



The Code of Ethics – Organisational Model

Introduction

The Organisational Model lists the key considerations and activities that an organisation should consider to successfully embed the Code of Ethics to its fullest potential. The model demonstrates an aspiration of ethical policing and is cyclical in nature, requiring regular review.

The Organisational Model:

- illustrates what a 'model' force should have done and considered in order to embed the Code
- is an aspirational statement of what success looks like in the future
- clearly identifies the enablers to achieving continuous improvement
- is not an exhaustive list and will evolve and grow as application of the Code matures.

Background

The College of Policing took an evidence-based approach to developing this Organisational Model. This included liaison with subject matter experts and consultation with the National Policing Lead for Professional Ethics, Cleveland Chief Constable Jacqui Cheer. Further details are listed at [Appendix 1](#).

Format

The Organisational Model is based on the Integrity Model developed for the police service by Transparency International UK and approved by the Association of Chief Police Officers in 2011.

The Organisational Model is structured in accordance with the following headings:

1. Commit
2. Assess
3. Plan
4. Act
5. Monitor
6. Report.

When producing this model the following principles were taken into consideration:

- proportionate scrutiny
- independence and impartiality

- competence
- efficiency
- flexibility
- inclusivity
- innovation.

1. Commit

- The chief constable consistently reinforces the significance of the Code of Ethics.
- Everyone understands their roles, responsibilities and expectations under the Code.
- Ethical values are externally and internally communicated.
- A statement of commitment to the Code is included in published policing plans.
- Senior leaders demonstrate how they have personally applied the Code.
- Supervisors and leaders facilitate and encourage professional decision making by their teams.
- The ability to use discretion to do the right thing is actively acknowledged and rewarded.
- Police staff associations and trade unions reinforce the significance of the Code and demonstrate examples of how they have applied it.

2. Assess

- Risks are identified, monitored and managed.
- Perceptions of fairness are a key consideration both internally and externally and could be measured using staff surveys.
- Everyone is empowered to challenge any perceived unprofessional behaviour by colleagues (including their supervisors and managers).
- Everyone has the confidence and the ability to seek guidance on ethical dilemmas.
- Policies, procedures and practices reflect the ability to use discretion and the need to do the right thing.
- The National Decision Model (NDM) is used as the preferred decision-making model.
- Everyone has the confidence to report unethical behaviour and knows how to do so.
- Internal governance structures appropriately reflect the new 'employer' status of chief constables.
- Recipients consider training to be realistic, practical and engaging.

3. Plan

- Responsibility for embedding the Code is aligned to a chief officer portfolio.
- Everyone receives information, training and development opportunities to aid their understanding of the Code and how to apply it.
- Organisations make use of professional assistance via the College of Policing and suitable academic institutions.
- An anti-corruption control strategy is in place.
- An evidence-based approach is used for embedding the Code.

4. Act

- Leaders are engaged and accessible in relation to the Code, and frequently reinforce ethical policing.
- Leaders and supervisors seek opportunities to demonstrate and discuss ethical decision making.
- Ethical considerations underpin all decision making, which is transparent whenever possible.
- All training seeks opportunities to reinforce the Code and discuss ethical dilemmas.
- Recruitment, selection and promotion processes test and evidence ethical principles and standards, including a personal commitment to the Code.
- The organisation provides a range of methods that enables everyone to report unethical behaviour.

5. Monitor

- Risk assessment should be a continuous process which adapts to meet changing conditions and mitigate emerging risks.
- Lessons are learnt where ethical decision making could be improved but blame is not attributed.
- Staff surveys are regularly conducted to monitor attitudes towards ethical policing, perceptions of leadership and confidence in disclosure and reporting mechanisms.
- Honest feedback on professional behaviour is sought by everyone; leaders in particular should be receptive to feedback and challenge.
- Ethics committees or other scrutiny mechanisms are established and should include members of the public.
- Internal investigations and complaints should be monitored for timeliness, proportionality and effective outcomes.

6. Report

- A published report demonstrates transparency in relation to how the organisation and people within it abide by the Code of Ethics.

Appendix 1

Development of the Assessment Guide has involved:

Consultation

- national policing lead for Professional Ethics and the national policing lead for Professional Standards (both portfolios are now held by a single person)
- internal and external subject matter experts
- a wide range of police practitioners.

Key reading

- Successive versions of the Code of Ethics for the policing profession of England and Wales (as produced by the Integrity Programme, College of Policing)
- Committee on Standards in Public Life (2013) *Standards matter: A review of best practice in promoting good behaviour in public life*
- Transparency International UK (2011) *Benchmarking Police Integrity Programmes*
- ACPO (2011) *Integrity Model*
- NPIA (2012) *Integrity in the police service* (unpublished discussion paper for HMIC)
- HMIC (2011) *Without fear or favour*
- College of Policing *The Equality Standard for the Police Service*
- Recommendations from ACPO/IPCC (2012) *The abuse of police powers to perpetrate sexual violence*
- NPIA (2012) *Integrity within the police service – implementing change* (unpublished discussion paper for HMIC).

Input from senior leadership programmes

The 2013 Strategic Command Course resulted in 36 assignments on the following topic:

Using the Code of Ethics as your starting point, please devise a plan to promote higher levels of ethics and integrity in your force/organisation.

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