

POLICE AUTHORITY STATUTORY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Local police authorities, together with chief officers and the Home Secretary, make up the **tripartite relationship** responsible for 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, provides independent local oversight of the police, holds the Chief Officer to account for policing services delivered, and is itself accountable to local communities for how it does its job.
- The Chief Officer is responsible for direction and control of the police force, and is accountable to the police authority for the delivery of policing services.

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

- Maintain an efficient and effective local police force for its area
- Hold the chief officer to account
- Set the policing precept and police budget (except in the Metropolitan Police area, where the Metropolitan Police Authority recommend the budget to the Mayor of London who sets the precept, and the City of London which operates different arrangements through the Corporation of London)
- 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
- Meet employer's liabilities, including health and safety requirements, and ensure the police 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 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.

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 - 75% of funding via central government grants, and set a precept on the council tax according to locally determined need (except in the Metropolitan Police Authority and City of London Police Authority – see above). 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 officers and 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 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;
- 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, Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and 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 provisions 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 view of local communities in relation to the policing of the area and secure their co-operation with the police in preventing crime:
and
- to operate an Independent Custody Visiting scheme to provide a check on persons detained in police cells.

Role of the Police Authority and Members' Job Profiles

POLICE AUTHORITY MEMBER

Role

- To ensure that there is an effective and efficient Police Service for the area
- To hold the Chief Officer to account for the Policing Service delivered within the area
- To set the strategic direction for the Force and exercise effective oversight of Force performance.
- To ensure improvements in the way the Force delivers policing services to the public
- To determine the policing precept (the element of Council Tax that supports local policing) and the police budget (where appropriate), and ensure that arrangements are in place for proper financial management
- To represent the interests of all those who live in, work in, or visit the Police Authority area and to ensure that the views of local people are reflected in the nature and style of local policing.
- To monitor the way in which complaints are dealt with by the Force and directly consider complaints against Chief Officers.
- To ensure that policing services are provided fairly and in a way which does not discriminate against any group or individual.
- To participate constructively in the good governance of both the Authority and the Force and where appropriate, of activities undertaken jointly with partners

Responsibilities

- to carry out collectively all statutory and locally determined requirements of a Police Authority Member, 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 Force area, developing the Authority Corporate / Strategic Plan) A list of Police Authority roles and responsibilities is set out in Appendix 'A'.
- to participate actively and effectively as a member of any committee, panel, task group or other Authority forum to ensure the strategy, policy and plans of the Authority are carried out.

- to participate actively and effectively as a member of any external board, committee, panel, or post, to which appointed to represent the Police Authority (for instance, crime disorder reduction partnerships, local criminal justice boards, local strategic partnerships, local authority scrutiny committees, answering questions at council meetings, joint committees overseeing shared services).
- to participate actively in reviews of Force or Authority effectiveness or efficiency, including reviews of personal effectiveness as an Authority member, and contribute to ensuring improvements and major change programmes are implemented successfully.
- to comply with all relevant Codes of Conduct and maintain the highest standards of conduct and ethics
- to maintain an up-to-date knowledge and awareness of national and local policing issues.
- to maintain a good working knowledge of Force 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 with Officers of both the Authority and the Force.
- to rigorously scrutinise, challenge and monitor all aspects of Force performance.
- to participate fully in developing Authority community engagement strategies with local people about local policing services.
- to represent the views of the Police Authority within local communities and the views of local communities to the Authority.
- to be involved in the appointment, discipline or dismissal of senior officers and staff, as appropriate
- to champion human rights and equality of opportunity, and work to eliminate unlawful discrimination both internally within the Authority and Force and in the provision of policing services.
- to attend local, regional and / or national conferences / seminars / briefings, if nominated by the Authority.
- to attend and actively in training programmes relevant to the role of police authority member.
- to contribute to the maintenance of an effective independent custody visiting scheme

CHAIR OF THE AUTHORITY

Role

- To fulfil the basic responsibilities of a Police Authority member and hold the office of chair of the Authority

Additional Responsibilities

- To provide leadership, ensuring that the Authority works as a coherent and corporate body
- To preside at Authority meetings, applying standing orders and ensure that members have a fair opportunity to participate debates
- To represent the Authority to the press and outside organisations
- To oversee co-ordination of Police Authority business at member level and develop, review and monitor implementation of the policies and strategies of the Police Authority
- To liaise with the Chief Executive, Treasurer and Chief Constable to facilitate Authority business
- To hold regular strategic meetings with the Chief Constable
- To undertake a Personal Development Review of the Chief Constable in consultation with HMIC
- To ensure that arrangements are in place for effective management of the Authority's Officers
- To ensure that Authority members receive support and training they need to carry out their functions effectively and to undertake periodic individual personal meetings with the Members in order to ascertain their needs
- If appropriate, to represent the Authority on the Association of Police Authorities (APA).
- To attend regional networks and national tripartite gatherings, as required.
- To represent the Authority on the Police Authorities of Wales (PAW) and undertake any responsibilities on behalf of PAW.

VICE-CHAIR OF THE AUTHORITY

Role

To fulfil the basic responsibilities of a Police Authority member and to hold the office of vice-chair of the Authority

Additional Responsibilities

- To deputise for the Chair of the Authority when necessary
- To liaise closely with the Chair of the Authority and assist him / her in overseeing conduct of the Authority's business as described in the Chair of the Authority's job profile

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Role

To fulfil the basic responsibilities of a Police Authority member and to chair a committee of the Authority and act as a lead member for that committee.

Additional Responsibilities

- to lead the work of a committee of the Authority
- to act as the Authority's lead member and spokesperson on the areas within the committee's remit
- to develop and maintain up-to-date knowledge and specialist expertise in the area for which he /she is responsible
- to liaise closely with Authority and Force staff in developing and managing the work of the committee
- to contribute to national policy development, national events, PAW or APA networks or initiatives on the areas for which he / she is responsible

Role of a Lead Member:

To fulfil the basic responsibilities of a Police Authority member and to act as a lead member for a particular portfolio

Responsibilities:

1. To act as the Authority's "champion" and spokesperson on the areas within a particular portfolio, recognising that on occasions the lead member should have the freedom to act in a scrutiny or questioning capacity.
2. To be the initial and focal point of contact for the Authority, Force, or others wishing to discuss issues informally with a Police Authority member or to sound out views.
3. Where appropriate, to attend meetings of Police Force Boards, and other appropriate meetings, to represent the views of the Authority and if necessary arrange for particular issues to be considered by the Authority as a whole.
4. To contribute to (and steer if necessary) policy development locally within the Authority and the Force, and nationally as appropriate, by representing North Wales Police Authority on other bodies etc.
5. To actively seek Best Practice both locally and nationally in respect of their particular portfolio.
6. To be a link between the Authority and the Force, and a collecting point for information in respect of their particular portfolio.
7. To transfer views and good ideas from the Authority to the Force.
8. Committee Chairs are by definition the lead member for those areas in their committee's terms of reference, unless another member has been allocated a specific responsibility – in such cases it is preferable for that member to be drawn from the committee's membership.
9. Lead members are non-executive, and therefore do not have the authority to commit North Wales Police Authority to a course of action or to make decisions on its behalf, however they do have a key role in influencing the subject.
10. Lead members must consider how particular issues identified in their role as lead member should be introduced to the Authority.
11. In carrying out their role or speaking publicly, the lead member must promote and represent views or policies agreed by North Wales Police Authority or its committees even if these are not their own views.

12. Lead members have a responsibility to keep the Authority or relevant committee informed of their work by way of regular written updates, and to keep themselves informed of the key developments and issues in their lead area.
13. A lead member can request briefings/information on their subject area from North Wales Police Authority and North Wales Police (within reason in terms of the time it might take to produce a briefing).
14. To represent the Authority at relevant meetings outside the Force Area e.g. APA and Forensic Science Consortium etc.
15. Lead members are regarded as the Authority's eyes and ears in respect of a particular subject, and must ensure that other members of North Wales Police Authority are confident that all aspects of the relevant subject are covered by the lead member on their behalf.