

Charging for Police Services

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Policy aim

To ensure that where a request is made for policing services beyond those which would normally be provided by Northumbria Police, a 'special duty' charge will be made where such services are provided.

To ensure compliance with Financial Regulations.

Who is this for?

Police Officers, Police Staff, volunteers and line managers.

Policy statement

The policy on charging for police services will be determined by the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). Charges will be made by the Chief Constable within the policy so determined, and all accounts for income due to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) will be rendered promptly by, or in a manner approved by, the Chief Finance Officer.

If a request is made for policing services beyond those which would normally be provided by Northumbria Police, in accordance with the Police and Crime Plan or any statutory requirements, the request will be considered. A 'special duty' charge will be made where such services are provided.

The PCC will annually review the level of these charges and has provided the Chief Constable with delegated powers to reduce or waive charges to reflect local knowledge and awareness of any political, economic or cultural benefit to the area.

National guidance has been issued by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) which outlines a structured approach to determining the basis of special duty charges to be levied for charging for police services, and also an assessment tool to determine the category of charge detailed below:

Category 1 - Full Cost Recovery

The agreed basis of charge will remain special duty which will be agreed by the PCC on an annual basis, i.e. full special duty should apply in all cases where there is a unique or

infrequently recurring requirement for a small number of officers or police staff OR a commercial operation requests the provision of a policing service. Full cost recovery should be the default position for all special policing services.

Category 2 - Direct Cost Recovery

A reduced charge may be applied to events which are either a one-off, or a major recurring event which has a special political, economic or cultural impact. The reduced rate of only charging direct cost recovery would then take due cognisance of the benefits to the general public.

Category 3 - No Charge

No charge would be applied in the following scenarios:

- If the event falls within the remit of an area command or department policing plan and therefore the request for policing services is not above and beyond that which would usually be provided in the normal course of events.
- If the event was on a public highway or an area with unrestricted access to the public.
- If the political, economic or cultural benefits to the area are such that no charge should be made.
- Policing on public land (Ipswich Town FC v CC of Suffolk Constabulary 2017).
- Statutory or constitutional events.

Authorisation

Legal advice should be taken, and the risk formally assessed before considering the deployment of chargeable Special Police Services (SPS) on Public Land and, if undertaken, the decision should be documented to demonstrate the assessment and subsequent reasoning behind any decision to supply.

The authorisation levels for the agreement of no charge, or of a reduced charge are:

- Where the estimated hours of special duty are less than 48 hours for a one off or series of events: Area Commander or Head of Department.
- Where the estimated hours of special duty are more than 48 hours for a one off or series of events: An Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) will approve following review by the Chief Inspector, Force Coordination Centre (FCC).

Monitoring

All agreements of a no charge or a reduced charge should be recorded in writing, be retained centrally by FCC, and be available for future inspection by Internal Audit.

Northumbria Police acknowledges the potential for conflicts of interest where an officer acts in the interests of the funding provider, and that allegations may be made that this may breach the right to a fair trial under Article 6 of the Human Rights Act 1998. Such actions could also affect the balance in terms of operational policing; therefore, careful consideration will be given to each request and all decisions regarding charging for police services will be made on operational grounds.