

RECORD OF DECISION

TITLE: Sale of former Tenbury Wells Police Station, Berrington Rd, Tenbury Wells, WR15 8EJ

Ref: PCC/D/2023/10

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In seeking to develop the target police estate, the asset formerly used as Tenbury Wells Police Station, located on Berrington Rd, Tenbury Wells, WR15 8EJ was identified as surplus to requirements and marked for disposal. The local policing base has now moved to a replacement facility.

Through a competitive tendering exercise, OPCC Estates appointed marketing agents to advertise the property and assist with obtaining best value from this sale. A local small business owner has since expressed interest and after viewing the premises has submitted an unconditional cash offer for the property at £218,000.

PROPOSAL

It is proposed that the PCC:

- Approve the disposal of the former Tenbury Wells Police Station, along with the recently acquired from Worcestershire County Council strip of land adjacent to the station building, to the interested party for the value of £218,000 on an unconditional cash payment basis.
- Agree to pay the fee of the appointed agents for this sale. This will be 1% of the sale price, exclusive of VAT - £2,180 exclusive of VAT.
- Approve estimated costs of £2,500-£3,000 for the conveyance of the asset.

**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

The asset at Tenbury Wells was originally an early 20th Century 3-bedroom house providing accommodation for Police staff. In 1989 planning permission was received to convert and refurbish the property into a Police Station. It has been used as such ever since and was extended in 2005, in order to provide space for a front counter (now closed). The old double garage was replaced and the rear garden was converted into secure parking for response vehicles.

The property became void in early 2022 and marketed for disposal in the end of 2022. West Mercia Police staff now co-locate with Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service at Tenbury Wells Fire Station. This decision was in accordance with the following:

- Safer West Mercia Plan;
- Estates Remodelling Strategy;
- Estates Rationalisation Delivery Plan; and
- West Mercia Change & Transformation Strategy.

Via a tender exercise, OPCC Estates appointed local marketing agents to value the property and market the disposal. The agents consider the asset has potential to be used as a commercial or as a dwelling. The agents advised in their tender that the former police station be marketed for in the region of £230,000.

Within a month of advertising on the open market, five parties showed an interest and viewed the property. The only offer received from the viewings comes from a small local business, who submitted an unconditional cash offer for the property at £218,000. The aim was to complete the transaction before the end of the financial year (31st March 2023) therefore, agreement on the sales price of £218,000 would help achieve this target date.

As the offer is unconditional, this significantly reduces the time required to complete the conveyance. For example, the PCC will not be required to await the outcomes of any planning permissions submitted by the purchaser nor any need to invest any funds into change of use applications.

Consideration has also been given to the prevailing, uncertain and volatile property market conditions at the time of this Decision Notice, as property prices decline nationally and the market cools. Financing has also become harder to obtain.

It is therefore considered that an expedited, unconditional cash sale at £218,000 obtains best value for the asset.

The PCC will also make a saving by transferring the responsibilities for keeping the property safe, secure and compliant. Building fabric deterioration will be avoided, along with the payment of business rates on this void premises.

It is important to note that the disposal of the former Tenbury Wells Police Station will include the recently acquired from Worcestershire County Council strip of land adjacent to the station building. The land is used as amenity land and provides access from the adopted highway St Mary's Close to the rear of the Police Station building.

After the completion of the sale, the PCC will retain no interest in the property.

The proposed disposal is operationally supported by West Mercia Police Chief Officers.

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

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

- Putting Victims and Survivors First Building a More Secure West Mercia
 Reforming West Mercia Reassuring West Mercia's Communities

The decision supports the above listed objectives through the following:

- Obtaining capital receipt from the sale of the asset, that can be reinvested to support delivery of policing services
- Ensuring better resource management by maximising value, effectiveness, efficiency to meet demand.

BENEFITS AND THEIR REALISATION

Benefits include:

- Maximised capital receipt from the disposal of the asset
- Mitigation of risk from unbudgeted maintenance costs – This asset has been void for about one calendar year and there is a risk of the building fabric deteriorating and requiring repair works which are not in the planned programme.
- Mitigation of risk from liability claims – The non-operational void asset has now become a liability.
- Due to the lack of daily presence on site, there is a higher risk of people trespassing, vandalising or squatting in the premises.

FINANCIAL AND TREASURER COMMENTS

An unconditional offer of £218,000 has been received for the site, which is 5% less than the estimated value from the selling agents was £230,000. This is the only offer that has currently been received.

The disposal of this asset will not require any further costs for building alternations or for a change of use planning application.

The PCC will also ensure that further revenue costs related to the premises will be avoided as it will end the liability for the maintenance, compliance, running costs and business rates for the site. Disposal of the police station asset will realise annual revenue operating cost savings of circa £12,500 and annual Rates savings of £3,300.

It is for these reasons that the sale price is support as representing value for money against the risk of incurring future costs.

The fee of the appointed agents for this sale will be 1% of the sale price, exclusive of VAT - £2,180 exclusive of VAT. The budget for the marketing of the asset was £675 exclusive of VAT and this amount has already been paid.

Warwickshire Legal Services have provided an initial estimate for the conveyancing process between £2,500 and £3,000. The exact price will be dependent upon the extent of due diligence undertaken by the buyer's solicitors.



Treasurer

Date 16th February 2023

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

Chief Executive Officer



Signature

Date 23rd February 2023

