



Leicestershire Police

Cadet Safeguarding Policy

Owner:	Supt Robert Arthur
Department Responsible:	Volunteers In Policing
Chief Officer Approval:	ACC Adam Streets
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Security Marking:	OFFICIAL NOT MARKED
This policy and procedure has been reviewed against APP and all relevant procedures.	
Moved to APP:	No
Rationale:	

This document has been produced in conjunction with the Leicestershire Police Legislative Compliance Pack

Review log

Date	Minor / Major / No change	Section	Author
06/09/2021	Major	all	PS 4618 Charlotte Dickens
13/8/2024	Minor	All	PS 4311 Victoria Lucas

Note: Authorised Professional Practice (APP) has been checked.

POLICY

Statement and Aim

This Policy underpins the National Volunteer Police Cadets (VPC) Safeguarding Framework 2020. The aim of the policy is to ensure that all staff and volunteers involved in the Cadet Programme understand that Child Protection and Safeguarding should be at the first priority when planning and engaging with Cadet Activities.

Leicestershire Police is committed to safeguarding the welfare of its Cadets regardless of their gender, religion, race, ability, disability, sexuality and social background by protecting them from physical, emotional or sexual abuse and neglect. The Force recognises and supports the provision that the “welfare of the child is paramount”, as defined in the Children Act 1989.

This policy defines the responsibilities expected of all adult Cadet Leaders, and any other individual involved with the delivery of the Volunteer Police cadet programme, in respect of safeguarding the welfare of the Cadets. The guidelines are here to protect staff, volunteers and young people so that they can confidently deliver an exemplary Cadet programme.

Force Strategic Lead (DRO, designated responsible officer)

The Assistant Chief Constable with portfolio lead responsibility for Volunteers in Policing will act in the capacity of the Force Strategic Lead for Cadet Safeguarding.

The national VPC guidance states that the DRO will be the main link between the national and regional VPC lead to their force coordinators. They will have oversight of the quality assurance of delivery of the cadet programme in terms of governance and enabling leaders to operate safely.

Maintaining compliance to the UK Youth Safe Spaces standards and ongoing guidance.

[WJ3873 UKY Safe Spaces Clickable PDF 7.pdf \(ukyouth.org\)](#)

In cases where an allegation of a crime, inappropriate behaviour contrary to the roles and responsibilities detailed later in this policy or suspicion of abuse from a member of the cadet leader team the DRO must as soon as reasonably practicable be informed and it is their responsibility to liaise with the ongoing police investigation. This liaising role must continue and involve the management of the safeguarding concern with parents/carers and or the national safeguarding manager.

The Superintendent who has ownership of the Volunteers in Policing portfolio will be the designated deputy for the DRO in their absence.

Safeguarding Manager

The Volunteers in Policing Sergeant, will act within a liaison role with regards to all safeguarding concerns with parents / carers; along with any ongoing police investigations. They must ensure that the relevant departments within Leicestershire police are made aware and all relevant referrals/reports are submitted.

This role will also ensure that any communication on behalf of the VPC National Hub Team is shared and distributed with all relevant parties. Liaison with the National Safeguarding Manager will take place via the Volunteers in Policing Sergeant.

This role is to be the main conduit for communications from unit level through to the force strategic lead and will have responsibility in supporting the DRO in maintaining compliance to the UK Youth Safe Spaces standards and ongoing guidance.

Central Cadet Coordinator

The Central Cadet Co-ordinator undertakes the role of 'Local designated Safeguarding Officer'. They will generally be the first point of contact for the cadet leaders/cadets and Parents to raise any concerns or issues too. They must bring any issues or concerns to the attention of the safeguarding manager who will ensure the relevant referrals/reports are submitted to the right department. They will also ensure that the VIP safeguarding data base is updated.

Cadet Leaders

Cadet leaders must be aged 18 or above upon commencement of the role. Cadet leaders will be carefully selected through the Force Recruitment and Selection process. Cadet leaders must adhere to the guidance within this document.

All our cadet leaders receive the current National VPC introduction to safeguarding training and unit heads receive the VPC 'Managing a safeguarding concern' training this enables the unit heads to act in the role as the named person which is set out in the VPC Safeguarding and wellbeing policy. This role ensures that all allegations, disclosures and concerns are raised, actioned and recorded appropriately at unit level, and are available to offer relevant support to those involved. The VIP team keep accurate training records.

Role and Responsibilities

Mandatory Procedures and Training

- Police Vetting to a minimum standard of Recruitment Level/NPPV Level 2
- DBS Check
- Complete VPC Safeguarding training
- Complete Scout UK risk assessment online training
- Cadet Leader / Police Support Volunteer Induction Training
- Read, sign and be familiar with the VPC Code of Conduct
- Read and be familiar with the College of Policing Code of Ethics
- Read and be familiar with all Cadet related Risk Assessments and Policies
- First aid training (for designated first-aiders)
- Keep up to date with updates and undertake regular refresher training.

Leicestershire Police does not act in loco parentis for the Cadets under the age of 18 and parental responsibility remains with the Cadets' parents, guardians or carers. Where necessary, the Cadet Leaders must seek permission from the Cadets' parents,

guardians or carers before the Cadets can participate in certain activities on the VPC programme. All activities must be properly risk assessed; cadets must not be allowed to engage in activities which are dangerous.

General Guidance for Cadet Leaders

It is the responsibility of all adults to ensure that:

- Your behaviour is appropriate at all times as laid out in the Code of Behaviour and reflective of the VPC Code of Conduct and College of Policing Code of Ethics.
- Abide by the provisions set out in this policy, the Risk Assessment, the Police Code of Ethics and any other policy relating to the Leicestershire Police VPC programme
- Treat everyone equally and respect everyone as an individual
- Recognise that they have a duty of care to the Cadets and that the role of Cadet Leader constitutes a position of trust
- Maintain a professional relationship with Cadets
- Respect everyone's right to personal privacy and recognise the boundaries between personal and professional life
- Abide by the supervision ratios as outlined in this document
- Take appropriate and timely action when they suspect abuse or when an individual makes an allegation or disclosure
- Obtain the necessary consent from the individual(s) with parental responsibility for a Cadet before allowing that Cadet to participate in a VPC activity
- Complete any mandatory safeguarding training and regular updates
- Inform their Unit head (or Safeguarding manager if the Unit head is involved) immediately if there is any indication of inappropriate crushes, infatuations or flirting directed towards themselves.
- Inform their Unit head (or Safeguarding manager if the Unit head is involved) immediately if there is any indication of inappropriate crushes, infatuations or flirting directed towards another Cadet Leader.
- You observe the rules established for the safety and security of young people through processes, procedures and guidance provided
- You follow the procedures laid out following an allegation, disclosure or the raising of a concern
- You recognise the position of trust in which you have been placed.
- Concerns regarding the behaviour of any adult connected to the Cadet Programme are reported. Consider discussing it with the Central Cadet Co-ordinator (Safeguarding Officer), the VPC safeguarding manager the Counter Corruption Unit or by using Bad Apple.
- Gifts and gratuities should be treated in accordance with the force policy .Further information can be found on our force intranet on the professional standards page, this is also where the Gifts, Gratuities & Hospitality form can be found.

- **Leaders must not allow allegations made by a young regardless of how small they may seem person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.**

Staff and Volunteers must not:

- Show favouritism towards a particular Cadet
- Give personal contact details to Cadets
- Engage in any behaviour or a relationship with a Cadet which would constitute an abuse of a position of trust
- Be in a one to one situation with a Cadet at any time. If a member of staff or a volunteer needs to speak to a young person on their own e.g. in a 1 – 1 setting, then they should ensure that another member of staff present knows and is aware of their whereabouts and they should be within shouting distance of another member of staff or volunteer at all times.
- Leaders should not engage in 1 to 1 online sessions with cadets at any time, online sessions should be utilised for group session only with more than one leader present at all times.
- Accept Cadets as 'friends' on personal social media accounts or engage in a private conversation with a Cadet via social media or an instant messaging site/application
- Use inappropriate language or display improper behaviour towards a Cadet or in the presence of a Cadet
- Allow the Cadets to use inappropriate language or to display improper behaviour unchallenged
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- Allow or make any sexually suggestive comments towards a Cadet or to someone else in the presence of a Cadet
- Allow abusive peer group activities, such as bullying and initiation ceremonies
- Allow or invite a Cadet to assist them with an activity outside of the VPC programme that is of a personal nature to themselves or another adult in a position of trust, such as a personal errand or a personal social event
- Spend excessive amounts of time with one young person away from the others during a cadet session or event
- Take young people to your home or other place where you will be alone with them
- Allow or Engage in rough play, physical or sexual provocative games, including horseplay
- Allow or engage in any form of sexual innuendo, flirting or inappropriate gestures or terminology
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a young person or anyone else in the young person's presence, even in fun.
- Discuss their own sexual relationships with or in the presence of a young person
- Do anything of a personal nature for a young person that they can do themselves
- **Allow allegations made by a young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or acted upon**

One to one situations should be avoided at all times, however If a member of staff or volunteer needs to speak to a young person on their own e.g. in a one to one setting, they should ensure that another member of staff or volunteer present knows and is aware of their whereabouts. They should be within shouting distance.

If a young person requires assistance of a personal nature then an individual dynamic risk assessment should be completed and any recommendations within the young person's individual care plan adhered to.

Recording and Managing Allegations and Disclosures

It is vital that all staff and volunteer Cadet Leaders refer any cases of child abuse, (Sexual, Physical, Emotional Harm including concerns of Criminal Exploitation) as a matter of urgency, to the Unit Leader. The Unit Leader should ensure that the matter is escalated to the Central Cadet Co-ordinator (Safeguarding Officer).

All allegations and suspicions should be treated as strictly confidential and should be reported immediately to the Safeguarding Officer.

All allegations and suspicions should be recorded on Niche (Police recording system) and a Public protection Notification (PPN) submitted and referred no matter how insignificant they may seem at the time. All necessary parties need to be recorded so this can be shared with partner agencies to consider wider safeguarding of other who may be involved.

The Safeguarding manager will follow the process detailed in the National VPC safeguarding and Wellbeing policy, escalating matters to the Strategic Lead where appropriate. Referrals will be made in-line with Leicestershire Safeguarding procedures.

Responsibilities in the event of a disclosure by a Cadet

A Cadet may make a disclosure in relation to themselves or they may report abuse of another Cadet. In all circumstances follow the process below:

1. Cadet discloses abusive activity to Cadet Leader
2. Find somewhere suitable to talk. Ensure another adult is present
3. Remind Cadet that you cannot keep secrets, but reassure them that you will do everything you can to keep them safe
4. Ask Cadet to describe in their own words what happened, do not investigate, ask leading questions or examine Cadet. Provide words of support but do not physically comfort
5. Write a dated, timed and signed note of what has been disclosed using the Cadet's words. Where there is immediate risk the Safeguarding Officer should be informed immediately along with on call Detective Inspector and the on-call Child Abuse Detective Sergeant. Build up the occurrence on NICHE and also complete the PPN. Take the details of the child's parents and details of any other children that may be involved.

Reporting Cases of Suspected Abuse

Staff and Volunteers should be aware at all times of their duty of care to the young people they are working with.

When suspicions are raised, either by noticing signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect, or by disclosure by the young person, Cadet Leaders must follow procedures as outlined in this Policy. The Disclosure of Child Abuse process above will assist.

It is important to remember to write up a comprehensive account of the suspicions or disclosure.

Allegations against staff and volunteers

In all cases of allegations against staff or volunteers, the following process should take immediate effect:

- Inform the Central Cadet Co-ordinator or in their absence or if not appropriate inform the safeguarding manager.
- Record the Cadet's disclosure/account at the time, passing on all details to the Safeguarding Officer
- The Safeguarding Officer will notify the relevant departmental line management immediately.
- The Safeguarding Officer will take account of the VPC safeguarding and wellbeing policy guidance.
- Local Designated Safeguarding Officer to be notified immediately, inline with procedure. Where appropriate Local authority Designated officer to be notified inline with current procedures **LADO** – Local Designated Safeguarding Officer Not all areas have them however the function must be completed. They will be involved in the management of allegations against people who work with children and have oversight. The VPC has been identified as a Regulated Activity provider we MUST ensure that any concerns or allegations made about any Leader or adult associated with Cadets MUST go to the LADO – Each Force will have a reporting process – please ensure YOU are clear on how this is done. This is a legal requirement – called a 'duty to refer'
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Welfare of staff and volunteers in the event of an allegation

Cadet Leaders need to be mindful that an allegation made against another Leader can have a significant impact upon that person and the group, which may cause them to feel upset, angry, isolated or concerned.

There needs to be consideration on a case by case basis as to whether the Leader will need to be removed from the VPC programme during any investigation and have no further contact with the Cadets.

Such an incident will need to be brought to the attention of the Force Strategic Lead and safeguarding manager for the above decision to be made.

Strict confidentiality must be maintained throughout.

Cadet Leaders, who are the subject of an allegation, may be at risk of self-harm. Welfare and support during the investigation will be maintained by professional Standards with VIP support, who will act to safeguard the lead.

The Leader must be provided with the Force welfare support contacts including Health Assured, Staff Support Networks. (list not exhaustive)

The Strategic Lead must be informed and kept updated.

If you have concerns regarding the behaviour of any adult connected to the Cadet Programme remember you have a duty to report it. Consider discussing it with the Central Cadet Co-ordinator (Safeguarding Officer), the Counter Corruption Unit [Bad Apple](#) or by contacting the VPC direct

Cadet Leader / Cadet Ratio's

Leicestershire Police will follow the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) recommended adult to child ratios when supervising children and young people detailed below, these will be reviewed annually.

- **9 - 12 years** - one adult to eight children
- **13 - 18 years** - one adult to ten children

When deciding on the number of leaders required, please remember that this is a ratio is a guideline only and should be accompanied by an up to date risk assessment. In certain situations the risk assessment will evidence the need for a higher number of adult leaders to children and young people e.g. if there is a child who has a specific support need or if behaviour is identified as a potential risk then the number of supervising adults will be higher. As far as possible, include input from children and young people and their parents and carers in risk assessments to ensure children's needs are met.

It may not always be possible to adhere to these recommended ratios, however, every effort should be made to achieve the best level of supervision of children and young people at all times.

There must be a minimum of 2 adult leaders present for events and activities and preferable to have 3, in the event of a Leader being unavoidably abstracted from the event ratios would be protected.

The only exception to this is with regards to Duke of Edinburgh which has its own safeguarding policy which states spending time alone (unsupervised) with children and young people. Where possible, remain where others are nearby or where you can be visibly seen

This principle can also be applied to events where Cadets are split into smaller groups.

No event should be solely supervised by Senior Cadets; there must be a minimum of two adult leaders present, at least one of which should be fully trained. In the event that an Adult Leader is unavoidably abstracted the event must end.

Supervision should reflect the gender mix of participants in the group, for mixed sex groups there should be at least one leader of each gender whilst for single sex groups' leaders of the same gender or both genders is acceptable.

Transporting Young People

- Leaders should never be alone with a Cadet in any vehicle; there must be at least one other person present. If you are travelling in a vehicle it is recommended that there is one adult driving and one adult supervising the child

if a situation arises where breaching these instructions is unavoidable, they must only occur with the full knowledge and consent of the Unit Leader and the child or young person's parent or carer. In these circumstances the young person should sit in the rear of the vehicle. The young person should give their consent verbally and in writing if possible.

- A written record should be made by the Safeguarding Officer (Central Co-ordinator) of their decision to allow the situation to take place.
- It is actively discouraged for leaders to use their own vehicle to transport Cadets but if the circumstances are unavoidable, the driver must have business insurance in their name, for the vehicle that they will be using. The Cadet will be seated in the back of the vehicle they are travelling in and where possible another Leader will also travel with the driver, sat in the front passenger seat.
- It is the driver's responsibility to ensure that seatbelts for all passengers are correctly fitted and used.
- Transport arrangements are covered within the Leicestershire Police Cadets generic risk assessment.

Residential Trips

When planning a residential trip where possible a site visit should be carried out as part of the risk assessment process, it is particularly important to ensure safe working practices where an overnight stay is involved.

Sleeping arrangements must be documented on the Event Order Template accompanying the Force risk assessment and risk assessments from the venue / organisers of the event if this is not Leicestershire Police.

Overnight trips for mixed groups should include at least one female and one male supervising adult.

Leaders must ensure that no cadet has to sleep in the same room or tent as a cadet of the opposite sex. No leader should sleep in the same room or tent as a cadet, although accommodation for adults should be separate from children, it should be nearby. Where possible arrange to have exclusive use of accommodation. If this isn't possible, try to negotiate the use of a whole floor and keep all the children's rooms close together. If children's rooms are on different floors, adults should be available on each floor.

If risk assessment dictates that the only safe accommodation is shared accommodation then sleeping areas within this should be segregated. Males and Females are to sleep in different areas and leaders should sleep in a different area to the young group.

There must be separate sleeping, washing and toilet areas for:

- adults and children
- older and younger children
- boys and girls

If it is necessary for Leaders to enter the vicinity where young people may be changing, then Leaders working in pairs should do this. The leaders must warn young people that

they are about to enter so that they can have the opportunity to ensure that they are dressed.

Leaders must have separate access to washing / toilet facilities to the young people. If this is not possible, then a distinctly separate rota for use of the facilities should be in place. No leader should be in the same facilities as young people when they are undressed.

On overnight stays it is important that there is at least two members of staff available at all times. The members of staff will not be required to remain awake throughout the night but the children should be aware of where the staff are situated and that they can be awoken during the night if required for any welfare or emergency issues. The whole group will be provided clear guidance on their conduct and behaviour whilst in the residential setting. Typically, this will consist of boundaries and to not leave the location or venue during the evening. The staff will also ensure children know what to do if they need help in the night and if there is an emergency, for example a fire alarm.

Professionalism and Relationships

Relationships between leaders and young people must be on a purely professional basis. It is wholly inappropriate for a leader to have a personal relationship with a young person or a young person who has recently been under their supervision.

Leaders should not:

- Give cadets personal contact details
- Accept them as “friends” on social media networks
- Show favouritism towards a particular Cadet(s)
- Engage in any behaviour or a relationship with a Cadet which would constitute an abuse of a position of trust
- Spend excessive amounts of time with one young person away from the others
- Take young people to your home or other place where you will be alone with them
- Allow to engage in rough play, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Allow or engage in any form of sexual innuendo, flirting or inappropriate gestures or terminology
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a young person or anyone else in the young person’s presence, even in fun.
- Discuss their own sexual relationships with or in the presence of a young person
- Do anything of a personal nature for a young person that they can do themselves
- Accept any obviously inappropriate gifts or gratuities that may compromise your professional integrity. Record this information via the Professional Standards Department PSD intranet page - Gifts, Gratuities and Hospitality Form.
- Speak openly about a Cadet in a negative way or discuss personal or conduct issues within hearing distance of other cadets.

All adults associated with the Cadet Programme should adhere to Leicestershire Police Values and high standards set in the Code of Ethics and the Standards of Professional Behaviour, which each member of the policing profession is expected to uphold.

Leicestershire Police are not complacent around the safety of our organisation, we encourage the reporting of any such issues or concerns and are committed to ensuring that any reports are investigated and addresses appropriately.

Online/Social Media

The safe and appropriate use of the internet and social media applications to promote the VPC programme is encouraged.

Leicestershire Police has established a set of clear standards and guidelines for the use of the internet and social media in the following local policy procedures:

- Force Web and Social Media Sites
- Using the Internet and Social Media

All Cadet Leaders, who have been given access to a Leicestershire Police social media account as an 'author', must adhere and refer to these policies. The Force Web and Social Media Sites policy contains a useful 'traffic light guide' to posting content for social media authors.

Cadet Leaders must never:

- Give personal contact details to Cadets, including details of personal social media accounts
- Accept Cadets as friends on personal social media accounts
- Send private messages to Cadets on social media or via an instant messaging application Including but not limited to Facebook messenger, whats app
- Post photographs or any personal data which could be used to identify a Cadet on a social media platform or a website, if consent to media coverage has not been given by, or obtained from, the cadet's parent, guardian or carer.
- Post confidential or sensitive personal data about a cadet on a social media platform or a website
- Take images of Cadets using personal devices

Cadets will not be given access to Leicestershire Police social media accounts.

Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing best practice developed because of a number of high profile cases involving tragic accidents and public scandals in the late 1980s and early 1990s. These cases were also the catalyst behind the UK law to protect workers who blow the whistle on wrongdoing. This protection is set out in the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

The Force Whistleblowing Policy should be referred to in all circumstance relating to Whistleblowing. This policy applies to all those who work for us; whether full time or part time, employed through an agency or as a volunteer, if in doubt - raise it!

The Chief Constable and Chief Officer Team of Leicestershire Police are committed to running the organisation in the best way possible and to do so we need your help. We have introduced this policy to remind and reassure you that it is safe and acceptable to speak up and to enable you to raise any concern you may have about malpractice at an early stage and in the right way. Rather than wait for proof, we would prefer you to raise the matter when it is still a concern.

Concerns can be raised by speaking to a senior leader, or you are unable or feel that you cannot tell a leader for whatever reason, the concern can be reported via the Bad Apple application on Connect or via the Crimestoppers integrity line on 0800 111 4444.

Bullying

Leicestershire Police takes a zero tolerance approach to any form of bullying, harassment, victimisation or any unacceptable behaviour towards an individual or group.

Police Officers, Police Staff, Police Community Support Officers, Special Constables and Volunteers of Leicestershire Police, have both the right to complain about bullying and harassment and the means of pursuing such complaints.

Further, they have the right to expect that every complaint will be properly investigated and dealt with appropriately. The Force Bullying and Harassment Enabling Guidance should be referred to in all cases or reports of bullying / harassment

Appendix A:

Glossary

Child – Has a specific legal meaning of anyone below the age of 18 years

Young Person – Has no specific legal definition. However, 12-18 years is the standard age associated with the term.

Adult – Has a specific legal meaning of anyone above the age of 18 years

Safeguarding – For the purposes of this policy, we are using the terms ‘safeguarding’ and ‘to safeguard’ to describe the prevention and precautionary approach to planning and procedures needed to protect children, young people and adults from any potential harm.

Child Protection - Child protection is a process within the Safeguarding Policy and refers to the activity undertaken to protect children suffering from, or at risk of, significant harm (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018)

Child and young person focussed - our safeguarding practice places the views of children and young people at the centre of our policy planning and implementation processes. This approach ensures that their welfare remains paramount in all we do

Safety - Safety is about being protected from and not causing, danger, risk, injury, loss or harm. Safety can be a feeling, a physical object or place, and an action, and sometimes refers to the laws, rules, and principles that are intended to keep people

safe. Safety is not just about what happens inside the meeting place, it is also about outside it, including days out, and may be about something that is happening at home.

Wellbeing - Wellbeing refers to a person's sense of contentment and satisfaction with their conditions in life and their current circumstances. It is closely linked to emotional balance and mental health but it also affected by an individual's attitude, values and perspective.

Grooming – is the planned and deliberate act of manoeuvring an individual into a position of isolation to ensure they become a key influencer or 'trusted person'

LADO – Local Designated Safeguarding Officer Not all areas have them however the function must be completed. They will be involved in the management of allegations against people who work with children and have oversight. The VPC has been identified as a Regulated Activity provider we MUST ensure that any concerns or allegations made about any Leader or adult associated with Cadets MUST go to the LADO – Each Force will have a reporting process – please ensure YOU are clear on how this is done. This is a legal requirement – called a 'duty to refer'

Risk Assessment- Risk assessment is a term used to describe the overall process or method where you: Identify hazards and risk factors that have the potential to cause harm (hazard identification). ... Determine appropriate ways to eliminate the hazard, or control the risk when the hazard cannot be eliminated (risk control)

VPC: The Volunteer Police Cadets is the nationally recognised police uniformed youth group throughout England & Wales and in Scotland known as Police Scotland Youth Volunteers.

Whilst being a national movement, all forces work to a national standard, whilst ensuring local volunteer police cadets operate flexibly in local police forces with individual forces being responsible for their delivery. The sharing of good practice and learning is encouraged at a national level

PPN: Public Notification Notice : A public protection notification document (PPN) summarises the vulnerabilities of victims. A PPN is a means of sharing information with partner agencies and recording abuse. Information recorded should be relevant and minimum required to achieve the purpose of sharing.

Niche: Police recording system