

n e w s r e l e a s e



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PLANS FOR A JOINT FIREARMS SUPPORT UNIT APPROVED

IT WAS announced today (May 6) that both Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Police Authorities have given the go-ahead for a joint Firearms Support Unit for the two forces to be established in July this year.

The decision will generate significant efficiencies for the two forces, which will be re-invested into frontline policing across the two counties.

The move follows the establishment of three joint units in key areas of police service delivery in April this year, and the launch of the Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire Major Crime Unit in 2007, one of the most successful police collaboration initiatives in England and Wales.

Peter Conniff, Chair of Bedfordshire Police Authority, commented: "The two forces have submitted an excellent proposal in relation to a joint firearms capability which has been scrutinised and approved by the two Police Authorities. The project will lead greater efficiencies, particularly in relation to training, which is obviously vitally important in this area of work. The collaborative initiatives already in place have shown that working together in this way can enable the two forces to deliver a more efficient and resilient policing service to our communities."

Chair of Hertfordshire Police Authority, Stuart Nagler, said: "We were particularly impressed with the detailed work that has already been undertaken by the two forces to align firearms policies and procedures in advance of the new joint unit being set up. Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire are leading the way in collaboration in the country, and other forces and Police Authorities are taking an active interest in our progress with this groundbreaking work. The work we are doing can only strengthen both Hertfordshire Constabulary and Bedfordshire Police forces."

The Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire Firearms Support Unit will have two operational bases, at Welwyn Garden City and Kempston, with a training base at Bedfordshire Police Headquarters. Officers will continue to be deployed across the two counties as required and support a wide range of pro-active policing operations and initiatives. This collaboration will save approximately £437,000 per annum.

The proposals for the joint firearms capability were developed in consultation with staff by the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Joint Collaboration Team, which was set up specifically to explore opportunities to improve efficiency, effectiveness and resilience across a range of key policing services.

The work of the Collaboration Team is overseen by the Joint Police Authority Collaboration Group, which is chaired by Peter Conniff, Chair of Bedfordshire Police Authority and with Stuart Nagler as Vice-Chair representing Hertfordshire. Government legislation states that plans to collaborate need formal approval by both Police Authorities before implementation can take place.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: Library photos of Peter Conniff and Stuart Nagler are obtainable by contacting Sally Patient or Sallie Blair on the contact numbers shown below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

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