

HOME OFFICE PREMISES IMPROVEMENT FUND

Joint Report of the Chief Constable, Clerk, Treasurer and Architect and Technical Advisor

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to inform the Police Authority of the outcome of the bid submitted to the Home Office in relation to the Premises Improvement Fund (PIF).

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In August 2002, the Home Office invited police authorities to submit up to two bids from a £20 million Premises Improvement Fund, which had been established with the aim of modernising the Police Estate in order to improve the working conditions of police officers. Northumbria Police Authority approved submission of two bids (minute 130 2002/03 refers) but was successful with only one bid (the conversion of non-operational space into office accommodation) and a grant of £500,000 was subsequently received from the Home Office.
- 2.2 In May 2003, the Home Office informed Police Authorities that a second Premises Improvement Fund had been set up and Authorities were again invited to submit up to two bids for a capital grant from this scheme. Some of the key features of the bidding guidance were:
- Each bid could be for a maximum of £0.5 million.
 - Police Authorities needed to at least match any PIF grant from their own resources.
 - Each bid could cover one development or a number of smaller initiatives.
 - The primary objective of each bid would be to improve the working conditions of police officers.
 - Expenditure must be committed by the end of 2003/04 and must be spent by 31 March 2005.
- 2.3 At the meeting of the Police Authority held on 23 July 2003 (Minute 7 - 2003/04 - refers) approval was given for submission of the following two bids to the Home Office for funding from the PIF, subject to consultation and agreement with the Chief Constable and appropriate officers of the Authority:
- Bid 1 - Provision of a new building to accommodate all Crime Teams within one facility.
 - Bid 2 - Provision of shower and changing facilities, and storage facilities for Police Support Unit equipment at six police stations.
- 2.4 However after consultation between the Chief Constable and appropriate members of the Authority, it was agreed that only Bid 2 would be submitted. The cost of providing a building to co-locate the Crime Teams was found to be prohibitively expensive.

- 2.5 At this meeting it was also agreed that a further report would be submitted to the Police Authority when the outcome of the bids was known and to note the potential impact on the capital programme if either or both of the bids were successful.

3 RESULTS OF PIF BID

- 3.1 On 30 September the Home Office informed the Chief Constable, by letter, that the bid had been successful.
- 3.2 The approved PIF grant for this scheme is £350,000.

4 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Nil.

5 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Nil.

6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The outline costs for this scheme are £700,000, of which £350,000 can be met by the PIF grant.
- 6.2 A detailed assessment of the scheme will need to take place during 2003/04 to determine more accurate costs and prepare for the implementation before the end of March 2005. The cost of this work can be met from the Authority's capital programme in the current year.
- 6.3 Provision for the matched funding of £350,000 will be included in the Authority's capital programme for 2004/05.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The Police Authority is requested to:
- 7.2 Note the outcome of the bid.
- 7.3 Agree to commence preparatory work on the scheme in 2003/04.
- 7.4 Agree to include the matched funding in the Authority's capital programme for 2004/05.