

PFCC Decision Report

Report reference number: 013-21

Classification: OFFICIAL

Title of report: Stage 2 Capital Bid – Sunflower Rooms

Area of County/Stakeholders affected: Children / vulnerable persons countywide

Report by: Patrick Duffy – Head of Estates

Date of report: 11th March 2021

Enquiries to: Patrick.Duffy@essex.police.uk

1. Purpose of report

This Decision Report seeks approval for capital investment into upgrading three existing and creating one new location for Sunflower Rooms within our existing police stations, for the safeguarding and supervision of children and vulnerable persons until suitable accommodation can be arranged by partners.

2. Recommendations

To proceed with investment of £45,000 of capital funding for the design, upgrade and implementation of Sunflower Rooms across four Police Station locations, in addition to up to £10,400 recurring revenue consequences.

3. Benefits of Proposal

The proposal will provide suitable accommodation across the estate to enable officers to safeguard vulnerable persons, children under police protection and persons who have been harmed or are at risk of immediate harm with no alternative accommodation available to them.

The proposal ensures suitable accommodation, equipment and supplies are available to care for those within our guardianship.

4. Background and proposal

This proposal is to update and refurbish the existing Sunflower Rooms across the estate in line with the Stage 2 Capital Bid and background paper provided to the Estate Change Board in August 2019 by the Public Protection Unit. The rooms were initially created for vulnerable persons, children under police protection and persons who have been harmed or are at risk of immediate harm with no alternative accommodation immediately available for them. The rooms are for short term use only.

The existing rooms currently vary in standard and equipment within them and are located across four existing Police Stations. The proposal is to upgrade three existing locations and re-locate a provision from one station to another ensuring sufficient geographical coverage across the local policing areas (LPAs). Each room requires work to be completed within them to achieve an adequate standard and to be more suitably equipped for the required use.

Without the provision of the Sunflower Rooms there is an operational risk of having insufficient rooms to accommodate children and vulnerable persons taken into police protection whilst awaiting Social Care to find suitable accommodation. This could result in children and vulnerable persons being cared for within police premises with inadequate facilities or a cost to Essex Police for paying for hotel rooms.

By providing these facilities across all LPAs Essex Police will be able to provide safe and appropriate facilities for short term use to accommodate children and vulnerable persons taken into police protection whilst awaiting Social Care to find suitable alternative accommodation.

5. Alternative options considered and rejected

Leave the existing provision in place with no improvement.

- This could put children and vulnerable persons at risk of injury.
- This could cause legal and / or reputational damage to Essex Police if a child is injured whilst within our care to protect them.
- The existing rooms are in a similar condition to where the victims are being protected from and does not represent the desire that Essex Police has when those children and vulnerable persons are taken into our care.

Remove the rooms altogether.

- There will be an operational risk, with unsuitable rooms being used to accommodate children and vulnerable persons taken into police protection whilst awaiting Social Care to find suitable accommodation.
- The potential impact for Essex Police in paying for hotel rooms to accommodate the children and vulnerable persons.
- Officers and staff not having appropriate policies or provision when faced with the need to care for children and vulnerable persons.

6. Police and Crime Plan

Priority 6 of the Police and Crime Plan is *‘Protecting children and vulnerable people from harm - Our objective is to ensure children and vulnerable people are appropriately safeguarded and that they receive the help and support they need’*. By providing Sunflower Rooms across the estate we are supporting this priority and enabling officers to provide a safe place for young and vulnerable people whilst in police protection.

The Estate Strategy underpins delivery of the Police and Crime Plan. Page 20 (Finance and Resources) states *“Rationalise the police estate, making it fit for purpose for 21st century policing and drive out savings to reinvest back into local policing.”*

7. Police Operational Implications

There are no changes to operational policing activities associated with this request for capital funding.

8. Financial Implications

The proposal is within the Subject to Approval category of the capital programme with capital funding allocated for £45,000 which was formally approved at the Police, Fire & Crime Panel on 4th February 2021.

No revenue consequences were included within the Stage 1 capital bid. At the request of Chief Officers, running costs have now been included within the Stage 2 capital bid of up to £10,400 per annum.

9. Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising from this decision report.

10. Staffing implications

There are no staffing or resource implications arising from this decision report.

11. Equality and Diversity implications

As set out at section 3 above, the proposal will provide suitable accommodation across the estate to enable officers to safeguard vulnerable persons, children under police protection and persons who have been harmed or are at risk of immediate harm with no alternative accommodation available to them. The proposal ensures suitable accommodation, equipment and supplies are available to care for those within our guardianship.

It is not considered that an Equality Impact Assessment is required for this decision report.

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12. Risks

There are no operational risks arising from approval of this decision report.

13. Governance Boards

Essex Police Estate Change Board – 26th January 2021

Essex Police Chief Officer Group – 10th February 2021

PFCC Strategic Estate Board – 16th February 2021

PFCC Strategic Board – 11th March 2021.

14. Background papers

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Report Approval

The report will be signed off by the PFCC Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer, prior to review and sign off by the PFCC / DPFCC.

Chief Executive/M.O

Sign: 

Print: P. Brent-Isherwood

Date: 17 March 2021

Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer

Sign: .....

Print: Julia Berry.....

Date: 18 March 2021.....

Publication

Is the report for publication?

YES

NO

If 'NO', please give reasons for non-publication (state 'None' if applicable)

However the appendix is not for publication as it has been marked Official Sensitive

If the report is not for publication, the Chief Executive will decide if and how the public can be informed of the decision.

Redaction

If the report is for publication, is redaction required:

1. Of Decision Sheet YES

2. Of Appendix YES

NO

NO

If 'YES', please provide details of required redaction:

The appendix is not for publication as it has been marked Official Sensitive

Date redaction carried out: 18 March 2021

Treasurer / Chief Executive Sign Off – for Redactions only

If redaction is required, Treasurer or Chief Executive are to sign off that redaction has been completed.

Sign: .....

Print: Julia Berry.....

Chief Executive/Treasurer

Date signed: 18 March 2021.....

Decision and Final Sign Off

I agree the recommendations to this report;

Sign: 

Print: Roger Hirst

PFCC

Date signed: 18 March 2021

I do not agree the recommendations to this report because;

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Sign:

Print:

PFCC/Deputy PFCC

Date signed: