

## PFCC Decision Report

**Report reference number:** PFCC/120/23

**Classification:** OFFICIAL

**Title of report:** Sale of Paynes Lane, Boreham, Chelmsford (Former Police House)

**Area of county / stakeholders affected:** District of Chelmsford

**Report by:** Patrick Duffy – Head of Estates

**Chief Officer:** Jules Donald, Director of Support Services

**Date of report:** 6<sup>th</sup> July 2023

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### 1. Executive Summary

This decision report recommends to Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) to dispose of a vacant, surplus to operational requirements, the former police house by sale for the sum of £450,000. In addition, to enter a formal contract for the sale and sealing the land registry transfer.

### 2. Recommendations

The first recommendation to the PFCC is to agree to proceed with the unconditional sale of Paynes Lane, Boreham, the former police house for the sum of £450,000.

The second recommendation to the PFCC is to sign the sales contract contained within *Section 16 Background Papers and Appendices*.

The third recommendation to the PFCC is to seal the Land Registry Transfer (TP1) contained within *Section 16 Background Papers and Appendices*.

### **3. Background to the Proposal**

The property is a former Police House built around the 1950's comprising a three-bedroom detached house with two reception rooms, kitchen and bathroom. The property needs decoration and modernisation throughout. The property benefits from a good size garden to the side and to the rear of the property in a central position with wide access either side and parking for 3 vehicles. The property offers good development potential and benefits from its slightly remote and detached location with only two neighbouring cottages close by.

The property was vacated by the residing former police officer following from their retirement from the force. All police houses were declared surplus to operational requirements and approved for disposal by the former Essex Police Authority as part of the Housing Review.

The property has been marketed on a private treaty basis by Bairstow Eves estate agents with a guide price of £475,000.

The property has been exposed to the market by means such as a For Sale Board, Property Particulars, Direct and Internet Marketing. This range of marketing is considered to provide wide exposure. The property was marketing with development potential.

Marketing commenced on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2022 with 20 viewings taking place between December 2022 and January 2023, and 1 acceptable offer was received on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2023 following negotiation to increase the initial offer. The purchaser's offer is with full financial qualification and a large deposit. The decision to accept this offer was made, as we are keen to sell the house, especially given the current market conditions and comments received from viewers about the noise impact of the A12. On 24<sup>th</sup> May 2023, the buyer withdrew from the sale.

Bairstow Eves were advised to remarket the property on 24<sup>th</sup> May but later confirmed they already had a list of names of buyers that showed an interest initially after the property was previously sold subject to contract.

Bairstow Eves therefore liaised with these buyers and a further offer of £450,000 was received on 24<sup>th</sup> May. This offer was accepted on 25<sup>th</sup> May on the basis that the offer was of equal value to the initial offer and the price reflected market conditions and the few viewings/offers received.

Therefore, our recommendation is to proceed with the unconditional sale of the former Police House for the sum of £450,000.

### **4. Proposal and Associated Benefits**

This proposal disposes of the former Police House which is surplus to operational policing requirements and provides a receipt for the Capital Funds of the Commissioner.

The proposal is for an unconditional sale and is not dependent on the buyer obtaining planning permission.

## **5. Options Analysis**

Keep the Property – Rejected – Essex Police has no operational need to keep and maintain the property following the residing officer's retirement and there is no need to provide a police house provision within Essex. If the property is kept it would remain vacant and be subject to increasing council tax due to being vacant and with continuing costs to maintain the property.

Keep the Property short term and re-market when market conditions improve – Rejected – The building has signs that the roof and guttering is deteriorating which would need attention and financial investment within six months. For the property to remain vacant, general external repairs, grounds maintenance and general repairs to the fencing would need to be completed. As well as regular vacant property visits for insurance purposes and the cost of Council Tax which after two years would have 100% multiplier for a vacant property. The building is in poor condition internally and would only continue to dilapidate.

## **6. Consultation and Engagement**

There has been engagement with staff representative bodies through the relevant governance boards, namely the Estate Change Board for asset disposals.

## **7. Strategic Links**

The recommendations within the decision report are underpinned by the Estate Strategy, which in turn supports the overall Police & Crime plan ensuring we have the most efficient and effective estate to support policing throughout the county for the Essex public.

## **8. Police operational implications**

There are no adverse operational policing implications arising from the sale. Completion of the sale will assist in delivering Capital receipts to reinvest as per the Commissioners capital programme.

## **9. Financial implications**

The recommendation within this decision report will achieve a capital receipt of £450,000. If this sale is not completed the Capital Programme will need to be funded from elsewhere.

A failure to maximise the sale value of the building could place the Commissioner in breach of the fiduciary duty to sell assets for best consideration. The property has been placed on the open market, a significant number of viewings and similar values of offers received, therefore achieving what the property is worth and providing assurance in respect of the best consideration.

The capital receipt of £450,000 which is now being forecasted was submitted to Corporate Finance within the January 2022 disposals tracker and was updated within the month 11 Performance and Resources report provided in March 2023

## **10. Legal implications**

The commissioner will be required to enter a sale contract and seal a land registry transfer (TP1) to complete the asset disposal as detailed within the second and third recommendation.

The conveyance has been undertaken on behalf of the commissioner by Essex Legal Services and the documentation is included within Section 16 Background Papers and Appendices.

A failure to maximise the sale value of the building could place the Commissioner in breach of the fiduciary duty to sell assets for best consideration.

## **11. Staffing implications**

There are no staffing or resource implications, the former police house is not part of the core property requirements.

## **12. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion implications**

There are no specific Equality, Diversity or Inclusion implications arising from this decision report.

## **13. Risks and Mitigations**

There are no adverse risks identified that are as a result of the recommendation within the decision report.

## **14. Governance Boards**

Essex Police Authority – Strategic Housing Review

## **15. Links to Future Plans**

This decision report and the recommendations are linked to our longer-term plans for providing capital resources and subsequent investment strategy.

## **16. Background Papers and Appendices**

Marketing Brochure – OFFICIAL (Publish)



Marketing Brochure  
05122022.pdf



Estate Strategy 2018 – 2023

<http://www.essex.pfcc.police.uk/finance-reporting/publications/police-estates-strategy/>

**Report Approval**

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

Chief Executive / M.O.

Sign: .....Dhorsman.....

Print: Darren Horsman - Deputy Monitoring Officer

Date: 18/7/2023.....

Chief Financial Officer

Sign:



Print: Janet Perry

Date: 18 July 2023

**Publication**

Is the report for publication?

YES

NO

If 'NO', please give reasons for non-publication (Where relevant, cite the security classification of the document(s). State 'None' if applicable)

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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   
NO

2. Of Appendix? YES   
NO

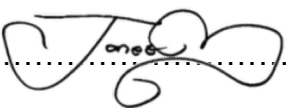
**If 'YES', please provide details of required redaction:**

The sales contract and transfer contain personal information relating to the purchasers. Once the sale has completed the information will be available through Land Registry.

**Date redaction carried out:** 18th July 2023

**Chief Finance Officer / Chief Executive Sign Off – for Redactions only**

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

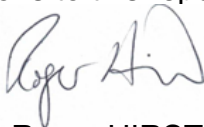
Sign:  .....

Print: Janet Perry .....

~~Chief Executive~~ / Chief Finance Officer

**Decision and Final Sign Off**

I agree the recommendations to this report:

Sign: 

Print: Roger HIRST

**PFCC**

**Date signed: 18th July 2023**

I do not agree the recommendations to this report because:

.....  
.....  
.....

Sign:

Print:

**PFCC/Deputy PFCC**

**Date signed:**