

DEVON AND CORNWALL POLICE AUTHORITY

21 May 2004

(FOI – Open)

Report by Chief Constable

**BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE –
BRIEF ON THE OPERATIONAL PROPERTY STRATEGY**

INTRODUCTION

1. This document outlines the work currently being undertaken within the Strategic Development Department, to produce a robust, operationally led strategy for the future Police Authority Estates programme.

BACKGROUND

2. This work was initiated by the Command Team on the 26 January 2004 because initial investigation had shown that the Constabulary's estate has become progressively decoupled from operational requirement to the point that in some cases it now imposes a restraint on the delivery of police services. Space is diminishing, some properties are in the wrong location or the wrong size and configuration and do not or can not offer the most appropriate services.

3. The agreed objectives were to define and agree the scope and resources necessary to have an interim report and draft business model by 31 March 2004. It was recognised that we did not have the skills in house, to facilitate production of the strategy and an external consultant would be employed to assist.

KEY HISTORICAL MILESTONES

4. The command team approved the draft approach to achieve the objectives on the 9 February 2004.

5. Dr Colin Bloch, Director, WS Atkins began work on the 11 February 2004 refining the objectives and approach. He facilitated a workshop on 26 February 2004, involving the Heads of Department, Crime, Custody, Call Management and Operations and all four BCU Commanders. This ensured that the fundamental principle that it would be "operationally led" was achieved.

6. Subsequent individual follow up meetings with them have taken place to identify any specific local issues within their area's, for consideration within the strategy.

7. On the 16 March 2004 a meeting took place between the Police Authority Property sub committee, Dr Bloch and Sue Coulson to give an initial briefing prior to the interim report.

8. The preliminary report was completed to coincide with the Command Team meeting on the 29 March 2004. All Command Team members received an advance copy of the report to enable them to comment thoroughly on its content. Broad approval of the work was given and confirmation of resources necessary to complete the work was agreed.

9. Minor amendments were made before it was sent to the Senior Operational Staff and the Police Authority Property Sub Committee for their views. On the 20 April 2004 the Police Authority Sub Committee reviewed the document and further minor amendments have been made to complete the interim strategy report.

CURRENT POSITION

10. The methodology for providing an accurate measure to assess “our estates operational fitness for purpose” is taking place within Crime, Custody and Operations Departments and BCUs. This process is key to the success of the strategy and has been independently quality assured by the head of the Strategic Department to ensure consistency and accuracy. All results and analysis will be independently assessed before the next scheduled meeting.

11. On 2 June 2004 all the Senior Operational Staff will meet to take part in the next step of the process, which is to map out all our existing estates onto a large-scale map of Devon and Cornwall. This will be photographed and the senior staff will then plot out where they would wish to be able to provide a robust “citizen focused” police service. They will also agree the list of current property which is “fit for operational purpose”, collated from the worst to the best to allow decisions / recommendations to the strategic board on budget spend. A representative of the Police Authority Property Sub Committee will attend to quality assure the process.

12. This will provide all the necessary management information for the Operational Estates board on the 18 June 2004 to make recommendations to the Strategic Board as necessary.

13. The strategy document and implementation manual will be complete by September 2004. A review of existing estates strategy and uncommitted work will be evaluated against the changing parameters. An estates business case template will be created to allow the Senior Departments/ Units to request funding in line with the Force planning cycle.

14. The organisational structure, terms of reference and link to the Finance, ICT, Resources, Estates and Engineering board have been created to allow the process to continue after the strategy has been completed and agreed by the Force Strategic Board in September 2004.

RECOMMENDATION

15. It is recommended the Police Authority note the contents of the report.

Maria Wallis
Chief Constable

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