



# PROTOCOL

## Governing the relationship between Bedfordshire Police Authority and Bedfordshire Police

### BACKGROUND

The people of Bedfordshire will receive the quality of policing to which they are entitled only if there is an open, mutually supportive yet constructively challenging relationship between the Police Authority, the Chief Constable and the Bedfordshire Police Service he or she leads.

It is in order to foster and maintain this crucial partnership working that the following principles, guidelines and practices have been developed. They are intended to underpin a culture and climate of mutual trust, confidence and openness in which both responsibility and accountability are clear. However, they do not provide an exhaustive statement of the legal responsibilities exercised by the Chief Constable and the Police Authority respectively.

### PRINCIPLES

It is the Chief Constable's job:

- to have direction and control of Bedfordshire Police;
- to lead Bedfordshire Police;
- to formulate policy;
- to manage operational policing;
- to make the best use of financial and other resources made available by the Police Authority;
- to deliver efficient and effective policing.

It is the Police Authority's job:

- to secure an efficient and effective policing service for Bedfordshire;

- to promote, support and uphold the Bedfordshire Police;
- to ensure compliance with all its statutory responsibilities e.g. Employment law, Equality and Diversity, Health and Safety and the liabilities that could arise from the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007;
- to ensure through consultation that the demands and aspirations for policing of local people are reflected in policing policy;
- to determine an affordable budget;
- to monitor and review policing performance and to hold the Chief Constable to account for it;
- to account to Bedfordshire people for policing performance;
- to ensure value for money;
- to issue a three-year rolling policing plan and local policing summaries;
- to appoint the Chief Constable and other chief police officers;

## GUIDELINES

The Police Authority and the Chief Constable will be successful in carrying out these roles only if they do so in a spirit of partnership. The following guidelines flesh out the mutual expectations and responsibilities that are more likely to make this happen.

<b>Budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Police Authority will determine the overall budget, but will delegate to the Chief Constable responsibility for financial management of that part allocated to Bedfordshire Police.</li> </ul>
<b>Organisation, Recruitment, Promotion, Discipline and Grievances, and Complaints</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Police Authority will appoint the Chief Constable, Deputy Chief Constable and Assistant Chief Constables.</li> <li>• The Chief Constable is responsible for the recruitment and promotion of all other officers and staff, including volunteers, under his/her direction and control.</li> <li>• The Police Authority has oversight of human resources plans to ensure that recruitment processes and procedures for all staff are fair and equitable and meet standards of best practice.</li> <li>• The Chief Constable is responsible for all disciplinary matters (including dismissal appeals) and the handling of grievances (including grievance appeals) and complaints against police officers, police staff and volunteers, including members of the Special Constabulary. The Assistant Chief Constable (Protective Services) will report on complaints and discipline to the Police Authority Complaints and Professional Standards Committee.</li> <li>• The Police Authority is responsible for complaints against police officers at the rank of Assistant Chief Constable and above, and for the general oversight of the conduct of complaints and professional standards.</li> </ul>

<b>Performance and Accountability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Chief Constable is accountable to the Police Authority for the performance of Bedfordshire Police and, in so doing, for providing timely information that is fit for purpose to the Authority which impacts on issues of performance throughout the organisation.</li> <li>• The Chief Constable will be expected to provide constructive feedback to the Authority wherever appropriate to assist in the process of sustaining mutual confidence between the Authority and Bedfordshire Police. Similarly the Authority will be expected to provide constructive feedback to the Chief Constable wherever appropriate for the same purpose.</li> <li>• The Police Authority will act as a ‘critical friend’ to the Bedfordshire Police.</li> <li>• The Chief Constable is responsible for managing policing operations but will keep the Police Authority informed and in touch, and draw attention to the extent there is or could be an impact on finance, day to day policing or the reputation of the organisation.</li> </ul>
<b>Role of Chair</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Chair of the Police Authority takes their responsibilities from the Police Authority and in that <i>capacity</i> will liaise with the Chief Constable and their senior colleagues.</li> <li>• The Chief Constable, in return, will advise the Chair of all issues likely to impact directly or indirectly on the Authority in the performance of its duties, either imminently or some time in the future.</li> <li>• The Chair is expected to inform and advise their fellow members of the Police Authority of information conveyed to them by the Chief Constable (unless told in confidence) and to involve them in any consequent decision-making process wherever appropriate.</li> <li>• In accordance with Standing Orders/Scheme of Delegation, the Chief Constable will consult the Chair on urgent decisions. It is a matter for the Chair as to whether/when consultation with other members is necessary or not.</li> <li>• The Chief Constable and the Chair will work jointly at continuing to develop a mutually supportive professional relationship aimed at achieving their common goals for quality policing in Bedfordshire, and in which the regular and open exchange of ideas, information and views is a common expectation and practice.</li> </ul>
<b>Openness and Accessibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both the Chief Constable and the Police Authority encourage an ‘open’ policy in relationships between the Bedfordshire Police and the Police</li> </ul>

	Authority.
<b>Conduct of Police Authority Members</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members of the Police Authority have signed a Code of Conduct which governs their approach and behaviour in matters of probity, equality, fairness and appropriateness. The code of conduct requires that Police Authority Members will at all times treat all police officers and police staff (including Police Authority staff) with respect and dignity. The Police Authority has appointed a Standards Committee that includes independent members to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members of the Police Authority.</li> <li>Members shall at all times adhere to the Authority's Ethical Governance Policy</li> </ul>
<b>Bedfordshire Police Participation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Police Authority needs appropriate support and assistance from Bedfordshire Police if it is to fulfil its responsibilities effectively and the Chief Constable will ensure that all necessary support is provided for that purpose.</li> <li>The Police Authority is statutorily responsible for securing Best Value through its Value For Money Strategy, publishing a three-year rolling policing plan and annual local policing summaries.  Bedfordshire Police will work with the Police Authority to satisfy these responsibilities.</li> <li>The Police Authority has a duty to consult with local communities about policing, and to advise Bedfordshire Police accordingly. Bedfordshire Police will be involved and invited to participate, where appropriate, in public consultation meetings organised by the Police Authority. Similarly, Bedfordshire Police will keep the Police Authority informed of its consultation work, and invite the Police Authority to participate where appropriate.</li> <li>As representatives of the public, the Police Authority members will assist Bedfordshire Police by giving full support to its agreed strategies and helping to explain them to communities.</li> <li>Members of the Police Authority – in discharging their ever-increasing responsibilities and their need for greater understanding of policing, its problems, complexities and successes – look to the Chief Constable to foster a working environment where the benefits of their support and assistance can be maximised.</li> <li>The Chief Constable will ensure that the Chair, Vice-Chair and other members of the Police Authority are encouraged to play a full role in the formal life of Bedfordshire Police through, for example, invitations to attend attestation and award ceremonies.</li> </ul>

<b>Role of Chief Executive</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Chief Executive is the statutory officer employed by the Police Authority to support the Authority in the discharge of its functions. They will also act as a bridge between the Authority and Bedfordshire Police wherever appropriate in receiving and acting upon information which requires further consideration by members.</li> </ul>
<b>Role of Monitoring Officer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Monitoring Officer is the statutory officer who is responsible for ensuring that the Authority acts lawfully without maladministration or injustice and monitors the operation of the Authority's Code of Conduct for Members, including supporting the Standards Committee in the local assessment and determination of complaints.</li> </ul>
<b>Role of Treasurer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Treasurer is the statutory officer employed by the Police Authority to provide the Authority with financial advice and to secure the proper administration of the Authority's finances.</li> </ul>

## PRACTICES

A range of practical proposals has been developed to underpin these guidelines, and help to further mutual trust, confidence and understanding.

- The Authority has developed a Business Plan that is reviewed annually.
- The Authority has developed with Bedfordshire Police a shared vision delivered through strategic priorities as set out in its strategic plan.
- The Authority has an agreed framework in place to deliver its Value for Money programme.
- The Police Authority has embedded risk management into the work of its committees. The Authority and Force Risk Registers are monitored by the responsible Committee and overseen by the Authority's Audit and Business Assurance Committee.
- A joint Bedfordshire Authority/ Police Collaboration Strategy has been agreed supported by the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Police Authorities Joint Collaboration Panel.

- The Authority has agreed terms of reference for itself, its committees and panels in order to record and collate all its responsibilities and to distribute accountability for these fairly between its members.
- The Code of Conduct and Ethical Governance Policy referred to earlier in this document.
- The Chair and Chief Constable will keep each other informed about their availability and periods of leave of absence.
- The Police Authority will delegate to the Chief Constable responsibility for approving secondments and leave of absence on official or related duties, except in the case of the Chief Police Officers where they would expect him/her to seek permission from the Police Authority.
- There will be regular and frequent meetings between the Chief Constable and their senior staff and the Chair and Vice-Chair.
- The Chief Constable will ensure that they and/or Executive staff attend all meetings of the Authority and its committees, except where otherwise advised by the Chief Executive.
- If either the Authority or the service intends to issue a press statement which could adversely impact on the other, prior consultation between the Chair of the Authority and the Chief Constable will take place before the statement is issued. Members shall adhere to the Authority's Media Protocol
- The Chair and members of the Police Authority should address issues of policy only to chief officers, although they will be able to discuss local issues with divisional commanders and other staff.
- The Chair will ensure that Police Authority members attend meetings and events for which the Authority accepts invitations.
- The Chairman will be made aware and kept informed of any developments in relation to major policy issues raised by members of the Authority which are raised directly by them with the Chief Constable or his/her senior staff, or both.
- Lead members shall adhere to the principles set down in the Lead Member Scheme.

## **REVIEW**

A review of this protocol will be undertaken annually by the Authority and Bedfordshire Police at the last full Police Authority meeting before the Annual Meeting to reflect any changes in emerging good practice. It may also have to be up-dated immediately where statutory changes occur.

**COMMENTARY**

The protocol's crucial elements lying at the heart of the necessary essential partnership are mutual understanding, confidence and trust.