

### › Independent Members of the Police Authority



Eight of the seventeen members of the Authority are Independent Members. These are members of the public who respond to locally placed advertisements. Following a rigorous selection process, Independent Members are approved by the Home Secretary before being appointed to the Authority for a period of four years.

### › Independent Custody Visitors

Independent Custody Visitors make unannounced visits to police custody suites to check the conditions in which a detained person is

being held and ensure that people are aware of their rights.

Custody visitors provide impartial feedback on the way in which people in custody are treated.

### › Animal Welfare Visitors



Animal Welfare Visitors provide independent verification that all police dogs are well cared for. This is a joint scheme with Hertfordshire Police Authority.

### › Independent Members of Misconduct Panels

In some circumstances panels considering allegations of misconduct by

police officers need to have a lay member of the public sitting on them. These lay members, who are totally independent of the police, are expected to help the panels reach a fair and appropriate outcome. Their inclusion provides assurance to the community that misconduct panels are completely impartial.

### › Independent Members of the Standards Committee

For complete impartiality, our own Standards Committee has four Independent Members who are not otherwise involved with the Authority. This Committee has a remit to promote and uphold the highest standards of conduct and behaviour from the seventeen members of the Police Authority.

## Contacting us

If you would like to know more about the Bedfordshire Police Authority and its work please visit our web site or contact us at details below.

**Web site:** [www.bedfordshirepoliceauthority.co.uk](http://www.bedfordshirepoliceauthority.co.uk)

**Email:** [info@bedfordshirepoliceauthority.co.uk](mailto:info@bedfordshirepoliceauthority.co.uk)

**Telephone:** 01234 842066

**Write to us:** Bridgebury House, Woburn Road, Kempston, MK43 9AX

*Every effort is made to help everyone access our information and services, and our website has a number of accessibility features to encourage people to browse.*

*The Authority is committed to equality and diversity in every area of its business. If you need this document in another format or language, please let us know.*



# Why Should I Get Involved?

**Bedfordshire Police Authority, the independent watchdog for local policing, believes that you have a right to influence the way in which policing is delivered where you live, so that the service you receive reflects your views and expectations.**

## › About the Police Authority



The Police Authority has a strategic role in local policing. We are not part of the Police Force, nor do we get involved in day to day police operations.

An important element of our work is to establish what is important to local people, then set priorities and targets for the Police Force that reflect local needs and expectations. We monitor police performance against these targets and those set by the Government.

Another key part of our role is to help increase confidence and satisfaction in the police service which we do through our scrutiny work and engagement activities. Other responsibilities include

setting the budget for policing Bedfordshire, checking that all resources are used effectively and appointing the Chief Officer team.

There are 17 members of the Authority. Nine are locally elected councillors and eight are independent members of the public, one of whom must be a local magistrate.

## › Tell us about it



Your thoughts can only be taken into account if you tell us. If you think we should do things differently to encourage you to get involved, let us know.

As you can see, there are various ways in which you can give us your views.



## › Meeting you

The Authority holds community meetings in partnership with other local organisations and service providers. If you go to a meeting you can voice your views on many of the issues that affect your quality of life.

We also attend local surgeries and community safety forums organised by the Police Force, to monitor how well local concerns and issues are being addressed.

## › Asking You

Your answers to our questions help us agree what the priorities will be in the future, so you really can influence the ways in which policing is delivered.

leaflet, which is delivered to every household.

In addition, there are electronic surveys on our website or you can simply contact us with your views via telephone, email or by writing to us.

## › Business Views



We are keen to encourage more businesses to give their views, not just at budget time, when we have a statutory duty to consult with local businesses, but throughout the year, looking at issues specifically relevant to the business community. If you would like to take part in our business focussed consultation please contact us.

## › Police Authority Meetings

Police Authority meetings provide a formal opportunity for members of the public to ask questions of the Authority about any area within our remit. If you

wish to ask a question, please contact the Authority to find out more.

You can also observe any full Authority or Committee Meeting, which will enable you to see how decisions affecting policing are made. If you have any queries after these meetings someone will always be happy to help you.

## Join us!

**From time to time the Authority recruits members of the public for a number of different roles. If you are interested in any of these roles please contact the Authority on: 01234 842066 or email: [info@bedfordshirepoliceauthority.co.uk](mailto:info@bedfordshirepoliceauthority.co.uk) to see when the next recruitment phase will take place.**

