

## Engagement and Communication

### Reference Number: P6

The Authorised Professional Practice (APP) has been approved by the College of Policing as the official and most up-to-date source of professional practice on policing. South Yorkshire Police have adopted APP as their Statement of Agreed Policy. This is the agreed policy on **Engagement and Communication** and you may wish to refer to the APP sections now.

### Exceptions

South Yorkshire Police do not deviate from APP in this subject.

### Additions

In addition to APP, South Yorkshire Police's statement of agreed policy on Engagement and Communication includes;

### Drugs – Role of Police in Schools

This procedure outlines the objectives that officers will follow who undertake drug education and enforcements within schools. The work in and around schools in respect of drugs is aimed to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour. Improve satisfaction and confidence of children and young people. Improve the safety of children and young people and to work alongside other agencies and partners.

### Media

A successful working relationship between the media and the police service is vital. Working with the media to communicate to the public can help solve crimes and give the public an insight into what the police are doing and why they are doing it. It is an important way in which the police demonstrate respect for principles of openness, legitimacy and accountability.

Constitutionally, policing in England and Wales is delivered with the consent of the people to whom the police service is accountable. To maintain that consent and achieve that accountability, the police service must have a relationship with the people it serves that is based upon understanding, support and trust.

It is therefore vital that the police service equips the public with information and knowledge of police activity to engender that understanding, participation and trust. We must inform the public about what, strategically, we are trying to do, and encourage the public's help in preventing and detecting crime locally.

The traditional media (print and broadcast) provides a mass communications channel through which we can communicate to a significant proportion of the population.

Our relationship and interaction with media organisations locally, regionally, nationally and internationally, will at all times be ethical, professional, transparent, accountable, auditable, appropriate and justified in law.

The aims of this section of the policy are to:

- Inform the public through the media about corporate and local priorities
- Reduce and detect crime using the media as a communications conduit
- Enhance the public's understanding of, support for, and active participation in, policing
- Provide the public with an honest and transparent picture of policing activity in South Yorkshire
- Demonstrate public accountability

### **SYP Social and Digital Media for Engagement**

The purpose of this policy is to assist police officers and staff to make good decisions and act responsibly, in a manner that will allow them to make safe and effective use of social media in both a professional and personal capacity.

Our use of social and digital media will at all times be professional, honest, transparent, accountable, ethical, appropriate, proportionate and justified in law. We will also be bound by the terms and conditions of use and codes of conduct set out by individual social and digital media websites and applications we choose to use both in a professional and personal capacity.

The general rule is that the same standards of behaviour and conduct apply online as would be expected offline.

The public expect police forces, police officers and police staff to act with integrity and impartiality whilst upholding fundamental human rights and treating all persons with equal respect. It is important that police officers and staff meet these expectations both online and offline. To support this, the social media instructions seeks to:

- Provide officers and staff with an understanding of the standards of behaviour expected of them when using social and digital media, both in a professional and personal capacity.
- Establish arrangements for monitoring and governance of the use of the use of social media by officers and staff.
- Clarify the legal framework within which officers and staff must operate when using social media on behalf of the force.

Every interaction we have using social media must be conducted within a legal framework to ensure that the public disclosure of information is lawful.

Those responsible for using social and digital media on behalf of the Force must ensure all interactions comply with the website or application's terms and conditions of use, and codes of conduct.

### **Associated Procedural Instructions**

This policy is supported by the subsequent procedural instructions

- [Pi6.1 – Drugs – Roles of Police in Schools](#)
- [Pi6.3 – Social and Digital Media for Engagement Instructions](#)

Other relevant SYP policy documents you may wish to consider are:

## **P7 - Information Management**

### **Equality Act 2010**

The Act creates a statutory requirement for all Functions and Policies (Including Procedural Instructions) to be analysed for their effect on equality, diversity and human rights, with due regard to the **General Equality Duty**.

In principle, this document has been assessed for discrimination, which cannot be justified, among other diverse groups.

The **Code of Ethics** published in 2014 by the College of Policing requires us all to do the right thing in the right way. It also recognises that the use of discretion in Policing is necessary but in using discretion, states that you should, "*take into account any relevant policing codes, guidance, policies and procedures*."

### **Human Rights/Discretion**

The purpose of providing policy is to give an indication to staff of the expected course of action. However it is not possible to cater for every possible combination of factors that would justify a departure from stated policy. The Human Rights Act 1998 requires the proper use of discretion at all times and nothing within this policy and associated procedural instructions prohibits the proper use of discretion in appropriate circumstances.

Where action is taken that has the potential to interfere with an individual's Human Rights, the reasons behind the making of the decision to act in that way should be recorded on the appropriate forms, or where this is not practicable, in pocket books or policy logs.

### **Rights of redress for members of the public:**

Anyone who feels that a member of staff has behaved incorrectly or unfairly, or who is dissatisfied with organisational matters, service delivery or other operational policing issues, has the right to **make a complaint**.

Initial action should be taken in one of the following ways:

- Complain in writing or in person to the Senior Officer at the appropriate police station or to the Chief Constable of the force concerned.
- Visit a local Citizens' Advice Bureau
- Contact a Solicitor

### **Rights of redress for South Yorkshire Police personnel:**

South Yorkshire Police personnel who feel they have grounds for concern in relation to the implementation of policies may, as appropriate:

- Pursue concerns through their line manager.
- Contact a First Contact Advisor.

- Pursue a grievance formally through the South Yorkshire Police Grievance Resolution Procedure.
- Seek advice from their staff association or trades union.

Use procedural instruction [Pi23.11 - Management of Complaints](#), in the section entitled Handling Complaints relating to Direction and Control.

**Start Date:** 04/01/2017

**Review:**

This statement of agreed policy is managed by Head of Corporate Communications.

This policy and its Equality Analysis were last reviewed on: 26/03/2021

The date for the next review of this policy and Equality Analysis is: 26/03/2023