



## REPORT / SUMMARY DECISION SHEET

**PURPOSE:** Commissioner Decision

**Timing:** Routine

**Title:** Volunteer Policy - Amendment

**Category of Decision / Business Area Impact:** Volunteers

### Executive Summary:

The new Volunteer Policy came in to force on 01.03.2016. It introduced changes to previous volunteer scheme guidance, including: *"Volunteers may be appointed up to a maximum of three terms; 9 years. When a volunteer reaches the 9 year milestone, they will be asked to stand down from the volunteer scheme."*

To recognise the commitment of volunteers who reach the maximum tenure, the following sentence will be added to the Volunteer Policy: *"For recognition of their time as a volunteer, those who reach this maximum tenure will be awarded a small gift by the PCC."*

### Recommendation:

The Commissioner is asked to approve the decision to incorporate the above in to the Volunteer Policy.

### Police and Crime Commissioner for Dyfed-Powys

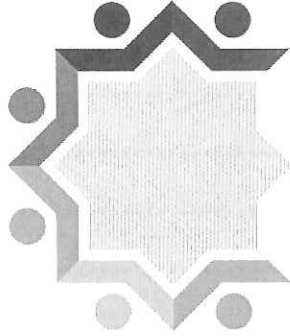
I confirm I have considered whether or not I have any personal or prejudicial interest in this matter and take the proposed decision in compliance with the Nolan Principles for Conduct in Public Life.

The above request has my approval / ~~does not have my approval / I note the information contained within the report (delete as appropriate)~~

**Signature:**

**Date:**

14 / 3 / 16



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DYFED-POWYS  
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# Volunteer Policy

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## Commissioner's Foreword

*I thank you for your involvement in my volunteering schemes.  
Two priorities in my Police and Crime Plan are protecting vulnerable people and ensuring high standards of professionalism.  
You help me meet these priorities. Many thanks for the time you put in and for your commitment to these schemes.*

*Christopher*

## 1. Introduction

This is an overarching Policy covering the PCC's three volunteer schemes. It sets out volunteers' rights and the broad principles of volunteering for the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC).

More in-depth details of volunteers' specific roles are available in the separate scheme handbooks. These can be accessed on the PCC's [website](#), or by request to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC).

## 2. Summary of PCC's Volunteer Schemes

Independent Custody Visiting Scheme:

- Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) visit custody suites across the Dyfed-Powys area.
- They provide an independent check on the welfare of detainees in custody, and the conditions in which they are being held.
- ICVs' work offers protection to detainees and the transparency of detention processes.
- Issues raised by ICVs are considered by police inspectors and updates provided to the PCC.

Animal Welfare Scheme:

- Animal Welfare Lay Visitors visit Dog Handlers and their police dogs across the Dyfed-Powys area.
- They provide an independent check on the welfare of police dogs, and the conditions in which they are being housed, trained and transported: Their handling must be effective, humane, ethical and transparent.
- Issues raised by the volunteers are considered by police inspectors and updates provided to the PCC.

Residents' Panel:

- The Panel are asked to scrutinise the quality of police contact with the public, in a transparent and independent manner, on behalf of the communities within the Dyfed-Powys area.
- The focus of the Panel has been on the complaints handling process. However, they are starting to scrutinise other aspects of policing.

- Issues raised by the Panel are considered by Dyfed-Powys Police and updates provided to the PCC. Improvements are made to business practices and customer service as required.

Further information on the above volunteer schemes can be found on the PCC's [website](#), or by request to the OPCC.

### **3. Management of the Schemes**

The PCC recognises the right of volunteers to have adequate support in their role, and will ensure that suitable resources are available to effectively run the volunteer schemes.

The schemes are managed within the PCC's Office, with one single point of contact for volunteers. Volunteers will be informed of the contact details on joining the volunteer scheme, and will be kept updated of any changes.

### **4. Eligibility**

Volunteers must meet a number of criteria to be eligible for the PCC's volunteer schemes:

- They must be over the age of 18;
- They will ideally live, work or study within the Dyfed-Powys area;
- They must have been resident in the UK for at least 3 years before applying;
- They must be independent of the Police and the Criminal Justice System, i.e. the OPCC will not appoint serving police officers, police staff, serving members of the OPCC itself, special constables, or anybody with a direct involvement in the criminal justice system, such as solicitors or probation officers;
- Volunteers may only be a member of one of the PCC's volunteer schemes at any one time; and
- The over-riding factor when considering applications will be to prevent possible conflicts of interest for individuals, and to maintain the independence and integrity of the volunteer schemes. However, each application will be treated on its merits.

There are also role-specific eligibility criteria for each of the schemes. Further information can be found in the scheme handbooks.

### **5. Recruitment and applications**

These volunteering opportunities will be widely promoted to ensure they are accessible to all members of the community. Applications are welcomed from individuals from all sections of the community to reflect diversity in relation to race, disability, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, religion and belief, age, and Welsh language.

The PCC is firmly committed to equality and diversity in all areas of its work. We have much to learn and profit from diverse cultures and perspectives. The PCC

is committed to developing and maintaining volunteering schemes in which differing ideas, abilities and backgrounds are fostered and valued.

All interested volunteers will be sent an application pack for their chosen scheme. The pack contains a scheme handbook, a role description and person specification, an application form, and an equal opportunities monitoring questionnaire.

Once an application is received, the volunteer will be invited to attend an informal interview with the PCC's representatives. A final decision will be made by the interviewing team and communicated in writing to the volunteer. Feedback will be provided to unsuccessful applications, on request.

## **6. Vetting**

Successful applicants will be asked to complete a Non-Police Personnel Vetting Questionnaire. Outcomes of such checks will assist in determining a person's suitability to the role. Each case, regardless of outcomes will be considered on its own merits.

If vetting clearance is granted, it will be valid for a period of three years. After three years, vetting will be reconsidered by Dyfed-Powys Police's Vetting Officer. Volunteers must not undertake any volunteering duties should their vetting clearance expire and delays occur before renewal.

## **7. Training**

Training needs differ from scheme to scheme, and details are provided in the scheme handbooks. It is however expected that *all* volunteers will undertake an initial training day prior to commencing their roles, which includes training on their specific role, health and safety, and data protection.

## **8. Probationary period**

Once training is complete, volunteers will be required to complete a probationary period of six months. Appointments will then be confirmed subject to satisfactory adherence to the schemes' provisions.

## **9. Tenure**

Appointments to the PCC's volunteer schemes are initially set for a term of three years. Appointments will subsequently be reviewed, and volunteers may be appointed for a further term of three years.

The key factors in renewing appointments are the continuing ability and willingness of volunteers to carry out their role effectively, whilst demonstrating impartiality and objectivity at all times.

Volunteers may be appointed up to a maximum of three terms; 9 years. When a volunteer reaches the 9 year milestone, they will be asked to stand down from the volunteer scheme. For recognition of their time as a volunteer, those who reach this maximum tenure will be awarded a small gift by the PCC.

Whilst the PCC acknowledges that effective and committed volunteers are a precious resource, and is grateful for the time they have dedicated to the volunteer scheme, it is necessary to balance this against the need to ensure the volunteer schemes are representative of the Dyfed-Powys area, to avoid overfamiliarity or stagnation and receive an injection of fresh perspectives and ideas.

## **10. Volunteer roles and responsibilities**

Detailed information on specific volunteer roles can be found in the scheme handbooks.

Volunteers must be committed to undertaking their voluntary duties. It is understood that volunteers will have other external commitments, and the PCC is mindful of this. However, where a volunteer fails to commit sufficiently to their scheme, an explanation will be requested. In the absence of good reason for the lack of commitment, consideration will be given as to whether that person should continue in the role.

Volunteers will need to keep the OPCC informed of any issues relating to their own ability to meet the requirements of the scheme, for example, changes in personal circumstances, or periods where they are unavailable to undertake their duties. Volunteers should also notify the OPCC if they are arrested or charged with a criminal offence, or are under investigation. They will be suspended from undertaking further volunteering duties pending the outcome of any proceedings.

## **11. Expenses**

Travelling expenses will be paid to all volunteers when travelling on business in conjunction with their voluntary role.

Only public transport fares or private car mileage at the current HMRC specified rate will be paid (£0.45 per mile). Reimbursement of taxi fares will not be paid apart from in certain justifiable circumstances e.g. volunteers requiring particular accessible transport.

If volunteers require train tickets to attend a course / conference linked to their role, held outside of Dyfed-Powys, they should contact the OPCC. Their tickets will be arranged and paid for by the OPCC.

Similarly, if an overnight stay is required, volunteers should contact the OPCC.

Volunteers are also entitled to claim for a meal (up to the value of £7.50) when undertaking duties for an uninterrupted period of four hours or more; where refreshments have not been provided. This includes travelling time. Where meals are claimed for, volunteers must provide a valid VAT receipt.

All expenses must be submitted on the expense claim forms provided by the OPCC.

Volunteers who receive state benefits of any kind should notify the Department of Work and Pensions, or other relevant authority, of their role as a volunteer for the PCC.

## **12. Insurance**

The PCC holds the appropriate liability insurance for volunteers, to cover them whilst undertaking their volunteer duties.

This does not extend to motor insurance cover. Volunteers making use of their own private vehicles when undertaking their volunteer role are strongly advised to check with their own insurers that they are covered for this purpose. The PCC will not be liable for individuals' insufficient level of motor insurance.

## **13. Health and Safety**

Volunteers will receive health and safety advice, relevant to their role, as part of their training.

Volunteers will be asked to complete a medical questionnaire, relevant to their role, and are advised to keep the OPCC informed of any changes to their health which could impact upon their ability to undertake their volunteering role.

Each scheme has a Risk Assessment detailing the possible risks. All volunteers will be asked to familiarise themselves with the content of the relevant Risk Assessment.

## **14. Termination of appointment**

Although the roles are entirely voluntary, the PCC has the right to terminate the appointment of any volunteer whose conduct is not felt to be of the expected standard.

Volunteers will sign a Code of Conduct on joining a scheme, and will be expected to abide by the standards set out in that document. If conduct falls below that standard, the PCC will consider whether that person should continue in the role.



## **15. Confidentiality**

During the course of their duties, volunteers will acquire confidential information about policing issues.

Volunteers will receive training on data protection and confidentiality, and will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement on joining the volunteer scheme and be routinely asked to sign a declaration of confidentiality when undertaking their volunteer duties.

## **16. Disposing of documentation**

When a volunteer leaves a scheme, they must ensure that all documentation relating to their role is appropriately disposed of / returned to the OPCC.

Access to documentation varies from scheme to scheme. Where volunteers meet to scrutinise specific documents, these documents must not be taken away from the meeting or off police premises.

Any identification badges must be returned to the OPCC when a volunteer leaves a scheme.

## **17. Publicity Guidelines**

It is desirable that the PCC's volunteer schemes are promoted to the public. If volunteers are involved in this publicity, they must bear in mind that the purpose of this publicity is to inform the public of the schemes, and not to draw attention to any information acquired whilst undertaking their duties.

Any invitation to speak to the press, or local groups / organisations about the volunteer schemes should be referred to the OPCC. Volunteers should remember that they are accountable to the PCC, and not to the press or individual members of the public.

## **18. Settling differences**

The PCC aims to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently, and to ensure that volunteers' views are heard, noted and acted upon promptly for a positive and amicable solution.

The PCC's Support Officer is responsible for handling all grievances and complaints in respect of volunteers. Should a volunteer wish to submit a grievance against the Support Officer, they should advise the PCC's Chief of Staff.

## **19. Complaints against the Police**

Where a volunteer makes a complaint against the Police, which is recorded, whether in their role as a volunteer or as a private individual, the PCC must be informed. The full details will then be put to the Chief of Staff who will take the initial decision on whether the duties of the volunteer should be suspended in the interest of impartiality.

## **20. Volunteers' Area on the Commissioner's Website**

On the PCC's website, you will find a Volunteers' Area. This is a password-protected section of the website, which only the PCC's volunteers can access.

There are separate pages for each of the schemes.

On here, you will find the relevant resources for your scheme; including upcoming meeting dates and agendas, minutes from past meetings, rotas, reports, templates, and guidance documents. You will be able to download and refer to the above resources at your convenience.