



# CUMBRIA POLICE AUTHORITY

Wednesday, 21st September 2005

## Police Authority Message about Structural debate

On Monday, 26<sup>th</sup> September 2005, Cumbria Police Authority Members meet in session. The Authority's Chairman, Reg Watson, and Acting Chief Constable Christine Twigg will be reporting back to them on a meeting held in London, the week before, where the Home Secretary invited Police Authority Chairs and Chief Constables to consider the reform of policing structures in England & Wales.

In particular, the Police Authority will be giving careful thought to issues and options set out in a detailed report prepared for the Home Secretary by Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary (HMIC), which challenges the capacity and capability of forces with less than 4,000 police officers to deal with certain types of major incident or crime on their own.

A similar question arose previously for Cumbria with recommendations to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister from the Boundary Committee for England (withdrawn May 2004).

As before, any position taken by the Police Authority towards the Home Secretary's proposals will be based on the fundamental principle of supporting new proposals that benefit the people of Cumbria and policing in Cumbria; whilst robustly challenging any that would not. On this occasion, the Home Secretary has clearly stated his preference for creating "Strategic" forces which meet or exceed that size, but there will be a three month period of consultation, first, before any discussions between forces lead to change.

During the consultation period the Police Authority will work with the Constabulary, and with local people, to develop a vision for the future policing of the County. During this period we will explore all the options available to take this matter forward, and we will be looking for clarity on the key question of what most benefits the people and policing of Cumbria.

### 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 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 (and, if necessary, dismissing) the Chief Constable; Deputy Chief Constable, and Assistant Chief Constables;*
- *monitoring and managing local police performance.*

News Release

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Further information: Clive Alcock, Clerk & Chief Executive; or Stuart Edwards, Deputy Clerk to the Authority, at the Cumbria Police Authority office, Carleton Hall, Penrith CA10 2AU. Tel. (01768) 217734 Website: [www.cumbriapoliceauthority.org.uk](http://www.cumbriapoliceauthority.org.uk)

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*Maintaining an efficient and effective police service*

