



**OFFICE OF THE POLICE & CRIME  
COMMISSIONER FOR THAMES VALLEY**

**REPORT FOR DECISION – PCC 2016 / 022**

**Title: Purchase of site at York House, Sheet Street, Windsor**

**Executive Summary:**

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the purchase of a site at York House, Sheet Street from the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead (RBWM) for the purposes of developing a new police station in Windsor.

TVP has been actively exploring the options for replacing the existing Windsor Police Station in Alma Road since 2013. It has not been possible to identify any suitable sites or existing buildings in the commercial market, and for the past two years we have been working closely with RBWM to examine possible opportunities for a co-location solution with them. The only other deliverable solution we have been able to consider is the option to redevelop our existing Alma Road site by creating a much smaller operational facility and then selling off the residual part of the site.

As a result of our collaborative work with RBWM we have identified the opportunity to purchase a site from them on their York House site in Sheet Street which would be suitable for developing a new operational facility for Windsor. This option will provide the most economically advantageous solution for TVP and due to physical proximity will enable both our organisations to benefit from closer partnership working arrangements.

The York House co-location between TVP and RBWM is now specifically identified within the One Public Estate (OPE) 'Berkshire Property Partnership' programme as one of 14 projects involving joint working by public sector bodies.

Provisional Heads of Terms have been negotiated with the Council, and are recommended for approval by the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) as set out in this report.

**Recommendation:**

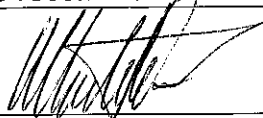
It is recommended that the PCC:

1. Approves the terms for the freehold purchase of a site at York House, Sheet Street, Windsor from the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead in the sum of £1.35m to enable the development of a new police station, together with a long lease at a peppercorn rent on space that will enable the provision of operational parking.
2. Authorises Property Services staff in conjunction with our external legal advisors Blake Morgan to negotiate the necessary details of the conditional contract for the purchase without further recourse unless the terms and conditions change substantively and to the detriment of the interests of the PCC.

**Police and Crime Commissioner**

I hereby approve the recommendation above.

**Signature**



**Date**

24.1.17

## **PART 1 – NON-CONFIDENTIAL**

### **1 Introduction and Background**

Windsor Police Station was first identified as a potential site for disposal and replacement in the 2012 approved Asset Management Plan (AMP) and this was confirmed as a definite intention in the 2014 review of the plan. The force requires an operational facility within Windsor but no longer needs a building of the size of the existing police station. The current site originally included a custody facility and, until 2015, accommodated one of TVP's call handling centres; the top floor of the building was developed to provide single quarter's accommodation for police officers.

TVP commenced initial feasibility work for the police station replacement project in 2013. It became clear at an early stage in the process that it was going to be difficult to find an alternative in the normal commercial 'open market' as the supply either of sites for development or existing buildings in Windsor is always extremely limited and nothing suitable has been identified at any stage. Since spring 2014 we have therefore been working jointly with RBWM to examine potential opportunities within Windsor as they have also been examining their own accommodation requirements including looking at their existing estate.

By December 2015 feasibility work had established that there were only two potentially deliverable solutions capable of meeting TVP's requirement:

Either

Option 1: To develop a new facility through purchasing a small site on RBWM's York House site in Sheet Street; the Council will be refurbishing their existing building and a site can be purchased immediately adjacent to their retained building. Under this option our existing building/site would be sold in its entirety following relocation to the new police station.

Or

Option 2: To redevelop our existing Alma Road site by building a much smaller new facility, and disposing of the residual part of the site most likely for residential use.

### **2 Issues for Consideration**

#### **2.1. Accommodation & Operational Activities**

A two storey building of approx. 500sqm will be developed which will accommodate the local/Neighbourhood teams and provide suitable storage and ancillary facilities and parking for these teams. Additionally specialist facilities required for other operational units who will be located periodically within Windsor will be provided.

Windsor was one of several front counter locations around the force that were approved for closure following the Priority Based Budget review of 2015. The front counter has subsequently closed, with statutory counter services now delivered solely from Maidenhead police station within the Windsor and Maidenhead LPA.

## **2.2. Jointly Commissioned Feasibility Work**

Because of the very limited prospects of either TVP or RBWM being able to find suitable options within the commercial sector, consultants were jointly commissioned in May 2014 to examine the potential options that both organisations might be in a position to consider whether separately or for collaboration/co-location solutions. This work was undertaken over the course of 2014/15; the only potentially suitable options that were identified and evaluated were:

- 2.2.(a) A site owned and occupied by RBWM at Tinkers Lane in Windsor. This was considered not to be suitable for a joint project as there was insufficient space and the location was not suitable for TVP.
- 2.2.(b) RBWM's office building/site at York House on Sheet Street in the centre of Windsor. This was assessed to be capable of complete redevelopment or refurbishment and potentially to be capable of providing a small site for the development of a new police station; if the site is used/occupied jointly by RBWM and TVP it will be necessary for RBWM to acquire additional adjoining land for the provision of car parking.
- 2.2.(c) TVP's existing site at Alma Road. This was assessed as being suitable for complete redevelopment (for residential purposes), or for the development of a smaller new police station with residential development on the residual portion; it was not considered capable of accommodating both TVP's and RBWM's requirements.

## **2.3. Preferred Joint Solution**

The solution which most closely aligns with the physical requirements of both TVP and RBWM and brings the benefits of close physical proximity and partnership working is option 2.2.(b) above at York House.

From TVP's operational perspective, a new police station on part of the York House site will be close to the centre of Windsor providing a convenient position for the Neighbourhood team whilst being easily accessible for response teams deploying across this part of the Local Police Area (LPA). For both TVP and RBWM, co-location on the same site will offer the benefits of closer collaboration between the two organisations.

The site will support a 2 storey building of c. 500 sq. m that will adequately meet the LPA's local policing needs and be capable of accommodating the temporary requirements arising from operations/events that are a characteristic of policing within Windsor itself.

## **2.4. Heads of Terms**

The principal elements of the draft Heads of Terms (HoTs) produced following negotiations between the parties are as follows:

- 1. A purchase price of £1.35m for the freehold site for a new police station together with a long lease at peppercorn rent for operational parking.
- 2. TVP to seek formal approval for the purchase from the Police & Crime Commissioner on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2017.

3. Exchange of conditional contracts for the purchase to be achieved by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017.
4. The exchange of contracts to be subject to site surveys and environmental surveys.
5. The completion of the purchase to be subject to TVP obtaining detailed planning consent for the new police building.
6. The completion of the purchase to be subject to RBWM making alternative provision to replace their car parking that will be displaced as a result of the development of the police building and associated operational parking.
7. Both parties to be responsible for their own legal costs.

### **3 Financial Comments**

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#### **3.1. Comparison of Options**

During the course of the feasibility process a comparative financial assessment has been undertaken at regular intervals to evaluate and compare the two alternative options. The data used in this analysis has been updated as new information has become available. There is a difference between the overall financial parameters for the two options which demonstrates that Option 1 at York House is the more economically advantageous. The comparative analysis has been updated to reflect the latest available information and in particular this now incorporates the proposed purchase price of £1.35m which has been formally confirmed by RBWM and approved by their councillors in December 2016.

Based on an overall value for money analysis it is considered that Option 1 will provide the best outcome for both organisations which will be further enhanced by the collaboration benefits of close physical proximity.

Note: See Part 2 section 2 Financial Comments

#### **4. Legal Comments**

The proposed transaction will raise a number of challenging and complex issues which will have to be satisfactorily addressed. It will be progressed via a conditional contract which will contain a number of key conditions which will have to be met to enable the project to be progressed.

TVP will be using our retained legal advisors Blake Morgan to deal with the legal documentation and, at this stage, we do not envisage any unsurmountable contractual matters that cannot be resolved through the best endeavours of both the parties and their respective solicitors.

Note: See part 2 Section 3 Legal Comments

**5. Equality Comments**

There are no matters of this nature relevant to this proposed transaction.

**6 Conclusion**

It is important that the Force delivers the smaller replacement operational facility within Windsor; the existing building is now very substantially larger than is required for future needs and if the building were to be retained it would require major expenditure/investment to make it capable of continuing use/occupation over the 0-10 year horizon.

After a lengthy period of investigation into potential alternatives, only two deliverable options have been identified and both of these have been evaluated in order to compare their relative merits. Of these, the option that provides the better overall solution is that at York House, Sheet Street, Windsor. The development of a new police station on this site will bring advantages of closer working relationships with the Council and will give TVP a position that is close to the centre of Windsor. From a financial perspective, the York House option represents a better value for money solution for TVP than the alternative of redeveloping on the existing Alma Road site and it also aligns with the local accommodation strategy being pursued by RBWM.

**Public Access to Information**

Information in this form is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and other legislation. Part 1 of this form will be made available on the website within 1 working day of approval. Any facts and advice that should not be automatically available on request should not be included in Part 1 but instead on a separate Part 2 form. Deferment of publication is only applicable where release before that date would compromise the implementation of the decision being approved.

**Is the publication of this form to be deferred? Yes / No**

**If yes, for what reason?**

**Until what date?**

**Is there a Part 2 form? Yes**

<b>ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION (as appropriate):</b>		
	<b>Officer</b>	<b>Date reviewed</b>
<b>Head of Property Services</b>	<b>David Griffin</b>	<b>19/01/2017</b>
<b>Legal Advice</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Financial Advice</b>	<b>Linda Waters</b> Director of Finance	<i>19/01/17</i>

**OFFICER'S APPROVAL**

We have been consulted about the proposal and confirm that financial and legal advice have been taken into account in the preparation of this report.

We are satisfied that this is an appropriate request to be submitted to the Police and Crime Commissioner.

  
Chief Executive

Date 24/1/2017

  
Chief Finance Officer

Date 19/1/17