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NEWS RELEASE

AUTHORITIES EXTEND JOINT WORKING FOR FIREARMS AND ROADS POLICING

The Police Authorities of Cleveland and Durham have approved a recommendation to establish a joint firearms and roads policing unit.

The new single unit will manage firearms operations and training for both forces. In addition it will oversee roads policing, including patrols, collision investigation, traffic management and safety cameras.

The aim will be to maximise the potential for effective and efficient deployment of firearms and roads policing resources of both forces, with expected overall annual efficiency savings of £2½m.

The new unit will function from two operating bases: Wynyard in Cleveland and Aykley Heads in Durham, with firearms training continuing to be provided at the existing joint force Tactical Training Centre at Urray Nook.

Chair of Cleveland Police Authority, Councillor Dave McLuckie said: “It clearly makes sense to examine ways in which forces can collaborate in those areas where it can improve the service and achieve greater efficiency. Initially the project between ourselves and Durham, which was part-funded by the Home Office, looked at the possibility of a joint firearms operation but was then extended to include roads policing because of the obvious close links.

“As well as overseeing roads policing, ARV services and the Urray Nook training centre, the new joint management unit will cover a number of other specialist functions such as collision investigation, stolen vehicle examination and safety cameras.

“We believe it is a sensible development of our joint working arrangements and, as well as providing a streamlined service able to respond to the needs across both force areas, it will generate significant savings at a time when our budgets face extreme pressures.”



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Mr Peter Thompson, Chair of Durham Police Authority reinforced the view of the Chief Constables and the Chair of Cleveland Police Authority and added that: “This exciting initiative builds on existing collaboration between the two Forces and is one of several projects aimed at delivering more efficient and effective policing across our respective Force areas”.

Mr Thompson added: “It is a fundamental requirement of Police Authorities to ensure that value for money is obtained for the benefit of the communities they serve.

“The residents of County Durham and Darlington can be assured that this is yet another excellent example of achieving that goal”.

The decision to create the new joint unit follows the successful implementation of routine cross-border deployments to spontaneous firearms incidents, jointly staffed pre-planned firearms operations, a shared standby team to support spontaneous and protracted operations, and arrangements for sharing incident management.

This has produced operational benefits and financial savings for both forces.

In support of the agreement, the Chief Constables of Cleveland and Durham have issued this statement:

“We are delighted that the two forces and authorities have agreed to implement a joint unit for these vital specialist areas and are confident that this development will help us in achieving our shared aim of providing efficient, top quality services in support of the needs of our combined communities.

“This is an exciting development, and staff consultation on the implementation of this unit will continue.”

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