

## Police Approved Interpreters and Translators Scheme – An Explanation

### Introduction

Chief Constable Simon Cole QPM is the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) lead for use of police interpreters across UK Policing. He is responsible for the implementation of the PAIT system, which was approved by NPCC Chief's Council in October 2020 with all Chief Constables giving their support to the scheme.

This document provides an overview of the PAIT system for Chief Constables. Each police force across the UK will be consulted by Leicestershire Police in order to ensure their specific requirements are met by the scheme. It will remain flexible to local needs, whilst providing overarching standardisation, professionalism and regulation for all interpreters and translators working in a police environment.

### What is the PAIT Scheme?

The National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) is introducing a new classification for interpreters and translators carrying out police assignments across England and Wales.

The system is called 'PAIT' which stands for 'Police Approved Interpreter/Translator'.

Interpreters and translators who hold the required vetting, qualifications and experience will be approved by Leicestershire Police on behalf of the NPCC to undertake police assignments for all police forces.

### Why is this scheme required?

Head of Procurement & Support Services, Ian Fraser has spent over two years engaging with key stakeholders to understand the issues faced by police forces, linguists and language service providers (LSPs) in relation to current frameworks. He has held round table events with the majority of LSPs, interpreter and translation organisations as well as police representatives and has noted all the issues.

The PAIT system has been devised as the result of the consultation around the framework after carefully considering all the challenges, issues and complaints voiced by participants in the consultation.

- Ian and his team heard suggestions that lower qualified interpreters were being sent to police assignments by some agencies.
- There was confusion within police documentation regarding whether the National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI) was mandatory or not.

- Suggestions were made that unqualified interpreters were being contacted and sent to police assignments.
- Information was provided that interpreters who were disciplined by one agency, were found to be working for another, due to inconsistencies in the way information was shared between forces, agencies and vetting units.

## The Solution

The PAIT system was devised as a direct result of the challenges and risks that were raised during the consultation process.

Taking into account all the issues raised about unqualified, un-vetted and inexperienced interpreters, Leicestershire Police will authorise all interpreters and translators and hold a master list (in a secure and confidential repository).

- LSPs will only be able to assign those linguists who hold PAIT accreditation.
- Accreditation will include stringent checks on qualifications, experience and vetting.
- Conduct and discipline matters will be notified to Leicestershire police when appropriate and the information sharing agreement will ensure the flow of information when necessary to ensure the integrity of all police investigations and prosecutions. Vetting may be removed and PAITs de-authorised from undertaking police assignments if necessary.

Due to supply and demand, there may be occasions when a PAIT cannot be sourced for a specific assignment. In such circumstances, police forces will always have the option to accept a person who is not a PAIT, after conducting their own risk assessment and receiving authorisation from an officer of at least the rank of Inspector. LSPs will be able to assist the officer with details of the qualifications, vetting and experience of the suggested interpreter offered for that assignment.

## Scope of the PAIT Scheme

Unless a Chief Constable states their force does not wish to support the PAIT scheme, the interpreters used by that force will be subject to the same regulation provided by PAIT regardless of whether the force is procuring language services through the national Police DPS, or any other framework. Exemptions will be made for local arrangements where forces enter into agreements with local authorities for BSL services. More details will be provided during force consultation with Leicestershire Police.