



PERSONAL STATEMENT TO THE LEVESON INQUIRY

From: CLLR MARK BURNS-WILLIAMSON OBE

Chair of the Association of Police Authorities, and Chair of West Yorkshire Police Authority

01.03.201

1. Who you are and career summary

I was elected Chair of the Association of Police Authorities in October 2011, having served as Deputy Chair since 2009 and a Board member since 2003.

I have been a member West Yorkshire Police Authority since 1999, and was elected Chair of the Authority in June 2003 and have been re-elected Chair every year since.

I have served as a Wakefield Metropolitan District Councillor for over 13 years representing the Castleford Central and Glasshoughton Ward and am currently Chair of the Castleford Town Centre Partnership, Chair of the Wakefield Labour Group and a member of many voluntary groups. I am also a member of the Local Government Association's Safer Communities Board.

I am a long time governor at Wheldon Infants School and Castleford High School & Technology College and also President of Glasshoughton Cricket Club. I am a former Rugby League player and administrator and a keen supporter of Castleford Tigers RLFC. I live in Wakefield.

2. Role and functions of the APA

The APA is the national voice of the public in policing within the tripartite arrangement which oversees policing in England and Wales (the other members of the tripartite being ACPO, representing Senior Police Officers and the Home Office). Please see: www.apa.police.uk .

1. Following the creation of police authorities in their present form in 1995, The Association of Police Authorities (APA) was formed in 1997 to represent all police authorities in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, as well as the British Transport Police Authority, the Civil Nuclear Police Authority, and the Ministry of Defence Police Committee.
2. Local police authorities (through their 'umbrella body' the APA), along with the Home Secretary and chief officers of police, make up the tripartite relationship which is responsible for the governance of policing in England and Wales.

3. Police authorities are currently made up of local people: a mix of local councillors and independent members (selected from the community) of which one must be a magistrate.
4. The tripartite partners are the Home Office, the Association of Chief Police Officers and the Association of Police Authorities.
5. The job of police authorities is to:
 - Consult with local communities to find out what they want the local police to do
 - Set the strategic direction for policing locally and decide what the police should focus their attention on locally, based on consultations with local communities
 - Set the budget for their police force, and decide how much local people should pay for policing in the local council tax
 - Make sure the police force is continuing to do a better job
 - Appoint (and, if necessary, dismiss) chief constables and senior police officers

The APA's mission

- Influence the policing agenda at the national level on behalf of police authorities and the public
- Support and equip police authorities to secure more efficient and effective policing that is responsive to the public it protects
- Secure adequate resources for policing
- Promote the role and achievements of police authorities
- Champion the principles of local accountability and 'policing by consent' to ensure that local communities are served by efficient and effective police authorities

We create value for our police authority members through two primary functions: influence (at the national level) and support (advice, guidance and training).

The Inquiry will be aware that Parliament resolved last September that Police Authorities should be replaced by directly elected Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) in November 2012. The APA is therefore, in addition to its usual business, fully and constructively engaged with the Home Office and other partners to ensure that the transition to PCCs is as smooth and as efficient as possible.

3. Role and responsibilities as Chair of the APA

My responsibilities include:

- Working with the APA Board and Chief Executive to set the strategic direction for the APA
- Chairing meetings of the APA Board and APA Council
- Acting as the spokesperson of the APA to the media, (working with our press office)
- Regular liaison with the leaders of partner organisations including the LGA, Police Federation, ACPO, Police Superintendents' Association, HMIC, IPCC, NPIA, etc.
- Regular bilateral meetings with the Home Secretary and Police Minister
- Meetings with the Home Affairs spokespeople for the Opposition and Liberal Democrats
- Providing evidence on behalf of the APA, as requested by the Home Affairs Select Committee and other external Inquiries
- Membership of the Board of the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA)
- Representing the APA at external events including Police National Memorial Day, The Police Bravery Awards, etc.

4. What role does the APA play in the oversight of the Police Service's relations and communications with the media, and what role should it play?

At present it plays no role.

The oversight of police forces' relationship with the media is a duty for local police authorities, as is oversight of all other functions of a police force.

The general role of the APA has to date included assisting police authorities to fulfil their duties through the provision of guidance and training. We have not, to date, produced such guidance or training for authorities on the specific matter of the police service's relations with the media .

The APA or any successor body representing or providing a co-ordinating function for elected PCCs should play a role in assisting Police authorities or PCCs to implement the recommendations of the Leveson or other inquiries, through the medium of guidance and or training.

5. Contact, oversight and knowledge from the APA in relation to the police's relations and communications with the media?

None. The APA does not have any oversight role of the police in this area.

6. Contact, oversight and knowledge from the APA in relation to police service's policing of offences committed, or suspected as having been committed by the media?

None. The APA does not have any oversight role of the police in this area.

7. Contact, oversight and knowledge from the APA in relation to relations and communications between police authorities and the media

The APA has played a facilitating role by sharing existing police authority protocols for dealing with the media between authorities.

The APA has shared template press releases with police authorities for them to adapt and use as they see fit in a local context.

The APA has convened occasional meetings of police authority communications staff to aid the sharing of best practice and to inform communicators about topical issues which may feature in local media reports.

The APA does not have any oversight role in relation to police authorities' contact with the media. We are a membership, not a regulatory body.

The APA has limited knowledge of police authorities' dealings with the media, except that we monitor their mentions in the published (online) media on a daily basis and some authorities have, in the past, provided the APA with copies of all of their press releases.

8) APA Guidance to police authorities and or forces on relations with the media

The APA has no role in issuing guidance to police forces.

I am aware of occasions on which guidance has been disseminated by the APA

- The APA has facilitated the sharing of existing media handling protocols between police authorities when requested to do so.
- The APA has in the past provided authorities with guidance on behaviour during the purdah period of local and national elections and this has included sections on dealing with the media
- The APA ensured that police authorities had copies of both the Filkin report and the HMIC inspection report 'Without fear or favour' regarding relations between the police and the press.

I am not aware that the APA has ever provided comprehensive guidance on relations with the media to police authorities and has certainly never done so for police forces.

9) What changes, if any, will there be to the role or functions of the APA in the oversight of relations and communications between PAs and / or the police service and the media once PAs are replaced with PCCs?

The APA will cease to exist on or before the date on which its members (police authorities) are abolished in late November 2012.

However, the Home Secretary has agreed that the APA should provide an interim association for the 41 elected Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and other bodies of policing governance from 15.11.12 until the end of the financial year 2012/13. It is expected that this interim body will provide a slimmed down version of the dual functions of representation, co-ordination and support for those delivering governance and oversight of the police that the APA has provided for police authorities. It is also expected and that during the lifetime of the interim body, PCCs will decide whether they wish to continue or establish such a representative / coordinating and support function on a more permanent basis.

Our hope is that the interim representative body for PCCs should play a role in assisting PCCs to implement the recommendations which may be issued in the wake of this Inquiry. The interim, or a more permanent representative body could also facilitate the introduction of a 'peer network' of those who could provide assistance and expertise to PCCs and their staff as required.

10) What role should the MOPC and the PCCs have in ensuring that relationships and communications between the police and the media, both locally and nationally are appropriate?

The Act states that PCCs will be held responsible for “the totality” of policing in their area so they will have the primary role in monitoring and ensuring that communications are appropriate.

Personally speaking, my tests of “appropriate” relations and communications in this context would examine whether the relationship is:

- a. Conducted through or transparent to appropriate channels (the press office)
- b. Lawful
- c. In the public interest – and here I would ask, does the activity
 - Reassure - build public trust and confidence
 - Challenge or expose service failure in the public interest
 - Help catch criminals

11) Contacts about MPS matters with the Mayor, Conservative Party central Office or other politicians whilst Chair of the APA?

I have not had any contacts with the Mayor or Conservative Central Office.

Whilst Chair of the APA I have spoken with Kit Malthouse of the MOPC on no more than four occasions and then in general terms, in the context of Kit being a member of the APA board and Council, both of which I chair.

I have not had specific conversations with those listed regarding the specific matters which prompted this inquiry but the matters have been raised in passing during my regular bilateral meetings with the Policing Minister.

12) What sort of information do politicians seek from you (or have sought from you) in relation to the MPS?

The only instances during my tenure as Chair when other politicians have sought information from me regarding the MPS relate to my regular bilateral meetings with the Policing Minister and occasional meetings about the Riots Damages Act, when the Minister and other politicians have asked about the MPS response to last summer’s riots in relation to dealing with claims under the Riots Damages Act.

I have not been asked for any information regarding the matters (Operation Weeting, etc) which prompted your Inquiries.

13) Volume frequency nature of contact have or have had about matters relating to police forces other than the MPS, with politicians

In representing police authorities I have regular bilaterals with the Home Secretary, Policing Minister and the opposition lead spokespeople about policing matters with a national focus.

I have also been called to give evidence to the Home Affairs Select Committee, and hosted events at Labour Party conference, again with a focus on policing but from a generalist national, rather than a single force-specific perspective.

14) What sort of information do politicians seek from you in relation to police forces other than the MPS?

As Chair of the national umbrella body for police authorities I am called upon to provide a national overview rather than a single force specific view.

Requests from the media or politicians for a view on one force are best fielded by the force or police authority in question and our policy is to divert such queries accordingly.

15) The culture within the APA in relation to dealings with the media

I believe that our culture is necessarily predominantly reactive, due to the limits on our capacity, but that our culture is also increasingly professional and competent with an influence and reach that has grown over the past year.

16) The type, frequency duration and content of your contact with the media during your tenure as Chair of the APA

My contact with the media as chair of the APA is entirely channelled through the Press Office.

Our chief means of communication has to date been the release of press statements. These are issued on average once per week but obviously dependent on events:

<http://www.apa.police.uk/news-releases>

I have outlined my interaction with the media as Chair of the APA over the course of the last month for purely illustrative purposes:

- 12.01 Agreed a comment to be issued to the media re: Police Arbitration tribunal
- 19.01 Agreed media statement re: latest crime statistics
- 02.02 Issued comment on HMIC reports into undercover policing
- 06.02 Agreed a media statement re: High Court ruling on police pensions
- 10.02 BBC 6 o'clock news – planned live interview about PCCs
- 10.02 Agreed statement issued to Sunday Mirror re: Riot damages act
- 16.02 Live interview BBC Radio 4 'You and yours' re: Riot damages act
- 16.02 Agreed a statement re: PCCs for a trainee journalist
- 27.02 Agreed a statement re: report of CJS Joint Inspectorate into the CJS & police's handling of cases of rape

17) What do you seek to gain through your personal contact with the media

My contact with the media is in a professional, role based capacity and in this way my aim is to raise the profile, concerns, successes and priorities of police authorities in the national media.

18) What has the media been seeking from you in your personal dealings with them whilst Chair of the APA?

In the professional dealings that I have had with it, 'the media' has consistently sought the usual quarry; a story, comment or quote on a story or some useful background information that might add context or colour to a report.

19) Have you ever had "off the record" conversations with the media in your capacity as Chair of the APA? Please explain and give examples

No. All of my contact with the media as Chair of the APA is through our media office (Head of Press and Public Affairs)

20) To what extent have you accepted hospitality from the media?

21) The nature of that hospitality

I have not accepted any hospitality from the media as Chair of the APA.

22) Have you provided hospitality to the media on behalf of the APA?

23) What has been the nature of that hospitality?

I have not personally provided any hospitality to the media on behalf of the APA.

However; members of the media who have attended meetings of the APA council will have had access to, and been welcome to partake of the same hospitality provided for APA members at such events, (typically a sandwich lunch and soft drinks).

Similarly, any members of the media attending one of the 'Policing fringe' events organised by the APA and ACPO at each of the national political party conferences every autumn will have had the same access as all other attendees to the sandwich lunch and soft drinks provided to guests at these events.

24) Have you accepted gifts from the media?

No.

25) Mechanisms to monitor and record hospitality?

Yes, a record book at the APA.

26) Recording meetings / contact with the media generally?

Yes, The APA Head of Press keeps a log book of contacts with the press

27) Ever discussed the media or media coverage with politicians? How important is such communication and why?

Most of my colleagues are 'politicians' so my conversations about the media are frequently with politicians as part of routine, everyday discourse; bringing the attention of each other to articles or stories which might be of interest.

28) Has a politician put pressure on you to take a certain course of action as a result of lobbying or influence exerted on that politician by the media? If so please explain.

No.

29) Set out your understanding of the type of contact APA personnel have had with the media.

This is perhaps best illustrated by detailing the contacts that the 'press office' (actually one member of staff – The Head of Press and Public Affairs) has had with the media during the last month:

- 11.01 BBC News call enquiry about PCCs
- 12.01 Police professional call re: Police Arbitration tribunal
- 17.01 BBC North West TV calls and emails re: 'Inside out' documentary on PCCs
- 20.01 GovKnow call: plans for publicising a conference on Policing
- 25.01 Independent production company call and email re: researching programme looking at impact of cold weather on emergency services
- 26.01 ITV west call enquiry re: impact of police cuts
- 26.01 Huffington Post call re: impact of police cuts
- 01.02 BBC Lincolnshire call enquiry re: local candidates for PCC elections
- 06.02 Western Mail reporter called re: High Court ruling on police pensions
- 06.02 Home Office press office called
- 08.02 BBC Radio Gloucestershire 'phone bid re: interview on police cuts
- 08.02 Capita conferences – called re: publicity for conference on PCCs

- 10.02 BBC 6 O'clock news called re: bid for a live interview about PCCs
- 10.02 'Phone Sunday Mirror enquiry re: Riot damages act
- 13.02 'Phone and emails BBC Radio 4 'You and yours' interview bid re: Riot damages act
- 14.02 Request for information from Voluntary sector umbrella body (response to press)
- 15.02 'Phone Bid from Channel 4 News story (riots)
- 16.02 'Phone Interview bid from a trainee journalist
- 17.02 BBC TV Politics Show 'phone inquiry re: PCCs
- 21.02 Call from Feature writer from 'The Economist' researching an article about PCCs
- 23.02 Lincolnshire press enquiry (call) re: outsourcing of policing functions to G4S

To note:

- Contact is almost always by email or phone. Meetings are rare, though they do of course take place on the fringes of conferences or press conferences.
- In general – media enquiries regarding any issue that is specific to one authority will be referred onto the local police authority concerned.
- Calls occasionally come in asking for 'a *police* view on X' – these callers will be directed to ACPO.
- Our relative level of media activity has reduced significantly since the conclusion of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill's passage through Parliament (15.09.11)

30) Is contact restricted to certain staff?

APA staff contacts with the media are limited to the Head of Press, the Chief Executive and the Chair(s) as explicitly set out in the APA staff handbook, as below:

"All media enquiries should be referred to the Communications Manager [Head of Press and Public Affairs] and Executive Director [Chief Executive] (or in her absence, the Deputy executive Director). No comment or other information (even factual information) should be provided to the press or other media without first obtaining explicit clearance from the Executive Director (or in her absence, the Deputy Executive Director). This applies to all media."

31) What do you expect the APA to gain from such contact?

To promote the views, concerns, priorities and successes of police authorities.

32) What do the media seek from such contact?

In the professional dealings that I have had with it, 'the media' has consistently sought the usual quarry; a story, comment or quote on a story or some useful background information that might add context or colour to a report.

33) What hospitality are APA personnel permitted to accept from the media (a drink?)

The staff would be permitted to accept a single drink from the media in the context of an event.

The staff handbook states :

Hospitality, gifts and fee income

Employees shall treat with caution any offer of a gift, favour or hospitality that is made to them personally, particularly by persons or organisations seeking, or with whom the APA has, a commercial relationship.

Hospitality may, at times, be an appropriate way of doing business provided that no extravagance is involved. For example, a meal or refreshments taken to enable [parties to continue] discussion of business; hospitality offered in the course of inspecting facilities which may be used by the APA to host an event; or taken at a public or semi-public occasion where the employee attends in an official capacity as representative of the APA. Offers to attend purely social or sporting functions should be accepted only if the APA should be seen to be represented and acceptance of such hospitality should be authorised by the Chief Executive.

Employees should not accept significant personal gifts or favours from contractors, suppliers, or those seeking a commercial relationship with the APA. Modest gifts such as inexpensive items of equipment, pens, diaries or promotional material bearing the giver's insignia, food/drink of a seasonal nature (i.e. Easter eggs) may be accepted. Gifts from visiting delegations may be accepted where to refuse would be likely to cause offence.

The Chief Executive shall maintain a register and each employee shall personally record hospitality and gifts received or given by them, and all offers of significant gifts, in the appropriate register. Hospitality given by the APA's employees will be recorded via the expenses claim procedure.

When hospitality or a gift has to be declined, those making the offer should be courteously but clearly informed of the procedures and standards operating within the APA.

Any fee income or other remuneration and payment in kind offered to an employee by virtue of his/her employment with the APA shall be paid to the APA.

34) What hospitality are APA personnel permitted to afford to the media?

Guidance is provided in the staff handbook (as above). Alcoholic drinks are not acceptable expenses and will not be reimbursed. All hospitality received or given must be registered on the APA register of hospitality and gifts.

35) How if at all is hospitality between the APA (including you) and the media controlled and or regulated?

The APA keeps a register of hospitality. I have instructed that this should be made available on the APA website.

36) Are the hospitality rules governing contact between the APA and the media different from those covering contact with other third parties?

No they are not different.

37) Are records of hospitality policed and if so by whom?

They are monitored by the Chief Executive and available upon request. I have also taken the decision to publish them on our website.

38) Are the procedures (above) sufficient and working effectively?

Yes – especially since we have taken the decision to publish the hospitality register on our website.

39) Has there been or is there an inappropriate level of hospitality accepted by the APA from the media?

No there has not been an inappropriate level of hospitality accepted by the APA from the media.

40) What systems, policies and procedures are in place in the APA to ensure all staff knew what is and what is not appropriate contact with the media?

Only the Head of Press and Chief Executive deal with the media.

The staff handbook (introduced and explained as part of the induction of new staff) makes explicit that media handling is to be done only by the Head of Press and Public Affairs or the Chief Executive.

The handbook also makes clear that alcoholic drinks are never acceptable company expenses.

We are reviewing these procedures in the light of the Filkin report and HMIC report 'Without Fear or Favour' and will review them again in the light of your Inquiry's findings.

41) Are the policies and procedures sufficient and working effectively?

We have not experienced any breaches of these procedures during the last year and our office is so small and transparent that any break in protocol during office hours would be evident. In the light of this inquiry I have instigated a 'refresher' in our procedures for all staff.

42) What training is in place to ensure the APA staff know what is appropriate contact with the media?

The staff induction and handbook are our standard means of informing staff about the standards that they are required to meet and these are monitored and reviewed as part of the 6monthly Personal Development Review process.

43) Are leaks to the media a problem for the APA?

Leaks are not a problem – I am unaware of any leaks during my time as Chair of the APA.

44) What systems are in place to deal with leaks?

There are no systems or processes to identify the source of leaks. This is something I have instructed the Chief Executive to rectify.

45) and 46) How many leaks and how many investigations into leaks and what were the outcomes?

I cannot comment on the driving forces behind leaks or investigations into leaks as we have not experienced any leaks during my tenure as Chair of the APA.

47) What payments are legitimate financial transactions between APA personnel and the media?

None – contracts with the media (subscription fees) will be paid through the normal contracting procedure and not by individual members of staff.

48) Policies / guidance in relation to financial transactions between APA personnel and the media.

I am unaware of any payments between the APA and the media. Our staff handbook is clear that employees shall not accept significant personal gifts or favours from contractors, suppliers or those seeking a commercial relationship with the APA and all such offers must be recorded.

All hospitality (gifts) given by the APA's employees must be recorded by the expenses claim procedure.

The staff handbook also states that:

Any fee income or other remuneration and payment in kind offered to an employee by virtue of his/her employment with the APA shall be paid to the APA.

49) To what extent do you believe that bribery of personnel by the media is a problem for the APA?

I do not believe that bribery is a problem at the APA.

50) Steps to prevent, detect and investigate bribery and discipline any personnel who accept bribes?

The staff handbook is clear that bribery is not acceptable and includes specific instructions to prevent it, including

Employees shall treat with caution any offer of a gift, favour or hospitality that is made to them personally, particularly by persons or organisations seeking, or with whom the APA has, a commercial relationship.

Offers to attend purely social or sporting functions should be accepted only if the APA should be seen to be represented and acceptance of such hospitality should be authorised by the Chief Executive.

Employees should not accept significant personal gifts or favours from contractors, suppliers, or those seeking a commercial relationship with the APA. Modest gifts such as inexpensive items of equipment, pens, diaries or promotional material bearing the giver's insignia,

food/drink of a seasonal nature (i.e. Easter eggs) may be accepted. Gifts from visiting delegations may be accepted where to refuse would be likely to cause offence.

The Executive Director shall maintain a register and each employee shall personally record hospitality and gifts received or given by them, and all offers of significant gifts, in the appropriate register. Hospitality given by the APA's employees will be recorded via the expenses claim procedure.

When hospitality or a gift has to be declined, those making the offer should be courteously but clearly informed of the procedures and standards operating within the APA.

Any fee income or other remuneration and payment in kind offered to an employee by virtue of his/her employment with the APA shall be paid to the APA.

Having never experienced a case of actual or alleged bribery of APA staff we have not put in place specific procedures to investigate bribery, but **bribery would be treated as any other alleged case of gross misconduct**. A (non-exhaustive) list of matters which would constitute "Gross Misconduct" is included within the Staff handbook, together with full details of how such misconduct would be investigated and disciplined. An extract of the examples which would be relevant to bribery and associated matters of gross misconduct are given below:

Gross Misconduct (extract from APA Staff Handbook)

Gross misconduct is regarded as misconduct of such a nature that it fundamentally breaches the contractual relationship between the employee and the employer, and justifies management in no longer accepting the continued presence of the employee at the place of work.

The Handbook states that gross misconduct includes (non-exhaustive list):

- *Serious and/or wilful failure to observe the APA's financial regulations or other serious financial impropriety*
- *Serious, wilful failure to observe APA policy or practice*
- *Fraud or attempted fraud; corrupt behaviour*
- *Conduct which is likely to bring disrepute to the employer's business or organisation.*
- *Wilfully committing an act outside work or being convicted of a criminal offence which is liable to adversely affect the performance of the contract of employment and/or the relationship between the employer and the employee.*
- *Theft of, or misappropriation of, or failure to account for, or falsely claiming entitlement to the APA's property, assets or funds or theft from staff or visitors.*
- *Providing false information, or falsifying records or documents, likely to result in financial gain.*
- *Undertaking other paid work during contracted hours or when on sick leave or authorised absence*
- *Serious breaches of confidentiality (except in relation to the Public Interest Disclosure Act)*

The Handbook also states that gross misconduct could lead to "**summary dismissal**".

The Handbook makes clear that the Chief Executive has the right "**to dismiss an employee without notice or prior warning and with immediate effect, on the grounds of "gross misconduct", following the investigation and hearing procedures set out [above]**".

Decisions Regarding Disciplinary Action

Decisions about disciplinary action need to address two main issues:

1. *Has the misconduct been proven?*

*An assessment of whether a particular allegation of misconduct has been proven will be based on the "**balance of probabilities**" (ie: a genuinely held belief that is more rather than less likely that the employee concerned did what is alleged). This is a significantly less exacting requirement than that applying in a criminal court where the requirement is for proof "beyond all reasonable doubt".*

2. *What is the appropriate penalty?*

Where misconduct has been proven, consideration must be given to the merits of a case before selecting from the disciplinary sanctions at any given stage. Varying circumstances may justify different disciplinary action for apparently comparable offences. Typically, the following factors should be considered:

- *The gravity of the offence*
- *Any relevant precedent*
- *The employee's previous record, including any current disciplinary warnings*
- *Length of service*
- *Any special or mitigating circumstances*

In the light of the issues being examined by this inquiry I have asked the Chief Executive of the APA to review our procedures to ensure that our ability to prevent, detect, investigate and discipline instances of bribery are sufficiently clear, robust and effective.

51) What is the function of the APA Press Office and how does it operate? Does it have a gatekeeper function for controlling the flow of information out of the APA to the media?

The 'press office' consists solely of the Head of Press and Public Affairs who, with the Chief Executive under my direction as Chair, is the gatekeeper controlling the flow of information out of the APA to the media.

The press office has a number of responsibilities and functions with regard to public affairs and also a limited role in policy with regard to certain aspects of the transition from police authorities to PCCs. However the chief responsibilities of the individual concerned as regard to the press are:

1. To draft and agree the content of all written statements to the press with the Chair / Deputy Chairs and the Chief Executive and to issue those press releases to the media
2. To manage and 'author' the APA's presence on twitter
3. To respond to all enquiries from any sections of the media at any time. This includes the provision of factual information or background to an issue. Requests for an official quotation from the APA will be referred to the Chair and if accepted the press office would draft a quote for their consideration.
4. To respond to requests for, and proactively to seek interviews for the Chair / Deputy Chairs with relevant media.
5. To scan the media and provide links to the most important stories for police authorities on our 'press blog' every morning.

6. To ensure that the Chair(s), and relevant colleagues and or members are aware of significantly relevant media stories as soon as possible.
7. To update the front page and press pages of the APA website and other pages as far as possible.
8. To provide a response to relevant stories in the media where correction is required or there is an opportunity to raise the profile / concerns / priorities of the APA. This might involve placing a comment underneath a story on the Internet or writing to the editor, etc.
9. To provide a forward planning function to ensure that the APA responds to relevant stories / publications / events in a timely fashion.
10. To secure appropriate representation (speakers / branding) for the APA at relevant events / conferences.
11. To oversee contracts associated with my function (media / Parliamentary monitoring services, subscriptions).
12. To assist in maintaining the APA's constructive links with partner organisations such as ACPO, the Home Office, the LGA, Police Federation, Superintendents', etc.

Reporting: In delivering these functions the Head of Press and Public Affairs reports to the APA Chief Executive who ensures the delivery of strategy and messages agreed and set by me as Chair. All press statements are signed off by and issued in my name as Chair of the APA.

52) In the last 5 years, how many people have worked in the APA's Press Office at any one time?

One

53) In the last 5 years, how many of the people who have worked in the APA's Press Office previously worked for the News of the World?

Zero

54) In the last 5 years, how many of the people who have worked in the APA's Press Office previously worked for a title owned by Rupert Murdoch?

Zero

55) In the last 5 years, what proportion of the personnel who have worked in the Press Office has come from a media background?

One member of staff (the Communications Manager who fulfilled the media function immediately before the appointment of the incumbent) worked in the MPS Communications department before joining the APA.

56) What is the media's attitude towards the APA's Press Office?

The media themselves are obviously best placed to answer this question but in my experience the media are happy with the performance of our press office function, and the APA's media profile has risen substantially during the last year, not least due to the passage of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill.

I have not experienced any requests for direct access since requests for access to me via the press office are always dealt with quickly and efficiently.

YOUR ROLE AS CHAIR OF THE WEST YORKSHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY

(57) What are your responsibilities as Chair of the West Yorkshire Police Authority?

My responsibilities include:

- Chairing Full Authority meetings and other all-member meetings;
- Chairing Senior Appointments Committee meetings;
- Representation on Yorkshire and Humber Joint Police Authorities Committee and attendance at Regional Collaboration Board meetings;
- Chairing Transition Board meetings;
- Act as lead member for specified policing divisions and departments, as agreed at the Authority's AGM;
- Represent West Yorkshire Police Authority at APA Council meetings;
- Represent West Yorkshire Police Authority on outside bodies, as agreed at the Authority's AGM;
- Regular meetings and conversations with the chief constable, to stay abreast of force business;
- To make urgent decisions under delegated authority from time to time;
- To act as the Authority spokesperson where appropriate;
- Regular liaison with the leaders of the five WY District Councils on issues of mutual concern;
- Meetings with West Yorkshire MPs on issues of interest/concern;
- Regular meetings with the external auditor;
- Dealing with correspondence from/meetings with complainants;
- Meetings with the staff associations and trades unions; and
- Signing the Annual Governance Statement and the Statement of Accounts on behalf of the Police Authority.

(58) What role does the WYPA play, if any, in the oversight of relations and communications between West Yorkshire Police and the media? Do you consider that it would be in the public interest for there to be changes to this role? If so, what changes?

West Yorkshire Police Authority is routinely sighted on Force news releases and media coverage, through inclusion the daily news cuttings circulation, which is compiled and distributed from the Force Press Office. Structures are also established for a WYP Press Officer to work a proportion of their role at the PA office thus enhancing the knowledge of media matters and the relationship between PA and Force on this issue.

The Authority is also briefed on major/critical incidents and reputational issues likely to attract media attention. Where matters have an Authority remit or impact (e.g. media enquiries on budget issues) the WYP Press Office consult with them and agree communications strategies.

We will ask the Force to report on incidents and/or issues that are highlighted in the media.

The Chair and Chief Executive of the Authority meet with the Chief Constable on a weekly basis to discuss matters of strategic and reputational importance. This will include any emerging or ongoing media issues.

Whilst it is fair to say that not every media issue is highlighted to the PA by WYP (such as daily crime appeals) there is certainly a close and open dialogue and relationship.

(59) What level of contact, oversight or knowledge is there from the WYPA in relation to West Yorkshire Police's relations and communications with the media?

WYPA is routinely copied into information as it is released to the media for critical or relevant incidents.

WYPA will also receive background information briefings, as necessary, to accompany statements that have been issued. WYPA also has sight of the majority of press releases issued to the media by headquarters and divisional satellite offices; again as they are issued.

We also share responsibility for press releases where there is joint interest e.g. performance statistics, the budget – some are drafted by WYPA and some by WYP.

WYP Media Strategies for major/critical incidents include the Police Authority as an internal stakeholder.

WYPA internal audit functions have also undertaken reviews of the WYP Press Office/Media Department functions with regards both internal and external media communications systems.

(60) What level of contact, oversight or knowledge is there from the WYPA in relation to West Yorkshire Police's policing of offences committed, or suspected as having been committed, by the media?

It is extremely rare for allegations of criminal activity to be made against the media either in, or operating within, West Yorkshire. The only one in recent memory was at the time of the Metropolitan Police's Operation Weeting (phone hacking). Concerns were raised that attempts may have been made by a journalist to access an individual's personal records (West Yorkshire resident). However, this matter involved national media and was not linked to West Yorkshire Police officers/staff. Nonetheless, the allegations were subject of detailed police enquiries with no evidence being found to substantiate the concerns. The Police Authority was regularly briefed on the enquiry at various stages.

(61) Has the WYPA issued any guidance to West Yorkshire Police concerning their relations and communications with the media? If so, please specify and indicate whether, to your knowledge,

West Yorkshire Police follow the guidance. Please also indicate whether the guidance reflects/follows guidance issued by the Association of Chief Police Officers.

Not to my knowledge. However, the Force Press Office does work within agreed ACPO guidelines. Press Office staff also deliver training to officers on how to deal with the media; in accordance with the same guidelines.

(62) Do West Yorkshire Police seek advice or guidance from the WYPA on their dealings with the media?

Often media statements (for example performance/budget) involve joint input and comment from the Force and Authority, who liaise and agree content. The Force also highlights Authority specific issues (e.g., Authority funds held in collapsed Icelandic Banks), for the Authority to provide comment.

Again, this all emanates from the close relationship between PA and Force on this issue.

(63) Please describe the volume, frequency and nature of the contact that you have (or have had), about matters relating to West Yorkshire Police with politicians.

We arrange meetings at least twice a year with our local MPs – usually in Westminster. These take the form of an open invitation to all 23 MPs and, if he's available, the CC also attends. Attendance is usually determined by the parliamentary business that day.

MPs and local politicians are provided with copies of some WYPA press releases, depending upon the nature of the release e.g. policing plan, budget, etc. During 2010 WYPA issued 36 press releases, of which approx. 22 were copied to MPs and local politicians. During 2011 WYPA issued 37 press releases, of which approx. 24 were copied to MPs and local politicians. There have been 5 press releases issued in 2012 to date, of which 2 were copied to MPs and local politicians. Over the years there have been e-bulletins and other newsletters published which have been sent to MPs and local politicians too. There were 3 newsletters issued and copied to MPs and local politicians during 2010 and 2012. Many attended our district and more local public meetings (forums) in the past.

(64) In relation to the contact referred to above, what sort of information do politicians seek from you (or have sought from you) in relation to West Yorkshire Police?

General information about policing matters within WY and any specific issues of concern to constituents.

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE WEST YORKSHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY AND THE MEDIA

(65) What is your impression of the culture within the WYPA in relation to its dealings with the media (the media in all its forms)?

We willingly provide anything that is in the public domain and we try to respond as fully as possible to all questions asked. We have a policy which governs what we say about anything included in committee papers prior to the meeting, so that we are not anticipating the outcome of the discussion by members. We try and respond to questions and freedom of information requests as quickly as possible but after careful consideration of what to say. We have occasionally proactively contacted some media, in addition to issuing press releases, to promote events e.g. Ridings FM about the Airedale participatory budgeting event, Yorkshire Post about our budget survey.

(66) Describe the personal contact which you have had with the media (in all its forms) during your tenure as Chair of the WYPA. The Inquiry would like an overall picture of the type, frequency, duration and content of your contact with the media.

I have fairly regular contact with various local media outlets, radio stations, newspapers and occasionally TV. This is usually through requests via the press office, but sometimes I am contacted directly regarding current issues that arise. I do advise WYPA when this happens to inform them of potential media coverage that might follow on from this. The frequency of this contact varies, depending upon the issue that they want to talk to me about. For example, at budget setting time there may be multiple contacts within a very short space of time. At other times it might just be one contact. There may also be long periods of time between contacts too. The duration is typically just a few minutes at a time.

(67) Describe what you seek to gain for the WYPA through your personal contact with the media.

Wider understanding of the role of the PA, its areas of responsibility and achievement. To increase public interest in and contribution to policing governance and who holds them to account on behalf of the public of West Yorkshire.

(68) Describe in general terms and using illustrative examples what you consider the media has been seeking from you in your personal dealings with them during your tenure at the WYPA.

I think someone who they can rely on to give a considered and knowledgeable view regarding decisions made by WYPA and what it means for their listeners, readers, viewers, etc. I recently did an interview with Radio Leeds about the budget and it was a good opportunity to explain the impact of the decision for both the force and the public, the latter in respect of the service they might expect in the future.

(69) Have you ever had “off the record” conversations with the media in your capacity as Chair of the WYPA? If so, please explain why and give examples.

No, all conversations have been in relation to requests for comments/ interviews in the public domain.

(70) To what extent have you accepted hospitality from the media?

None.

(71) Insofar as you have accepted hospitality from the media, what has been the nature of that hospitality?

Not applicable.

(72) To what extent have you provided hospitality for the media on behalf of the WYPA?

None.

(73) Insofar as you have provided hospitality to the media, what has been the nature of that hospitality?

Not applicable.

(74) Have you ever accepted gifts from the media? If so, please give full details (including who gave you the gift, when, what the gift was, and why you believe they gave you the gift).

No.

(75) What mechanisms are in place to monitor and record hospitality as between the WYPA (including you) and the media?

WYPA maintains a register of gifts and hospitality, for use by members and staff. Expenses for members and senior staff are also published on the police authority website.

(76) What mechanisms are in place to monitor and record meetings/contact with the media generally?

Members are asked to inform staff if they have any contact with the media, but this only tends to work if the member requires any support from staff. There are no other methods to monitor and record meetings/contact with the media.

(77) Have you ever discussed the media, or media coverage, with politicians? If so, how important is such communication and why?

Yes, but only in general terms in the course of conversations about media coverage of police related matters.

(78) Have you ever known, or sensed, that a politician has put pressure on you to take a particular course of action as a result of lobbying or influence exerted on that politician by the media? If so, please explain (although you need not identify the politician at this stage if you do not wish to do so).

No.

(79) Set out your understanding of the type of contact which WYPA personnel have had with the media covering nature, extent, and (in general terms) topics / content.

WYPA members other than the Chair are quoted in press releases from time to time, especially chairs of committees. They then may be asked to do a short interview for radio stations e.g. Ann Liston (Chair of Strategic Planning and Performance Committee) in respect of performance. WYPA staff tend to deal with the media if they make contact in connection with press releases that we've issued or news stories where they want statements, information or someone to interview from the WYPA angle, or if the force press office has decided not to comment (recent example is NPAS mandation). WYPA staff tend not to be interviewed or quoted but there have been exceptions e.g. promoting events or if there are no appropriate members available.

(80) Is contact with the media restricted to certain staff or are all staff able to deal with the media?

The External Relations Director mostly deals with the media, but frontline admin staff may also take calls and arrange interviews with the Chair. The External Relations Director mostly is responsible for issuing press releases and statements. There have been instances where other staff have dealt with requests in the absence of the External Relations Director.

(81) What do you expect the WYPA to gain from such contact with the media?

Ultimately to increase public awareness of WYPA and its role of governance of the force on behalf of the public of West Yorkshire.

(82) What do the media seek from such contact with WYPA personnel?

Answers to questions, statements or interviews. Accountability, as the body which "oversees" West Yorkshire Police.

(83) What hospitality are WYPA personnel permitted to accept from the media? Inter alia, are they entitled to accept a meal or a drink from a journalist?

WYPA staff adhere to a code of conduct, which requires them to be politically neutral and act with integrity. It also covers accepting gifts and hospitality but does not say that they must not accept a meal or a drink from a journalist.

(84) What hospitality are WYPA personnel permitted to afford to the media?

None.

(85) How (if at all) is hospitality between the WYPA (including you) and the media controlled and/or regulated?

Through the codes of conduct and register of gifts and hospitality.

(86) Are the hospitality rules governing contact between WYPA personnel (including you) and the media different from those covering contact with other third parties? If so, what are the differences?

No differences.

(87) Are records of hospitality and other contact with the media audited and/or policed and, if so, how and by whom?

The WYPA Standards Committee monitors entries in the register of gifts and hospitality.

(88) Are you satisfied that the policies and procedures described above are sufficient and working effectively? Do you consider that they are capable of improvement? If so, in what ways?

The code of conduct could be amended to make specific mention of gifts and hospitality from journalists, although this is only one source of potential professional/personal conflict of interest.

(89) Do you consider that there is, or has been, an inappropriate level of hospitality accepted by the WYPA from the media? In addressing this issue please give your reasons and set out what you consider to be an appropriate level of hospitality for a Police Authority to accept from the media (if any).

No. It would be unusual for WYPA members or staff to meet journalists face-to-face, or in a setting where hospitality could be accepted. There has only been one incidence of hospitality being accepted, during a North Yorkshire Police Authority initiated fact-finding meeting with a Yorkshire

Post journalist about what contact the media would expect to have with police and crime commissioners.

(90) What systems, policies and procedures are in place in the WYPA to ensure that all members of staff knew what is and what is not appropriate contact with the media? Do they reflect/follow the ACPO guidance on this subject?

Most media contact is channeled through one member of staff, save for some telephone requests for interviews. We willingly provide anything that is in the public domain and we try to respond as fully as possible to all questions asked. We have a policy which governs what we say about anything included in committee papers prior to the meeting, so that we are not anticipating the outcome of the discussion by members. We try and respond to questions and freedom of information requests as quickly as possible but after careful consideration of what to say. We have occasionally proactively contacted some media, in addition to issuing press releases, to promote events e.g. Ridings FM about the Airedale participatory budgeting event, Yorkshire Post about our budget survey. We are not members of ACPO, so have not seen the guidance, having different considerations from the force.

(91) Are you satisfied that the policies and procedures described above are sufficient and working effectively? Did you consider that they were capable of improvement? If so, in what ways?

For the current level of contact, the above is seen as sufficient and working effectively. We are reviewing all aspects of our external communications in advance of the police and crime commissioner being elected. We recognise that the new governance arrangements will require a different level of capability and capacity to meet the risks and requirements. We will adopt a system for recording contact with the media as part of the preparation for the arrival of the police and crime commissioner, as an increased amount of contact with the media is anticipated and the commissioner's staff will become more involved in dealing with this work.

(92) What training is in place in the WYPA to ensure that all members of staff know what is and what is not appropriate contact with the media? Does the training reflect/follow the ACPO guidance on this subject?

Members and some staff have received media training. All staff know to refer requests from the media to the External Relations Director and are bound by the code of conduct in respect of any other contact. Not seen the ACPO guidance.

(93) To what extent are leaks from the WYPA to the media a problem for the WYPA?

There have been no leaks in recent years.

(94) What systems and procedures are in place to identify, respond to and detect the source of leaks?

None specifically, although the Authority has a clear whistleblowing policy in place for staff to report any matters of concern, anonymously if necessary.

(95) Insofar as applicable, what do you consider are the driving forces behind, or the main causes of, leaks from the WYPA?

Not applicable.

(96) In the last 5 years, how many investigations have been conducted into actual or suspected leaks from the WYPA and how many have led to the successful identification of the source of the leak? What was the outcome of the other investigations?

None.

(97) What payments (if any) are considered to be legitimate financial transactions between WYPA personnel and the media?

None.

(98) What policies and/or guidance are in place in relation to financial transactions between WYPA personnel and the media?

None.

(99) To what extent do you believe bribery of personnel by the media is a problem for the WYPA (if at all)?

Not at all.

(100) What steps are taken: (a) to educate your personnel about bribery; (b) otherwise to prevent the bribery of your personnel; (c) pro-actively to detect bribery; (d) retrospectively to investigate bribery; and (e) to discipline personnel (if any) who were found to have accepted bribes from the media?

None. This area of misconduct has not required any specific action and is part of the general standards and conduct arrangements applicable to all staff and brought to their attention on appointment/within the PDR process.

(101) Does the WYPA have a Press Office or similar PR outlet? If so please give particulars setting out how it operates and what its function is. In particular, does it have a gatekeeper function for

controlling the flow of information out of the WYPA to the media? Please also give your view as to its utility and role.

The External Relations Director performs the Press Office role as part of her responsibilities. She drafts press releases and liaises with most media requests that come via WYPA. She works closely with the force press office, who distributes press releases on behalf of WYPA. She also publishes press releases on the WYPA website and Twitter feed. She acts as the gatekeeper for any requests that come to WYPA, although some media make direct contact with the Chair and other members.

(102) In the last 5 years, how many people have worked in the WYPA's Press Office at any one time?

The External Relations Director performs the press office function in addition to other responsibilities. She was assisted part-time by a member of staff from the Force Press Office for about 18 months from January 2010 until that person went on maternity leave in mid-2011.

(103) In the last 5 years how many of the personnel who have worked in the Press Office had previously worked for the News of the World? Insofar as you are able to please name them.

None.

(104) In the last 5 years, how many of the personnel who have worked in the Press Office had previously worked for a title owned by Rupert Murdoch? Insofar as you are able to please name them.

None.

(105) In the last 5 years what proportion of personnel in the Press Office has come from a media Background?

50% - the part-time force press officer had a media background.

(106) What is the media's attitude towards the WYPA's Press Office or other similar PR outlet? In particular, are they satisfied by the provision of information and the routing of communications through the press office or do they prefer direct contact with individual personnel within the WYPA?

Generally they appear to be satisfied. Some do prefer to contact the Chair or other members directly, but this can vary.

(107) To what extent do you believe bribery of personnel by the media is a problem for the WYPA (if at all)?

Not a problem at all.

(108) To what extent do you believe leaks from the WYPA to the media are a problem for the WYPA (if at all)?

Not a problem.

(109) Do you consider that there is, or has been, an inappropriate level of hospitality accepted by the WYPA from the media? In addressing this issue please give your reasons and set out what you consider to be an appropriate level of hospitality to accept from the media (if any).

No. It would be unusual for WYPA members or staff to meet journalists face-to-face, or in a setting where hospitality could be accepted. There has only been one incidence of hospitality being accepted, during a North Yorkshire Police Authority initiated fact-finding meeting with a Yorkshire Post journalist about what contact the media would expect to have with police and crime commissioners.

RELATIONS BETWEEN POLICE FORCES OTHER THAN THE MPS AND THE MEDIA

Please answer the questions in this section in two parts (i) your specific knowledge of West Yorkshire Police in your capacity as Chair of the WYPA and (ii) your knowledge/understanding/impression of the other forces (other than the MPS) by virtue of your role as Chair of the Board of the APA.

(115) What is your impression of the culture within police forces other than the MPS in relation their dealings with the media (the media in all its forms?)

WYPA: West Yorkshire Police, like other Forces, is publicly accountable. It's important that officers tell people what they are doing for them, and one way of doing that is through the media, who are our link to the wider public. A relationship with the media is therefore essential.

I believe that in West Yorkshire, this relationship is a professional one. Interaction with the national media is dealt with almost exclusively by the Force Media Officers rather than operational officers, staff, or senior managers. This is structured and is managed in accordance with ACPO guidance.

Interaction with the media is at a local level is of course spread across a wider domain and will include operational officers; specifically those involved in leading crime investigations or Neighborhood Policing Teams. Again however, this relationship is a professional rather than personal one.

Interactions are functional and the Force Press Office are either involved with contacts or apprised of the contact as soon as possible afterwards. Officers/Staff work to a set of guidelines produced by the Media Dept (Media Matters document and Social Media Guidance), and comment is always attributable to named individuals, ensuring accountability.

APA: I have little detailed knowledge of the culture within police forces outside of West Yorkshire in relation to their dealings with the media.

(116) To what extent do you believe bribery of personnel by the media is a problem for the other forces (if at all)?

WYPA: There is no evidence of bribery of West Yorkshire Police officers or staff by the media, and we do not believe that this is a problem. The culture does not attract or encourage the type of close, personal relationships through which bribery might foster.

APA: My knowledge of the culture within police forces outside of West Yorkshire in relation to their dealings with the media is essentially that gained from media reports and the hearings of this Inquiry to date. The revelations aired at this Inquiry are extremely serious and of great concern. But without evidence to the contrary, I would hesitate to assume that forces other than those examined to date have experienced the same serious problems.

I have no personal knowledge of bribery in other forces. Though I have heard non-specific rumours and generalized allegations occasionally made, I have never encountered specific evidence or charges of bribery and therefore from my experience am not aware that it is a big problem.

(117) To what extent do you believe leaks from to the media are a problem for the other forces (if at all)?

WYPA: It is acknowledged that there is a level of 'leakage' to the local media. However this level is low and, where they do occur, tend to be in the form of unguarded or naïve comments, rather than deliberate serious breaches of trust. For example, a number of local journalists undertake routine 'check calls' to stations, to see if there are any news items of interest. Officers in an unguarded moment have been known to say they can't take the call at that time because they are on their way out to x incident. Such "leaks" need to be separated from individuals who may proactively seek out and anonymously brief the media, for whatever motive.

However, when instances of this nature are identified, they are still dealt with in a positive and proactive strong manner by the Force. They are closely examined and strong advice/guidance provided to ensure that lessons are learned.

Any more serious suspected breaches would be investigated within existing structures (Professional Standards Department) with the full range of criminal and/or misconduct sanctions available.

APA: I have no knowledge or experience of leaks from other forces being a problem.

(118) Insofar as you are able to say, what do you consider are the driving forces behind, or the main causes of, leaks from the other forces?

WYPA: I cannot say.

APA: I have no knowledge or experience of leaks from other forces being a problem at all so cannot comment on the driving forces behind, or causes of leaks

(119) What do you know about the level of hospitality accepted by the other forces from the media? Do you consider the level to be appropriate now and to have been appropriate in the past?

WYPA: There is no one-way or mutual "hospitality culture" between West Yorkshire Police employees and the media. The relationship is a professional and accountable one.

APA: I have no knowledge or experience of the level of hospitality accepted by other forces from the media so cannot comment on how appropriate or otherwise this might be.

GENERAL MATTERS

(120) What is your view of the practice of police officers and police staff having “off- the-record” conversations with the media?

Police officers should not have “off-the-record” conversations with the media, except if managed and transparently recorded by the force press office. My personal view is that whilst such briefings can, alongside public statements, play a part in the press office’s dealings with the media, they should **only** be carried out by the force press office. This is crucial since only the members of the press office or those it trains are equipped to weigh up the balance of risks and benefits of such briefings, how to deliver and record such briefings to ensure propriety, and it is the press office who is properly held to account for the force’s relations with the press.

“Off the Record” conversations (in the sense of conversations not intended for publication) are a part of the relationship between the police press office and media and there are public benefit reasons why this practice might continue , if it is properly managed, and recorded and conducted **only** through the formal channel of the force press office.

At times of intense media interest in a case there may be public benefit in providing journalists with background or other information which might assist in providing public reassurance or confidence, and managing the expectations of the media for a story. In such cases, for the force to have managed and appropriate contact with the media can be far better than no contact at all. The police media team can play a professional role in filling an information void with appropriate facts when fears and rumours might otherwise prevail.

For example, such briefings were employed during the high profile case of Shannon Matthews’ alleged kidnap in West Yorkshire in 2008. A decision was taken that it was important to brief journalists about the size and scope of the policing operation, to ensure that the media knew what was being undertaken by the Force, not least to reassure the public that widespread public anxiety was appropriately reflected in the resources being allocated to the case.

“Off-the-record” conversations may also be a means of providing prior notice of information under embargo with the straightforward purpose of allowing the media to make appropriate preparation for a story which will become fully public at a later date, For example, during some high profile court cases the press office will brief the media at an appropriate point, in order that a true picture, including a true representation of police work involved in bringing the case to trial, is presented on conclusion of the case. Such briefing could be said to foster public confidence, deter crime and play an essential role in providing maximum transparency about how taxpayers’ investment in the police service is actually used.

Whenever off the record briefings are utilized it is absolutely crucial that these conversations are managed and fully recorded, including attendees and detail of any conversation held.

Further, journalists involved in such briefings as those delivered during the Shannon Matthew case are typically asked to sign confidentiality clauses, confirming that they understand the terms under which it is held.

Pre verdict or pre sentence briefings are always undertaken in accordance with guidance provide by the national Association of Chief Police Officers' Communications Advisory Group (CAG).

(121) is it necessary for police forces to have a press office, and what is your view of the utility and role of police press offices?

Yes.

Amongst the potential benefits accruing from a good press office for both the police and public are:

- Police Officers being able to focus on their role – primarily as crime fighters
- Corporacy, consistency and clarity for both parties: the press know who to go to quickly and can be confident of a response that will hopefully be positively consistent, clear and recorded
- An efficient and timely response to media enquiries at any point in our 24 hour news culture.
- A locus for honing the particular communications skills which are helpful in communicating with the public and keeping those skills available to the Senior Officers who might be called upon to use or learn them in order to deal with the media, through the press office
- Enhanced transparency: the public deserve to know more about how their £12bns annual investment in policing in England and Wales is spent
- Preservation of propriety: a good press office will efficiently and transparently control official police contact with the media and minimize the potential for bribery or other impropriety.
- The potential to fill an information vacuum with facts, rather than rumors or fear
- Effective communications should increase public trust and confidence in the police, which can potentially lead to better co-operation between the police and communities, and ultimately help to both solve and deter crime

(122) What limitations do you consider there should be on police officers and police staff leaving the Police Service to work for the media and vice versa?

I remain open mind about this issue.

There would almost certainly be a detrimental impact on police communications if members of the media were restricted from taking up posts within police press offices, as good journalists of course have many of the skills which a force press office requires to do its job. Further, any new members of police staff, including those in the press office are of course vetted and trained to an appropriate degree and managed in accordance with the standards of the force.

I am somewhat sympathetic to the suggestion, put in the response of the APA's head of press to this Inquiry that there *might* be a case for limiting the ability of a former police officer or member of staff to take up a post with the media *for a limited period of time*. If, for example, a police officer or member of staff has access to sensitive information which might be of interest to the media but is not, and should not be in the public domain, then there might be a case for arguing that the ability

of that staff member to join the media might be restricted in the same way that former government Ministers have time limited restrictions on their employment options after leaving office. Such restrictions could be useful in providing a 'firewall' to minimise the potential for conflicts of interest, potential for unauthorised disclosure of timely information or any ability to exercise improper influence.

Any such proposals for restrictions would of course need to be the subject of full consultation and negotiation, but would not be a wholly new concept for members of the service who are already subject to guidance regarding what work they may or may not take up whilst a serving officer but outside of their working hours.

(123) What is your view of the recommendations contained in the HMIC's recent report "*Without Fear or Favour*" insofar as they concern relations between the media and the police? (If you have not seen it, the report is available online).

This report has the APA's full endorsement and we support the implementation of its recommendations. We are developing a work programme to assist police authorities in implementing the recommendations of this review in a way which balances the need for transparency and propriety and bureaucracy, and we hope this guidance will also be of use to elected PCCs from November.

Forces and authorities are considering the recommendations of the report - often through their Audit and Risk Committees.

(124) what is your view of the recommendations contained in Elizabeth Firkin's report "*The Ethical Issues Arising from the Relationship between Police and Media*" (If you have not seen it, the report is available online).

This report has the APA's full endorsement and we support the implementation of its recommendations. We are developing a work programme to assist police authorities in implementing the recommendations of this review which we hope will also be of use to elected PCCs from November.

Whilst the report's focus was the MPS, other forces and authorities have included consideration of its recommendations alongside HMIC's "Without fear of favour" through their Audit and Risk committees.

(125) Do you consider that there are any different or further steps which could and/or should be taken to ensure that relationships between the police and the media are and remain appropriate?

a. Media recording

On the basis that the HMIC recommends the recording of all interactions between police employees and media representatives, a similar recording mechanism might usefully be instituted by media editors to be available for their own self-audit.

b. The capacity of elected Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs)

Police authorities typically contain 17 individuals from a range of professions and perspectives who could devote time to monitoring and scrutinising the work of the enormous organisations that are police forces in England and Wales. Whilst authorities would not claim to have been perfect, it cannot be contested that 17 people have more capacity to delve into the details of spending, contacts with the media or any other area, than one individual, however elected. I remain concerned that PCCs must have the capacity necessary to fulfil their enormous responsibility to hold forces fully to account for the totality of policing in their area.

c. Standards and complaints

Police authorities have played an important role in dealing with complaints and allegations made against Senior Police Officers, including those related to improper relations with the media, which can of course have a huge impact on the all-important perceptions of public trust and confidence in the media. Under the new regime of PCCs, those complaints and standards will be managed entirely within the office of the Chief Constable, without independent oversight. I believe that this is a retrograde step and that PCCs or an independent standards board should be empowered to play a constructive and appropriate role in senior officer appointments and complaints as one means of maintaining public trust and confidence in the leaders of our police service.

I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed



Dated

1st March 2012

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