

Plans approved to dispose of Portobello police station

Plans to dispose of Portobello police station following public consultation has been approved and the building will now be marketed for sale.

Police Scotland announced on 14 December 2023 proposals to close police stations across the country as part of their estate transformation strategy.

Public consultation was launched both at a local level and nationally through an online Engagement Hub. The consultation on Portobello opened on 17 January 2024 and closed on 13 March 2024. In total there were 116 respondents.

Portobello has historically been underutilised; operational officers have not been stationed there since October 2016. Community and response officers have been based at Craigmillar police station. The disposal of Portobello would lead to no change in this operational model.

Public counter services can be accessed at Craigmillar police station and St Leonards Police station which are approximately three miles away. Musselburgh police station, in East Lothian also has front office counter provision.

Speaking about the approved disposal, Superintendent Murray Tait said: "Portobello is a very large Victorian building and has continued to incur significant annual running costs and ongoing repairs and maintenance.

"I realise that for many, the physical presence of Portobello police station has provided reassurance and confidence to the local community over the years. However, it's important to clarify that operational police officers have not been stationed in the building since 2016.

"Community and response officers will continue to actively patrol the Portobello area. We are committed to maintaining a strong presence and ensuring the safety of the community.

"Some respondents to the consultation expressed concern about crime during busy summer periods when the town sees greater visitor numbers. As part of our policing plan, we have increased police resource throughout the summer in Portobello every year and I would reassure residents this will continue.

"With advances in digital technology and our fleet, officers spend most of their time out in communities dealing with calls and helping the public rather than sitting in police stations.

"Our presence in communities is not defined by buildings but by the officers and staff who work hard to police the area.

"I would like to assure local residents that our officers will continue to be active, visible and accessible.

"Our officers based at Craigmillar and St Leonards will continue to patrol the east side of the city and the public will receive the same high level of service."



PHOTO Stephen Rafferty