

**LOCAL JUSTICE AREA BOUNDARIES CONSULTATION PAPER
(Report by Head of Legal and Estates)**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider whether any comment is required on the proposal that there should be minor changes to the boundaries of the Peterborough, Huntingdonshire and Cambridge Local Justice Areas (LJA's). The proposed changes would have the effect of realigning the LJA boundaries with the Cambridgeshire Police Force divisions, the relevant local authorities and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRP's).

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In October 2005 Cambridgeshire Constabulary altered some of the boundaries of its three divisions in order to align them with South Cambridgeshire District Council and Huntingdonshire District Council. This meant that the magistrates' courts in Peterborough, Huntingdon and Cambridge were no longer aligned with the police divisions. This has led to an imbalance in workload for the courts. The Cambridgeshire Justices' Issues Group considers that a realignment of the boundaries should improve distribution of workload between the courts, and has requested that a formal consultation in respect of boundary changes is carried out.

3. PROPOSED CHANGES

- 3.1 Yaxley and surrounding villages, to the south and west of Peterborough, would move from the Peterborough LJA to the Huntingdon LJA.
- 3.2 The area around Gamlingay in south Cambridgeshire would move from the Huntingdonshire LJA to the Cambridge LJA.

4. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

- 4.1 From 1st April 2001 s.8 Courts Act 2003 divided England and Wales into LJA's as specified by the Lord Chancellor. Only he may make orders altering LJA's. Before he can make an order various parties must be consulted, one of which is any local authority whose area includes the LJA or part of the LJA. In this case responses are required by 20th June 2006.

5. RECOMMENDATION

Following consultation with Councillor Hansard is recommended that the proposed changes be supported and that this report is noted accordingly. Should any further comment be deemed necessary those representations will be passed on.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Consultation paper outlining the proposals, dated 28th March 2006.

Contact Officer: Vicki Stevens, Solicitor
 01480 388023