

Policing Elections



Reference Number: P14

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 [Policing Elections](#) and you may wish to refer to the APP section 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 Policing Elections includes;

Purpose

Electoral malpractice is rare but can attract considerable media attention and undermine public confidence in the electoral process. Public confidence can also be affected by the perception that an initial response to allegations or complaints of electoral malpractice is ineffective.

This policy sits alongside the APP guidance on policing elections, and aims to support police officers and staff who are involved in planning the police response to elections and the prevention and detection of electoral malpractice.

Force Election Single Point of Contact (SPOC)

In South Yorkshire Police, SYP, the [SPOC duties](#) will be carried out by the Force Financial Crime Investigation Unit and **any** electoral offences should be referred to the Force SPOC in the first instance. The only SPOC duties to be carried out by other departments are as follows:

- The Operational Planning Unit is responsible for liaising with local authority returning officers, to ensure that they have access to police advice/support when needed

- The Force Intelligence Bureau will carry out the analysis and dissemination of intelligence and information, which is relevant to the planning process for an election. This begins the National Decision Model (NDM) process, which leads to **threat assessment**, strategy and ultimately the tactical options which guide how the respective election will be policed

Candidates and Campaigners

In addition to the **APP guidance** on officer attendance during elections, a senior officer from each district will also attend the election count.

Communities

APP states that the Silver commander should write a community engagement strategy. As part of this strategy, it should be considered whether a community impact assessment is required. In SYP, the Gold Commander may request that a community impact assessment (CIA) is undertaken for each district in relation to the election.

Associated Procedural Instructions

There are currently no procedures that support this policy.

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: 16/01/2018

Review:

This statement of agreed policy is managed by Superintendent, Operational Support Unit.

This policy and its Equality Analysis were last reviewed on: 14/12/2021

The date for the next review of this policy and Equality Analysis is: 14/12/2023