

Have you got what it takes?

Working with the Home Secretary and the Home Office

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Important facts

The introduction of police and crime commissioners (PCCs) will allow the Home Office to withdraw from day-to-day policing matters, giving the police greater freedom to fight crime as they see fit. It will also give local communities the power to hold the police to account.

The Home Secretary will continue to be legally accountable for national security and for the role that the police service plays in delivering any national response to policing issues that arise.

The Home Secretary ultimately has to answer to Parliament and is responsible for making sure our communities, in all force areas, are kept safe and secure, and for protecting our national borders and security.

The policing protocol, which you can find at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/police/pcc/policing-protocol/>, sets out the roles and responsibilities of the PCC, chief constable, police and crime panel and the Home Secretary.

Effective working relationships between these people will be essential. They will all be expected to co-operate on the basis of goodwill, professionalism, openness and trust and to do their utmost to make the relationships work.

Background

The Home Secretary is head of the Home Office and is responsible for all of its work. She is also the Minister for Women and Equalities.

The Home Office is made up of a number of different groups.

- **The Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism works with other departments and agencies to co-ordinate an effective response to the threat of terrorism and keep people safe using proportionate, focused and open powers.**
- **The Crime and Policing Group works with the police service and other partners to reduce crime and protect the public.**
- **The Government Equalities Office works across government to improve equality and reduce discrimination and disadvantage in all aspects of life. It is using a new approach to equality which is based on the principles of equal treatment and equal opportunity, working with businesses, the voluntary sector and wider civil society to bring about change.**
- **The Border Force is responsible for immigration and customs in the UK, including controls in France and Belgium.**

The Home Office also includes:

- **three agencies – the UK Border Agency, the Identity and Passport Service and the Criminal Records Bureau – providing directly managed frontline services from within the Home Office; and**
- **a number of independent services and public bodies.**

The Home Office follows the Government's values of freedom, fairness and responsibility. In future, the Home Office will be smaller, making sure that we deliver the best value for money for the taxpayer and reflect the Government's new approach of giving the power to make decisions, funding, and accountability, to others and intervening less.

We are giving the public the power to hold the police to account for crime in their area, through their directly elected PCC. This will allow them a real say in how their streets are policed.

Alongside this shift in power, we want the police to be able to get on with their jobs out and about in local communities, fighting crime and not tied up by unnecessary procedures and paperwork. Each PCC, once elected, will be responsible for making sure the policing needs of their communities are met as effectively as possible.

More information

Our priorities for changing our structure are shown below.

1. To give the public the power to hold the police to account for their role in cutting crime by introducing directly elected PCCs and making police action to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour more open.
2. To free up the police to fight crime more effectively and efficiently by cutting police bureaucracy (unnecessary procedures and paperwork), end unnecessary interference from the Government, and overhaul police powers to cut crime, reduce costs and improve police value for money.
3. To simplify the structure of national institutions and set up a National Crime Agency to strengthen the fight against organised crime.
4. To create a more integrated criminal justice system by helping the police and other public services work together across the criminal justice system.
5. To secure our borders and reduce immigration by:
 - **delivering an improved system that serves our economic interests and one that the public have confidence in;**
 - **limiting non-EU economic migrants, introducing new measures to reduce the flow of migrants into the country and reducing the numbers of those who abuse migration routes, for example, the student route; and**
 - **processing asylum applications more quickly and ending the detention of children for immigration purposes.**

6. To protect people's civil liberties by reversing state interference into people's lives. To protect people from terrorism through the Government's approach to counter-terrorism.

7. To build a fairer and more equal society by helping to:

- **create a fair and flexible job market;**
- **change culture and attitudes;**
- **give power back to individuals and communities;**
- **improve equal opportunities in frontline services and support; and**
- **promote equal opportunities as a matter of course in government departments and elsewhere.**

The Government is committed to a programme of reform that will turn government on its head. We want to bring about a shift in power, taking it away from central government and putting it into the hands of people and communities. These plans are central tools for holding departments to account for putting the Government's commitments into practice, replacing the old top-down systems of targets and management from central government.

How will the Home Secretary make sure that national and local policing issues are dealt with appropriately?

The Home Secretary has powers and legal tools to give orders to all those who signed up to the policing protocol if she considers that there is a risk to public or national security.

These powers and tools will be used only as a last resort. They will not be used to interfere with the will of the PCC within a force area, or with the office of constable, unless HM Inspector of Constabulary advised the Home Secretary that not to do so would result in a police force failing or national security being threatened.

The Home Secretary has a duty to issue the strategic policing requirement, setting out what are, in her view, the national threats, and what the police need, at a national level, to be able to tackle them.