

## **More officers to tackle Crime in Our Communities**

Bedfordshire Police have drawn up ambitious plans to improve the service provided by the Force while also saving taxpayers' money.

From October 2011, the Force and the Police Authority will deliver a more streamlined process to improve both operational capacity and capability. This means that more officers will be available to deal with incidents reported to us by the public.

The Force carried out a detailed review of the way it organised key departments to identify areas where costs could be cut and performance improved. During the process, residents confirmed they were happy for structural matters to be dealt with by the Force so long as they received an appropriate police response when needed and crime continued to fall.

The new changes will see the number of police officers dedicated to local policing double from 92 to 185. This means a larger number of officers will be available to tackle local crime, anti-social behaviour and other community concerns while PCSOs will carry out more patrols.

There will no longer be any geographic boundaries or divisions separating communities. Instead, a Chief Superintendent will oversee Local Policing while another will be responsible for Tackling Crime.

Through reorganisation, the Force and the Police Authority will speed up response times. A new centralised team will respond to incidents county-wide officers will get to where they are needed more quickly as well as save money.

Meanwhile, a greater number of incidents will be resolved over the telephone to reduce demand on frontline staff thanks to a new appointment system for non-emergency issues. A recent survey found that people accepted this as a good way of dealing with non-urgent matters. A new three digit non-emergency number will be introduced in the autumn, after which time all you will need to dial is 101 for non-urgent situations.

Peter Conniff, Chair of Bedfordshire Police Authority, said: "We've listened to our residents throughout the review process and their comments have very much informed our strategic decisions. The changes have been made to promote greater access to police services and deliver a more effective response that meets the expectations of our communities."