

London Borough of Bexley

News Release

For Immediate Release

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Mayor's consultation on police front counters "flawed"

London Borough of Bexley has told the Mayor of London it strongly opposes his proposal to close the front counter at Bexleyheath Police Station and relocate it to Marlowe House in Sidcup.

There is still time for local people to give their views before the Mayor's deadline of Friday 6 October. All the information you need is [online](#).

In its formal response to the Mayor, the Council says it recognises the need for efficiencies and the need to focus resources on 'front line' staffing, but that it does not support the move of the 24/7 police station service in the borough from Bexleyheath to Sidcup.

It is critical of the way the consultation was worded and the way a survey of visitors to police stations was carried out. It also draws attention to issues with the police response to emergencies in other boroughs where policing changes are being piloted.

Council Leader Cllr Teresa O'Neill OBE said: "I drew a number of our concerns about the accuracy of the consultation to the attention of the Deputy Mayor of London for Policing and Crime."

The key reasons for the Council's position are –

- The need to listen to local residents, who have strongly indicated that they do not support the closure of the police station at Bexleyheath.
- The fact that Marlowe House does not provide a suitable base for the borough's 24/7 police station because parking is restricted and it is not a location that is easily accessible from other parts of the borough.
- Relocating the police station will move it from the ward in the borough with the highest crime, to the area with the lowest crime, which will inevitably impact on response times.
- The fact that Marlowe House is a favoured location because it provides pan-London support services for the Met, rather than that it meets the needs of local Bexley residents. The Council has suggested that the Mayor retains Bexleyheath Police Station and either moves its support services elsewhere in London or moves support services from other areas into Marlowe House.
- The fact that moving the police station away from Bexleyheath town centre will have a negative impact on the police's ability to work in partnership with the Council and NHS to keep young people safe, at a time when the Met have been judged inadequate for children and young people's services by HMI Constabulary in November 2016.
- The need to carry out proper Equality Impact Assessments on the proposals to properly consider their impact on different groups.
- The fact that the CCTV cabling from the Council's CCTV centre will need to be relayed from

Bexleyheath to Marlowe House, at significant cost.

- The fact that the consultation does not include the detailed financial information which would make it possible to weigh up the cost of the proposals against the financial benefits, even though reducing costs is the main justification for the proposed changes.

In its response the Council also says it is unhappy with the way the consultation has been carried out and with the leading nature of some of the questions used, which suggests a decision has already been made.

It has also described the survey carried out on the use of front counter service as “seriously flawed”, because it did not count all visits, seriously misrepresenting visitor numbers.

The Council argues that there are better ways of making the savings needed, including locating the emergency services in the borough together, on a smaller number of sites.

Its detailed response to the Mayor’s consultation will be published online later this week.

‘ENDS’

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Attachments

- Mayor’s consultation on police front counters “[Mayor’s consultation on police front counters](#)”



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