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**TRUST, INTEGRITY AND ETHICS COMMITTEE**

**Thursday 30 April 2015**

**Attendees:**

**Warwickshire OPCC:**

**Neil Hewison Chief Executive (NH)**

**Debbie Mullis Policy and Research Officer (DM)**

**Neal Vincent Minutes**

**West Mercia OPCC:**

**Bill Longmore Police and Crime Commissioner (BL)**

**Barrie Sheldon Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (BS)**

**Andy Champness Chief Executive (AC)**

**Police:**

**DS Gary Watson (Items 3&4) (GW)**

**Inspector Nigel Jones (Item 12 only) (NJ)**

**Independent Members:**

**Cllr Chris Cade (CC)**

**Susanna McFarlane (SM) Chair**

**Jane Spilsbury (JS)**

**Col. Tony Ward (TW)**

**Apologies:**

**Ron Ball (RB) Police and Crime Commissioner, Warwickshire**

**Clive Parsons (CP) Independent Member**

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

Susanna McFarlane opened the meeting and welcomed the Committee Members.

SM requested that this section of the agenda include a declaration of conflicts of interests.

**ACTION: DM to add declaration of conflicts of interests as a standing item on committee agendas.**

1. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 February 2015 and Matters Arising**

On page 3, item 5, SM asked that the word ‘the’ be removed from the first line of the third paragraph.

The remainder of the minutes of the committee meeting held on the 11 February 2015 were deemed to be a true and accurate record.

1. **Complaint Statistics – Discussion**

GW said that the review commissioned by the Chief Officer had highlighted a range of issues, and performance data had revealed issues within departments.

Priorities were:

1) Staff vacancies. Currently there are four investigator vacancies, with the lack of a financial investigator proving particularly difficult, and a shortage of admin staff. HR were working hard to resolve staffing issues; temporary staff were not considered to be a long-term solution. Admin recruitment should be reasonably simple to address; recruitment of higher-level staff was the problem.

2) Work by the Process and Practice Review team had identified variance in processes across teams in different locations.

SM asked why staff were situated across various locations. GW said this was for geographical coverage; to facilitate carrying out interviews and enquiries.

GW expected performance to get worse before it got better. Closing cases would make the stats look worse in the short-term, and it would be the end of the year before any improvement was seen.

Regarding the move to Stratford, CC enquired whether the I.T. was compatible. GW said that the single location at Stratford (previously Hindlip and Leek Wootton) was beneficial and I.T. would not be a problem.

JS enquired whether the high incidence of certain complaints, e.g. rudeness, tied in to training. GW said that, nationally, figures were roughly level and the wider learning aspects of cases were always looked into, not just the big lessons. BL asked whether the number of complaints against police were level, e.g. compared to last year, and GW confirmed that they were about the same.

Discussion of the terminology used in complaint outcome letters to the public.

SM and TW noted that the terminology used (e.g. “Failure of duty” or “Officer dealt with by management advice”) created a false impression with the public that officers had merely been given a “ticking off” by management. GW clarified the terms, and stated that the wording used was the IPCC’s. SJ suggested that the terminology be explained in any letters to the public; it could not be assumed that internal terminology (jargon) would be universally understood, and an explanation of terms used would improve public perception of outcomes. GW advised that he would look at the letter templates used.

BL asked how we could be sure that new recruits entering the force had accepted the obligations that this placed upon their personal lives, e.g. they could no longer drink irresponsibly, or use drugs. GW stated that officers are made aware of such expectations, and reminders were put out internally as part of a prevention plan.

Discussion of on-body cameras reducing complaints

SM asked whether on-body cameras helped with this. GW said they did. BS said U.S. research had demonstrated that complaints against officers were not reduced by the presence of on-body cameras; the number of spurious complaints remained the same. SM noted that body-worn video should reduce the quantity of “he said, she said” complaints. GW said that use of on-body cameras was not a simple matter of buying cameras and sending them out; their usage required infrastructure to be in place for storing and managing recorded footage.

Discussion of future updates and report data

JS asked whether future updates could be expected. GW said a report was included in the agenda. NH noted that it would be useful to monitor PSD (Professional Standards Department) progress at each meeting, until such time as the committee was happy that it had bedded-in.

**ACTION: DM to invite GW to each meeting to provide an update on the Professional Standards Department review and the complaint statistics.**

AC commented that the charts included in the report were not intuitive. GW said that the data they submit to the IPCC comes back to them in that form.

Discussion of police officer misconduct hearings to be held in public

BL noted that from 1st May certain classes of misconduct by police officers (as distinct from police staff) would be heard in public. GW said it was not clear where they would be held, as sites like Hindlip were not ideal for public access. GW doubted that there would be much public interest, except possibly with high-profile cases, but that an increased number of hearings should be expected.

BL asked whether notifications would be sent out ahead of publicly-held hearings. GW said information would be available on the internet. SM requested that Committee Members be notified of misconduct hearings so they could choose whether to attend.

**ACTION: GW to notify DM of misconduct hearing dates for circulation to Committee Members.**

BS asked whether, if an officer pleads guilty, there would be no hearing. AC said it would be more of a sentencing hearing in such cases, while a not guilty plea would result in a full public hearing.

JS asked where the independent chairs for these hearings would come from. GW said they would come from the Home Office; the chairs would be legally qualified.

The committee thanked GW, who left the meeting at this point.

1. **Complaint Dip-Sampling Report / Lessons Learned**

TW stated that the backlog had been cleared. The move to Stratford looked good, although recruiting staff was proving difficult.

BS said that there were lessons to be learned from Stage 1 of the Strategic Alliance, and the IPCC wished to be assured that the lessons learned were being passed down. Dip-sampled cases suggested that the IPCC could be satisfied on this point.

20-30% of complaint cases were from custody. BS suggested linking in with Independent Custody Visitors. It was proposed to link in with Independent Custody Visitors in the future as the Warwickshire and West Mercia schemes are currently being restructured.

**ACTION: DM to add contact with Independent Custody Visitors to the work plan.**

1. **HMIC Crime Data Integrity Review**

DM stated that this was an opportunity to provide an update. AC noted that one I.T. system, CRIMES, was due to be replaced in 12 months. The new system would be able to talk to ATHENA, and should be bedded-in in 18 months.

NH asked whether the committee was content with the action plan, which they were. CC hoped that the presentation at July’s meeting would complete it. JS queried the form and content of the presentation. NH/CC said it would be a quick run-through, looking at delivery of the action plan and whether the system is working. JS urged that the July presentation focus on the impact of the action plan, in addition to noting the actions that had taken place.

**ACTION: NH to report on the impact of the action plan.**

1. **Rape ‘No Crimes’ Review Feedback**

SM said that the review had been helpful, and asked whether a statement about the exercise would be published online. BS suggested a public statement instead, on the number of rape cases that close without charge.

JS queried West Mercia’s statement that no rape cases would be “no-crimed” and BS explained that this was the result of an operational change to the order of events. Under the old system, a crime would be reported, investigated, deemed crime / no-crime, and only crimes would be recorded. Under the new system, a crime would be reported, recorded, then investigated; therefore all reports would be recorded.

NH asked whether the committee felt the review sample size was large enough to go public with and submit to media scrutiny. JS said she was not content with the number of cases sampled, or the process, to wish to present any findings to the media and public at this stage. BS suggested presenting it as ongoing work in progress. CC suggested presenting it as “looking at” – as this would at least provide reassurance that it is being looked at.

JS suggested that an announcement could be made stating that a decision had been taken not to no-crime rapes. Two out three cases being moderated should demonstrate that someone is looking into it.

NH said that if the data was provided a draft media release could be created for discussion, but queried the credibility of such a small sample size. NH’s opinion was that any media announcement would be premature at this stage. JS agreed that it was premature and suggested there be at least another couple of sessions first.

SM queried when the work could be considered “finished” and whether the 27 cases looked at from 2014 were representative; was 2014 an average year? AC noted that if police no longer “no-crime” rape then the work of looking at “no-crime” rape cases was, by definition, finite. NH added that looking at a complete year of data would constitute a credible body of work.

**ACTION: DM to arrange an additional two days for considering the remaining 18 cases from the review period.**

1. **Work Plan**

NH said the programme already contains a lot of activity, but the pace is about right; not overloaded.

NH asked whether the group was content with the work plan and SM said she would disseminate the responses, following private discussion.

Discussion of use of force in public order

AC, looking into the use of force in public order, noted that while stats were kept on the use of force, no stats are kept on the effectiveness of that force, e.g. all Taser discharges are recorded, but how effective the usage was is not recorded. Data on effectiveness needs to be captured. SM queried whether this only referred to Tasers or all uses of force, and whether incident reports might yield data on effectiveness.

**ACTION: AC to determine which types of force are to be looked at, and decide upon a format.**

1. **Media Training Approach**

AC asserted that there was no urgency, as no committee member would find themselves asked to speak to the media unprepared, and members would not be asked to participate in media engagements that they were uncomfortable with.

SM sought assurance that Media and Communications officers would support committee members, and no-one would not be sent out to face the media cold. AC gave this assurance.

CC suggested this approach should be reconsidered at the July meeting. NH noted that announcement of the no-crime rape findings would throw this issue into focus, as it would generate media interest.

1. **Any Other Business**

*Discussion on public access to meetings*

CC queried the practicality of public access to Police sites like Hindlip or Leek Wootton. NH suggested meetings could be webcast as the equipment was available to do this.

BS asked how public access was advertised, and whether the current meeting had been publicly advertised. AC said the information is posted on the Warwickshire and West Mercia PCC websites.

BS questioned how the committee should engage with the public in these meetings. DM clarified that the public could attend but not speak, and must leave the room during private sessions. AC stressed the difference between a public meeting and a meeting held in public was whether the public could participate or only spectate.

AC said that while it would be nice to have public interest, no interest equalled no concern, and details of forthcoming meetings were being posted on websites.

*Report on Cultural Change Programme*

JS attended training at the beginning of April, finding it a well-facilitated and useful opportunity to reflect on visions, values, and behaviours. Morale in the force was very low, with reduction of resources leading to difficulty in providing services like child care and mental health support.

BL said the cuts had been managed well, and grants had actually increased in West Mercia; there had been a lot of disruption, but lessons had been learned and the next phase should be smoother. Staff sickness was a problem, with Warwickshire / West Mercia forces bottom of the league, and this was tied to the low morale.

JS highlighted the turbulence due to combining the forces. People did not feel part of the process; they had good ideas for savings, etc, but their voices were not heard and they felt they had no ownership of the process. BS agreed that the change had been too focussed on the process, not enough on the people, and staff ideas should be published. BL agreed; there was not enough consultation in phase one, but things had certainly improved.

*Discussion on impact of grants*

JS asked what processes measured the impact of grants. BS said their impact in West Mercia was monitored through the application process which essentially asked applicants to make a business case, and was subject to 6/12-month progress reports.

SM pointed out that JS’s concern was about the lack of morale in the force; how did these grants help the force? BS said that one way to reduce crime is to prevent it, and preventing crime reduced demand on the force.

CC queried how this applied to grants for things that you couldn’t make a business case for, e.g. cyber-crime. BS reiterated that all prevention and reduction of crime reduced demand on the force.

1. **Date of Next Meetings**

10:30am, Thursday 23 July 2015, Stratford District Council

1:30pm, Thursday 29 October 2015, venue to be confirmed

SM requested that the July meeting be moved from Stratford to Leek Wootton, and asked whether a later start time could be arranged. DM pointed out that Stratford was more accessible for the public and the room had already been booked and paid for. While acknowledging that Police sites were not as good for the public, SM said that the ideal for the committee members would be for meetings to alternate between Leek Wootton and Hindlip. DM agreed that the July venue would be changed if a refund could be obtained, and that future meetings would alternate between Hindlip and Leek Wootton where possible.

**ACTION: DM to explore change of venue / time for the July meeting.**

**Closed Session**

The following items were deemed restricted and members of the public will be asked to leave the meeting.

1. **Exempt Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 February 2015 and Matters Arising**

The committee was content that the minutes were an accurate record.

1. **Child Sexual Exploitation Presentation – Inspector Nigel Jones**

Inspector Nigel Jones provided a presentation on CSE to the Committee.