



CUMBRIA POLICE AUTHORITY

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Meeting of the Professional Standards Committee held on Monday 19 July 2010 in Conference Room 2, Police Headquarters, Carleton Hall, Penrith, commencing at 10.05 am.

PRESENT

Mr Alan Barry (Chair)
Mr Rob Huck
Mrs Margaret Johnson
Mrs Lynda Shaw

Also Present:

Deputy Chief Constable (Mr Stuart Hyde)
Detective Superintendent Professional Standards Department (Mr Paul Smith)
Acting Chief Executive (Mr Stuart Edwards)
Community Engagement Officer / ICV Scheme Administrator (Mrs Joanne Thornborrow) Agenda Item 7 only
Committee Services Officer (Mrs Joanne Head)

PART I – ITEMS CONSIDERED IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC.

The Chair welcomed Detective Superintendent Paul Smith to his first meeting since being appointed as Head of Professional Standards Department and conveyed his thanks to Temporary Detective Superintendent Capstick for all his hard work.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Jill Heath, Mrs Joke Maes, Mr Ray Cole and Mr Reg Watson.

2. URGENT BUSINESS AND EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED, that under section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraph indicated in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act –

<u>Item</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Paragraph</u>
8	Anti-Corruption Unit Quarterly Report	1
9	Complaint about a Senior Officer	7



3. DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INTERESTS

There were no disclosures of any personal interest relating to any item on the Agenda.

4. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 29 April 2010 had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

A member asked what progress had been made in relation to Threat Assessment and Management of Employees (TAME). Detective Superintendent Smith advised that this process was being monitored by the Professional Standards Department. The first training session had been delivered in North Cumbria with sessions being rolled out throughout the rest of the county. The dates of these training sessions would be provided to members who could attend if they wished to observe.

RESOLVED,

that, the

- (i) Minutes of the Professional Standards Committee meetings held on 29 April 2010, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair; and
- (ii) dates for the TAME training sessions be provided to members.

5. COMPLAINTS BY THE PUBLIC

Detective Superintendent Smith presented the quarterly report which provided details of complaint allegations made between 1 April and 30 June 2010. He stated that future reports would contain more detailed commentary as he acknowledged there were a lot of bare figures which did not provide full explanations.

Eleven cases had been referred to the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) of which 9 had been returned to the Constabulary. One of the 11 cases was to be managed by the IPCC due to the nature of the offence and the IPCC would lead on any media/press releases.

A discussion was held on the point at which the Police Authority and its members were notified of possible media interest in high profile cases against police officers and staff. The Chair of the Committee had monthly meetings with the Head of Professional Standards Department and received briefings and updates in relation to a number of areas including any high profile investigations. However it was recognised that there may be occasions between these meetings when the Authority needed to be notified quickly. It was agreed that the Authority would receive copies of any press releases when they were sent out to the media and if necessary a Chief Officer would ring either the Chair of the Police Authority and/or the Chair of the Committee depending upon the seriousness of the situation.



It was anticipated that future analysis of the number and types of complaints would identify any trends or increases in relation to the complaints received.

The Constabulary regularly hold Safer & Stronger meeting with various communities around the county and actively encourage members of the public to complain if they were not satisfied with the service that the Constabulary were providing. This may result in the number of complaints being received increasing, however it would be important to note the number of complaints which were substantiated rather than the total number received.

Members advised that there was still a need for officers to develop their soft skills when dealing with members of the public and to positively promote the work that they were required to carry out. This may prevent members of the public complaining if they had a better understanding of what officers were required to do.

Detective Superintendent Smith advised that each BCU (Basic Command Unit) was to have a single point of contact of Inspector rank to deal with complaints in relation to incivility. This would then enable any trends or repeat issues to be identified and addressed quickly.

The members looked at the analysis of allegations, breakdowns and types of complaints. A member asked why the number of complaints classified as "*other neglect or failure in duty*" had increased by 22 compared to the same period last year. Detective Superintendent Smith informed members that this allegation type related to failure by an officer to take appropriate action when reporting crime, updating progress/responding to queries, property and call handlers response. The increase in the number of allegations received was attributed to the introduction of the Policing Pledge and advised that future analysis would identify any trends.

With regard to performance 97 allegations had been finalised within the reporting period. Forty five of these allegations had been finalised by way of Local Resolution; 32 by the Professional Standard Department and 13 within the BCU areas. Within PSD 95% of the Local Resolutions had been dealt with within 40 days which was above the performance target of 80% and within areas there had been 100% performance rate.

RESOLVED, that, the

- (i) report be noted;
- (ii) Authority receive copies of any press releases regarding officers and staff when they are issued to the media; and
- (iii) Chair of the Authority or the Chair of the Committee be briefed by a Chief Officer about particularly serious cases.

6. DIP SAMPLING OF PUBLIC COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE



Three members of the committee had carried out dip sampling of police complaint files on 6 July 2010. The members had reviewed 16 complaint files which had been finalised during the last quarter.

At the previous committee meeting it had been agreed that members would look specifically at complaint files regarding incivility of officers in addition to the normal number of files reviewed. The members randomly selected 3 such files which they reviewed. It was felt that many of these types of complaints could have been avoided had the officer used better 'soft skills' when dealing with the member of the public and positively promoted the work that they were required to carry out. At the dip sample session members had been advised that the Professional Standards Department did look at officer profiles to identify any repeat complaints received against individual officers, which would be referred to the Senior Management Teams with the relevant area to deal with.

During the dip sample process members were taken through files which had been identified as best practice. The best practice identified within the cases were circulated force wide using various mediums such as Staff Matters and Raising the Standard publications.

The Chairman thanked the members for undertaking the dip sampling and for presenting the report.

The list of the files sampled, together with a copy of the check lists completed during dip-sampling, forwarded from the Professional Standards Department, would be placed on file with the papers for the meeting.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

(Note: Mrs J Thornborrow joined the meeting at this point)

7. INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITORS

(a) Independent Custody Visitors Annual Conference

The Lead Member for Custody Visiting updated the meeting regarding the Independent Custody Visitors Annual Conference which had been held on Saturday 12 June 2010. A total of 32 Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) had attended the conference; along with 3 Police Authority members, the scheme administrator, Joanne Thornborrow and Inspector Neil Carlton from the Constabulary. Two representatives from Lancashire Police Authority had also attended the conference.

The conference had been well received by the ICVs in attendance and some of the feedback comments were included within the report. The North West Regional Conference would be held in September which ICVs from Cumbria would be able to attend.



The Lead Member offered to undertake a presentation for all Police Authority members at the next meeting of the full Police Authority.

(b) Review of Self Introduction Pilot for Independent Custody Visitors

The ICV Scheme Administrator reported to the meeting the findings from a pilot undertaken by the Barrow Panel, whereby ICV's introduced themselves to detainees rather than Custody Sergeants or Detention Officers. The trial took place over a 24 week period between January and June 2010 which had seen an increase in the number of people who had been seen by the ICVs; however, this increase could not be definitively attributed to self-introduction as acceptance rates always varied. Members did not feel that the increase in the numbers seen were significant enough in themselves to justify wider adoption of self-introductions.

It was noted that not all ICVs on the Barrow Panel had been in favour of the scheme and after careful consideration and discussion it was proposed that the Self Introduction scheme not be rolled out throughout the county. Members recognised that not everyone would feel confident in undertaken self introduction and with this in mind they agreed to endorse the decision not to roll-out the pilot scheme throughout the county.

The Committee asked that the Lead Member send a letter of thanks to the Barrow Panel thanking them for all their work and efforts in undertaking the pilot scheme. Ongoing training for Custody Sergeants and Detention Officers was continually being developed and this may see an increase in the number of visits which ICVs carried out.

- RESOLVED,** that, the
- (i) report be noted;
 - (ii) Lead Member undertake a presentation to all police authority members at a future meeting;
 - (iii) Self Introduction scheme for Independent Custody Visitors not be rolled out throughout the rest of the county; and
 - (iv) Lead Member for Independent Custody Visitors write a letter of thanks to the Barrow Panel for undertaking the pilot.

PART 2 – ITEMS CONSIDERED IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

8. ANTI-CORRUPTION QUARTERLY REPORT

Detective Superintendent Capstick presented a report which provided an overview for the period from 1 April 2010 to 30 June 2010.



Details of the types of cases dealt with by the Anti-Corruption Unit were provided within the report. Members noted that 62 intelligence reports had been received during the reporting period.

RESOLVED that, the report be noted.

9. COMPLAINT ABOUT A SENIOR OFFICER

The Acting Chief Executive presented a report and supporting documentation in relation to complaints which the Police Authority had received regarding a Senior Officer in Cumbria Constabulary whilst serving in another Force area.

Copies of documentation in relation to the complaints had been provided to members for their consideration. Following discussion and further contemplation of the documentation available the Members of the committee agreed that they would go on to record the complaints.

The investigation of the complaints would be conducted by the relevant Police Authority, the arrangements for the investigation were to be agreed with this Authority by the Chief Executive in consultation with the chairman.

RESOLVED, that, the
(i) report be noted;
(ii) complaints be recorded; and
(iii) investigation of the complaints be conducted by the relevant Police Authority, and the arrangements for the investigation being agreed by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairman.

The Acting Chief Executive advised the committee that Ms Naseem Malik, North West Regional Commissioner for the Independent Police Complaints Commissioner would be attending the next meeting of the committee in October 2010.

Meeting ended at 11.35 pm

Chair:

Date: