

## **LIBRARY E-BOOK SERVICE OF TO FLYING START**

The e-book service was launched on the 9th August. Since then there have been 484 visits in the first month to the website with a total of 55 downloads. These downloads have been made by 35 users. Currently 217 titles are available. The average loan period is 19 days with 94.55% of the loans for fiction, with biographies being the next most popular genre.

In common with most public libraries Cambridgeshire have launched the service to test the technical aspects of the service and also because of the limited number of titles which are available.

Currently publishers are uncertain of their approach to the lending of e-books by public libraries and a number will not currently allow access to their titles. As a result our range of titles is much more limited than that of the market leader the Kindle. Our titles cannot be downloaded onto a Kindle as this is a proprietary format and does not allow library loaned material to be which adheres to an open standard.

E-books is a service in the early stages of development as the technology develops and it becomes easier to download titles and a wider range of titles is available the service should develop.

## **TAKING STEPS TOWARDS CAMBRIDGESHIRE'S NEWEST CHILDREN'S CENTRE**

County Council Chairman John Powley was the guest of honour when he officially opens Cambridgeshire's latest Children's Centre in Bassingbourn. Cllr Powley will cut the ribbon and a celebratory cake will also be shared. The opening will be part of a fun day for families between 10am and 12 noon.

Attractions at the fun day will include an army assault course for young people, provided by neighbouring Bassingbourn Barracks, and a bouncy castle. There will also be crafts and activities for under 5's as well as a welcome pack.

The Stepping Stones Children's Centre in Brook Road has an activity room, a health room, an office, reception area, kitchen and outdoor play area for children. The other part of the building provides new facilities for the Pre-school, breakfast club and out of school club.

Children's Centres are a national government initiative, which are being delivered across the country by local authorities. Their core purpose is to improve outcomes for all children from birth to age five. Children's Centres offer easier access for families of children under five to health, family support and drop-in activities, along with information about local childcare, early education, specialist services for under 5's and help with finding jobs and training.

## **COUNCIL TAX FREEZE GRANT**

The Chancellor of the Exchequer has announced a Council Tax Freeze Grant payable to authorities which freeze the Council Tax for 2012/13 at 2011/12 levels. HM Treasury stated this was 'a one-off grant equivalent to a 2.5 % increase'. In Cambridgeshire's case the amount received will be approximately £5,847,000

The Council Tax Freeze Grant for 2011/12 will continue to be paid in 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15.

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## **COUNTY COUNCIL TO STAY FOCUSED ON SAFETY MEASURES ON THE A1307**

Cambridgeshire County Council will continue to focus on safety measures on the A1307 to build on work already carried out which has cut accidents by more than 50% in the past five years. The County Council's Road Safety Team regularly reviews the accident record of county roads following serious accidents and following the recent double tragedy on the A1307, the team will look again at any additional measures which could be introduced within existing financial resources to further improve the safety record.

The work already carried out includes reduced speed limits on some stretches, improved signing and lining, traffic island realignment, installation of a static safety camera, a road safety campaign to influence driver behaviour and 'accident blackspot' warning signs to alert drivers to the number of accidents on the route. A recent meeting between the County Council, MEP Vicky Ford and local representatives, agreed that a further review of safety measures should be carried out.

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said: "The County Council has already carried out a programme of safety improvement work which has halved the number of accidents on this road in five years. That work includes installation of a safety camera, reduced speed limits, better lining and signing and warning signs to alert drivers to the fact that the road has been an accident hotspot in the past.

While I am pleased with the impact of the improvements, the recent fatal accident at the Dean crossroads highlights the need to continue to constantly monitor the safety record on the road including looking at the outcomes of police investigations into the cause of any accidents which occur, to see what could be done to further reduce the number of accidents on the A1307."

The earlier safety campaign work will be reviewed with local people and County Councillors, future work could include further casualty route warning signs, high profile enforcement operations with the police and consideration of further speed limit changes.

## **WOODLAND IMPROVEMENT GRANT**

The Forestry Commission has provided the County Council with a cash grant that will enable work to be carried out on the County Farms woodland Estate. One of the sites is at Histon and Girton Community woods.

These 3 blocks of woodland were planted approximately 15 years ago, and as little management has been carried out since it is now in need of works. Contractors will carry out the work this winter.

The wood has permissive access throughout and works will involve coppicing along the paths to improve access, making it feel less enclosed in areas and helping the paths to dry out in winter. The grant also allows us to put in waymark posts to improve access. By coppicing we will replicate the natural varied structure of a mature woodland, with areas of shrubby growth and areas where light can reach the woodland floor, encouraging ground flora diversity.

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said: "This cash grant from the Forestry Commission is very good news and builds on the excellent joint working between the two organisations.

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## **A BISHOP'S BLESSING FOR NEW SCHOOL BUILDINGS**

The Bishop of Huntingdon will be the guest of honour at an official opening ceremony to mark the completion of new buildings at Burrough Green C of E Primary School. A special ceremony will be held on Tuesday 18 October between 6.00pm and 7.00pm when the buildings will be officially opened and dedicated by the Rt Rev'd David Thomson.

Burrough Green CE Primary School is one of the oldest schools in the country. It all started in the early part of the 1600s when the local Rector, Dr Anthony Cage, had a good idea. This was only some 20 years after the death of Queen Elizabeth I and within living memory of the victory over the Spanish Armada in 1588. He left a house and land to raise rent to pay for a poor woman of the parish to teach reading and for training an apprentice.

By 1633 the records show there were two educated ladies, the widows Folkes and Desborough, employed by the scheme, with the schooling taking place in village homes. Dr Cage's vision was driven by a social and religious conviction, not uncommon at the time, that to enable people to have a fulfilling and meaningful encounter with God they should be taught to read.

The Bible phrase "If ye continue in my word then ye are my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free." (John 8:31-32) was taken very seriously. Spurred by the publication of the King James' Bible in 1611, knowing and possessing the word meant reading. So started a slow and steady revolution that led to parliamentary democracy, the National Schools, free education and emancipation for the common man and woman.

By 1708 sufficient funds had accumulated to build a dedicated school room, and not long after a school house and alms house were added. Further endowments of land and buildings bequeathed by Elizabeth March in Brinkley, and the Drs Samuel Knight and Thomas Watson of Burrough Green consolidated the educational aspirations of the community.

The legacy of this support continues to benefit the school today. Until recently, for example, local children still received a bursary from the charities to attend school - possibly the only example of children being paid to attend school between the ages of 4 and 16 in the country.

However, by the early part of the 21st century the original buildings and the more recent extensions were beginning to fail as the school's numbers increased, and the physical fabric deteriorated. Builders started work in August 2009, completing the work two years later. One of the oldest schools in the country had become one of the newest.

The new buildings consist of a refurbished Listed Building which housed the old school, now serving the Playgroup (for children 2-4 years), providing a music room and library. The rest of the school is completely new, housing 4 classes, admin block, kitchens, and a new hall. The school also hopes to develop a museum and gallery space to celebrate its heritage. The project cost around £2.8m.

"The school is very proud of its history, but is also proud of the exciting future it is carving out for itself, as a centre of educational opportunity, excitement, innovation, and excellence. That - taken with its strong sense of moral purpose - would have made Dr Cage a very happy man."

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## **CELEBRATIONS THE PRIMARY CONSIDERATION AT DITTON LODGE**

A week of celebrations will mark the official transition of Ditton Lodge First School into an all-through Primary School. The completion of new buildings at the school means it can now cater for the full primary age range of 4 to 11 for up to 210 pupils. The £3.1m extension comprises a new entrance, new reception office, head teacher's office and medical inspection area. The staffroom has been enlarged and refurbished. Existing classrooms were also refurbished to a high specification.

Three additional classrooms have also been built, each including whiteboards and wet areas. The Pre-school is also in a new building, having moved out of the mobile classroom they previously occupied. Also included in the scheme is a large sports hall and discovery centre, part funded by the school. The school grounds have undergone a significant landscaping project to provide a stimulating outside learning environment.

## **BEGINNERS WORKSHOP - CLIMB YOUR FAMILY TREE FOR FREE**

Cambridgeshire County Council is delighted to announce two free workshops where residents can learn to explore the world's largest family history website for free. The workshops have been made possible by the generous support of volunteers from ProQuest, an information firm central to serious research and the distributor of Ancestry Library Edition.

Ancestry Library Edition is a leading online genealogy resource, with more than 5 billion names in over 4000 collections. It allows people to search census returns, birth, marriage and death records, passenger lists, and much, much more. Best of all, access to Ancestry Library Edition is available free of charge in Cambridgeshire Libraries. The first workshop took place at Central Library, Cambridge, on Thursday 6th October, repeated on Thursday 15th December. They begin at 2.30 pm and last one hour. The sessions are open to anyone aged 16+, and are free of charge. To reserve a place email

[Your.Library@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:Your.Library@cambridgeshire.gov.uk) call 0345 045 5225, or ask any member of staff in Central Library.

The forthcoming workshops, led by Alison Knight from ProQuest, will help first-time users explore this treasure store of genealogical data. They will be especially helpful for those who have an interest in family history, but are not so confident at using a computer - although basic keyboard and mouse skills will be assumed.

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said: There is a huge and growing interest in family history, as shown by the popularity of BBC TV's 'Who Do You Think You Are?' Cambridgeshire Libraries and Archives helps thousands of people trace their ancestors using a whole range of resources of which Ancestry is one of the best known.

Cambridgeshire County Council extends a warm welcome to volunteers from ProQuest. This is a wonderful example of the business community supporting their local library."

### About ProQuest

ProQuest connects people with vetted, reliable information. Key to serious research, the company has forged a 70-year reputation as a gateway to the world's knowledge - from dissertations to governmental and cultural archives to news, in all its forms. Its role is essential to libraries and other organisations whose missions depend on the delivery of complete, trustworthy information. ProQuest's information pool is accessible through the all-new ProQuest(r) platform, which moves beyond navigation to empower researchers to use, create, and share content-accelerating research productivity.

## **CAMBRIDGESHIRE BUCKING NATIONAL TREND**

Cambridgeshire is bucking the national trend by increasing the number of babies under the age of one placed with adopters. National statistics have focussed on the number of adoption orders made for children of that age - a legal process which has to be completed to confirm the adoption. Although no adoption orders were made in relation to this age group last year, 13 children under the age of one were placed with adopters.

Adoptive parents are not able to make their adoption application to Court until the child has been placed with them for a minimum of ten weeks. The timescales following the application are then directed by the Courts. In total, 39 children of all ages in Cambridgeshire were placed with adoptive families - 25 of which were under the age of two. In total, 26 adoption orders were completed.

For the period from 1 April 2011 to 29 September 2011, Cambridgeshire has already achieved two adoption orders for children under one year and for a further eight for children between one and two years. The County Council expects this trend to continue following the signing of an agreement with adoption agency Coram earlier this year, which will result in improved decision-making and fewer delays in the adoption process. Cambridgeshire County Council launched the partnership with Coram – a national children's charity and specialist voluntary adoption agency - in response to the Government's call for local authorities to improve their adoption services by.

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said: "Cambridgeshire has maintained a proactive approach to adoption and are conscious of the need to ensure that adoptive placements are achieved for children as young as possible and in a timely way. It is difficult to achieve adoption orders for children under one, but Cambridgeshire has been successful in placing children in their adoptive families before they are one year old."

## **RESIDENTS TO HAVE THEIR SAY ON NEW CAMBOURNE SECONDARY SCHOOL**

Cambridgeshire County Council is asking residents to comment on its plans to build a new secondary school for Cambourne as a consultation is launched this week. Plans for the new school will be on display on Wednesday 12 October between 2pm and 8pm at The Hub, Cambourne Community Centre, High Street, Cambourne. Planning Officers from the County Council will be on hand at the event to answer questions, particularly about the planning process and how local residents and other members of the public can have their say on the proposed development. The new school is intended to take some of the burden from nearby Comberton Village College which will be full by 2013.

The site for the new school lies between the north-western edge of Lower Cambourne and Swansley Wood Farm. The proposal includes the construction of a two storey school building including a gym and sports hall, a dining area, a main hall, an activity studio as well as general purpose and subject-specific classrooms and hard play areas and sports pitches

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said: "I would like to encourage as many local residents as possible to come along to this event so that they can have their say on this important proposal. If you can't make it on the day, you can always comment on the proposal by email or send a letter to the County Council's planning team."

Members of the public have until Monday 24 October 2011 to comment either by email to [planningdc@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:planningdc@cambridgeshire.gov.uk) or by letter to Box 1213, Shire Hall, Cambridge, CB3 0AP. The proposal is likely to be decided by the Council in the New Year.

The full planning application can be seen on the County Council's website at: [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/environment/planning/applications](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/environment/planning/applications) and follow the links.

## **USING YOUR TIME FOR THE GOOD OF THE COMMUNITY**

Communities will be time rich with the announcement of two new Time Bank schemes. The innovative approach was showcased at an event hosted by Cambridgeshire County Council and CHS Group to over a hundred people from all sections of business and the community. The event explained how people's time and skills are the biggest asset of any community. 'Time banking links people in a social network; each act of caring triggers a reciprocal act so that every transaction has social capital built in'.

Time banking relies on a form of exchange which does not involve money. For every hour that a person 'gives' they are awarded a credit and can then 'receive' one hour of support from someone else in the time bank. But it is not just a skills exchange; the same principle can be used by service users and providers for a form of co-production, or by organisations in sharing resources and assets.

In Cambridge, time banks already have a strong foothold. The Freedom Club Time bank set up in 2006 already has over 100 members including a number of local homeless people who are 'giving' their time to help with garden renovations. With the help of the County and CHS, two new Time banks are shortly to be launched where CHS are looking to set up an initiative in Cambourne and are working with residents to explore what they feel will work there.

In Somersham, a time bank scheme sponsored by the County Council, but led by the Parish Council is due to be launched in the next few weeks. Offers of time from local people will be aimed at helping older and more vulnerable people. The project is part of the County Council's localism agenda, where real power is shifted to local communities.

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said: "Time banking is such a simple idea, but it can transform the way people work together for the good of their community. You might be able to help with someone's gardening, painting a community venue or shopping for someone housebound. In return you will benefit by receiving assistance from others. It's a win-win approach to strengthening communities."

More information is available at the contacts below.

[www.chsgroup.org.uk](http://www.chsgroup.org.uk) (opens in new window)    [http://www.chsgroup.org.uk/](http://www.chsgroup.org.uk)

## **TRADING STANDARDS SCHEME TO PROTECT PUBLIC AND BUSINESS UP AND RUNNING**

A new Trading Standards scheme to help protect local people and businesses across Cambridgeshire is now up and running and local firms are being invited to become members. 'Buy With Confidence' - which was approved by the County Council's Cabinet on September 27 - will provide householders and consumers with an online database of local Trading Standards approved businesses who can be relied upon to provide a top quality service. The scheme will also help to resolve any disputes which do occur and protect businesses from malicious or unfair complaints or disputes over the quality and cost of goods and services.

Buy With Confidence encourages businesses to comply with both the spirit and letter of the law and enables them to approach Trading Standards for assistance. The scheme also provides a support structure to consumers should they have a dispute with a member business. The scheme rules require various checks on applicants, including that the business is properly licensed, for example with the Consumer Credit or Waste Carriers Licence if applicable. Staff working in people's homes will also need to have a current CRB check. Business will benefit from regularly updated advice on changes to legislation, with a dedicated e-mail and telephone contact with the Trading Standards Service.

Buy With Confidence schemes already operate in over 40 local authority areas with over 4,500 businesses signed up creating a nationwide network of pre-vetted bone-fide suppliers and contractors. Any Cambridgeshire-based business which wants more information about the scheme, or to apply for membership, should visit: [www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk](http://www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk)

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### **OUTSTANDING PROVISION AT CAMBRODGE PILGRIM PUPIL REFERRAL UNIT**

Outstanding teaching at the Pilgrim Pupil Referral Unit in Cambridge ensures that pupils' achievements are also outstanding, according to Government inspectors. Two inspectors from OfSTED – the Office for Standards in Education – said the unit as a whole was outstanding, together with many individual aspects such as pupils' behaviour and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

They also praised the excellent engagement with parents and the outstanding partnerships with medical staff. "Pupils' achievement is outstanding and they greatly enjoy their education. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay healthy and nearly all do so. Pupils' above average attendance, together with their outstanding achievement and outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, prepares them exceptionally well for the next stage of their lives," said the inspectors' report.

"Key strengths of the outstanding teaching are the excellent relationships and management of pupils' behaviour by staff. As a result, pupils show great respect for all adults in the classroom, listen very carefully and follow instructions. "Lessons are always brisk and lively, and teachers provide a wide range of resources to support learning," it added. Inspectors particularly highlighted the leadership of the unit. "Good leadership, based on good monitoring of teaching and learning by the head of the unit, the teachers-in-charge of the centres and the local authority advisor have resulted in sustained high quality teaching.

"Outstanding involvement of parents and carers in regular reviews of their child's progress and in supporting learning, together with outstanding links with pupils' schools, have a strong impact on achievement," they added. The report also said that the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage was good, and that the sixth form provided an outstanding education for students.

"Good leadership and management, excellent liaison with medical staff and the expertise of staff have enabled high quality provision to be maintained since the last inspection," the report concluded. The unit was encouraged to develop an overall strategic view of how well pupils are achieving within each of their centres.

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said; "I am delighted that once again the dedication of my hard working staff has been acknowledged and the accolade of outstanding has been awarded. The pupils at the Pilgrim PRU are very vulnerable and have to overcome many difficulties. They deserve the very best education and I am very proud of the fact that they receive it at the Pilgrim PRU."

### **GUIDED BUSWAY UPDATE**

Passenger journeys in the first two months of the Guided Busway operations totalled approximately 433,000. The Business case for the scheme assumed that it would take three years for patronage to build up to around journeys 300,000 per month, and that use in the first year would be only half of that amount. Patronage in the first two months is therefore around 50% higher than forecast.

Consequently, both operators have modified their time tables to improve reliability and to increase the number of bus services available. Stagecoach Sunday services have changes from hourly to every 20 minutes and Whippet from every two hours to hourly. Further additional weekday services have been added and some destinations amended to better meet customer demand. More changes are planned for services in the next month.

### **ROLL UP, ROLL UP FOR CIRCUS STARS READING CHALLENGE**

More than 6,000 Cambridgeshire children en-rolled up in the County's libraries for this Summer's "Circus Stars" Reading Challenge. The children were invited by Cambridgeshire County Council libraries to read six books or more over the course of the summer holiday in the national campaign. By the end some 3,487 girls [57%] and 2,628 boys [43%] participated in the scheme. They joined at their local library and were given a circus themed membership pack to get them started. There were stickers and rewards to collect along the way with a medal and certificate for all who read six books. A total of 3,395 children received certificates and medals at special presentation ceremonies.

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said: "The combination of fun, freedom and creativity impacts significantly on children's reading levels, range, motivation and confidence. Taking part in the Summer Reading Challenge helps prevent the 'summer reading dip' in achievement when children without reading opportunities at home over the long summer break traditionally lose ground in their reading."

"The summer reading challenge harnesses the power of reading for pleasure to improve children's life chances. Research shows that children who enjoy reading are more likely to score highly on reading assessments than those who don't and that children who use libraries regularly are twice as likely to be above average readers. We want Libraries to be community hubs and a great initiative such as this, is a perfect way of getting families into our facilities and seeing what else is on offer."

### **FAIR WAY TO HELP YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

This year's 'Make A Difference Day' will highlight how volunteers can tackle loneliness and isolation at a special fair held at Cambridge Central Library on Saturday, October 29. The Volunteer Recruitment fair is being held by Cambridgeshire County Council Library Service together with Volunteering Cambridgeshire. The free event will celebrate community service volunteers and will give people the opportunity to find out more about volunteering in their local area or opportunities in Cambridgeshire County Council and other organisations.

The event is being held in the Central Library, Cambridge from 10am to 2pm in the third floor conference room. There will be staff on hand to talk to and more information can be found at [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/leisure/libraries/news/](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/leisure/libraries/news/) or contact [maggie.brown@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:maggie.brown@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said: "Why not come along to this free Volunteer Recruitment Fair at Central Cambridge Library. We will have a range of volunteering opportunities available including those across Cambridgeshire County Council, such as in libraries, Museums, Archives and Learning Centres as well as a number of external organisations too. Perhaps you are interested in crafts, family history or IT - we have roles in all of these areas. Cambridgeshire Libraries are at the heart of their communities and this is just one of the events we are holding to help benefit residents."

## **PUTTING CAMBRIDGESHIRE FAMILIES IN THE KNOW**

Local parents have been asked for their views on information for families as part of a consultation by Cambridgeshire County Council. The research tied in with Parents' Week (October 17 to 24) - which had the theme Family Friendly... what's the story?

Research has suggested that families sometimes struggle to find the information they need. This could be related to childcare, education, health, behaviour - anything around families and parenting. The problem can be even worse for parents with a child with special educational needs or disability, who often find they have to search hard for information that is often inconsistent. The results of the survey will be used to develop the information provided by the Council to support families to make informed decisions for themselves and their children. A more specialised consultation with parents of children with special educational needs or disability will begin on 1 November.

Local County Councillor John Reynoldas, said: "In order to get a reliable idea of the information needs of families in Cambridgeshire, we need as many people as possible to complete the survey. It will take about 20 minutes and 10 respondents will win a £20 high street shopping voucher. " The survey can be completed online until 30 October at <http://tinyurl.com/6dh2ksy> and can also be found at [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/fis](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/fis) .

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## **POLICING UPDATES**

### **GO-AHEAD GIVEN FOR FOUR JOINT FUNCTIONS**

SAVINGS of up to £3m per year will be achieved following the recent agreement to establish four new joint functions for Bedfordshire Police, Cambridgeshire Constabulary and Hertfordshire Constabulary. The three organisations' Police Authorities have given the go-ahead for joint Firearms, Major Crime, Professional Standards and Scientific Services units to be established early next year as the 'Strategic Alliance' between the three forces continues to develop and strengthen.

The ambitious Strategic Alliance will help each of the three forces meet the unprecedented financial challenges over the next few years and reduce the impact of the budget cuts on frontline policing. By 2015, it is anticipated that a wide range of joint operational functions and support services, comprising more than 50% of policing business, will be saving around £20m per year and bring economies of scale and increased resilience.

The only areas of policing that will not be considered for joint working are local policing (incident response, neighbourhood policing and volume crime investigation) as these need to be tailored to local priorities of the communities we serve and styles of delivery, and 'Protecting Vulnerable People' functions which are best delivered in partnership with locally based agencies. The Strategic Alliance is building on the former Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Joint Collaboration Programme which has, over recent years, seen the development of 13 joint functions, already saving the two forces more than £4m per year. The two forces and Police Authorities have also worked with Cambridgeshire Constabulary to develop a Procurement function to serve the three organisations.

Police Authority member John Reynolds, said: "These complex business cases are the result of a great deal of work by the constabularies and scrutiny by the authorities. We look forward to them helping to ensure effective policing whilst making the best use of

resources for the three areas. We are very pleased to be developing this shared response with our partner forces. We will be monitoring the implementation very closely to ensure we deliver a high quality service as well as making the financial savings.”

**Firearms Unit** – This collaboration will save approximately £542,000 per annum across the three forces, provide significant capability and capacity across the three force areas and include a joint training capability ensuring that all officers are trained to the same high standard.

**Major Crime Unit** – This joint operation will save approximately £700,000 per annum. Its remit will include the investigation of homicides, attempted murders and life-threatening crimes in action as well as cold case murder reviews, ensuring that the investigation of these crimes does not impact on officers and staff fulfilling local policing duties.

**Professional Standards Department** – This collaboration will save approximately £637,000 per year. The unit will be the guardian of standards across the three forces, ensuring that the integrity and security (both physical and IT) are maintained and complaints against the police or allegations of misconduct are efficiently and effectively managed and investigated.

**Scientific Services Unit** – This collaboration will save around £670,000 per annum and will handle all the forensic and DNA work for the three forces. Further savings of £500,000 will be delivered over the following two years. The unit will align closely with the work of the Major Crime Unit.

#### **BRIEFING POLICE and CRIME COMMISSIONER & POLICE AND CRIME PANELS**

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill, proposes police authorities are replaced by elected Police and Crime Commissioners and Police and Crime Panels. The Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) will be elected by members of the public – so it could be someone you recognise. The candidates, who will serve for four years, are expected to be high profile individuals. PCCs will be responsible for a much wider agenda – not just policing, but also community safety.

The PCCs will be able to hold the chief constable to account. The Police and Crime Panels will hold the PCC by asking him/her to attend the panel meeting and answer questions. The panel can also call for information from the PCC. The panel is likely to be made up of 10 councillors (drawn from district, unitary and county) plus two co-opted members. The panel will be expected to publically comment on the PCC's draft police and crime plan.

The passing of the bill through Parliament succeeded in September – PCC elections will therefore take place in November 2012.

John Reynolds October 21<sup>st</sup> 2011