

POLICY GUIDANCE & GOVERNANCE

Executive Summary:

The aim of this policy, supporting procedures and templates is to simplify the process of and provide clear instructions and guidance for policy and procedural guidance.

This will ensure:

- A consistent corporate approach to policy
- Regular systematic review
- Compliance with the relevant legislation
- Adoption of WMP Strategy and key principles i.e. Fairness in Policing, Code of Ethics, Force Values

Force policy is a critical element of West Midlands Police (WMP) governance and is put in place to comply with law and safeguard the legal position and organisational reputation of WMP.

Approved Professional Practice:

This policy has been checked against APP and there is none in relation to the subject matter of this policy.

Policy Statements:

- The Chief Constable has overall direction and control of WMP and is ultimately accountable for all policies and supporting documents of the organisation and its actions.
- WMP places trust in their employees to comply with [force policies](#) and to work in accordance with and in support of:
 - [FORCE VISION & VALUES](#)
 - [WMP STRATEGY](#)
 - [DIVERSITY & INCLUSION](#)
 - [FAIRNESS IN POLICING](#)
 - [CITIZENS CHARTER](#)
 - [CODE OF ETHICS](#)
 - [RELEVANT POLICY LEGISLATION](#)
 - [AUTHORISED PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE](#)
- Force policy content must be written in a way that promotes this aforementioned trust.
- The law will always take precedence over force policies and policy authors are responsible for ensuring that policy content is legally compliant and up to date.
- Policy and procedure content must be [evidence-based](#), to ensure that our policies achieve both philosophical (honest, ethical, impartial) and practical (effective, efficient, fair) values.
- Policy authors must consider all available evidence (e.g. [benchmarking](#), best practice, [APP](#), research, available data, literature, feedback from consultation).
- Adherence to applicable force policies will be expected from all employees and representatives of WMP.
- Individuals will be held accountable for their actions; non-compliance to force policy without justification may result in disciplinary action.

- To ensure corporacy, accountability and legitimacy are maintained all policies must follow the policy process as set out in the attached procedural guidance document.
- Equality Analysis (EA) and consultation are integral parts of the policy process and must be completed for all policies.
- EA must be considered:
 - Prior to policy drafting
 - During policy drafting
 - On each review
 - For policy withdrawals
 - When anything impacts on the policy (i.e. change prior to a scheduled review)
 - Feedback post-publication of the policy
- A draft policy that has not been approved by the Chief Constable must not be published on the intranet, utilised as policy or advertised as a policy.
- No other documents (Memorandum of Understandings, guidance/information documents, agreements etc.) apart from the corporate force policy documents will be referred to as a policy.
- Procedural guidance will not feature in the main body of a policy document and instead will be included as a separate supporting document, referenced to in the policy.
- All requests for new policy must be approved by the appropriate Head of Department/Neighbourhood Policing Unit (NPU) via the appropriate Governance Board prior to any work being instigated.
- The attached procedural guidance document 'Policy Process & Completion' must be read in conjunction with this policy.
- Policies and their EA must be reviewed every 12 months and as soon as practicable following the scheduled review date.
- Live and archived policies may be disclosed (publication instructions will be considered) under Freedom of Information (FOI), for Professional Standards Department (PSD) purposes or for public inquiry.

Definitions/Acronyms:

- A **policy** is a high level statement that establishes the organisation's position on an issue, describing what the force aims to achieve and why.
Policies outline how the organisation intends to conduct services, actions or business and provides a set of guiding principles to help with decision making.
Where we are defining expected behaviours, standards, actions or processes we must be utilising a policy to do so.
It does not detail the 'how'.
- A **procedure** outlines a specific set of principles, requirements, measures or steps that are to be followed in order to achieve the aims of a policy – the 'how'.

- **Local Directives:** It is recognised that NPUs and Departments will have a need to issue written guidance to clarify specific issues unique to that business area or location. Local directives will not amend, contravene or duplicate policy and must not use the term 'policy'. Local directives must not be used if the content affects more than one Department or location, a policy must be created instead. An example of a local directive may be 'parking of private vehicles at Solihull NPU'. This is an issue that relates solely to Solihull NPU and does not impact on any other areas of the force, however, if the content of the directive was regarding 'parking of private vehicles at all police premises' this would be considered as a force policy.
- **Equality Analysis (EA):** Undertaking an EA is a legal requirement under the Equality Act 2010 and is therefore a mandatory part of WMPs decision-making process. It aims to determine the impact a project, policy, practice, function or service has on particular groups within WMP and/or the wider community and enable action to be taken if this impact could be negative or discriminatory.
- **Version control** is an auditable record of the history of the policy and its supporting documents. All amendments must be recorded by date, reason for change and authorisation details.
- **Authorised Professional Practice (APP)** is the body of consolidated guidance for policing. APP significantly reduces the amount of national guidance in circulation and encourages the use of professional discretion. APP streamlines existing knowledge products and guidance into a consolidated online format.

Procedural Guidance Documents List:

- Policy Process & Completion
- Policy Governance Flowchart including Authorised Professional Practice (APP) process
- Policy Roles and responsibilities
- Policy Equality Analysis Guidance

Publication Instructions:

- Suitable for publication to public

Policy Ref: MISC/02

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Any enquiries in relation to this policy should be made directly with the policy contact/department shown above.



Force Executive Approval:

CHIEF CONSTABLE

Version	Date Reviewed	No change / Minor Changes / Major Changes (<i>detail</i>)	Amended / Agreed by	New review date

Monitoring and Review