

STONEWALL

UK GENERAL ELECTION MANIFESTO 2019

HOW NOT TO BE INVOLVED IN POLITICS

**A FAIR COP GUIDE FOR POLICE
& CRIMES COMMISSIONERS**

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“THE IMPARTIAL EXECUTION OF POWERS, FREE FROM POLITICAL INFLUENCE, IS THE NON NEGOTIABLE KEY TO MAINTAINING ANY CIVILISED DEMOCRACY.”

(Clive Chamberlain. Chairman. Dorset Police Federation)

Authors: Harry Miller & SV Phillimore

FOREWORD

“We have never had a Stasi, a Cheka or a Gestapo” said Mr Justice Knowles in his



Police compared to Stasi and Gestapo by judge as he rules they interfered in freedom of speech by investigating 'non crime' trans tweet

landmark ruling against The Chief Constable of Humberside. Whilst these words made headlines across the free world, the former PCC of Humberside did not appear much troubled by his force being likened to not one, but three, of the most politically driven police regimes of recent history.

The Chief Constable issued a personal apology but was at a loss as to how he got things so badly wrong. “We need more guidance”, was his view, adding that “*common sense* is not an appropriate tool for a police officer, as it

does not lead to predictable outcomes.”

The College of Policing, meanwhile, denied all responsibility for the interpretation by Humberside Police of its guidance, insisting at The Court of Appeal in March 2021 that Humberside was entirely to blame. As I write this, we await the ruling on that point.

Meanwhile, The Home Secretary has suggested that PCCs are not up to the task of holding Chief Constables to account. Her solution is to centralise power. We reject this proposal. The police are the public, the public are the people, and accountability must come from the Police and Crimes Commissioners holding their Chief Constables to account.

Demanding that Chief Constables remove themselves from giving the impression of having political favourites is a start.



THE CHIEF CONSTABLE OF GREATER MANCHESTER

“Impartiality is in danger of being upset in our urge and desire to demonstrate that we would like to make common cause from time to time with people whose agenda is very difficult to disagree with,” said Stephen Watson, the recently appointed Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police in an interview with The Telegraph. “I do not think that things like taking the knee, demonstrating that you have a commonality of view with the protesters that your policing is compatible with the standards of service that people require of their police.

“I would probably kneel before God, the Queen and Mrs Watson. That’s it.”

“Whether it be through adulterating the uniform with pins and tabs and badges or whatever, and having all manner of florid social media accounts. Police officers putting rainbows on their epaulettes and wearing rainbow shoelaces - these are all things which I think leave the public cold, and I just personally don't think they have a place in policing,” he said.

THE CODE OF ETHICS



In order to prevent the police from falling into the hands of a political class, the standard set by The Code of Ethics is purposefully high. The police must not engage in politics. The foreword by Dame Shirley Pearce says, “These principles should underpin every decision and action across policing.... [They] must be more than words on a page and must become embedded in the way police professionals think and behave.”

Political activity

6.5 Police officers must not take any part in politics. This is intended to prevent you from placing yourself in a position where your impartiality may be questioned.

This means that police officers must not actively promote, endorse or support a political party, faction, agenda, or cause.

Association

6.3. Membership of groups or societies, or associations with groups or societies, must not create an actual or apparent conflict of interest with police work and responsibilities.

This means that police officers must not even give the impression of promoting, endorsing or supporting a political party, lobby group, message or organisation that is associated with a political party, political agenda or political campaign for legislative change.

The Test of Reasonableness

6.4 The test is whether a reasonably informed member of the public might reasonably believe that your membership or association could adversely affect your ability to discharge your policing duties effectively and impartially.

The bar of what is *political* is set deliberately low. The test is not what an expert, or an academic, or a political philosopher, or a human rights lawyer thinks is or is not political. What counts is the opinion of an average, reasonably informed member of the public.

The test is not subject to a balance of opinion. A reasonably informed member of the public with a minority opinion must be respected in the same way as those holding a majority view. Whilst a PCC has every right to express a political opinion, a police officer, regardless of rank, forfeited that right the moment they took the Oath of Attestation.

WHAT IS POLITICS?

It is difficult to avoid being political or giving the impression of being political without having a clear understanding what 'politics' is. When asked if he supported the restriction on police officers being involved in politics, the former PCC of Humberside, Keith Hunter, said: "Everything is political. Somewhere, someone will be campaigning for cows to wear hats. I would expect my police officers to decide which politics to support and which to be against."



The defence that 'everything is political' is disingenuous. The reasonably informed member of the public knows the difference between a legitimate law, enacted by Parliament, and a campaign for cows to wear hats.



Professor Christina Boswell provides a practical definition: “Politics is a power struggle between people or groups...politics is a process of manoeuvring to assert rival interests.”

All law, whether good or bad, is given legitimacy by virtue of the fact that it results from an antagonistic process, rather than being waived through as happens in dictatorships. When an idea moves from Legislative Proposal, through debate and vote, to Act of Parliament, it then becomes Law. At this point - and only at this point - is it of legitimate interest to the police.

IMPRESSIONS & IMPARTIALITY

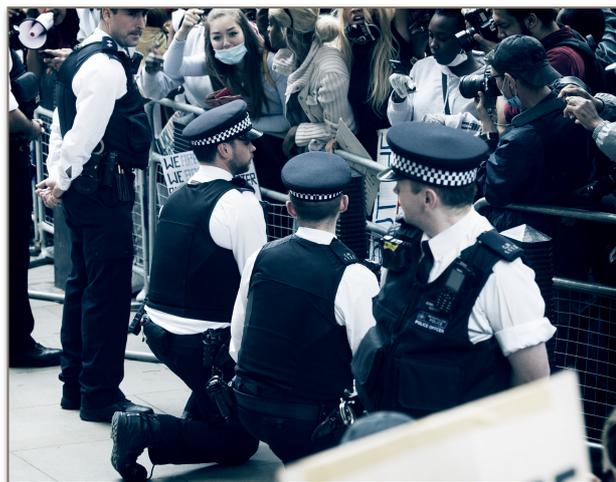
Very often, through usage and association, straightforward statements of fact, or symbols and flags, take on a clear political overtone, from which the reasonably informed member of the public is able to discern political leaning or allegiance.

1. WHITE/BLACK/ALL LIVES MATTER

Of course, ‘white lives matter’. The reason police officers do not signal this undeniable truth via a Twitter hashtag is because they recognise that it gives tacit resistance to the Black Lives Matter movement.

2. TAKING THE KNEE

National abhorrence of racism is reflected in a number of Acts of Parliament, including The Equality Act 2010. However, as taking the knee is associated with the politics of Black Lives Matter, the police have been repeatedly warned against doing it as it may suggest support of the wider political campaign.



3. FOR THE MANY NOT THE FEW

Strictly speaking, it may be argued that this slogan supports a cherished democracy and majority rule. However, since becoming a campaign slogan of The Labour Party, whatever political innocence it had is now lost. A police force tweeting this slogan would have no defence against the charge of showing political bias.

4. MAKE BRITAIN GREAT AGAIN

Wishing for a country that is great to live and work in is surely an aspiration that transcends the political divide. However, since the Trump electoral campaign and Presidency, the words 'Make... Great Again' are clearly associated with right wing politics.

5. THE RAINBOW

The LGBT movement has adopted the rainbow not only as an overarching community flag but also as the symbol of a political cause. Due to its ubiquitous presence at political rallies and its deliberate attachment to the social media accounts of those campaigning for reform to the Gender Recognition Act, the reasonably informed member of the public is likely to accurately guess the political allegiance of the person or organisation flying it.

6. THE TRANS FLAG

The Trans Flag is a more militant and explicit iteration of the political message behind the Rainbow flag and incorporates the critical race theory of Black Lives Matter.



7. TRANS RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS

Strictly speaking, it is a simple matter of fact that a trans identified person should have access to the human rights common to us all. However, this is not a celebration of the status quo but a call for reform to the Gender Recognition Act, parity of gender identity with sex, unfettered access to female only spaces (changing rooms, sports, prisons etc). It is a call for political change.

8. WOMAN: NOUN. ADULT HUMAN FEMALE.

Prior to 2019, this was simply a dictionary definition. However, when the women's rights activist, Posie Parker, placed this definition on billboards and t-shirts, it ceased being a benign statement of fact and took on the quality of a political statement. If a police force flew it on International Women's Day, that force would be inundated with protests from Trans Rights activists.

9. ACCEPTANCE WITHOUT EXCEPTION

This presents itself as shorthand for support of those individuals who are protected by The Equality Act 2010. However, it is a slogan of the political campaign of Stonewall and must be treated with the same caution as 'For The Many Not The Few.'

10. TRANS WOMEN ARE WOMEN, TRANS MEN ARE MEN

The phrase is contentious in that it seeks to disassociate a person's self perception of innate gender from objective biology sex. Irrespective of whether one agrees or



disagrees with the statement, it is a slogan (often appearing as a repetitive mantra) associated with a political campaign.

POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS

STONEWALL ALLY SCHEME

Stonewall uses two key words in relation to its partners. The first is *ally*. The second is *champion*. The dictionary defines these words:

“**Ally**: noun: one that is associated with another as a helper : a person or group that provides assistance and support in an ongoing effort, activity, or struggle; a political ally.”

“**Champion**: noun: a militant advocate or defender; one that does battle for another’s rights.”

It is difficult to argue that the reasonably informed person would not view these phrases as indicating political support. When The National LGBT Police Network tweet “We Stand Fort Stonewall” there is no doubt, whatsoever.

PRIDE

One does not need to guess the political element of Pride. It is documented here:



Unison: 'Pride started as a protest...in response to the 1969 Stonewall riots in New York. Prides are commemorations of those riots, which helped create an LGBT movement.' Unison, the union of Humberside police staff, have a follow up section in their brochure headed, *Making Prides Political*.

Hull Pride: 'The purpose of Hull Pride is protest. Pride in Hull marked 50 years since the Stonewall uprising by parading an original Gilbert Baker Pride flag through the streets... marking five decades of LGBT+ protest.'

The Guardian: 'Tens of thousands will head to Pride... which was in danger of losing its political edge.'

Peter Tatchell: 'Pride is politics with joy. A unique blend of carnival-like celebration and political demands.'

The BBC: 'The political element of Pride is still there.'

Vice: 'The activists who started UK Pride are demanding a return to its revolutionary roots.'

NATIONAL POLICE LGBT+ NETWORK

The full extent of this secretive police network's engagement with politics is documented in Fair Cop publication The Thin Pink Line. In short, it has adopted The European Parliament resolution of 11 March 2021 (2021/2557(RSP) which declared the EU as an LGBTIQ Freedom Zone. This declaration committed member states to support the following:

- The ideology that LGBTIQ rights are human rights
- To resist Regional Charters of Family Rights, such as declared by over 100 regions, counties and municipalities across Poland.
- To oppose the Hungarian town of Nagykáta's opposition to 'the dissemination and promotion of LGBTIQ propaganda'
- Promotion of LGBTIQ awareness in schools
- Prevent discourse that is critical of LGBTIQ in public and in private
- The criminalisation of conversion therapy (sic)
- The closure of legal lacunae to protect gender identity within hate speech law
- Legal protection for the teaching of gender ideology in schools
- Adoption of minimum EU standards in relation to hate speech and gender identity
- The furtherance of hate speech laws in relation to gender identity and gender expression
- Opposition to Article 33 of the Omnibus Bill T/9934 which de facto bans legal gender recognition for trans in Hungary
- Support for a Romanian bill to prohibit activities aimed at addressing gender identity theory
- The adoption of two same-sex parents on a birth certificate

Regardless of the merit or otherwise of these proposals, they are inarguably political and therefore off limits to the police.



A POLITICAL CHECKLIST

To help Chief Constables understand what is and is not political, Fair Cop offers the following check:

- Is the topic contentious?
- Is there a national debate?
- Is there a campaign?
- Are there activists?
- Is there a slogan?
- Are there colours?
- Are there opposing views in the national press?
- Does it cause outrage on social media?
- Is there a conflict of interest?
- Is there a protest?



If the answer to any of these questions is YES, then the topic may reasonably be construed as political. If it *might* be political, it *is* political... and must therefore be off limits to the police.

THE SOVEREIGN RULE



WHAT DOES HER MAJESTY THINK?

If we do not know what the Sovereign thinks about an issue then we do not need to know what a Chief Constable, a Constabulary or a police officer thinks about an issue. Politically, the Queen is vanilla. The police need to be similarly inscrutable.

The Chief Constable of Greater Manchester makes a similar observation:

“If you ever see one of the guards outside Buckingham Palace doing that before getting the next plane to Afghanistan, give me a ring because I’ll be very interested,” he said.

WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOUR

If a Chief Constable wishes to signal support for a community without also tacitly or explicitly signalling support for an associated political campaign, then it should march in a uniform divested of anything which may be construed as offering political allegiance, alliance or support by marching beneath a banner which says “Serving our communities Without Fear or Favour.”

This will have the effect of signalling support to the community whilst remaining distant from the politics of that community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Insist that Chief Constables understand that their single locus of control is the law. 'There is no duty or expectation upon the police to go beyond the law, even to protect human rights. Parliament makes the law, the police enforce it.
2. Insist that Chief Constables adopt the low-bar definition of what it means to be engaged in political activity.
3. Insist that The Code of Ethics is applied to the fullest extent (including on social media).
4. Insist on withdrawal from Stonewall's Champion's Scheme or Ally programme.
5. Insist on the immediate removal of all non standard insignia from police uniforms, cars, livery etc, social media accounts etc.
6. Insist that the police do not attend Pride as interested participants.

FURTHER READING

What Is Politics? Boswell, C. (2020). The British Academy.

Through The Looking Glass. Fair Cop. 2020.

The Thin Pink Line. Fair Cop. 2021

Ruling Miller V Chief Constable of Humberside & The College of Policing

BY SARAH PHILLIMORE:

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