

Common values for the Police Service of England and Wales



Home Office



A message from the Home Secretary

The police service is at an important crossroads. Although the service is bigger and better resourced than ever, you have never faced such a wide range of challenges. And while I am proud of the Government's record investment in the service, I am also the first to admit that resources will be significantly tighter in the future. Tough choices and clear priorities will be needed.

I want to take the opportunity to sum up the mission, values, goals and aspirations that I see as essential to successful policing. You will know better than I that many of the values are enduring ones – from the very first days of the service in this country – and the mission of the police service is largely unchanged. But the context in which the service operates has changed rapidly. New challenges and fresh opportunities bear down on you. The time is right, therefore, for us to set out what you can expect from Government and what the public can expect from you. This is relevant to all ranks and grades of police personnel. The job you do in protecting and serving the public is vital for the safety of individuals and the health of society. As always, it calls for commitment, sound judgement, fairness, ingenuity, compassion, resilience and bravery.

Your Mission

The mission of the police service remains to protect and reassure the public, to prevent and reduce crime, to maintain order and to bring criminals to justice. The challenges have seldom been so great: from anti-social behaviour at a very local level to new developments in terrorism and organised crime on the national and international stage. New challenges require new approaches and working methods. It falls to the police service to deliver neighbourhood policing that is accessible and responsive to local people's priorities, while at the same time meeting the threat from serious crime and terrorism. Both are important to the public and are two sides of the same coin. Neither task can or should be downgraded.

Accountability

The Government will continue to be accountable to Parliament for policing nationally, intervening locally only as a last resort where a serious issue has arisen and other local steps have failed to have an effect. We will continue to initiate legislation where necessary, resource the police service, be open about police performance and set a smaller number of national priorities. But we will also adopt a more strategic role with less interference in the tactical issues that ought to be the business of *you*, the professionals – police officers, PCSOs and staff.

Our police have always been locally rooted. This will remain the case. Indeed, we need to develop a stronger sense of accountability at the most local level to deliver the service that neighbourhoods want.

Chief Officers must continue to exercise their operational independence free from government interference and help guard – as must we all – the fairness and impartiality of law-enforcement.

Police authorities will ensure that forces have the resources, the performance framework and the appropriate local priorities to meet local people's expectations and to hold them to account for delivery.

Values

Every police officer and member of police staff must be animated by the sense of service to the public and policing must always be rooted in our shared, core values. As Home Secretary I will expect the service to show:

Fairness and impartiality, integrity, freedom from corruption, respect for liberty and compassion. It must be free from racism, serve all communities equally, and be committed to our individual protection and our common well-being.

*Respected nationally
Trusted locally*

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Serving locally, protecting nationally

Drawing on these core values, I want a police service which is:

- **Trusted and respected everywhere: which serves locally and protects nationally.** Trust is the bedrock of policing and the police act with the consent of citizens and communities. Trust drives effective policing and, in turn, generates respect.
- **Accountable and public facing.** Many police operations will be out of the public view, but the delivery of neighbourhood policing must be driven by public need and expectations.
- **Collaborative, working in partnership with other forces and authorities and with other partners.** Jointly many things can be achieved that cannot be achieved alone. More and more, the need to work with other forces and agencies to identify and solve problems will come to the fore in order to tackle the local and national challenges we face.

The public is constantly indebted to the police for their service, which can include sacrifices and real courage. We must continue to attract dedicated and talented individuals to fulfil this mission.

Continuous improvement

The service has delivered significant achievements to date, and we must build on this. I would like to see the police service commit to delivering the following:

- Visible, responsive and accountable local policing.
- Joint local problem-solving and the delivery of services through collaboration & partnerships.
- Local communities helping to shape services and citizens valuing their contact with the police.
- A service representative of, rooted in and trusted by the communities it serves.
- An efficient, flexible and productive service that delivers maximum value for taxpayers' investment.
- World class capacity to deal effectively with terrorism and serious crime.
- The right people doing the right job.
- A new focus on skills and leadership development.
- Greater rewards for effective performance in the workforce.
- The latest technology in place to help deliver for the public.

In return, I commit myself and government more generally to delivering the following:

- **Fewer targets and mandates from the centre.** We want more flexibility and fewer burdens on the police service, but transparency about how well forces and Basic Command Units (BCUs) are doing.
- **Less chopping and changing of investment priorities and new programmes.** Before we start new programmes we will make sure we have the resources to finish the job and have fully evaluated all the likely impacts.
- **Less bureaucracy.** We will make sure that administrative demands from the centre don't distort or get in the way of frontline policing priorities and that government departments co-ordinate their approach.

This statement is short, but the challenges you face are considerable. With the largest police service in our history, with strong values and a commitment to protect the public, I am optimistic as I look to the future. The police service is well placed to meet the challenges facing our communities. My intention is that this document not only informs the way in which police authorities and the police service seek to deliver their priorities but is of lasting value for how individual officers and staff see the future of the service and their role in it.

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Trusted locally