



Durham Police Authority

PRESS RELEASE

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Police Authority appeals to Minister of State for Policing and Criminal Justice to listen to their concerns

In responding to the Government's plans on the future of policing, Durham Police Authority has appealed to Nick Herbert MP, to consider their concerns and ideas on the future of policing.

'The Durham Model' was submitted to the Home Office earlier this week, as an alternative to the Government's plans for Directly Elected Commissioners as outlined in 'Policing in the 21st Century: Reconnecting Police and the People'. After reflecting on the potential risks and benefits of the Home Office's proposal, Police Authority members agreed that a refined model should be submitted to the Home Office for consideration.

The Durham Model builds on the Government's plans to introduce a democratically elected person whilst also ensuring the necessary checks and balances are in place. Mr Peter Thompson, Chairman of Durham Police Authority said:

"The robust governance structure of our proposal will lessen a number of key risks in policing in relation to the new Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), such as extremism, single issue campaigns and also minimising politics in policing.

"Our suggestion would see Durham Police Authority be replaced by a new 'Durham Police & Crime Board'. The Board would be led and chaired by the directly elected Commissioner and would comprise five Appointed Non-Executive Directors, who would be assessed against a rigorous competency framework. It is proposed that the five would be a mix of elected councillors and independent members drawn from County Durham and Darlington.

"I firmly believe that policing at a local level should be at the heart of our communities. The Police and Crime Board would ensure scrutiny of the Chief Constable and the Constabulary at a strategic level, whilst embedding a culture of customer focus and value for money services".

Other 'Durham Model' benefits for the public include:

- Keeping politics out of policing
- Ensuring that local communities are fully engaged in protection from extremist views
- Keeping the public safe from serious crime and terrorism, and
- Empowering the public through greater local representation so that they have a stronger voice on local policing matters.

Mr Thompson added:

“The Durham Model is based on a number of criteria, and although it builds on the proposal by the Home Office, we believe that our model would be more cost effective, business like and much more akin to proven models elsewhere in the public and independent sectors.

“The Durham Model and the Police Authority’s response to the Home Office’s proposal are available on our website at www.durham-pa.gov.uk and we welcome comments from the public.”

Durham Police Authority can be contacted through the following methods:

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Notes to Editors

Durham Police Authority is an independent body responsible for ensuring Durham Constabulary delivers an efficient and effective police service. It is made up of 17 local people who include 9 councillors, 8 members of the public who are the independent members.

The Authority ensures that the Constabulary is accountable to the people of County Durham and Darlington and ensures that citizens have a say in how they are policed.

The Authority is responsible, amongst other matters, for setting the budget for the Constabulary and, following consultation with local communities, mapping out the strategic direction of policing. This includes agreeing policing priorities and setting the Constabulary challenging targets to drive performance higher.

The Authority’s Vision

“To ensure that policing in County Durham and Darlington is fair, effective and visible”

The Authority’s Mission

“To be the effective voice of our communities in securing the delivery of high quality policing by:

- Exercising strong & effective leadership
- Engaging positively with communities to build confidence in local policing
- Strengthening partnership working
- Promoting equality, tolerance & respect for human rights
- Scrutinising and challenging police performance to secure continuous improvement
- Scrutinising and challenging business systems and processes to ensure effective use of resources

For further information or comment, please contact: Nyama Johnson, Policy & Communications Officer, Durham Police Authority

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