



Home Office

Police Covenant for England and Wales

Government consultation

This consultation begins on 26 February 2020

This consultation ends on 22 April 2020

About this consultation

- To:** This consultation is open to the public.
- We will be particularly interested to hear from serving and former police officers and members of police staff, as well as their families and the general public.
- Duration:** From 26 February 2020 to 22 April 2020
- Enquiries (including requests for the paper in an alternative format) to:** Police Covenant
Police Workforce and Professionalism Unit
Home Office
6th Floor, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF
Email: Policecovenantconsultation@homeoffice.gov.uk
- How to respond:** Please send your response by 22 April 2020 to:
- Email: Policecovenantconsultation@homeoffice.gov.uk
- If you are unable to use the online system, for example, because you use specialist accessibility software that is not compatible with the system, you may download a word document version of the form and email or post to:
- Police Covenant
Police Workforce and Professionalism Unit
Home Office
6th Floor, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF
Email: Policecovenantconsultation@homeoffice.gov.uk
- If you are unable to access an electronic version of the document, please write to the above address and a paper copy will be provided.
- Response paper:** A response to this consultation exercise is due to be published by The Home Office at: gov.uk

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Home Secretary Foreword



As Home Secretary, I am constantly humbled by the bravery, sacrifice and dedication of our outstanding police. They run towards danger to keep the public safe; putting their own lives on the line to protect us all.

The tragic death of PC Andrew Harper last year hammered home the horrific and constant risks our courageous officers face while simply doing their jobs. Others are put under untold pressure as they protect us from hardened criminals and the very worst of humanity. Their families can be torn apart by the strain.

Too many officers are paying the price for their astonishing devotion to public duty. They are true public servants, doing an exceptional job in extraordinary circumstances. They deserve our upmost respect, support and protection, and I am determined to do whatever I can to keep them safe and to make their lives easier.

That's why I have stepped up plans to introduce a Police Covenant to enshrine the rights of those serving in our police forces. This Covenant is a pledge to do more to recognise the service and sacrifice of our police and to deliver the urgent practical support they need.

The daily challenges and dangers our police face can have a serious impact on every aspect of their lives. This consultation asks what more we can do to help protect them from attack and boost their wellbeing. When an officer suffers it is often their families who pick up the pieces, so we will also look at what more we can do to support their loved ones.

As Home Secretary, my mission is to deliver the safer streets that the people want. We can only do that if we support and empower our outstanding police to do their job. They have my full and unwavering support.

Our police are the embodiment of public duty - facing danger on a daily basis so we don't have to - and I refuse to allow them to pay the price for that.

This consultation looks at how we ensure the Police Covenant changes their jobs and their lives for the better and delivers peace of mind for their families. I urge everyone, particularly those connected to the service, to respond and let us know how we can deliver a Covenant that truly works for our remarkable police.

Rt Hon Priti Patel MP

A blue ink handwritten signature of Priti Patel, consisting of stylized initials 'P.P.' followed by a flourish.

Home Secretary

Introduction

This consultation seeks views on the principle of implementing a Police Covenant in England and Wales, to enhance support for the police and their families. It will look at the themes of:

- Physical protection;
- Health and wellbeing;
- Support for families.

It will also consider the scope of the Covenant and who should be covered.

The consultation is aimed at those serving with the police, those who have previously done so, their families and any groups with an interest in supporting the police in England and Wales.

We would like to hear from anyone who has been affected, indirectly or directly, by the impact of policing work and to hear what more can be done to help.

Questions include how officers should be publicly recognised for their bravery and work, and what can be done to ease their burden.

Copies of the consultation paper are being sent to:

National Police Chiefs' Council

Association of Police and Crime Commissioners

College of Policing

Police Federation of England and Wales

Police Superintendents' Association

Chief Police Officers' Staff Association

National Association of Retired Police Officers

Disabled Police Association

However, this list is not meant to be exhaustive or exclusive and responses are welcomed from anyone with an interest in or views on the subject covered by this paper.

The proposals

This section sets out our proposals for a Police Covenant for England and Wales. It explores the reasons for having a Covenant and considers what could be suitable for inclusion.

Why do we need a Police Covenant?

The police do a unique and remarkable job in the face of enormous challenges and pressure. The Government has proposed plans for a Police Covenant, enshrined in law, to recognise this and provide the protection and support they deserve.

Last year, the Home Office's Front Line Review highlighted concerns of police officers and staff and the need to do more to help them.

The Review identified a wide range of issues, including:

- Frontline officers, staff and volunteers feeling undervalued by the wider policing system;
- A disconnect between the front line and senior/national decision makers;
- Scepticism about wellbeing measures, and a desire to see meaningful action with a lasting impact.

This highlighted the need for urgent action to ensure the police were fully supported and valued. A package of immediate measures was brought forward in response, but the Government has continued to look for ways to do more to improve police welfare and address these concerns.

The introduction of a Police Covenant is the next step on this journey to provide comprehensive, meaningful and lasting support to officers.

The Police Covenant would build on existing work to improve wellbeing and encourage and enforce the provision of enhanced support. It is separate from any decisions and processes around pay and conditions and pension provisions.

This follows the successful introduction of the Armed Forces Covenant in 2012. The intention of this Covenant was to address issues experienced by members of the armed forces, veterans and their families as a result of their service.

The Armed Forces Covenant.

The Armed Forces Covenant
An Enduring Covenant Between
The People of the United Kingdom
Her Majesty's Government

– and –

All those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces of the Crown
And their Families.

The first duty of Government is the defence of the realm. Our Armed Forces fulfil that responsibility on behalf of the Government, sacrificing some civilian freedoms, facing danger and, sometimes, suffering serious injury or death as a result of their duty. Families also play a vital role in supporting the operational effectiveness of our Armed Forces. In return, the whole nation has a moral obligation to the members of the Naval Service, the Army and the Royal Air Force, together with their families. They deserve our respect and support, and fair treatment.

Those who serve in the Armed Forces, whether regular or Reserve, those who have served in the past, and their families, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services. Special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and the bereaved.

This obligation involves the whole of society: it includes voluntary and charitable bodies, private organisations, and the actions of individuals in supporting the Armed Forces. Recognising those who have performed military duty unites the country and demonstrates the value of their contribution. This has no greater

The Armed Forces Covenant aims to ensure that those serving with the Armed Forces suffer no disadvantage as a result of their sacrifices. We now intend to do the same for the police officers who serve the public in the fight against crime.

The issues faced in policing are very different from those experienced by members of the Armed Forces. However, the underlying principle of a pledge to ensure that support is given to a unique workforce which faces unique challenges as they serve the public is the same.

We would welcome responses to the following questions set out in this consultation paper.

The questions explore the potential scope and principles, as well as the wording of the Covenant.

Q1. To what extent do you agree that it would be beneficial to have a Police Covenant?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q2. Please explain your answer.

Q3. To what extent do you agree/disagree that it would be beneficial for the Covenant to be enshrined in legislation?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q4. Please explain your answer.

We would welcome your views on the content of the Covenant. We have set out a vision for the Police Covenant recognising the bravery and commitment of those who work night and day to keep us safe. We plan to focus on **physical protection, health and wellbeing and support for families.**

DRAFT - Police Covenant

This Covenant recognises and acknowledges the sacrifices made by those who serve or have served in our Police Forces, or hold the office of Special Constable. It is intended to ensure that they and their families are not disadvantaged as a result of that commitment and seeks to mitigate the impact that has on day to day life.

The Covenant recognises that police officers are not employees but rather hold the office of constable, which comes with a high level of personal accountability and responsibility in their role to make communities safer by upholding the law fairly and firmly; preventing crime and antisocial behaviour; keeping the peace; protecting and reassuring communities; investigating crime and bringing offenders to justice. They must also abide by a code of ethics which sets out the high standards of behaviour expected from everyone who works in policing in England and Wales, both on and off duty.

This recognition extends to voluntary and charitable bodies, private organisations, and the actions of individuals in supporting the police forces. Recognising those who have performed policing duty unites the country and demonstrates the value of their contribution. This has no greater expression than in upholding this Covenant.

Q5. To what extent do you agree/disagree that the draft Covenant above represents your expectations?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q6. Please explain your answer and/or suggest alternative wording.

Q7. To what extent do you agree/disagree that it would be beneficial for the Covenant to focus on physical protection?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q8. Please explain your answer.

Q9. What does physical protection mean to you in the context of policing?

Q10. To what extent do you agree/disagree that it would be beneficial for the Covenant to focus on health and wellbeing?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q11. Please explain your answer.

Q12. What does health and wellbeing mean to you in the context of policing?

Q13. To what extent do you think that the Covenant should include support for families?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q14. Please explain your answer.

Q15. What does support for families mean to you in terms of the Police Covenant?

Scope of the Covenant

The Police Covenant will be owned by the Home Office and therefore will cover forces which fall within the remit of the Home Office. We would like to explore who within those forces should be within scope.

Q16. Are there any other groups that you think the Police Covenant should cover apart from police officers, e.g. volunteers, retired officers?

Physical Protection

We are interested to hear your views on what a Covenant could do in terms of improving physical protection for the police. Chief Constables have a responsibility to provide their officers with safety equipment and training. The police are also protected by Health and Safety legislation. There is no intention for the Covenant to replace either of these protections.

Q17. To what extent do you agree/disagree that training can contribute to improved safety?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q18. Please explain your answer.

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Q19. To what extent do you agree/disagree that government has a role to play in setting standards for safety equipment for policing?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q20. Please explain your answer.

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Q21. To what extent do you agree/disagree that consistent national standards for personal safety training could contribute to improving safety in policing?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q22. Please explain your answer.

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Q23. To what extent do you agree/disagree that personal safety equipment for frontline officers is suitable for a diverse modern police force?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q24. Please explain your answer.

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Health and Wellbeing

The Police Covenant seeks to build on what it is possible for forces to provide at a local level by sending a clear message to the nation regarding the sacrifice and daily risks faced by our police and their families. We are interested to hear your views on what could be done to show the nation's support to police by offering enhancements to wellbeing provisions already in place.

Q25. To what extent do you agree/disagree that a Police Covenant would address wellbeing issues at a national?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q26. Please explain your answer.

Q27. To what extent do you agree/disagree that safeguards should be put in place to ensure those serving within police are able to quickly access medical care for matters arising as a result of their position?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q28. Please explain your answer.

Q29. To what extent do you agree/disagree that there needs to be specific mental health provisions for those working in policing?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q30. Please explain your answer.

Q31. To what extent do you agree/disagree that the private sector has a role in supporting police wellbeing needs?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q32. Please explain your answer.

Q33. How do you think the private sector can support police wellbeing?

Support for families

Those who work in the police are often required to respond to serious and unexpected events. The nature and consequences of this work can often have an impact on the families of those who serve in the police.

We are interested to hear your views on how we might help families to feel better supported.

Q34. To what extent do you agree/disagree that society already recognises the sacrifices made by the police and their families?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q35. Please explain your answer.

Q36. What methods of recognition in the policing context are you aware of?

Q37. To what extent do you agree/disagree that memorials, the honours system, police sector awards and other forms of recognition are important in helping families to feel supported?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q38. Please explain your answer.

Q39. To what extent do you agree/disagree that the honours/medals available for police (Gallantry awards, Empire awards, Queen’s Police Medals, Police Long Service and Good Conduct Medal, Special Constabulary Long Service Medal) appropriately recognise the bravery, service and commitment of those involved in policing?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q40. Please explain your answer.

Q41. To what extent do you agree/disagree that honours are important in helping families to feel supported?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q42. Please explain your answer.

Q43. To what extent do you agree/disagree that a Police Covenant could add value in helping families to feel supported?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q44. Please explain your answer.

Q45. Do you have any other comments to make on the issue of the Police Covenant not specifically addressed by any of the questions above?

Thank you for participating in this consultation.

About you

Please use this section to tell us about yourself – this section is optional.

Job title or capacity in which you are responding to this consultation exercise (for example, member of the public)	
If you have previously served within policing, please indicate here and include any details you feel will help us to make best use of your responses	
If you are a family member of someone serving within policing, please let us know your relationship to the officer	
Date	
Company name/organisation (if applicable)	
If you would like us to acknowledge receipt of your response, please tick this box	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address to which the acknowledgement should be sent.	

If you are a representative of a group, please tell us the name of the group and give a summary of the people or organisations that you represent.

Contact details and how to respond

Please send your response by 22 April 2020 to:

Police Covenant
Police Workforce and Professionalism Unit
Home Office
6th Floor, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF
Email: Policecovenantconsultation@homeoffice.gov.uk

Complaints or comments

If you have any complaints or comments about the consultation process you should contact the Home Office at the above address.

Extra copies

Further paper copies of this consultation can be obtained from this address and it is also available online [here](#).

Alternative format versions of this publication can be requested from:

Email: Policecovenantconsultation@homeoffice.gov.uk

Publication of response

A paper summarising the responses to this consultation will be published in two months' time. The response paper will be available online at gov.uk.

Representative groups

Representative groups are asked to give a summary of the people and organisations they represent when they respond.

Confidentiality

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR).

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals, amongst other things, with obligations of confidence. In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that

confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Home Office.

The Home Office will process your personal data in accordance with the DPA and in the majority of circumstances, this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.

Consultation principles

The principles that government departments and other public bodies should adopt for engaging stakeholders when developing policy and legislation are set out in the consultation principles.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consultation-principles-guidance>



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