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CUMBRIA POLICE AUTHORITY

Standard Role Description for a Police Authority Member

Roles

Acting collectively the role of all Members of the Authority is to obtain the following outcomes on behalf of all the communities in Cumbria:

- An effective and efficient police service for their area;
- A Chief Constable who is held to account for the policing service delivered within the area;
- A clear strategic direction for the Constabulary in policing and an effective oversight of Constabulary policing performance;
- A process of continuing improvement in the way the Constabulary delivers policing services to the public;
- Public assurance that complaints against the police are properly dealt with by the Constabulary and complaints against Chief Officers are properly dealt with by the Police Authority;
- Public assurance that policing services are provided fairly in Cumbria and in a way which does not discriminate against any group or individual and which upholds human rights;
- Public assurance that Members participate constructively in the good governance of both the Authority and the Constabulary and, where appropriate, activities undertaken jointly with partner agencies and bodies.
- Agreement on an appropriate policing precept and level of police budget and appropriate arrangements in place to assure proper financial management;
- Effective representation for the interests of all those who live in, work in, or visit the Police Authority area and the views of local people in the nature and style of local policing adopted in Cumbria;

Responsibilities

- Acting individually and collectively to fulfil all statutory and locally determined requirements of a Police Authority, including participation in the formulation of policy, decision-making and other activities of the full Authority (such as determining the budget and precept, determining strategic direction and local policing priorities, agreeing policing and improvement plans for the Constabulary area, developing the Authority's Corporate Plan). A list of Police Authority roles and responsibilities is set out in **Annex A**.

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- As a champion on behalf of the public of policing in Cumbria to contribute individually, proactively and effectively as a Member of any Committee, Working Group, Task and Finish Group, Panel or other Authority forum to which appointed so as to ensure the strategy, policy and plans of the Authority are carried out.
- To contribute individually proactively and effectively as a member of any external board, committee, panel, or post, to which appointed to represent the Police Authority (for instance, Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, Local Strategic Partnerships, Local Authority Scrutiny Committees, Regional Joint Committee).
- To contribute individually proactively and effectively in reviews of Authority or Constabulary effectiveness or efficiency, including reviews of own personal effectiveness as an Authority Member, and contribute to ensuring improvements and major change programmes are implemented successfully to the benefit of policing.
- To maintain an up-to-date knowledge and awareness of national and local policing issues to enable an informed contribution to the work of the Authority.
- To scrutinise rigorously, to challenge and monitor all aspects of Constabulary performance.
- To participate fully in developing Authority community engagement strategies in conjunction with local people and about local policing services.
- To represent the views of the Police Authority within local communities and the views of local communities to the Authority reliably back.
- To maintain a good working knowledge of relevant Constabulary policies and practices and ensure they meet the requirements of all relevant legislation (including health and safety, human rights, race relations and disability), and to establish good working relationships of mutual trust and respect, with officers of both the Authority and the Constabulary.
- To be involved in the appointment, discipline or dismissal of senior officers and staff, as appropriate to the Committees to which appointed as a Member.
- To champion human rights and equality of opportunity, and work to eliminate unlawful discrimination both internally within the Authority and Constabulary and in the provision of policing services across Cumbria.
- To represent the Authority, when nominated to do so by the Authority, at local, regional and/or national conferences/seminars/briefings, reflecting

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accurately the corporate views of the Authority where appropriate and reporting back to the Authority on relevant issues of interest/significance.

- To attend and actively participate in training programmes and courses required as relevant to the role of Police Authority Member, as appropriate.
- To contribute to the maintenance by the Authority of an effective independent custody visiting scheme.

[NB Members are expected to attend at least 75% of all Authority meetings, Constabulary Boards and partnership meetings on which they serve throughout the year. Where a Member is unable to attend a particular meeting of the Authority, they should provide a reason for their absence along with their apologies. If necessary, this may be done in confidence to the Chief Executive.]

Conduct and Standards

Members are required to act in accordance with the Nolan Principles of standards in public life (**Annex B**) and comply with the Police Authority's Member Code of Conduct, the Police Authority's Anti-Discrimination Code of Conduct, the Member Officer Protocol, Joint Policy with the Constabulary on Anti-Corruption and all other Authority codes of conduct and practice.

Support

Members are entitled to:

- Advice, support and assistance from the Chief Executive and other Police Authority staff;
- A formal induction programme following appointment;
- Access to a range of training/learning/support/development materials and opportunities on an ongoing basis, with support from Police Authority staff;
- Appropriate information and advice from the Constabulary;
- Appropriate authorised allowances and expenses in accordance with the Authority's Scheme.

Standard Member Role Description Annex A

Summary of police authority roles and responsibilities

Local police authorities, together with chief officers and the Home Secretary, make up the **tripartite relationship** responsible for the governance of policing in England and Wales:

- the **Home Secretary** sets national strategic priorities for policing, expresses the will of Government as it applies to policing, and is answerable to Parliament about how this is carried out;
- the **local police authority** sets local policing priorities and provides independent local oversight of the police appropriate to the conditions, circumstances and requirements in its Force area; and holds the chief officer to account for the policing services delivered, whilst being itself accountable to local communities for how it does its job; and
- the **chief officer** is responsible for the independent direction and control of the police force, and is accountable to the police authority for their delivery of policing services.

The primary purpose of a police authority is to provide strategic direction and oversight of its police force. An authority's fundamental statutory duties as set out in law are to:

- maintain and efficient and effective local police force for its area;
- hold the chief officer to account;
- set the policing precept and police budget;
- ensure arrangements are in place within the force for proper financial management;
- ensure that the force acts within its powers and in accordance with the law;
- appoint the chief officer of police and senior police officers;
- oversee professional standards and complaints issues within the force;
- ensure that the local police force keeps improving, including receiving HMIC force inspection reports and responding to HMIC about implementing recommendations;
- consult local people and ensure that their views are reflected in the nature and style of policing and local policing objectives;
- work in partnership with others to reduce crime and disorder and the fear of crime;
- secure collaboration between forces, monitor their force's compliance with human rights legislation, and promote diversity;
- set local policing objectives within the national framework set by the Home Secretary, and publish plans and reports about the policing of their area;
- monitor force performance against plans and budgets;
- use discretionary power to require the chief officer to submit a written report on any matters connected with the policing of the area;

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- meet employer's liabilities, including health and safety requirements, and ensure the force does likewise;
- ensure that the force has adequate arrangements for the management of risk; and
- publish annual accounts to demonstrate the authority's stewardship of public funds.

The responsibility for operational activities and the day-to-day management of the force rests with the chief officer.

To meet the statutory duties placed on police authorities, members are responsible – collectively – for the following functions:

Engaging with local people

A key role of police authorities is to ensure that local people have a say in how they are policed and that their views are reflected in the nature and style of local policing. Police authorities are required to consult with local communities to ascertain their views on policing and to elicit their support for and co-operation with the police. Engaging in an effective and ongoing dialogue with local people and being transparent and accountable to them is therefore critical to the work that authorities do.

Scrutinising and monitoring police performance

It is the police authority's job to hold the chief constable and force to account, on behalf of local people, for the policing services delivered. Accordingly, one of the police authority's most important duties is to set standards and targets to improve local policing services, to monitor closely and to scrutinise all aspects of force performance against those targets and standards, and ensure that action is taken to remedy weak or poor performance.

Publishing a local policing plan annually

The local policing plan sets out in detail how the community will be policed in over the course of the following three years. It includes the local policing priorities, which are arrived at following consultation with local people, and performance targets for the police force. This document is drafted by the chief officer and the authority must consult him/her about any changes to the draft. But public accountability requires that ownership of the plan rests with the police authority. To inform this process, police authorities are required to:

- engage with local communities about their policing concerns and priorities – this is a wide ranging and on-going process;
- set key objectives, performance measures and targets, both for local priorities and for strategic priorities set by the Home Secretary; and
- ensure the plan includes strategies for improvements to the policing service delivered, including collaborative arrangements with other forces and efficiency savings.

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Setting the policing precept (where appropriate) and annual budget

Police authorities are responsible for setting the police budget, aligned to priorities for policing in the force area, and then for holding the chief constable to account for how the budget is spent. Police authorities receive approximately 50 to 75 per cent of funding via central government grants, and set a precept on the council tax according to locally determined need. It therefore follows that police authority members must be ready to acquire an understanding of how the funding system operates, and who is responsible for what. The chief officer is usually responsible for managing the financial resources allocated to him in the budget, although authority members will typically be involved in agreeing large contracts and capital expenditure.

Publishing an annual report and local policing summaries

The police authority is responsible for producing an annual report, to inform the community on the extent to which the local policing plan has been achieved. This will be informed by the chief officer's end of year report to the police authority. In addition, police authorities must publish, at least annually, a document that sets out how the local policing priorities will be met, as well as an objective assessment of the force's performance for the previous year. These are called local policing summaries and are circulated to every household in the local area.

Participating in local partnerships

Police authorities, along with chief officers, local authorities, health authorities and the fire and rescue service, all contribute to local crime and disorder reduction partnerships. The partnerships are responsible for producing an annual partnership plan informed by the results of a strategic assessment for the area. The plan sets out on a rolling three year basis the means by which each member of the partnership will work together to tackle local crime and drugs issues and anti-social behaviour. These local strategies are one of the elements that contribute to the development of the wider local policing plan.

Police authorities also contribute to a range of other local partnerships in the public and criminal justice sectors, such as local criminal justice boards, and have a duty to co-operate in developing local area agreements, which are the main vehicles through which councils deliver their priorities and plans. All of these partnerships will inform aspects of policing and local priorities for policing, and in turn will be informed by what the local police are doing or planning to do. In order to ensure all this activity is effectively joined up, police authority members play a key role in representing the authority on these partnerships, and individual members may, for instance, be asked to take on a lead role in a particular partnership on behalf of the authority.

Other statutory functions

In addition, police authorities have a number of other statutory functions. The most important of these include:

- monitoring the handling by the police force of complaints from the general public;

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- directly considering any complaints against the chief, deputy and assistant chief constables;
- acting as the disciplinary authority for the chief, deputy and assistant chief constables;
- meeting the requirements as a police authority and monitoring the force's compliance with the provisions of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and the Equality Act 2006, to:
 - eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment;
 - promote equality of opportunity;
 - promote good race relations between people of different racial groups and positive attitudes towards disabled persons;
 - have regard to the need to take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons; and
 - have regard to the need to encourage participation by disabled persons in public life;
- to monitor the force's compliance with the Human Rights Act 1998;
- to secure collaboration with other police authorities in the provision of services where this would be in the interests of efficiency and/or effectiveness;
- to monitor the performance of the force against the delivery of the local policing plan;
- to secure the views of local communities in relation to the policing of the area and secure their cooperation with the police in preventing crime; and
- to operate an independent custody visiting scheme to provide a check on persons detained in police cells.

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Standard Member Role Description Annex B

The seven principles of public life

(As identified by the Committee on Standards in Public Life, July 1997)

Selflessness

Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts or recommending individuals for awards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands it.

Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

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