



CONSTITUTION

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1. Introduction

- a) The Association shall be known as the “Disabled Police Association” (DPA), a national staff support network comprising representatives from UK police forces and other law enforcement agencies.
- b) The Disabled Police Association engages strategically with employers and key stakeholders to ensure the fair treatment of disabled officers, staff, and volunteers within the extended police family. We aim to support policing in delivering a fair and equitable service to all sections of the policing community, act as a critical friend and, in particular, to improve the relationship between the police service and disabled people in society, particularly in relation to attraction to and retention within the service.

- c) The Association seeks to ensure the fair treatment of everyone in the Police Service but works particularly hard to ensure that the “ability” of officers, staff, and volunteers with disabilities is recognised, rather than individual differences.
- d) This constitution will be accessible to all DPA members via the DPA website.

2. Disability

- a) The provisions set out in the Equality Act 2010 apply to and offer protection for people with a disability. The Act sets out the circumstances in which a person is defined as being ‘disabled’ and the protections afforded to that person.

3. Strategic Aim

To promote equality of opportunity for those with a disability working within the extended policing family in the UK

3.1 Strategic Objectives

- To achieve an equitable and inclusive working environment for people with disabilities working within policing
- Undertake or participate in strategic engagement with employers and key stakeholders to promote the fair treatment of those with a disability working within policing.
- Support the police service to become more reflective of our communities.
- Be cognisant of the views of DPA members when representing them with stakeholders and employer.
- Provide a support function to Force disability groups, networks or associations and share best practice.
- Advise¹, liaise, consult, influence and negotiate with key stakeholders regarding disability matters within policing
- Provide or signpost professional and personal development opportunities.
- To raise the awareness and understanding of issues affecting those with a disability within policing
- Be a critical friend to the Police Service in relation to disability

¹ The DPA does not provide legal advice.

4. Membership

Membership of the Disabled Police Association is free from subscription to any member of a United Kingdom or Crown Dependency Police Service.

As a member of any of the above organisations, you automatically become a member of the DPA (unless you inform us you do not wish to be).

Full Membership

This includes serving police officers and police staff. Full voting rights are conferred on these members and they are able to stand to be on the executive committee.

Associate Membership

This includes volunteers and retirees of the above organisations. There are no voting rights conferred on these members and they are unable to stand for the executive committee.

Members who are retiring from the police service must advise the DPA that this is the case prior to their last day of service in order for a personal email address to be registered. Any person who had not been a member prior to retirement must provide proof of service prior to be entered on the mailing/membership list.

The executive committee reserves the right to refuse, review and/or terminate membership.

Termination of Membership

A member may terminate their membership with the DPA at any time. This can be done by “unsubscribing” on the DPA website or writing to the DPA secretary, who will remove personal details from the records held by the DPA. When completed, this may be confirmed in writing, if requested, by the former member.

5. Organisational Structure

5.1 The Executive Committee

a) The DPA shall be administered and managed by an elected executive committee. Members of the executive committee are elected from within existing membership.

b) The DPA “executive committee” will comprise of one or more elected representatives from any of the eligible organisations previously listed plus two staff association representatives. Each person will have one vote. A maximum of two positions within the committee will be permitted from one force.

c) Members of the DPA may elect the following posts, and these shall be referred to herein as the “executive”:

- President
- Vice-President – Police Staff
- Vice-President - Police Officers
- Secretary
- Deputy Secretary
- Communications Officer
- Webmaster
- Committee Member (max ten) to include one reserved trade union, one Police Federation and one Superintendents Association seat.

i) Trade union seat

This seat will be filled following election from the National Executive Committee. Funding to attend committee meetings will be paid for by the trade union. Funding for DPA Conference attendance for the member should also be granted.

As more than one trade union represent police staff a vote would need to take place if more than one trade union applies. If only one nomination is received and the criteria is met, that trade union would automatically be given the reserve seat for that term.

ii) Police Federation seat

This seat is automatically filled by the National Equality Lead, or a suitable national deputy agreed by the National Equality Lead or National Executive Committee and DPA President. This person will have completed their Federation equality training. Funding to attend committee meetings will be paid for by the National Federation, and associated costs. Funding for DPA Conference attendance for the member should also be granted, alongside associated costs.

iii) Police Superintendents Association (PSA)

This seat is automatically filled by the PSA seat for disability on the Police Superintendents Association National Executive Committee, or a suitable national deputy agreed by the PSA Disability lead or National Executive Committee and the DPA President. Funding to attend committee meetings will be paid for by the Police Superintendents Association, and associated costs. Funding for DPA Conference attendance for the member should also be granted, alongside associated costs.

d) The executive committee will consist of seven officer positions, as above, and a maximum of ten additional committee members. Committee members will be expected to attend executive committee meetings (or participate via telephone/online conferencing). Members must attend at least 50% of meetings per year.

e) Executive committee members must hold a position within their force disability group, network or association or have been nominated as the dedicated point of contact within their force, group, network or association. Volunteers require endorsement from their respective group to be nominated.

f) The DPA executive committee reserves the right to extend the option to stand for executive committee membership to any person in a Force who does not have a disability network, group, or association to represent that force.

g) The DPA Executive will publish role profiles for all positions.

5.2 Decision Making

a) When making strategy or policy decisions, a quorum of seven members of the executive committee must be present, and a majority decision is required to determine a course of action.

b) To pass a vote, a majority of those in attendance must be in agreement. In the case of a tied vote, the chair is allowed to cast a second deciding vote.

c) In circumstances where the constitution is unclear, a vote of a quorum of executive committee members will resolve the issue.

5.3 Meetings

a) All DPA meetings will be organised by the DPA Secretary or another nominated person, who will provide at least two weeks notice, except in the case of exceptional circumstances. The Secretary or other nominated person will also record the meeting in documented minutes. Where at all possible, the following year's dates will be provided before year-end.

b) The executive committee will meet quarterly; however, where necessary and appropriate, they or an appropriately formed subgroup may meet more frequently.

c) An Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held, for which the Secretary will give at least four weeks notice to all members. At the AGM, the President (or one of the vice-presidents in their absence) will present an annual report detailing the work of the DPA during the preceding year.

d) Remote attendance and voting are acceptable forms of attendance at any meeting. Facilities for this (and other required reasonable adjustments) will be accommodated at all meetings and forums wherever possible, and requested in advance.

5.4 Election of the Executive Committee

a) The DPA membership will elect members of the executive committee every two years.

b) An executive committee member who resigns from the DPA also resigns from their post on the executive committee. Resignation should be in writing to the President and Secretary.

c) A vote of a quorate number of the executive committee members will then take place for the interim position to be filled until the next AGM.

d) Only full members of the DPA may vote in executive committee elections.

e) Only full members of the DPA qualify as candidates for election to the executive committee. All nominations for membership of the executive committee must have a proposer. The proposer must also be a full member of the DPA. Those members gaining the most votes shall be duly elected for that term of office.

f) A member of the executive committee may be removed from their post in the event of a majority decision of a panel of three members formed from the executive committee. The panel will consist of at least one vice-president plus two other members (not to include the President). The appellant should be advised of who will be on the panel prior to it taking place in order that they can make representations if they have concerns. Due consideration should be given to those concerns.

Due consideration will be given to the member's conduct and whether it is conducive to the association's aims. The panel will decide within two weeks whether the member's conduct warrants termination of their membership. The member in question can make representations and put their case forward two weeks prior to the panel meeting. There will be a right of appeal to the President or, if the appellant is the President, to the second of the Vice-Presidents. To be submitted in writing within four weeks of being advised of the panel's decision.

g) If a member of the executive committee vacates their post, the executive committee may appoint a temporary member without election to maintain the quorate status of the executive committee. The temporary member may remain in post until the next AGM. The temporary member will adopt voting rights at the executive committee meeting. At the AGM, any newly elected member will serve until the next regular period of election (i.e. the two years for the whole committee (odd numbered years)). See 5.4 c above

- h) The executive committee may co-opt members to address specific issues. A co-opted member will be a full member of the DPA and may contribute to discussion at executive committee meetings but will not have voting rights.
- i) The executive committee may initiate sub-groups to achieve the DPA's aims and objectives.
- j) Notification of the AGM and the intended election process will take place four weeks in advance or, in the case of an extraordinary election process, with at least two weeks' notice. All roles will be advertised to the DPA members, and nomination forms must be submitted to the Secretary at least two weeks in advance of the election. A DPA member may not hold more than one executive post unless there are extenuating circumstances, and then only temporarily.
- k) Voting will take place prior to the AGM, by electronic vote in accordance with the timetable set and advertised to members
- l) Election to an executive role will be by majority vote.
- m) In the event of a 'tie', the deciding vote will be granted to the President. In the case of a tied vote for the role of President, the decision will be made by the two Vice-Presidents. If this results in a further tie either a job share arrangement can be agreed by the two candidates or finally the decision will be made by the "toss of a coin".
- n) Votes will go to the Secretary apart from the Secretary position which will go to the President to ensure independence.

5.5 Subgroups

- a) Subgroups may be set up to develop a specific issue the Association raises.
- b) Other members with specialist knowledge or relevant experience may be co-opted on to the group on an ad hoc basis, if deemed appropriate, by the executive committee. These positions are advisory and include no voting rights.
- c) The designated chair of the working group will update the executive committee on its progress

5.6 Annual General Meeting (AGM)

- a) The AGM shall be held annually, no later than thirteen months after the preceding AGM, unless exceptional circumstances prevent this.

b) The meeting shall be open to all DPA members and guests invited with the agreement of the executive committee.

c) Only full members of the DPA will be afforded voting rights. Any decisions must be agreed upon by a simple majority of those members present and voting (including remote attendance). This will be by a show of hands. In the case of a tie, the President shall have a casting vote.

d) Ten members are the minimum number needed to form a quorum for business, and a majority decision will be required to determine a course of action.

5.7 Extraordinary General Meeting

a) Extraordinary general meetings may be called for urgent or constitutional matters. Any member of the DPA may request an extraordinary meeting.

b) The application for an extraordinary meeting will be in writing to the President/Secretary of the executive committee, outlining the reasons for calling the meeting, which will then be considered.

c) The date of an extraordinary meeting will be circulated to all DPA members, providing sufficient notice for interested members to attend.

d) Urgent meetings should be within seven days, and extraordinary meetings should be held within 14 days.

e) An extraordinary meeting must be quorate in the same circumstances outlined for an AGM.

f) Constitutional changes may only occur at an extraordinary general meeting or AGM.

g) The constitutional change will be accepted by a majority vote. In the event of a tie, the President will have the deciding vote.

5.8 Role of the Executive Committee

The DPA's constitution may only be changed upon approval of an extraordinary general meeting of existing members or at the AGM.

The executive committee has delegated authority to.

- Call meetings of the executive committee to formulate and agree on policies for the group on behalf of the DPA.

- Interpret the constitution accordingly where there are discrepancies or uncertainties.
- Establish the objectives of the DPA, subject to the Constitution.
- Maintain the list of members and maintain an information flow to the membership.
- Represent the interests of disabled officers and staff within policing at relevant forums.
- Undertake any actions deemed necessary to promote or achieve the objectives of the DPA without bringing the association into disrepute.
- Co-ordinate the management and arrangements of events for the membership, i.e. national conference.

6. Alteration of the Constitution

The executive committee will periodically review this constitution and, in any case, at the maximum of two yearly intervals. Any proposals for amendments will be brought to the AGM or an extraordinary general meeting for approval and acceptance by voting. A written draft copy will be provided to attendees before the meeting.

7. Code of Conduct

a) All executive committee members must abide by the College of Policing Standards of Professional Behaviour and Police Staff Council Standards of Professional Behaviour and will be responsible for acting accordingly, especially when conducting the DPA's business.

b) Members shall avoid discrimination, harassment, victimisation or abusive behaviour towards anyone they come into contact with.

c) Every member shall treat all information that comes into their possession throughout the term of their membership as confidential. They shall not divulge that information to other parties except in the proper course of DPA business and where appropriate permissions have been granted.

d) Any association member who knowingly breaches this Code of Conduct or commits any act which the executive committee may deem detrimental to the Association shall have their membership suspended, pending consideration by the Executive Committee. See 5.4 (f)

e) All data DPA holds is confidential and will only be used for DPA business. Any data held will only be shared to make representations on behalf of members and the DPA with the express permission of the member (s) involved.

f) Any member of the DPA will be required to obtain the express permission of the DPA executive to represent DPA with any non-DPA internal or external partner, regarding any business interest they hold that could conflict with DPA business, whether by way of payment or otherwise.

8. Budget

a) The DPA has no budget, so all members should be supported by their force.

b) Sponsorship/funding may be required for specific objectives, which the executive committee will raise, spend, and manage accordingly.

c) Requests for funding may be made to the NPCC via the current agreed protocols

9. Dissolution Procedure

a) Following an executive committee meeting, an extraordinary general meeting, or an AGM, the decision to dissolve the DPA shall be made by ballot with the agreement of at least two-thirds of the attending members of the DPA.

b) No member of the DPA shall benefit financially from the dissolution of the network.

c) The DPA shall formally cease to exist seven days after the ballot voting for the group's dissolution. It is the responsibility of the President to ensure that all members are informed of the dissolution and to conclude the affairs of the DPA.

d) Any monies held by the DPA shall be donated to a charity to benefit people with a disability, apart from sponsorship monies, which will be returned to the sponsor.

e) DPA will delete all data it holds if it ceases to exist.

Agreed at AGM 14th April 2026