

Annex A

Ethical Framework for Police and Crime Commissioners

This document sets out the key principles of ethical behaviour, which Police and Crime Commissioners may wish to apply locally, with suitable adaptations, to meet their obligation under the Local Policing Bodies (Specified Information Order) 2011 (as amended in 2012) to publish “a statement of the policy of the elected local policing body in relation to the conduct of relevant office holders, including procedures for the handling of qualifying complaints and conduct matters.”

Selflessness

- Taking decisions in the public interest, not for personal gain or that of family and friends
- Putting local communities (including victims, witnesses and vulnerable people) at the heart of what PCCs do
- Standing up for principles and local people

Integrity

- Not placing oneself under any financial or other obligation to external entities that might seek to influence the performance of official duties
- Not engaging in activity which is not demonstrably in the public interest
- Maintain appropriate transparency on approaches by lobbyists and ensure a balance of views in decision making
- Putting effective whistle-blowing procedures in place in the organisations for which the PCC is responsible

Objectivity

- Choices should be based on merit and objective criteria in:
 - making public appointments
 - awarding contracts
 - recommending individuals for awards and benefits; or
 - otherwise carrying out public business.
- Promoting and monitoring ethical standards through the procurement/commissioning process to ensure good standards of behaviour in organisations with which PCCs contract
- Ensuring appointees' commitment to ethical standards
- Acting fairly, irrespective of race, religion, gender, etc

Accountability

- Demonstrating accountability for decisions and actions to the public
- Submitting themselves to scrutiny by the public, police and crime panels, Parliament, or other appropriate bodies
- Promoting greater accountability in the organisations for which PCCs are responsible, especially the police, by holding them to account effectively on behalf of the public
- Improving public trust and confidence through promoting accountability.

Openness

- Being as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that PCCs take, including giving reasons for decisions.
- Restricting information about the PCC's office only when the wider public interest clearly demands it.

- Being as open as possible about the organisations for which PCCs are responsible, except where information would not be in the public interest.
- Being as open as possible with the media, without breaching the privacy or confidence of others, or giving them inappropriate access to restricted information

Honesty

- Declaring any private interests in relation to public duties and decisions in a regular and easily accessible format
- Taking steps to resolve any conflicts and mitigate risks arising in a way that protects the public interest, particularly in relation to:
 - Personal/prejudicial or financial interests
 - Use of resources
 - PCC expenses, gifts and hospitality
 - Procurement/commissioning process
- Being honest in dealings with the public and promoting greater trust in the office of the PCC.

Leadership

- Promoting and supporting these principles by leadership and example , since as leaders of local policing bodies PCCs are critical to setting the culture of transparency and ethical behaviour in which the public can have trust across the criminal justice system in their area,
- Setting an ethical vision and approach as a leader and ensuring it makes a difference to the culture of the organisations for which PCC is responsible
- Not bringing their office into disrepute
- Treating the public with dignity, respect and fairness to increase their confidence in the criminal justice system

Complaints Process

Complaints about the behaviour of Police and Crime Commissioners are dealt with by local Police and Crime Panels. If the matter is a serious complaint (an allegation of criminal behaviour against the PCC), the Panel will refer it on to the Independent Police Complaints Commission to deal with. If it is a less serious matter, the Panel is responsible for resolving the problem and seeking a satisfactory outcome. For instance, this might be an explanation or apology from the PCC, or an agreement to prevent or improve a problem in the future.

The administration of the complaint is dealt with by the Monitoring Officer for the Police and Crime Panel. The Monitoring Officer handles the paperwork about the complaint and may be asked to provide advice about the law in relation to complaints. Monitoring officers need to ensure the details of the complaint are recorded properly, but they are not involved in making any decision about the outcome of the complaint.

In some cases Police and Crime Panels will have asked one of the PCC's staff to act as their Monitoring Officer, in other cases it may be a member of staff of a local authority – but in any event a Monitoring Officer is under a statutory duty to act fairly and objectively in this role. For this reason, in some cases, Police and Crime Panels may ask complainants to contact a member of staff of the Police and Crime Commissioner with details of the complaint.

Local ethical statements will need to set out appropriate contact details for their Police and Crime Panel.