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~~Mr Roger Chaffey~~
Clerk – Social Justice and Regeneration Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CARDIFF
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18 October 2005

Dear Mr Chaffey

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE
Restructuring of Constabulary

Further to your letter of the 28 September, I set out the views of this Authority:-

Newport has enjoyed an excellent working relationship with the Gwent Police Force and we have partnered most successfully in addressing community safety issues in the City. Our key working relationship is at the Divisional level and we are most concerned to ensure that the role and resource base available to the BCU is strengthened. Hence, any proposal to break up BCUs or dilute their role should be resisted. We further believe that the focus currently being given to Neighbourhood Policing needs to be strengthened. This is an essential element in the reassurance agenda and enabling an effective partnership approach to low level crime and anti-social behaviour. This is the number one issue for our communities.

With any major change to Force structures the issues of local profile and accountability need to be addressed. Related to this is the need to strengthen the role of Local Elected Members at Police Authority level and in working with Divisional Commanders.

We also recognise the need for Police Forces to be adequately resourced to deal with level two serious crime. We note the report's recommendations relating to minimum Force size and see no reason to disagree with these. Hence, this Authority will support any appropriate Police Force structure that enables a more effective resolution to level two crime and at the same time gives further resources and authority to the BCU.

Referring to your terms of reference, I believe that my response addresses item 1. As far as item 2 is concerned the key relationship between this Council and the Police, within the Community Safety Partnership, is at the Divisional Commander level. While there may be connectivity between Fire Service and Police Service boundaries, I do not believe that this should necessarily be a key driver for structural change (your item 3).

I am happy for this submission to be available for public scrutiny.

Yours sincerely

COUNCILLOR RAY TRUMAN
Cabinet Member Community Safety and Sustainability