

Volunteer Police Cadet Scheme in Cambridgeshire

Agreement between the Chief Constable and Police and Crime Commissioner

(revised October 2016)

1. Introduction

Volunteer Police Cadets is a uniformed voluntary youth organisation currently run in 36 police force areas. The programme is designed to provide a safe environment in which young people can learn as individuals, develop positive relationships with the police and actively support their community.

Sir Graham Bright, Police and Crime Commissioner introduced the Volunteer Police Cadet (VPC) Scheme in Cambridgeshire in November 2014. The new Police and Crime Commissioner Jason Ablewhite continues to support the scheme as an integral part of the wider 'Citizens in Policing' agenda.

The Cambridgeshire VPC Scheme, which contributes towards the overarching Police and Crime Plan 'Communities' objective, will follow the National VPC¹ framework whose aims are:

- Promote a practical understanding of policing amongst all young people
- Encourage the spirit of adventure and good citizenship
- Support local policing priorities through volunteering and give young people a chance to be heard
- Inspire young people to participate positively in their communities

2. Strategic commitment

The Chief Constable and the Police and Crime Commissioner are committed to preventing crime and reassuring the public. This involves supporting work to build safer and stronger communities and taking a partnership approach to address causes of offending. The VPC Scheme plays a significant part in achieving these aims through diverting young people away from a life of crime and building confidence in communities through supporting visible policing.

Each Local Policing Area will have the opportunity to introduce one VPC unit, which will be embedded as part of the extended police family. Each unit will be tailored to the needs of the local

¹ <http://www.nationalvpc.org/>

community, but will operate within this force framework and adhere to local guidance. Each cadet unit will have a maximum of 30 young people:

- aged between 13 and 18
- 25% who come from a crime vulnerable background
- who volunteer at least three hours each month assisting in community and crime prevention activities
- who represent the diversity of their Local Policing Area

The VPC Scheme will operate under existing Cambridgeshire Constabulary policies. The Scheme will follow the National VPC Manual of Guidance and curriculum. Specific procedures developed for Cambridgeshire can be found in appendix one. This includes arrangements for recruitment, uniform and volunteer duties.

3. Governance

The Chief Constable is responsible for the VPC Scheme in Cambridgeshire as part of the wider 'Citizen in Policing' work. Strategic governance will be provided through the Business Co-ordination Board (BCB) as part of that wider agenda.

The Chief Constable devolves responsibility to the Assistant Chief Constable as force lead for the Volunteer Police Cadets to ensure the operational strategic aims are delivered. Each area commander will have operational responsibility for their unit. The area commander will nominate an area Single Point of Contact (SPOC) of at least sergeant rank who will be responsible for ensuring that all operational activities proposed for cadets are in line with local priorities and are appropriate and risk assessed.

Each cadet unit will have a unit co-ordinator. The unit co-ordinator is responsible for liaising with leaders and cadets to set the programme and ensure activities have appropriate risk assessments completed. The unit co-ordinator must consult with the area SPOC about all operational activities.

Day to day running of each VPC unit will be the responsibility of the unit leaders. They are responsible for monitoring cadets' attendance, performance, training and welfare.

The VPC Programme Group will meet every two months and will be chaired by the nominated Constabulary representative. The VPC Programme group will focus on operational elements of the scheme. The group will:

- Oversee the general implementation of the VPC Scheme in Cambridgeshire
- Take responsibility to quality assure Health and Safety and safeguarding practices

- Set direction for units and ensure they are running in line with the National VPC principles
- Ensure the programme plans are appropriate and suitable
- Ensure participants are safe from harm
- Identify and share good practice

Membership will consist of unit co-ordinators (or a representative leader), area SPOCs, head cadets and a parent representative will be invited to attend and contribute.

The VPC Programme Group will report to the Volunteer Board. The Board will ensure the strategic direction set by the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable, through the Police and Crime Plan, is being met and provide oversight and governance for the development of the VPC Scheme within Cambridgeshire.

4. Financial arrangements

Cambridgeshire Constabulary and the Police and Crime Commissioner have agreed financial arrangements – see appendix two.

Insurance cover is in place for Volunteer Police Cadets and Leaders. The policies are purchased in joint names of the Chief Constable and the Police and Crime Commissioner.

5. Operational arrangements

The unit co-ordinator and area SPOC will identify and agree the operational activity for the cadets to ensure it is in line with local priorities. It is the responsibility of the unit co-ordinator to complete a thorough risk assessment of every activity undertaken. Prior to any activity taking place, this will need to be reviewed and agreed with the area SPOC.

All operational plans, risk assessments and documentation will be stored within the VPC Scheme OneNote. This will ensure all activity is appropriately documented, can be reviewed, ensures openness, transparency and will enable units to share best practice. In addition, each unit should keep details of cadets, leaders and area SPOC within their section of the OneNote. Each unit will be set up with an email address and be provided with a unit mobile phone so cadets can keep in contact with leaders.

6. Complaints

All complaints should be addressed to the unit co-ordinator who will liaise with the Volunteer Co-ordinator and area SPOC to decide the best way forward in line with existing policies and

procedures. If the complaint is about the unit co-ordinator then the Volunteer Co-ordinator or area SPOC should be contacted directly.

Appendix one

Specific guidelines for Cambridgeshire

Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment of Volunteer Police Cadets will be the responsibility of the unit leaders and area SPOC. Particular focus should be placed on identifying cadets who would benefit from the scheme as a whole and may be from crime vulnerable backgrounds.

Each VPC unit will have a maximum of 30 cadets and following the initial recruitment, units can have one intake each year of up to ten young people, to the unit maximum of 30.

The VPC Scheme is open to young people from the age of 13 to 18. However, to enable cadets to make the most of their time within the scheme, recruitment will be from the age of 13 to 16 years with cadets able to stay on in the scheme until their 19th birthday. From the age of 18, cadets who wish to become a leader may start that application process.

Recruitment Process

1. Applicants will complete an application form and return it to the designated unit leader for review.
2. The applicant will be invited to meet with a unit leader to discuss their application, identify support needs and manage expectations -templates available on the OneNote.
3. The applicant will undertake vetting checks (to NPPV 1) and for parent / guardian to complete appropriate medical and consent forms – template available on the OneNote.
4. If accepted, the unit leader will write to the applicant confirming acceptance.
5. A waiting list of potential applicants may be held, however, recruitment from waiting lists will be at the point of vacancy.

Deployment and Management

Weekly Meetings

The weekly meetings should include drill, input from the National VPC curriculum and physical activity. All sessions should be appropriately risk assessed by the unit leaders.

Weekly meetings should take place during term time. Whilst there should be some provision made for activities during the school summer holidays it is up to the unit leaders to decide whether to have formal meetings.

Volunteer Duties

Cadets should complete a minimum of three hours each month in addition to the regular weekly meetings. Cadets shall not be used to replace Police Officers, Police Staff, or Special Constables. Cadet deployment and tasking should improve, enhance or support the service received by the public, support ongoing police operations and initiatives and have a clear link to local policing priorities.

Any police activity or attendance at events outside of weekly meetings that are supported by cadets must be subject to thorough event planning, threat assessment, risk assessment and checks that their activity is adequately covered by insurance. The unit co-ordinator must liaise with the area SPOC to ensure this is in place. A template stored on the OneNote can be used to record these decisions. Supervision ratios when out in the community should be a minimum of one leader to five cadets.

Teams interested in involving cadets in their work should contact the unit co-ordinator or area SPOC to discuss further.

Cadet Learning, Development and Curriculum

All units will follow the National VPC Curriculum who have provided lesson plans, which can be adapted to suit local needs. Each cadet will be issued with a National VPC workbook to record their learning and achievements.

All new cadets are required to complete the National VPC recruit level. On successful completion of this period the cadets and their parents will be invited to a presentation evening. Cadets will make

an oath in uniform and presented with certificates by representatives of the Constabulary and Police and Crime Commissioner.

Dress Code

Each cadet and cadet leader will be provided with an appropriate uniform upon commencement to the scheme. Cadets who require new uniform due to wear and tear or out growing uniform will be issued replacements as proportionate on request.

Uniform – Cadets

- Hat with VPC Blue band and Constabulary crest
- Black fleece with Constabulary crest marked 'Volunteer Police Cadet'
- White Shirt
- VPC blue clip on tie
- VPC blue epaulettes marked 'Volunteer Police Cadet'
- Black Trousers and belt
- Boots
- VPC polo shirt

The unit will also be given a pool of Hi-Vis jackets for use at events and volunteering activities.

Cadets should not wear their uniform outside the meeting venue unless accompanied by Cadet Leaders. Cadets should not travel in uniform.

Cadets should wear uniform at all operational events and weekly meetings unless specified otherwise by the Leader. Each cadet is responsible for keeping all uniform clean and in good condition. It should also be stored in a safe and appropriate place to safeguard against theft or damage.

When a cadet leaves the scheme, they should return all their uniform to the unit co-ordinator.

Uniform – Leaders

Leaders will be issued the same uniform as Cadets but epaulettes will show 'Volunteer Police Cadet Leader.' VPC Leaders who are Police Officers, PCSOs or Special Constables should normally wear their Police / PCSO uniform, when acting as a VPC leader supervising Cadets in a policing activity. However, their core duty is care of the cadets. Leaders will not be responsible for any other duties other than supervising Cadets unless required to spontaneously respond to a developing situation. In this situation any action taken must be cognisant of their primary role to safeguard the Cadets.

Appendix two

Volunteer Police Cadet Unit Finances

General Principles

- 1.1 The Police and Crime Commissioner, the Chief Constable and all employees have a duty to abide by the highest standards of probity in dealing with financial issues. This is facilitated by ensuring that everyone is clear about the standards to which they are working and the controls that are in place to ensure that these standards are met.
- 1.2 The Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable intends for VPC units to be sustainable and manage their own finances. Units can ask for contributions to activities but leaders should identify cadets who cannot afford this and make allowances. No cadet should be excluded from participation in any cadet event on the basis they cannot afford to participate.
- 1.3 The Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable will issue each cadet and leader in the initial cohort with his or her uniform. Once a cadet/leader leaves the uniform must be returned to the unit who will manage the re-issue to new cadets/leaders. Any loss or damage of uniform through negligence will be charged to the individual whilst being mindful of 1.2. Cadets who require new uniform due to wear and tear or out growing uniform will be issued replacements on request.
- 1.4 The Police and Crime Commissioner will provide the Chief Constable with an annual grant of £10k to fund the effective running of the scheme. Any additional units or growth of existing units, over and above 30 per local policing area, must be fully funded by an external source which includes costs for initial and replacement uniforms and workbook. However, the additional resources required to run the extra unit must be balanced against the wider demands on Constabulary resources.

Bank account and cash

- 1.5 VPC units should set up a bank account with at least two signatories to manage the unit's finances. The signatories should be appropriate leaders who are aware of the expenditure

from the bank account and be in a position to challenge the reason for expenditure if required.

- 1.6 The two signatories must not sign a cheque payable to themselves or a related party; if signatories are related, they must not sign the same cheque; signatories must never sign a blank or partially completed cheque; all signatories must verify the documentation associated with the payment before approving the payment.
- 1.8 Any monies in this account are to be used for cadet purposes only.
- 1.9 All monthly statements should be kept securely for seven years and must be made available for scrutiny by the Finance Department.
- 1.10 A simple income and expenditure sheet should be maintained and a copy of this sent to the Strategic Accountant at the Office of the Police and Crime commissioner on a quarterly basis as part of the monitoring of the grant expenditure.
- 1.11 Cheque books and cash should be kept locked away when not in use and access restricted to those individuals with responsibility for finances within each unit.
- 1.12 No more than £100 cash should be kept securely. Excess amounts should be banked as soon as practicable.

Equipment

- 1.13 Cadet funds may be used to purchase equipment for cadet activities, however that equipment remains the property of the VPC Scheme and ultimately Cambridgeshire Constabulary.
- 1.14 All purchases must be made in accordance with local force policies and guidance.
- 1.15 The equipment's primary use must be for the purpose of running the VPC programme or activities, not for the personal use of cadet leader in possession of it.
- 1.16 Equipment should be fit for purpose, however should not be of a specification that would be considered extravagant and draw criticism.
- 1.17 An inventory of equipment should be kept in order to identify equipment available for use by all units and to provide transparency.

Expenses

- 1.19 Each unit will authorise and pay leaders personal expenses incurred during cadet activities directly from cadet finances, as long as the transaction is documented and backed up with receipts and agreed by the unit prior to expenditure.

Donations, gifts, sponsorship, income generation

- 1.20 All donations, gifts, sponsorship and income must be recorded on income and expenditure sheet for transparency reasons.
- 1.21 Any offers of sponsorship of VPC units must be considered for its appropriateness and ethicality.