

ALL NEC AND BRANCH SECRETARIES FOR INFORMATION

Good afternoon All,

Today the Home Secretary announced the decision to enshrine the Police Covenant in law to enhance support and protection for the entire police family, including retired Police Officers. The Covenant applies to serving and former police personnel. It creates a statutory duty for forces to support police officers and places a requirement on the Home Secretary to report annually to Parliament. It will focus on protection, health and wellbeing, and support for families.

The main proposals are:

- I. Her Majesty's Government should legislate for the Home Secretary to report annually to Parliament on progress on the Covenant.
- II. The scope of the Covenant should include all those working within, or retired from policing roles, whether paid or as a volunteer.
- III. The focus of the Covenant in the first instance to be on: • Physical Protection • Health and Wellbeing • Support for Families
- IV. A governance structure should be established, reporting to a high-level policing board.
- V. The board should further consider the benefits of establishing a new role of Chief Medical Officer for Policing for England and Wales.
- VI. The board should explore options for bringing current activity within the purview of the Covenant and consider the governance needed to drive forward that activity.
- VII. There should be an option for non-HO forces to join the Covenant via a Memorandum of Understanding, on a case by case basis, agreed with the relevant department.

The full report can be viewed here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/police-covenant-for-england-and-wales>

A total of 1,113 questionnaire responses were received, 201 of which were from retired police officers, 18% of the total responses.

Please find the key points of relevance to NARPO from the report below:

- Over 90% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the idea of a Police Covenant for England and Wales.
- A high proportion of respondents were serving officers with the next largest groups being police staff and retired officers. A small number of responses were from police widows, Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and police families.
- The report found that specific concern was expressed regarding the support available following retirement, especially when retirement is on ill health grounds.
- On the theme of health and wellbeing, the report noted that respondents said that the issues identified above do not end at retirement. Many of the respondents who described themselves as retired reported flashbacks to incidents from their career which caused ongoing mental health issues, with no access to dedicated support.

Please find some of the Government's proposals from the report of relevance:

- The Government should legislate for the Home Secretary to report annually to Parliament on progress on the Covenant.
- The scope of the Covenant should include all those working within, or retired from policing roles, whether paid or as a volunteer.
- A governance structure should be established, reporting to a high-level policing board, which should further consider the benefits of establishing a new role of Chief Medical Officer for Policing for England and Wales.

NARPO has already posted updates on our social media

CEO Steve Edwards said:

“NARPO welcomes the Home Secretary’s decision to enshrine the Police Covenant in law. The Covenant will rightly enhance support and protection for serving officers but also extends to retired officers and the entire police family.

NARPO responded to the Government’s consultation earlier in the year and we are delighted that the Home Office has recognised the cumulative effect of a career in the police and that these issues do not end at retirement. We particularly welcome the emphasis on parity between physical and mental health. For too long retired police officers have not had access to dedicated support when mental health and wellbeing issues have arisen.

We sincerely hope that this will make a real difference to serving and retired officers and their families and we look forward to working with the Government to ensure it offers real and tangible support to those it covers.”