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Chief Constable**

**DORSET POLICE  
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Dr Martin Ayres  
Town Clerk  
Swanage Town Council  
The Town Hall  
High Street  
SWANAGE BH19 2NZ

Dear Dr Ayres

### **THE PROPOSED RELOCATION OF THE SWANAGE NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING TEAMS AND PUBLIC CONTACT POINT TO A CENTRAL LOCATION WITHIN THE TOWN OF SWANAGE**

As you will know we have, for some considerable time, been working with you to explore the possibility of relocating our police officers and staff based in Swanage (i.e. our Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs) and counter services staff) from our current, somewhat inaccessible site in Swanage to a more central location within the Town Hall.

This proposal is designed to increase levels of access and deliver an improved police service to the residents and visitors to Swanage and the surrounding area. We believe that such an approach would facilitate an even closer working relationship between the Town Council and the Force and offer the opportunity to enhance further the police service through a common enquiry desk serving both organisations.

The proposal is that Dorset Police occupy the entire Annexe building (with the exception of the archive store on the lower ground floor), amounting to approximately 75sq.m across 3 levels. This will necessitate some minor internal building modifications to make the space fit for purpose and meet security requirements. Very minor modifications to the exterior of the building will be required and will require planning permission. All necessary planning applications have already been submitted. It is hoped that the relevant consents will be received to enable work to start in the New Year with a view to the co-location being complete by the start of the new financial year.

As you will be aware, significant discussions have already taken place locally between the police and officers of the town council as well as with myself, my Director of Finance and my Head of Estates. This letter sets out our understanding of those discussions and provides confirmation of our commitment to them.

#### **Impact upon SNT/Patrol policing provision**

The existing Swanage Police Station provides a permanent base for two SNTs, currently amounting to five officers (two Constables and three Community Support Officers). It also provides access to our information systems, allowing officers deployed from other areas of the Force to undertake work locally.

The proposed co-location in the Town Hall will enhance this level of service through our intended investment in improved technology.

The central location will also improve visibility and access to the SNT and potentially reduce their travelling time when operationally deployed.

### **Improvements to Counter Services provision**

The proposal also presents an opportunity for Swanage Town Council and Dorset Police reception staff to work alongside each other in providing a mutually supportive service to the public – in effect an ‘Advice Hub’.

The Dorset Police Reception Desk Officer will work alongside the Town Council provision.

Functions performed will include: first point of contact to visitors, ensuring public reassurance and re-direction of police-related matters; receiving and making telephone enquiries and taking messages; receiving found property and recording lost property; recording messages for officers and providing updates to victims of crime. Support to this role will be provided by a direct telephone link to the Force’s Police Enquiry Centre (PEC) where crime details would be recorded by our dedicated call takers.

Following active interest from other councils interested in this proposal, we are actively exploring similar opportunities elsewhere in Dorset based on the ‘Swanage model’.

### **Benefits to Swanage Town Council members and staff**

A detailed review has been undertaken of the accommodation potentially available at the Town Hall. In order to meet and enhance the police service requirement, an investment by the Force in physical security and upgraded technology and communication access will be required. All such works have been discussed with officers of the Council and will be fully compliant with all local requirements. The improved security will also provide enhancements for the Council’s own officers and members.

### **Parking**

In order to facilitate the police requirement, three bays would be required for operational vehicles.

### **Financial implications**

Lease negotiations are in train and no issues are anticipated in terms of reaching agreement. This will address both annual rent charges and on-costs.

### **Conclusion**

This proposal presents a significant opportunity to enhance the current level of SNT/Patrol policing provision, and a counter service provision, bringing it closer to the Town Centre. It would also be a tangible commitment on both our organisations to ensuring the best possible value for money for taxpayers.

Dorset Police fully supports this proposal and I sincerely hope that we can, as soon as possible, move this proposal to implementation.

Yours sincerely



Martin Baker  
Chief Constable