



Altogether Better Policing

Keeping boundaries professional between the **Police & the Public**

When to speak out...

Police officers and staff must act ethically, professionally and treat all individuals with whom they come into contact with dignity and respect. In fact we have a Code of Ethics which governs our behaviour in and outside the workplace. Unfortunately there have been a small number of people in the Police Service who use their position to develop improper relationships with members of the public through the course of their duties. This is called an 'abuse of position for a sexual purpose or to pursue an improper emotional relationship'. It is considered to be serious corruption and can be a criminal offence.



The code of Ethics clearly states that officers/staff must not engage in sexual conduct or other inappropriate behaviour on duty - regardless of who instigates it. Officers and staff must not pursue an improper sexual or emotional relationship with a person with whom they come into contact in the course of their work or who may be vulnerable to an abuse of power. This applies to police officers, police community support officers, special constables, police staff and police volunteers.

The professional relationship between a member of the police and the public is based on trust and confidence. Behaviour which steps beyond this professional line can seriously damage public confidence. It is the worst possible breach of trust.

The police service often come into contact with the most vulnerable members of society – people who have been trafficked, sex workers, those with mental health issues, victims of domestic violence, people with drug or alcohol issues, young people who go missing from home... the list is long. There are also times when people become vulnerable as they have been a

victim of a crime such as burglary. It is important that we give people the professional support they require and don't take advantage of their vulnerability.

All our staff have received training to understand that it is wrong to use their job to develop emotional or sexual relationships with the public. If you have concerns that someone has or is trying to develop a relationship with you or someone you know - please come forward and tell us.

What are the kind of things to look out for?

- Someone giving you their personal telephone number
- Inappropriate texts
- Contact through social media from private (non-police) accounts
- Excessive visits in duty time, or off duty visits
- Presents
- Requests not to speak to other police officers/staff regarding contact or visits
- Police vehicles regularly parked outside private addresses for no apparent reason

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We are working hard to ensure this type of corruption doesn't happen. We will take any complaint seriously and treat information provided confidentially.

You can contact us via email on:

Integrityunit@durham.pnn.police.uk

or telephone us confidentially on **0191 3752627**.



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