



PRESS RELEASE

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14 September 2011

Response to Nick Herbert's proposal for neighbourhood justice, led by JPs

John Thornhill, Chairman of The Magistrates' Association said,

"This proposal has been canvassed previously in discussions with the Minister. In a triage, neighbourhood justice role, magistrates would use their knowledge of the local community and experience in assessing seriousness to deal with offenders appropriately. We believe it could help to alleviate our long-term concerns about the inconsistent misuse and abuse of out-of-court disposals and ensure fair and transparent justice is delivered in the public arena. The Magistrates' Association welcome the opportunity to discuss further details."

END

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Notes for Editors

2011 will be the 650 anniversary of the institution of the office of Justice of the Peace (JP) and a senior judge recently stated that *its members have served the justice system with distinction ever since*. Currently just over 27,000 men and women - known as JPs or magistrates - deal with 95% of all criminal cases brought before courts and a significant number of civil matters including family work. Magistrates are not paid for attending court, receiving only modest expenses, subsistence and small recompense for any loss of earnings. They have to attend training, are mentored and regularly appraised and work within guidelines.

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PRESIDENT: The Lord Chief Justice

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