiction, it was confirmed that all partners contribute for the provision of welfare and management of the staff – a nominated individual from Children Services acts as a Team Leader. West Mercia Police (not the OPCC) pay a share of £15,000 per annum.

An operational decision was made for the Herefordshire MASH to co-locate with Herefordshire JAIF at Wilson House in Hereford. The Major Investigation Unit (MIU) South are required to relocate from the first floor of Wilson House to Hereford Police Station to create the space required. The OPCC Estates Department has received the approvals of the proposal to move the MASH to Wilson House from Supt Edward Williams (Accommodation Requirements form for moving MIU service to Bath Street, Hereford in Dec 2021), T/Det Supt Jonathan Roberts and ACC Rachel Jones.

The works required at Hereford Police Station to create the office space for MIU South were approved and have been carried out. The MASH service will arrange for their own furniture, IT hardware and cabling and printing service. No capital investment will be required to be made by the PCC to accommodate the MASH function at Wilson House. The team is ready to proceed with the move. Herefordshire Council have confirmed it is desirable to have the MASH function operational from Wilson House by the 25<sup>th</sup> July 2022.

OPCC Estates are proposing a 10 year lease to the MASH at £1 per annum rent. The lease will not have a recharge mechanism and all costs will have to be borne in full by the PCC. The PCC for West Mercia will not receive any contributions from the MASH in connection with the running costs of this facility.

If a recharge mechanism is introduced, this may trigger a reciprocal change of the arrangements of other MASH locations (Shrewsbury, Telford and Worcester). This may result in WMP/PCC incurring substantially larger running costs of other facilities which would not be offset by the amount which the PCC can charge the Herefordshire MASH for using the first floor at Wilson House.

The annual costs to the PCC associated with occupying and maintaining Wilson House are £18,500 (average expenditure per annum based on the last 3 financial years). On top of this, business rates for the site are approximately £10,000 per annum. The building consists of two floors, one of which will now solely be used for

the MASH, which will occupy approximately half of the available space. On that basis, the opportunity cost to the PCC of this decision and providing accommodation for the MASH is estimated to be approximately £14,250 (half the estates costs and business rates) per annum.

Herefordshire Council have confirmed that they have made parking arrangements for the MASH staff. The two parking spaces in front of Wilson House are to be used only by staff using the JAIF facility on the ground floor.

## **STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS**

This decision supports the following element(s) of the Safer West Mercia Plan:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Putting Victims and Survivors First | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building a More Secure West Mercia   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reforming West Mercia               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reassuring West Mercia's Communities |

The decision supports all of these objectives through the following:

- Enables the co-location of the Herefordshire MASH function, to ensure that safeguarding support continues to be delivered to the communities and vulnerable people.
- Ensures that the support services are sustainable in the medium and long term.
- Ensures that the West Mercia Estate delivers the facilities the police and communities need in the most effective and efficient way possible.
- Supporting partnership working with other public sector bodies by co-locating in one premises.
- Ensuring public funds are spent in the best way possible, maximising the financial resource.
- Optimization of use of space in the Estate.
- Provides a good initial impression for members of the public. By keeping premises clean, tidy, well-maintained and in good condition helps build people confidence in the service and creates a more welcoming and inclusive environment.

## BENEFITS AND THEIR REALISATION

Benefits include:

- Will enable the Hereford MASH function to co-locate and work better together, in line with the Worcestershire MASH, Shropshire MASH and the Telford and Wrekin MASH.
- Improved operational working relations, to continue to provide a service to the public.

## AUTHOR

Name: Tess Vincent

Date: 8<sup>th</sup> June 2022

## FINANCIAL AND TREASURER COMMENTS

The outline proposal was that as a public sector partner a reasonable charge would have been £5000 - £6000 to use this space in Wilson House. However the reciprocal arrangement for MASH provision across West Mercia, means that the proposed peppercorn rent is reasonable. This avoids a potential recharge from our use of other MASH sites operated by partners.

There is an opportunity cost of providing this space to the MASH, and potential that the site could be rented out on a commercial basis. However this is an important partnership arrangement with other public sector partners. Therefore the proposal to provide the asset at a peppercorn lease is reasonable and in the best overall interest of the public purse.

There is no additional capital investment required from the PCC in respect of set up of the MASH.

**Treasurer**

Signature



Date

14/06/22

## LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

By virtue of schedule 11, paragraph 14 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 the Police and Crime Commissioner 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).

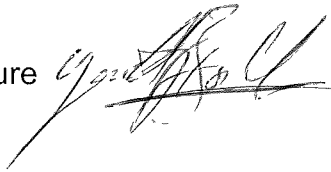
**PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

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**

**Deputy Chief Executive Officer**

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'G. [unclear]', written over a horizontal line.

Date

14/06/22