



Devon & Cornwall Police

Building safer communities together

To:
Chief Executive of County & District Councils
Chief Executives of Unitary Authorities
MPs
Lord Lieutenants
High Sheriffs
LCJB Chair/Members

Paul Netherton
Assistant Chief Constable
Force Headquarters
Middlemoor
Exeter EX2 7HQ

Telephone: 101

Our Ref: ACC(OS)/pn/sdb

18 March 2014

Your ref:

Dear Colleague

DEVON AND CORNWALL POLICE STATION ENQUIRY OFFICES STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

I am writing to inform you of our proposals and planned stakeholder engagement with regard to the future of the enquiry offices at our police stations.

In 2010/11, we consulted with the public and key stakeholders regarding a demand-led proposal to rationalise this service. Following a detailed examination of our police enquiry offices, the number of offices was reduced from 57 to 21 across Devon & Cornwall and this rationalisation saved the Force approximately £1.5m per annum.

I am sure that you appreciate the need to maximise the value for scarce resources. As one of the lowest spending Forces in England and Wales you will appreciate we are doing everything within our power to maintain our operational capability. Difficult choices have to be made, not least because we have one of the leanest 'back offices' of any police Force in the country. This means that there are extremely limited opportunities to make further savings in these back office departments. Therefore, as part of continuing budget cuts, it has been necessary to revisit the provision of police station enquiry offices to examine whether further savings can be made. As you will appreciate many other Forces have been, or are in, a similar situation and we are by no means unusual in having to review our service within this area.

We are aware that any changes, particularly with regard to police station enquiry offices, are likely to generate much local interest and discussion. We will be in communication with key stakeholders such as yourselves over the next four months with regard to the proposals. I would hope that this communication will help to inform people of the rationale for change and also to help identify gaps in provision and how we can fill them.



We would be particularly pleased to hear any thoughts and ideas you may have regarding joint working, shared accommodation or any innovative solutions to a shared approach to sponsorship or volunteers that could assist our joint working, give greater value for money and deliver an enhanced, integrated service to the public in your local area.

At this time we would like to reassure you that no final decisions have been made regarding the nature of police station enquiry office provision in Devon & Cornwall. However, we have to meet a very challenging budgetary situation. Please be assured this will be done in line with providing the best possible service to the public in Devon & Cornwall, whilst reflecting true demand and value for money.

The potential closure of police enquiry offices does not mean the closure of the respective police station itself, and the Force continues to ensure that there is a policing footprint in every town in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

If enquiry offices are closed, alternative provisions will be made available so that a free telephone facility will continue to be available at all our stations as a means for the public to make direct contact with our telephone enquiry centres. We will also continue to promote the non-emergency contact number (101) and we are aiming to improve our accessibility via the Devon & Cornwall Police Website.

In the meantime, please feel free to make contact so that we can work together and alleviate any particular concerns you may have.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Netherton', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Paul Netherton
Assistant Chief Constable
(Operations Support)