

Mr Bill Longmore
Police & Crime Commissioner
West Mercia
PO Box 487
Shrewsbury
SY2 6WB

March 13, 2013

Dear Mr Longmore

Thank you for your time updating me and my Parliamentary colleagues on the proposals to bring cost savings to West Mercia Police. I note that these proposals are currently out for consultation and I would like to make the following comments relevant to my constituency of West Worcestershire.

Malvern

With regard to using the Malvern Police Station, I accept your proposals to make better use of Malvern HQ and shared service proposals with Warwickshire Police. However, staff who are currently based in Malvern will have to travel to Ledbury or Worcester to start their shift. I would suggest that if that is a longer journey from home than before, staff should receive a mileage allowance to reflect this.

The public in Malvern would also welcome a more central point of contact with the Police. Could a sharing arrangement for space be discussed with either the District or the Town Council in the same way as in Tenbury and Pershore?

Visibility and Response

The public support plans to ensure that Malvern police units spend more time on visible policing duties, especially the need to utilise single officer patrols. I want reassurance that response times will not be affected by relocating command centres to alternative locations and I would insist that you measure response times and commit to maintaining or improving them as a result of these changes.

Tenbury and Pershore

I understand that both of these resources are to be re-located. I would urge you to take into special account the views of both town councils and local councillors. They have valuable insights into the best solution to this problem. My own opinion is that there will be a range of possibilities in both towns and I would favour the most visible and central location. I will also encourage both councils to respond to this consultation process.

Wider Policing Issues

As you will know from my previous correspondence, I am a strong supporter of Special Constables and I welcome your plans to recruit both regular staff and Special Constables. They are an effective additional resource to achieve your police and crime plan and are essential to reassure residents who like to see visible police resources on foot. I think Special Constables can be especially valuable in rural areas, where they can work effectively with parish councils and Neighbourhood Watch areas

I have also commented that illegal drug distribution and use is a serious issue in two areas where you are seeking to change the current police resource configuration – Pershore and Malvern. I would hope that additional visible policing will increase as a result of these changes and will result in crime reduction in this area.

I would hope that more mobile patrols will result in an increase in detection of persistent speeding offenders. My rural villages feel very exposed at these changes and more mobile patrols in these areas would have the double win of delivering visible policing and speed offence deterrents. Neighbourhood watch schemes are also important.

The 101 number for non-urgent calls is very useful and it needs to be widely publicised.

Yours sincerely

Harriett Baldwin
MP for West Worcestershire