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**Press Release - embargoed until 00:01 on Wednesday 21 December 2011**

## **Police Authority announce changes to police estate in Cumbria**

***“Better estate. Better service. Better value.”***

As a result of Government budget cuts, Cumbria Constabulary needs to save £20.3million by 2016, which is equivalent to a 20 per cent fall in income.

To achieve this, the Constabulary has been conducting a series of reviews to identify savings. This included a review of Cumbria’s police estate, which has looked at every Police Station and office building across Cumbria to ensure they provide value for money and meet the requirements of local communities and Neighbourhood Policing Teams.

A series of recommendations was presented to the Police Authority, who own the police estate, at a meeting yesterday (20<sup>th</sup> December), where they made final decisions about the future of each police building.

Some buildings will be upgraded, some officers and PCSOs will move into shared accommodation to save on running and maintenance costs, and a small number of buildings that are under-occupied and underused will close.

The money saved will be used to improve the overall quality of the police estate and help protect visible policing in Cumbria.

A separate review is underway to consider the future of front counter services across the county.

### **Carlisle East and Carlisle West Neighbourhood Policing Teams**

No changes are proposed for the police estate in the Carlisle area, which underwent recent changes when the state-of-the art Police Station at Durranhill opened in 2009 after the city’s original Police Station at Rickergate was flooded in 2005.

Durranhill Police Station will remain in use and will continue to be used as the area headquarters for North Cumbria and the base for the Carlisle East Neighbourhood Policing Team.

Shadygrove Rd Police Station in Carlisle will remain in use, and will remain the base for the Carlisle West Neighbourhood Policing Team.

The Carlisle East Neighbourhood Policing Team will continue using shared office space at Carlisle Civic Centre as a base for officers and PCSOs working in the city centre.



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### **Brampton Neighbourhood Policing Team**

Only minor changes are proposed to the estate used by the Brampton Neighbourhood Policing Team.

Brampton Police Station will remain in use, and will remain the base for the Brampton Neighbourhood Policing Team.

Longtown Police Station will also remain in use and officers and PCSOs covering the Dalston area will continue to use shared office space at St Michael's School.

Alston Police Station is too big for operational need, so the Police Authority will sell the existing station to generate income, and officers and PCSOs working in the town will relocate to the Topps Building, which is next to the existing station. This will maintain an operating police base in the town, and will save on annual running costs and generate income when the station is sold. There is no existing front counter service in Alston, and no plans to open one in the future.

### **Eden Neighbourhood Policing Team**

No noticeable changes are currently planned to the estate used by the Eden Neighbourhood Policing Team, which covers Penrith, Appleby and the Eden Valley.

Penrith Police Station at Hunter Lane will remain in use, and will remain the central base for the Eden Neighbourhood Policing Team.

Appleby Police Station will remain in use and will continue being used as a base for officers and PCSOs when policing in Appleby.

Kirkby Stephen Police Station is too big for operational need and consists of a police station with an adjoining annex. The main bulk of the station is no longer used, so will be sold, and the Neighbourhood Policing Team will continue using the annex. This will maintain a police presence in the town, save on annual running costs and generate income when the police station is sold.

Carleton Hall in Penrith will remain in use as the Police Headquarters for Cumbria Constabulary.



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### **Allerdale Rural Neighbourhood Policing Team**

The police buildings currently used by the Allerdale Rural Neighbourhood Policing Team are old, are not fit-for-purpose and are not situated in the best locations to provide the optimum service to communities living in rural Allerdale, which stretches from Silloth to Keswick.

The team currently operates from stations and buildings in Wigton, Keswick and Cockermouth.

These will be sold in order to fund the creation of a more efficient, functional and better located estate, with a new central base in Cockermouth and operating bases in Silloth, Aspatria, Wigton and Keswick. These changes will save on annual running costs and improve the dispersal of officers across the area.

The future of the front counter services in rural Allerdale will be considered in a separate review.

Two new shared operating bases will be opened in Silloth Fire Station and Aspatria Fire Station, providing accommodation for officers and PCSOs in both towns for the first time in a number of years. There are no plans to open front counter services in the towns, but residents can continue making appointments with local officers and police patrols in both areas will continue as normal.

Cockermouth Police Station is not fit-for-purpose and is expensive to maintain. It lacks in parking and does not provide sufficient, suitable space for the team. The existing station will be sold to generate income and the Neighbourhood Policing Team will relocate to a new building with better road links. The Constabulary and Police Authority are currently in talks to secure a new building in the town.

Keswick Police Station is too big for operational need and is underused by the Allerdale Rural Neighbourhood Policing Team, with officers and PCSOs spending their time in the community rather than in the office. Officers and PCSOs using the station will relocate to shared accommodation in Keswick Fire Station, which will maintain an operating base in the town, save on annual running costs and generate income when the building is sold.

Wigton Police Station is also too big for operational need and is underused by the Allerdale Rural Neighbourhood Policing Team, with officers and PCSOs spending their time in the community rather than in the office. Officers and PCSOs using the station will relocate to shared accommodation in the Local Links building and the Police Station will be sold to generate income. This will maintain a presence in the town, save on annual running costs and generate income when the building is sold.



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### **Allerdale Borough Neighbourhood Policing Team**

The central base for the Allerdale Borough Neighbourhood Policing Team is located in Workington Police Station, which will remain in use.

The Maryport station is too big for operational need and is underused by the Allerdale Borough Neighbourhood Policing Team, with officers and PCSOs spending their time in the community rather than in the office. Consequently, officers and PCSOs using the building will relocate to shared accommodation at Maryport Fire Station, which will maintain an operating base in the town, save on annual running costs and generate income when the building is sold.

Sharing accommodation with partner agencies has worked well in Carlisle and Sedbergh, where police share office space with the City Council and Fire Service respectively. This has saved money and improved services to the community, as partners can tackle issues together from the same location.

The future of front counter services in Workington and Maryport will be considered in a separate review.

### **Copeland Neighbourhood Policing Team**

The Copeland Neighbourhood Policing Team covers the whole of Copeland, from Whitehaven to Millom. The current estate is inefficient, costly and underused, so a number of changes have been approved by the Police Authority.

The team will continue to use Whitehaven Police Station as a base.

Cleator Moor Police Station is too big for operational need and is underused by the Copeland Neighbourhood Policing Team, with officers and PCSOs spending their time in the community rather than in the office. Whitehaven Police Station is only 4 miles away, so the Police Authority has approved the closure and sale of Cleator Moor Police Station, which will have no impact on policing patrols or emergency response in the town. The closure will save on annual running costs and will generate income when the building is sold. There is currently no front counter service in the town, and none is planned for the future.

Egremont Police Station is also too big for operational need and similarly underused by the Copeland Neighbourhood Policing Team, with officers and PCSOs spending their time in the community rather than in the office. Officers and PCSOs using the station will relocate to shared accommodation in Egremont Fire Station, which will maintain an operating base in the town and save money in annual running costs. The building will be sold to generate income. The future of a front counter service in the town will be considered in a separate review.



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Millom Police Station is underused by the Neighbourhood Policing Team, with officers spending more time in the community than in the office, making the building expensive to run compared to how much it is used. Officers and PCSOs using the station will therefore relocate to shared accommodation in the Millom Network Centre, which will maintain an operating base in the town and save on annual running costs and will generate income when the building is sold. The future of a front counter service in the town will be considered in a separate review.

### **Kendal Neighbourhood Policing Team**

No noticeable changes will be made to the estate used by the Kendal Neighbourhood Policing Team, which has seen recent improvement with refurbishments to Kendal Police Station.

Kendal Police Station will remain in use and will remain the central base for the Kendal Neighbourhood Policing Team, having undergone major refurbishments, including the construction of a brand new, state-of-the-art custody suite.

PCSOs based in Sedbergh Police Station recently relocated and are now successfully sharing office space with the local fire service personnel at Sedbergh Fire Station. This is saving on annual running costs, and the sale of the building will generate further income.

Milnthorpe Police Station is too big for operational need and consists of a purpose built Police Station annex attached to a house. The house is no longer used, so will be sold, and the Neighbourhood Policing Team will continue using the annex. This will maintain an operating base in the town, will save on annual running costs and will generate income when the building is sold.

### **South Lakes & Ulverston Neighbourhood Policing Team**

No noticeable changes are proposed to the estate used by the South Lakes & Ulverston Neighbourhood Policing Team.

Ulverston and Windermere Police Stations will both remain in use.

Ambleside Police Station is used both by the Neighbourhood Policing Team and the Parish Council, but is too big for operational need. The building consists of a police station with adjoining annex attached to a house. The police station and house will be sold, and police and the Parish Council will continue using the annex. This will maintain an operating policing base in the town, will save on annual running costs and will generate income when the buildings are sold.

A separate review will consider the future of front counter services in South Lakes & Ulverston.



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## **Barrow Borough Neighbourhood Policing Team**

Improving the estate used by the Barrow Borough Neighbourhood Policing Team is a priority for the Police Authority.

Barrow Police Station is outdated and, even with major refurbishment, would not be fit for purpose.

Consequently, the Police Authority and Constabulary are drafting plans to build a new police station and custody suite at a new site in the town.

The Police Authority want to invest in the future and improve the policing service in South Cumbria, so some of the money generated by the sale of buildings and related savings around the county will help pay for these much needed improvements to be made. This will maintain the standard of the policing service in the area and make the estate finances sustainable in the future.

Barrow Police Station will remain in use in the short term and a separate project will plan the construction of a new police station and custody suite.

Other accommodation used by the Barrow Borough Neighbourhood Policing Team includes an office on Dalton Road, which is used as an operating base for officers and PCSOs working in the town centre, and this will remain in use.

Dalton-in-Furness Police Station is too big for operational need and is only 4 miles away from the main operating base in Barrow. The team want to maintain a base in the Dalton, however, so will move into shared accommodation at Dalton Fire Station, which will maintain a policing presence in the town and save in annual running costs and generate income when the station is sold.

A separate review will consider the future of a front counter service in Barrow and Dalton.

## **Savings**

The implementation of these changes will save approximately £119,000 per year in running costs and is expected to raise in the region of £2.8million through the sale of buildings.



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## Comments

The Chairman of Cumbria Police Authority, Ray Cole, said: “The way Cumbria is policed has changed dramatically over recent years, and officers are no longer reliant upon static police buildings.

“The number of people visiting Police Stations has also been in steady decline for many years, with members of the community preferring to contact police via phone and email.

“The Constabulary has invested heavily in mobile working technology and officers can now complete paperwork and access police systems by accessing mobile devices while in the community, vastly reducing the need for them to use Police Stations. Detectives can also interview people using mobile recording equipment.

“All of this means that the traditional view of a Police Station is no longer a reality. Officers spend the majority of their time in the community, leaving many of our buildings oversized, underused and outdated.

“Consequently, it doesn’t make financial sense to keep investing in them, when the funds can be used to improve the quality of the police estate and maintain a visible policing service in the community.

“We have looked closely at each building and worked with local councils and the fire service to consider how we could share office space, and save money for all public services in Cumbria.

“We have approved a raft of changes that will save money for years to come, improve the flexibility and usability of the police estate in Cumbria and generate income to improve accommodation for Neighbourhood Policing Teams and the community.”

Deputy Chief Constable Stuart Hyde added: “As a result of Government spending cuts, Cumbria Constabulary has to save £20.3million by 2016. This sparked a review of our police estate, which showed that the way the community and policing teams use our buildings has changed significantly over recent years.

“Many of our Police Stations are outdated, too big for operational need, expensive to maintain and no longer fit for purpose.

“Communities tell us that they want to see officers and PCSOs in the community, rather than sitting behind a desk, so it is vital that we modernise our police estate, and ensure that our accommodation meets the needs of a police force in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Once we have made these changes we will continue to review our estate to ensure it provides better value and helps us deliver a better service in the future.



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“I understand that people in Cumbria will feel a certain level of reassurance in seeing a police building in their community, but it is our officers and staff that provide a service, not our estate.

“The structure of our Policing Teams will not change and the way people contact police, via the phone or via the web, will not change. Officers and PCSOs will continue patrolling as normal and will be even more visible in local communities.

“We want to create a better estate for a better service. Our ultimate aim is to provide the best policing service that we can afford so that Cumbria remains a safe place to live, work and visit.”

End