

PCSO powers

PCSO powers are categorised as 'standard' powers which are granted through primary legislation and apply to all PCSOs (appendix A) and those powers classed as discretionary which are granted by individual Chief Constables (appendix B). According to law the discretionary powers can only be granted by Chief Constables and cannot be delegated.

There are two ways in which PCSO powers can be changed. The first is through primary legislation and the second is through the authority of the Chief Constable.

The extent and nature of PCSO powers is closely aligned to the role they play within Neighbourhood Policing. PCSOs should be granted powers which assist them in discharging their duties effectively within the nature of Neighbourhood Policing and are in keeping with the style of policing to be adopted.

In considering the powers available to PCSOs Chief Constables are advised to strike an appropriate balance between the need to maintain the largely non-confrontational, community-engagement role of the PCSO, and the need to ensure that all PCSOs are provided with a set of powers that will enable them to contribute most effectively to neighbourhood policing and deal with low-level disorder and anti-social behaviour.