



Service Procedure

CHARGING FOR POLICE SERVICES

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Abstract:

This policy explains how the PSNI will establish a set of regulations and policies to support the system of charging for special police services.

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1. AIM OF SERVICE PROCEDURE

- (1) The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) aims to safeguard the stewardship of public funds by ensuring private persons or organisations are not able to profit at the expense of the police service.
- (2) As part of this process, PSNI will establish a set of guidelines and procedures to guarantee a consistent methodology for cost recovery.

2. INTRODUCTION

(1) Executive Summary

- (a) This policy explains how the PSNI will establish a set of procedures and policies to support the overall system of income generation and cost recovery relating to requests for special police services.
- (b) This Service Procedure will reflect best practice and provide a practical source of guidance.

(2) Origin

- (a) The PSNI came into existence on 4th November 2001, and exists to build a more confident, safe & peaceful society to keep people safe in Northern Ireland through the prevention, protection and detection of crime. PSNI is accountable to the Northern Ireland Policing Board (NIPB), which is comprised of independent members drawn from the broader Northern Ireland community and representatives from almost all the main political parties.
- (b) The PSNI is a body of constables, funded through the NIPB, which is a Non Departmental Public Body of the Department of Justice (DOJ). The Accounting Officer for the DOJ designated the Chief Constable as Accounting Officer for the Grant of the PSNI.
- (c) The 'Management Statement & Financial Memorandum' (MS/FM) for Governance of PSNI' sets out that fees and charges should be set to ensure where possible full cost recovery.

(3) Aims/Objectives

The aim of this policy is to:

- (a) promote a sound system of charging having regard to the requirements for stewardship of public funds, ensuring private persons/bodies are not able to profit at the expense of the Police Service;
- (b) define the methodology for charging of special police services to ensure a consistent approach to cost recovery;
- (c) ensure transparency and clarity for both providers and receivers of special police services
- (d) establish a set of guidelines which translates into practical guidance to support the PSNI's policies relating to financial management and control.

(4) Contribution

A robust charging framework is necessary for PSNI to deliver on all policing objectives and ensure that private organisations and individuals are aware of when and how they may be charged for the requests of police services.

(5) Application

Compliance with this Service Procedure is compulsory for all police officers and police staff.

(6) Legal basis

Section 11 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 states that the 'Chief Constable' may, at the request of any person, provide special police services subject to the payment to the Board the scaling of such charges may be determined by the Board'.

(7) Consultation

- (a) Service Executive Team
- (b) Northern Ireland Policing Board
- (c) Heads of Business Services
- (d) Operational Planners
- (e) S1 Policing with the Community

3. IMPLICATIONS OF THE SERVICE PROCEDURE

(1) Financial and efficiency implications

The charging procedures will strengthen the financial control framework within PSNI and help ensure sound financial management.

(2) Human Resources/ Training

This policy does not give rise to any new training requirements. Rather, the charging procedures will codify existing policies, guidance and material in a more accessible form.

4. POLICY LINKS

Internal

Policy/Procedure
PD 01/13 Finance Policy

External

ACPO guide on Charging for Police Services
Managing Public Money NI

5. MONITORING AND REVIEW

- (1) This policy will be reviewed annually; or
- (2) Interim reviews may also be prompted by feedback, challenge or change in legislation.
- (3) Feedback relating to this policy should be addressed to Financial Services Branch.

6. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

This Service Procedure is suitable for disclosure in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act (2000).

PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES FOR CHARGING

1. Background

The PSNI is funded by the Northern Ireland Assembly for the benefit of the public at large. However, there is a limited range of activities where it is appropriate for the service to make charges to individuals and/ or organisations to recover costs. Ensuring that charges are levied effectively and efficiently in these circumstances will protect the public police provision and contribute to the overall funding of PSNI.

The ability to charge for police services is determined by statutory provisions. These guidelines cover the provision of special police services under section 11 of the Police Act 2000, which makes such services subject to payment of charges as determined by the Board.

2. Special Police Services

Special police services are defined as; provision of police services over and above core policing at the request of a person or organisation. Payment for the services is the subject of a contractual arrangement with implications for prior agreement on both sides. The categories of events that this procedure relates to are set out below.

3. Basis for Charging

(a) The event footprint

The chargeable footprint/ locality of any event need to be agreed, as special police services can only be charged for within the event boundary i.e. the event footprint.

The footprint should be determined to encompass the need to properly protect/ benefit the persons organising the event or their attendees, and not the additional resources required to protect the general public as a consequence of the event. Where police resources are not required within an event footprint no charges can be levied to the event organiser.

Where a specific request is made for special police services, to provide a service on public roads to ease the flow of traffic, due to a potential obstruction caused by an unusual use of the highway, such a request will be chargeable at the appropriate rate.

(b) Level of Police Resource

The level of policing required in support of events/enterprises is a matter for the Chief Constable to determine. This will be undertaken by operational planning/events management teams at a local level, in conjunction with the event organiser, and should encompass a risk assessment of the event encompassing the need to ensure;

- Prevention and detection of crime;
- Preventing or stopping breaches of the peace;
- Activation of a contingency plan where there is an immediate threat to life;
- Traffic regulation.

The assessment should be based on the size and scale of the event and the levels of resources and safeguards put in place by the event organiser, as well as the outcomes of any previous events held.

Event organisers/promoters should be made properly aware of the nature and options available to them that could reduce the level of police resources required.

(c) Agreement with event organiser

There must be an agreement in place between PSNI and the event organiser in order for the costs of police services to be charged. The need for special police services must be requested by the event organiser and accepted by the PSNI. The levels and rates of charges to be levied are set out below.

Agreements should be drawn up in writing and signed by both parties. Typically the agreement should include;

- The areas where special police services will be provided;
- The level of police resources to be provided by rank/grade;
- Any specific equipment to be provided
- The total costs for provision of special police services.

All charging agreements will be signed off by ACC District Policing Command.

(d) Dispute Resolution

Where an agreement cannot be reached with the event organiser, the reasons for dispute and rationale for the policing levels should be escalated to District/Area Commander for review.

Where there is no request and or agreement reached between the PSNI and an organiser concerning the provision of special policing services and where PSNI believe there to be a risk to the public, PSNI will seek to have the issue addressed through the agreed licensing approval mechanisms for the event. This includes but is not limited to objecting to the granting of a licence on the grounds that the provision and payment of special policing services is essential to protect the public and to maintain law and order.

4. Categorisation of Events and Charging

There will be five categories of events that will be defined by this Service procedure;

(a) Commercial events and/or enterprises

A commercial event is one where there is financial gain or profit to the organiser/company/organisation without specific community/charitable benefit - usually but not exclusively through members of the public having to pay an entrance fee to gain access to the event. Events would include but are not limited to concerts, motoring events, Animal shows, filming & production and events on private property.

(b) Non-commercial events and /or enterprises

Non-commercial events can cover charitable, community and not for profit events. These events will be characterised by the distribution of any financial-gains to a charitable or community cause. Those organising the events will do so on a voluntary basis for the benefit of participants and spectators.

(c) Sporting events (both commercial and non-commercial)

Sporting events will include professional and amateur sports and both commercial and non-commercial ventures.

(d) Northern Ireland Executive sponsored events/enterprises

These events or enterprises have a significant element of Northern Ireland investment including substantial taxpayer monies.

(e) Statutory events reflecting constitutional rights or processes

These are event such as parades, legal protests and Constitutional events.

5. Charging levels

The level of recoupment for each category of event is set out below;

(a) Commercial events and/or enterprises

Where an event and/or enterprise is classified as Commercial, the organiser will be charged the full economic cost of the special police service provided.

Any proposal to depart from the principle of full cost recovery should only be made on exceptional grounds and requires the approval of a Chief Officer.

(b) Non-commercial events and /or enterprises

In order to recognise that these events are substantially different in nature to commercial, profit making, any event and/ or enterprise classified as non-commercial will be subject to a scoring process to determine whether a full, partial or no charge should be made. Details of the scoring methodology are set out in Appendix B.

NB: The level of abatement of any such charges does not impact on the process for determining the level of police resources required.

(c) Sporting events

Sporting events must be classified as either commercial or non-commercial in order to determine the overall level of charging. Where the classification is unclear, the scoring methodology should be undertaken to provide clarity over the level of charges to be applied.

(d) Northern Ireland Executive sponsored events/enterprises

Events or enterprises which have a significant element of Northern Ireland investment including substantial tax payer monies should be initially classified to determine the level of charging that would be normally levied. Chief Officers will be consulted as to whether or not any further abatement to charges is appropriate. Any shortfall will be regarded as the PSNI's contribution in kind to the event/enterprise's overall strategic objectives.

(e) Statutory events reflecting constitutional rights or processes

The policing of such events will be regarded as part of core policing and no charge will be made for any such event.

6. Charging rates

Special police services will be charged at a rate to reflect the full economic cost of the services provided. This calculation includes all properly attributable costs, including contributions to administrative and general overheads. These rates are available in the PSNI Fees and Charges handbook and are set out in Appendix C.

7. Payment for Special Police Services

Once an agreement is reached on the level of resources and charges to be levied, a copy of the agreement should be passed to business services.

An invoice request will be raised and submitted to central finance to allow issue before the event takes place. Instances of non-payment of charges will be recorded and noted as part of future feedback and negotiations.

8. Feedback

After an event has taken place a debrief of any issues or outcomes from the event should be undertaken with the event organiser/promoter. Where there was a significant element of crime and disorder arising from the event the impact of this on future policing requirements should be made known to the event organiser and any relevant interested parties or government organisations.

9. Reporting of costs

A consolidated return will be made available for viewing on the PSNI website.

COSTING METHODOLOGY

Consideration must be given to abatement to charges for non-commercial events. In order to provide a transparent approach to decision making the scoring process set out below should be undertaken to determine whether a full, partial or no charge should be made for an event. Completed templates should be completed to include rationale for any scoring and if requested made available to event organisers to back up the level of policing required.

A score of 0-6 would mean no charge, 7-15 would incur a 25% charge, 16-25 would incur a 50% charge, 26-35 a 75% charge, all events with a score of 35+ would be subject to full cost recovery.

Criteria	Assessment	Range of Scores	Score Applied
Identified Promoter	The existence of a promoter clearly identifies a commercial event. This can also be an organiser of a significant non commercial event and can also be implied – e.g. for sports matches.	0 to 5	
Premises Licence / Safety Certificate required	Most large defined events require a Premises Licence or a Safety Certificate to operate. Detail of the event capacity and the licensable activities are strong indicators of a significant event.	0 to 5	
Stewards used	This also characterises a major event –but can also be the basis of a reduction in police input leading to reduced charges.	-5 to 0	
Payment on entry	A key determinant of a commercial event. It can also be a factor of a major noncommercial event.	0 to 10	
Performers paid	Can also underline a commercial event or a major charitable/ non commercial event.	0 to 10	
Trader concessions	A secondary indicator of the size of an event – one anticipating a large number of attendees	0 to 10	
Nature of the event	Commercial for profit, not commercial or a private event / function.	0 to 10	
Proceeds to charity	This is an indicator of possible abatement, depending on other safety issues and the size of the event	-5 to 0	
Detrimental Community Impact	This is how a community will be affected by the holding of the event such as increased traffic flow, disruption and disorder.	0 to 10	
Community Value	This covers the reasons that an event should go ahead. An event that has strong traditions or promotes the values of community cohesion will have added community value.	-10 to 0	
Additional policing	This can give an indication that significantly more policing than the normal	0 to 10	
Normal deployment	This would, in conjunction with the above, give an indication of the level of additional chargeable policing resources provided.	-5 to 0	

Electronic versions of the scoring matrix are available on the Financial Services Branch intranet site.

CHARGING RATES FOR SPECIAL POLICE SERVICES

PSNI will take steps to maximise income through the recovery of costs for special police services when it is in the interests of the PSNI and the community to do so.

The current charges for uniformed officers and frequently requested staff grades are listed below. Costs for other Police Officer and Police Staff grades are available on request.

The figures in Table 1 below include;

- Averages basic Pay and permanent allowances
- Employers Pension liability
- Earnings related national insurance Contributions (ERNI)
- A Service charge for recovery of non-pay and support overheads.

Table 1- Hourly rates from 1 April 2015

Uniform and CID	Total Hourly rate £	Support Staff	Total Hourly rate £
Chief Superintendent	99.18	Grade 7	54.36
Superintendent	87.66	Deputy Principal	41.83
Chief Inspector	67.93	Staff Officer	32.69
Inspector	63.52	Executive Officer I	29.31
Sergeant	51.09	Executive Officer II	26.23
Constable	43.36	Administrative Officer	22.81
Part Time Reserve Officer	16.92		

Additional charges may be made to include Short Notice/Public Holiday premium, if the deployment is on a Public Holiday or PSNI is unable to provide Officers with more than 15 days' notice to perform the requested duties.

Costs for the use of police equipment and premises will be made on a case-by-case basis to reflect full cost recovery.