



CUMBRIA POLICE

Tuesday 3rd April 2007

Police Authority responds as Chief Constable announces retirement

As Chief Constable Michael Baxter QPM announces the date for his retirement, Cumbria Police Authority, the public oversight body for the Constabulary which selects and appoints its most senior officers, has praised his achievement whilst regretting his going:

Speaking on behalf of all 17 authority members, Police Authority Chairman Reg Watson said: "Since his appointment as Chief Constable in 2001, Michael Baxter has always worked hard for Cumbria and the Constabulary he directs today is very different to the one he found back then. Working closely with him, the Authority has come through all sorts of challenges: whether from Boundary Committee recommendations or that "Closing the Gap" report leading to the abortive merger with Lancashire; for which Protective Policing Services solutions he's recently put in place provide alternative remedy. It follows that everyone at the Authority will be personally sorry when his departure date arrives, but we will always remember what he's done for policing in Cumbria".

He added: "This week, what are probably the best set of performance figures for Cumbria Constabulary were released nationally. They show the force punching well above its weight with a knockout row of 'green lights' across every important heading for crime-fighting. With a 'Lonsdale Belt' of results like this, I can understand why a Chief Constable with more than enough service might think to leave when they're at the top of their game. It coincides with Michael Baxter being offered a rare opportunity, in the Chief Executive post at the Northern Police Convalescent Homes, a charity already close to his heart where I'm sure he can do more good in the future".

Aiming for a successor to be in post around September 2007, Cumbria Police Authority will be working closely with Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary and the senior appointments panel at the Home Office to appoint a new Chief Constable; someone who can do justice to Michael Baxter's achievements and build on them for the future.

Editors' note: Cumbria Police Authority is made up of local people - a mixture of councillors, magistrates and independent members - and acts as the bridge between Cumbria Constabulary and all communities across the county in policing matters. Legally, it owns all the buildings and land in the police property portfolio and is responsible for:

- *setting the budget for Cumbria Constabulary, including raising local council taxes for policing;*
- *consulting and engaging with local communities in Cumbria to find out what they want the local police to tackle;*
- *setting the strategic direction for policing in Cumbria; deciding local priorities for policing and setting the Constabulary challenging targets to drive performance higher*
- *appointing the Chief Constable; Deputy Chief Constable, and Assistant Chief Constables;*
- *monitoring and managing local police performance.*

NOTE TO NEWS EDITORS/REPORTERS: For further information, contact the Police Authority's Chief Executive, Clive Alcock, on 01768 217734 or email: policeauthority@cumbria.police.uk

Maintaining an efficient and effective police service

