

**POLICE AND CRIME
COMMISSIONER FOR
THE WEST MIDLANDS**

NON-CONFIDENTIAL

NOTICE OF DECISION

[029/2020]

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Title: Special Payment to Special Officers during Covid-19

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the national pandemic the Special Constabulary have shown commitment and enthusiasm to their role, providing essential support to officer colleagues and adding capacity to support gaps in the workforce from self-isolation and sickness.

Working with the Force the Police and Crime Commissioner would like to recognise the efforts of all members of the Special Constabulary, and will identify an approach to this. Not all Special Officers have been able to directly contribute to the pandemic effort due to their own circumstances or commitments, but every effort is valued.

Prior to 2015 the approval of the Secretary of State was required to make any kind of special payments to special constables, but the Special Constables Regulations were amended in 2015 and the ability to approve such payments was passed to Police and Crime Commissioners. Police and Crime Commissioners have the discretion to make special payments to special constables following a recommendation from the Chief Constable. The Chief Constable has made such a recommendation. In addition to this the PCC is working with the Chief Constable to consider how to recognise the contribution made by Special Officers, when they have contributed hours in excess of their existing Service Level Agreement.

The proposals are based on the following principles:

1. The payment is only payable to Specials who have volunteered during the qualifying period
2. The payment is to mobilise Specials and encourage additional support
3. The payment is in recognition of extraordinary service during Covid-19
4. The payment is not to compensate Specials for performing their role – they are volunteers

A range of options have been considered in determining how to calculate the payment, in consideration of the principles above. Currently Specials commit to a minimum of 16 hours per month voluntary service with the Force; where they volunteer in excess of that a reward will be payable at a sum of £150 for every 16 hours completed in a month, in addition to their existing commitment. Whilst this is a one off payment and not a wage, the PCC has maintained his approach of ensuring all payments are made above the Real Living Wage as set annually by the Living Wage Foundation. The qualifying period will be from the 23 March 2020 to the latter of the 30 June or a mutually agreed end point. The

payment will be made as a lump sum at the end of the qualifying period. The Force will investigate the tax implications of these payments and provide guidance where necessary.

An estimated cost for the period between 23 March and end June is £109,741. This will be initially funded by the Chief Constable and the Force will seek to claim the costs of this contribution back from the Government; who have committed to making funding available to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 on police finances. Approximately 116 of the 220 Specials are set to benefit.

DECISION

That Special Constables are awarded a special payment to recognise commitment and endeavour during the Covid 19 pandemic, based on a rate of £150 for each 16 hours worked in a monthly period over the existing 16h service level agreement.

Police and Crime Commissioner for the West Midlands

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in this decision and take the decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct for the Police and Crime Commissioner of the West Midlands. Any interests are indicated below.

Signature.....

Date 17.06.2020