

'Open Letter' from the Chair of Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Panel to members of the public in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

September 2014

Police Public Contact Strategy – Station Enquiry Rationalisation

At its meeting on 20th June 2014, the Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Panel (PCP) agreed to conduct a scrutiny review in relation to the *"Police and Crime Commissioner's joint announcement with the Chief Constable in respect of Devon and Cornwall Police Public Contact Strategy – Station Enquiry Rationalisation"*.

The role of the PCP is to provide support and scrutiny challenge to the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), to promote openness in the transaction of police business and also to support the PCC in the effective exercise of their functions. The PCP is not responsible for scrutinising the performance of the police force as a whole or the Chief Constable, as this is the responsibility of the PCC. Both the role of the PCC and the PCP were created as part of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, which brought in new structural arrangements for national policing, strategic police decision-making, neighbourhood policing and policing accountability.

The PCP is due to undertake the review at its next meeting on 17 October 2014 and will be adopting a select committee style approach. In order to assist the PCP Members in effectively scrutinising the topic, the Panel is seeking written evidence from stakeholders and members of the public through the provision of responses to the following questions:

- 1) Are you aware of the proposals and if so, how were you made aware of them?
- 2) What do you think will be the impact for communities and service users in relation to travel, contact etc?
- 3) Where closures have already taken place, what is the impact on your perception and satisfaction?
- 4) As part of the consultation with the public and key stakeholders in 2010/11 regarding the proposal to rationalise public enquiry offices, were you consulted directly, or were you aware of any consultation and how it was carried out?
- 5) Are you aware of a new Public "Contact Strategy" and any local policing detailed "engagement plan" introduced by Devon and Cornwall Police and if so, what is your view of them?
- 6) Has Devon and Cornwall Police contacted you to actively discuss how they will engage more effectively with you in the future eg. through the use of regular surgeries in libraries, supermarkets, partner agencies premises etc?

- 7) Have you any concerns or comments in respect of accessing stations and/or using the 101 number?
- 8) Have you been approached by Devon and Cornwall Police, or had the opportunity to discuss alternative options with them to share any ideas you might have where a police enquiry office is being withdrawn and if so, what did these discussions entail?

The PCP would be grateful for your written responses to some or all of these questions. **The deadline for written responses is Friday 19 September 2014** and responses should be sent to:

Sarah Hopkins
Community Safety & Partnerships Manager
& Lead Officer – Devon & Cornwall Police and Crime Panel
Plymouth City Council
Civic Centre
Plymouth
PL1 2AA

Email: sarah.hopkins@plymouth.gov.uk

Please also let us know if you would be willing and able to attend PCP meeting on 17 October 2014, as a witness, to provide verbal evidence, and provide contact details. There will be a limited opportunity to hear from witnesses and those invited will be notified in advance.

Please note that, depending on the level/number of responses received, we may need to summarise responses for presentation to the Panel.

Members of the public are welcome to attend and observe Police and Crime Panel meetings. For more information about when meetings are occurring, and to view archived and live webcasts of Panel Meetings, please visit the Panel's website: <http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/dcpcpmeetingsandminutes.html>

Members of the public can also ask questions in respect of the functions of the Police and Crime Panel at Panel Meetings – to find out more about how to do this, information is available at <http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/dcpcpquestions.html>

Yours faithfully



Councillor Roger Croad
Chair, Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Panel