

# The Association of Police Communicators

## Network Constitution

March 2024

**This document forms the constitution of the Association of Police Communicators (APComm) and outlines the purpose, principles, and governance underpinning the Association.**

### Purpose

#### 1. Purpose of the Constitution

The purpose of this Constitution is to set out the following:

- Objectives of the Association of Police Communicators
- The Executive Committee roles, how they are appointed, and the duration of term in post.
- Membership, including how membership is conferred and who is eligible for membership.
- Governance – how the business of the Association is undertaken, overseen, and visible.

### Name of the Association

#### 2. Name of the Association

The name of the Association shall be the Association of Police Communicators, hereafter referred to as APComm.

### Objectives of APComm

#### 3. Objectives of the Association

APComm is open to all members of communications teams involved in policing. As long as the force, OPCC or policing organisation is a member, then all staff within that organisation are a member too.

APComm is the voice for police communications on a national level and represents the interests of all members. It is committed to professional development and offers:

- Quarterly national meetings with updates on national issues and trends, and the opportunity to influence the national direction of police communications

- Formal and informal networking with colleagues from across the country
- Professional development in the form of training courses, workshops and seminars with many being free for members
- Access to training courses provided by other organisations
- National annual academies subsidised for members
- Monthly newsletters with information, news and opportunities
- Mentoring and coaching scheme
- Provide networking, well-being support and shared learning opportunities for members

*\*stakeholders include, but not exclusively, the Home Office, NPCC, APCC, NCA, News Media, PR and Communications professionals outside policing, and also within key partners.*

## Powers

### 4. Powers

In furtherance of the objectives, but not otherwise, the Executive Committee may exercise the power to:

- I. Receive contributions through an annual membership fee, and oversee the management of the accounts to effectively deliver the stated Objectives of the Association.
- II. Publicise and promote the work of the Association and organise meetings, training courses, events or seminars etc.
- III. Work with groups of a similar nature and exchange information, advice and knowledge with other organisations.
- IV. Employ staff and volunteers (who shall not be members of the Executive Committee) as necessary to conduct activities to meet the objects.
- V. Procure goods and services to aid the effective running of the Association, in line with the APComm Procurement of Services Framework.
- VI. Buy or rent equipment as required to support the objects of the Association.

## Membership

### 5. Membership

- I. Membership is open to anyone who is working to deliver professional police communications within the Corporate Communications (or equivalent department) within a police force, national or regional policing operation or structure, or appropriate law enforcement agency (as agreed by the Executive Committee) within the UK. Membership is corporate and acquired through the annual payment of an organisational membership fee.

- II. Members should assist the Association to achieve its aim and objectives and adhere to any requests.
- III. Where it is considered membership would be detrimental to the aims and activities of APComm, the Executive Committee shall have the power to refuse membership, or may terminate or suspend the membership of any member both organisational or individual by resolution passed at an executive meeting.
- IV. Members shall have the right to appeal to the Co-Chairs.
- V. Any member of APComm may resign the organisational membership by providing the Secretary with written notice.
- VI. Termination of membership does not qualify for full or part reimbursement of the membership fee.

## Management of the Association

### 6. Management of the Association

- I. The Association will be administered by an Executive Committee of no less than five (5) people and no more than fifteen (15) who must be members and currently working within police communications.
- II. The Executive Committee (with the exception of the roles of Secretary and Treasurer / Membership Secretary) will be elected for a period of two years and may seek re-election at the AGM. Elections will take place in alternative years, with the posts of Co-Chairs elected on alternative years to the posts of Vice Chairs. Where extraordinary circumstances occur which preclude the election process taking place, the executive committee will take forward to the membership a full account of why this is the case, and an alternative timeline for the election process, which the majority of members must agree to in order for the election process to be postponed.
- III. The post of Secretary and of Treasurer and Membership Secretary, will be appointed by the Executive Committee, and subject to review annually.
- IV. The Executive Committee will consist of two Chairs acting as Co-Chairs to ensure resilience, Vice Chairs (up to 8), Secretary, Membership Secretary and Treasurer, and any additional officers deemed necessary by the Executive Committee to carry out the required activities.
- V. Any member of the Executive Committee who fails to attend (including virtual meetings) 50 per cent of national committee meetings and 50 per cent of executive meetings, within 12 months without reasonable excuse shall lose his/her place on the Committee which may be filled by co-option.
- VI. Any member of the Executive Committee can choose to terminate their position with announcement to the wider membership and the Committee may choose to fill this by co-option.

## Functions of the Executive Committee

## 7. Functions of the Executive Committee

- I. The Executive Committee may make such regulations as its members consider appropriate for the efficient conduct of the business of the Association
- II. The Executive Committee may appoint such staff as its members consider necessary on such terms and conditions as they may determine
- III. The Executive Committee may appoint sub-committees, advisory groups or working parties of its own members and other persons as it may decide necessary for carrying out its work and may determine their terms of reference, duration and composition. All such sub-committees shall make regular reports on their work to the Committee.
- IV. The purpose of the Executive Committee is to be accountable for the delivery of APComm's stated Objectives, and to oversee its assets and finances. In delivering this purpose the Executive Committee will consult regularly with members, and provide updates at the national quarterly meetings, and via other means as appropriate.

## Meetings

### 8. Meetings

- I. The Executive Committee will meet at least 12 times a year to progress the Business and Training Plan and undertake any activity and planning necessary to deliver the APComm stated Objectives.
- II. National Committee meetings will take place at least four times a year. Meetings will enable the Association to discuss actions and monitor progress to date, consult with members, and to consider future developments. It will be planned that two will be in-person and two virtual.
- III. All members will be given at least 14 days notice of when a meeting is due to take place, unless it is deemed an emergency.
- IV. 50 per cent of committee members must be present in order for a meeting to take place.
- V. It shall be the responsibility of the Co-Chairs to chair all meetings or designate a deputy in his/her absence. All meetings must be minuted and accessible to interested parties.
- VI. The AGM shall take place in the last quarter of the calendar year. At least 14 days' notice must be given before the meeting takes place. All members are entitled to vote at the AGM.

## Finance

### 9. Finance

- I. Any money acquired by the Association shall be paid into an account operated by the Executive Committee in the name of APComm. All funds must be applied to achieve delivery of the objectives of the Association and for no other purpose.

- II. The Executive Committee shall fix the annual membership rates appropriate to categories including the size of the member organisation.
- III. Any income/expenditure shall be the responsibility of the Treasurer who will be accountable to ensure funds are utilised effectively and that the Association stays within budget. Official accounts shall be maintained and audited. An annual financial report shall be presented at the AGM. The Association accounting year shall run from 1 April to 31 March.

## Annual General Meeting

### 10. Annual General Meeting (AGM)

- I. An AGM of the Association shall be held at such place and time as the Committee shall determine, in the last quarter of each calendar year.
- II. At such an AGM the business shall include the following:
  - The election of members to serve on the Committee if required
  - The appointment of an auditor or auditors
  - The consideration of the finance report and audited accounts
  - The consideration of the business plan and work undertaken by the Committee
  - The transaction of such other matters as may from time to time be considered necessary

## Amending the Constitution

### 11. Amending the Constitution

Any changes to the constitution must be agreed by a majority vote at a specially arranged meeting or a scheduled meeting if appropriate.

Amendments to the constitution or dissolution of the Association must be conveyed to the Secretary formally in writing. The Secretary and Executive will then decide on the date of a special general meeting to discuss the proposals, giving members at least 28 days notice.

## Dissolution

### 12. Dissolution

The Association may be dissolved if deemed necessary by the members in a majority vote at a special meeting. Any assets or remaining funds after debts have been paid shall be returned to their providers or transferred to policing charities at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

## Data Management

### 13. Data Management

Any data, including personal data, provided by members in order to facilitate the business of the Association, will be used for the stated purpose only, and will not be shared onwards or disseminated to any individual or organisation.

## Brand

### 14. Brand

The use of the APComm brand will be managed by the Executive Committee. Members must seek permission before use of the APComm brand to accompany, promote, or endorse any product or activity.

## Indemnity

### 13. Indemnity

The Association shall indemnify and keep indemnified any officer, member, volunteer or employee of the Association from and against all claims, demands, actions and proceedings (and all costs and expenses in connection therewith or arising therefrom) made or brought against the Association in connection with its activities, the actions of its officers, members, volunteers or employees, or in connection with its property and equipment but this indemnity shall not extend to liabilities arising from wilful and individual fraud, wrongdoing or wrongful omission on the part of the officer, member, volunteer or employee sought to be made liable.

## Signatories

This constitution was adopted at the APComm Annual General Meeting held on 17 November 2020.

### Signatories:

Kate Quilley – Co-Chair

Clare Mills – Co-Chair

Lucy Bogustawski –

Treasurer and Membership

Secretary