



Staff Support Network Groups

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Note: By signing the above you are authorising the policy for publication and are accepting responsibility for the policy on behalf of the Chief Constables.

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Note: Please send the original Policy with both signatures on it to the Norfolk CPU for the audit trail.

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Legal Basis

Legislation specific to the subject of this policy document

Section	Act (title and year)

Other legislation which you must check this document against (required by law)

Act (title and year)
Human Rights Act 1998 (in particular A.14 – Prohibition of discrimination)
Equality Act 2010
Crime and Disorder Act 1998
Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and associated Regulations
General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018
Freedom Of Information Act 2000
The Civil Contingencies Act 2004

Other Related Documents:

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies recognise the value that staff support network groups provide to staff and officers. The networks contribute positively to developing an open and supportive culture across the organisations, support the delivery of equality objectives and help to promote equality and the elimination of discrimination.
- 1.2 The staff support networks primary aim is to provide a forum to support and develop the skills and talents of their members. They provide opportunities for their membership to use their knowledge and expertise to help to develop greater equality and representation across the organisations.
- 1.3 The following list details the staff support network groups in Norfolk:
- Christian Police Association
 - Black Police Association
 - Norfolk Disability and Carers Association
 - The Forum
- 1.4 The following list details the staff support network groups in Suffolk:
- Christian Police Association
 - Suffolk Ethnic Police Association
 - Suffolk Disability and Carers Association
 - Suffolk Association of Women in Policing
- 1.5 The following staff support network operates jointly across Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies:
- Norfolk and Suffolk LGBT+ Network

2. Purpose of Staff Support Network Groups

- 2.1 A staff support network group is defined as a group set up by staff, to support others who share a common characteristic. Listed below are a series of objectives that the networks seek to fulfil:
- Canvassing the views of staff to identify issues pertinent to their respective staff support network;
 - Holding regular meetings and supporting force meetings where appropriate;
 - Providing advice to the force in relation to matters affecting their network;
 - Providing a network of support for members;

- Linking to regional and national support networks;
- Promoting equal opportunities for all staff and officers; and
- Assisting the force in complying with equality legislation.

2.2 Although a network group is set up primarily to support the needs of a particular group, subject to the network's constitution, membership is not exclusive to individuals from that group and is open to all.

3. Supporting force diversity meetings

- 3.1 The Staff Support Network Steering Group (SSNSG) is held quarterly. The Chair of each network group should attend this meeting where possible, or nominate another office holder from the network to attend as their deputy.
- 3.2 Where possible, the Constabularies encourage the staff networks to be represented at and attend the quarterly Suffolk Strategic Equalities and Inclusion Board and the Norfolk Equality Board.

4. Eligibility for recognition as a staff network support group

- 4.1 To qualify for formal force support, networks must evidence that there is an additional support requirement for a particular group of individuals who share a common characteristic. The group should also demonstrate how it will meet the definition of a staff support network group as outlined in [Section 2](#). Applications should be made in writing to the Head of Diversity in Norfolk and to the internal Diversity lead in HR in Suffolk. Where applications are not supported, appeals can be made via the Chief Officer lead for diversity, the DCC for Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies respectively.
- 4.2 Networks which are joint with other forces and/or are affiliated to a national body, and which comply with the criteria above, will be supported by the Constabularies.
- 4.3 Individual networks are responsible for developing their own constitution and working arrangements.

5. Office holders

5.1 Role of office holders

Office holders of staff support networks are required by the Constabularies to fulfil the aims of the staff support network groups as outlined in [Section 2](#), by undertaking the following activities:

- Maintain the effective running of the network:

- a) Ensure the network has effective consultation and communication strategies with their members and the respective Constabulary;
 - b) Develop and implement action plans for the network;
 - c) Submit requests for attending conferences/training;
 - d) Ensure compliance with the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 for any personal information kept on members;
 - e) Hold an annual general meeting.
- Provide support to the membership of the network:
 - a) Meet with members to identify and discuss issues of concern or common interest and highlight these to the appropriate levels within the Constabularies;
 - b) Guide and assist members to challenge discrimination and inappropriate behaviour/language in a positive and constructive way;
 - c) Represent their members' interests by participating in the respective Constabulary management meetings and briefings as required;
 - d) Raise awareness of the group's particular characteristic to enhance colleagues' understanding of the network and the community it represents.
 - Support the diversity agenda within the Constabularies:
 - a) Act as a point of reference for colleagues;
 - b) Attend training events as agreed by the SSNSG;
 - c) Attend national and international conferences as agreed by the SSNSG;
 - d) Work with the Constabularies to improve the recruitment, retention and progression of under-represented and disadvantaged groups;
 - e) Assist with the development of good policy, practice, plans and strategies;
 - f) Raise awareness of concerns and issues relating to under-represented and disadvantaged groups;
 - g) Contribute to the development of diversity training.
 - Ensure their behaviour and conduct supports the aims of network groups and role of office holder as outlined above and falls within the parameters of this policy.

5.2 Election of office holders

All office holders will be elected by the membership of the group in line with their own constitution.

5.3 Conduct of office holders

The Code of Conduct will be determined by the Constabularies' professional Code of Conduct and staff support network constitution which shall provide standards of conduct for members in the pursuance of the objective and aims of their network.

Any member of the networks who knowingly breaches the Code of Conduct of the network or the respective Constabulary and who commits any act (by word or deed) which may be deemed as being detrimental to the network in the first instance will be reviewed by the network as per their Constitution with regards to their membership and any inappropriate behaviour will be referred to PSD.

Groups are requested to share any internally drafted information booklets with the diversity team prior to publication to ensure compliance with legal requirements and Force policy. This does not include publications, such as monthly newsletters used for group publicity/update purposes.

6. Resources available to networks

The Constabularies will provide each network with:

- Reasonable access to facilities, e.g. meeting rooms, telephones, computers, postal services, photocopying;
- Access to the Diversity team office;
- Administrative support from the Diversity team in relation to the booking of rooms, accommodation, transport and conferences;
- Reasonable time off for network activities and meetings in line with section 7; and
- Conferences, travelling and accommodation expenses as appropriate and agreed through the Diversity team.

7. Time off for office holders

7.1 The constabularies support a reasonable and proportionate amount of work time being made available to Chairs and Executive members to support their attendance at events and meetings. This needs to be agreed through the office holder's line management and planned through RMU. All networks must accept that attendance will always be in accordance with the exigencies of duty.

- 7.2 Managers must do all they can to release network office holders to attend meetings called by local management or by the Constabularies and regularly engage with office holders to explore and discuss how their network role is being managed alongside their core role.
- 7.3 If a meeting is called on a network office holder's day off or while they are not on duty then an equivalent amount of time in lieu will be given. Lieu time will also be given to office holders who attend approved training and conferences.

8. Roles & Responsibilities

Role Title	Responsibilities
Office Holder	<p>As the Office Holder you are responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining the effective running of the network; • Providing support to the membership of the network; • Support the diversity agenda within the Constabularies; • Ensure their behaviour and conduct supports the aims of the network group. <p>You must not do:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breach the Code of Conduct of the Network or their respective Constabulary.
Chair of network group	<p>As the Chair of a network group you are responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending the Staff Support Network Steering Group meeting (held quarterly) or nominating a suitable alternative representative to attend on your behalf.

9. Definitions

Term	Definition
Staff Support Network Group	A group set up by staff, to support others who share a common characteristic.