

Joint Audit and Standards Committee
27 September 2022

Standards Update

1. Update from Fairness, Policy and Standards Meeting

- 1.1 The last Fairness, Policy and Standards meeting was held on 08/09/22. The meeting is chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable (DCC).
- 1.2 The meeting covered a range of topics including:
- Fairness at work (FAW);
 - Promotions processes;
 - MyMax (the force's new approach to PDRs); and
 - Professional standards performance report.
- 1.3 Significant progress has been made this quarter in respect of the police officer promotion process review. The purpose of this review was to design a process which will select the most able officers efficiently and in a fair, transparent, and consistent manner.
- 1.4 A draft Executive Board paper was presented to the Fairness, Policy and Standards meeting and following relevant amendments will be submitted to Chief Officers for a decision. The paper includes a number of recommendations to change the existing police officer promotion process.
- 1.5 The paper and proposals have been subject of significant consultation with key internal stakeholders as well as the Police Federation and staff networks.
- 1.6 The force have launched a new approach to PDRs – MyMax. MyMax seeks to simplify and make it easier to record and monitor conversations between the individual and their line manager, built around achieving objectives and evidencing individual contributions to the organisations vision, values and plan on a page.
- 1.7 The new PDR process will help the force improve how it manages individual performance and identifies talent. This was an Area for Improvement (AFI) identified by HMICFRS in the 21/22 PEEL Inspection.
- 1.8 As of 02/09/2022 the overall completion rate for PDRs across the force was 89%. This marks a significant improvement in completion rates compared to previous years.

2. Update from Quarterly PSD Performance Meeting

- 2.1 The PCC has a quarterly performance meeting with the DCC, Head of PSD and the Senior Complaints and Misconduct Manager.

- 2.2 The last meeting took place on 11/08/2022. An overview of complaints performance and live misconduct matters in Q1 (Apr - Jun 2022) was provided.
- 2.3 There was a 10% reduction in complaints recorded in Q1 compared to the same period last year.
- 2.4 It is PSD's ambition to retain as many complaints within the department as possible, to reduce demand on local policing areas and to improve the timeliness, standards and consistency of complaint resolution for the public.
- 2.5 Integral to this is the utilisation of the triage team to resolve complaints informally outside of Schedule 3 of the Police Reform Act, (however it should be noted that a proportion of complaints will always be recorded under Schedule 3 due to the severity of allegations or the wishes of the complainant).
- 2.6 In line with these ambitions, PSD have set an internal aspiration to resolve 75% of complaints through the triage team. PSD have met this target consistently over the last 9 months. However, in the last quarter there has been slight increase in the no. of complaints that have been passed to local policing areas or other departments outside of PSD to investigate.
- 2.7 Timeliness of recording has improved within Q1 compared to the previous quarter.
- 2.8 Following reports of vacancies last quarter, the complaint team is now at full establishment. The vacancies in the wider PSD team have also been filled. However new officers and staff will be required to undergo training.
- 2.9 24 conduct matters were recorded in Q1. Conduct cases have increased year-on-year since 2020/21 (a trend seen regionally and nationally). An update on conduct cases in terms of both volumes and context is provided to the PCC each quarter.
- 2.10 The increased levels of recorded misconduct cases shows that the department is taking a proactive approach and position to investigating reports of misconduct. The department is also seeing an increase in officers and staff feeling comfortable to report concerns and worrying behaviours about their fellow colleagues, enabling the team to carry out further investigation.
- 2.11 On the PCC's request, the data now includes a greater focus on conduct and complaints matters related to violence against women and girls (VAWG). 3 of the cases in Q1 are VAWG-related.
- 2.12 A copy of the PSD prevention action plan was shared with the PCC following the last meeting to provide reassurance to the activity underway to prevent a range of conduct and complaint matters.

- 2.13 The PCC's 2022/23 budget prioritises additional resource into force vetting and professional standards, to provide reassurance to all parties that the right checks are being carried out on all police officers and staff, and to root out any individuals not suitable for the profession.

3. 12 month timeliness letters

- 3.1 PSD must provide the PCC and the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) with a notification letter for any local investigation (complaint, conduct or death or serious injury matter) which has not been completed within 12 months. 6 month updates are then required thereafter until the matter has been completed.
- 3.2 In this context, 'completed' is defined as a final report being submitted to the Appropriate Authority (i.e. does not include the reviews period). Letters must still be submitted even where cases are subjudice.
- 3.3 1 new letter has been submitted in Q1 2022/23. This matter has subsequently been finalised.
- 3.4 2 cases originally flagged in 2021/22 remain open and subject to 6 monthly update letters. Both of these cases are subjudice and awaiting the outcome of court proceedings.
- 3.5 The PCC's office have developed a mechanism to monitor the submission of these letters and to provide oversight of trends.

4. PCC Review Function

- 4.1 As of February 2020, the PCC has become the relevant review body (RRB) for low level complaints.
- 4.2 A log has been created to monitor the progress, outcomes and learning for all complaint reviews. This data is also recorded on Centurion (the ICT system used by PSDs nationally), to ensure compliance with national data standards.
- 4.3 37 valid reviews have been received year-to-date (01/04/22 – 09/09/2022). 29 of these reviews have been completed and 8 are pending an outcome.
- 4.4 Of those completed 15 have been upheld (52%). This is an increase on previously reported upheld rates, but it should be noted that the volumes are still low in Q1 and therefore percentages likely to fluctuate. This trend will be monitored going forward.
- 4.5 Key themes identified through the recommendations include the need to provide complainants with more clarity on explanations provided and to ensure all elements of the complaint are addressed in the outcome letter,

and consideration to be provided to new evidence presented by complainants.

- 4.6 Going forward, the review data will be incorporated into the quarterly PSD performance presentation, subject to scrutiny at the PCC's quarterly performance meetings. This will ensure greater oversight of the data and provide an opportunity for the PCC to discuss trends with the PSD command team.