

Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey – Decision Making Record

Title: Vacant Police Houses
Decision number: 011/2017
Author and Job Role: Judy Gavan, Estate Strategy Manager
Protective Marking: OFFICIAL

Executive Summary:

Agreement is sought to make a further eight vacant police houses available to officers and staff to lease via the Crown Simmons scheme that was introduced last year.

Background

In July 2016, twelve former police section houses were converted back to family homes and let to Crown Simmons Housing Association for sub-let to Surrey Police officers and staff. Under the agreement Crown Simmons is responsible for all administrative activities and for the day to day management of the properties.

The PCC does not have the powers to issue assured or assured short-hold tenancies and this scheme has provided a vehicle to let properties indirectly, providing a benefit to staff and officers (and thus contributing towards retention difficulties in an expensive county) whilst generating income for the force and retaining assets. Prior to the arrangement with Crown Simmons, vacant police houses were sold internally at market value or on the open market, generating a one-off capital receipt.

A further eight former police houses are now (or are soon to become) vacant following the retirement of occupying officers. It is recommended that these additional houses are also let to Crown Simmons for sub-let to police officers and staff. The proposed initial rental period is 5 years.

There was strong demand for the original twelve houses and good take-up by staff and officers is anticipated. If properties are not let internally within 3 months of being advertised on the intranet, Crown Simmons have the right to offer the properties to other emergency service/ public sector workers. Rent to the PCC is payable regardless of the sub-let status.

Rental charges for the additional properties are to be confirmed, as are costs to refurbish the properties to the required standards but a draft financial appraisal has been undertaken. The current proposal will bring the total number of houses let to Crown Simmons to twenty with a good geographic spread across the force area. Ahead of any further recommendations for additions to this scheme, a review will be carried out in consultation with HR colleagues with a view to recommending a cohesive package of housing support options for officers and staff. The review will consider the

overall profile of officers and staff and their housing needs and will aim to recommend an optimum mix of support options that addresses recruitment and retention issues whilst maintaining a strong asset base.

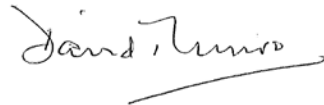
Recommendation:

It is recommended that agreement in principle is given to let a further eight former police houses to Crown Simmons subject to confirmation of refurbishment costs and rental receipts.

Police and Crime Commissioner Approval

I approve the recommendation(s):

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Tunno", with a horizontal line underneath it.

Date: 12/04/2017

All decisions must be added to the decision register.

Areas of consideration

Consultation

Paul Bundy, Head of Finance

Financial implications

Funding to complete refurbishments has been made available within the 17/18 capital and investment programme. A positive cash position is anticipated by year 3 with net income of £152,000 anticipated over the term of the lease

Legal

Legal advice sought when original Crown Simmons scheme set up.

Risks

Risk of properties not being sub-let is borne by Crown Simmons.

Equality and diversity

None

Risks to human rights

None