

## Ethics and Integrity Committee

1<sup>st</sup> September 2014

5pm – 8pm

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Hoffmanns Way, Chelmsford.

Present:

Nick Alston (NA)	Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)
Lindsay Whitehouse (LW)	Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (DPCC)
Susannah Hancock (SH)	Executive Director - PCC
Carly Fry (CF)	Assistant Director for Performance and Scrutiny
Stephen Kavanagh (SK)	Chief Constable
Derek Benson (DB)	Deputy Chief Constable
Mark Gilmartin	Director Essex & Kent Support Services
Steve Robinson (SR)	Head of Complaints and Professional Standards Department
Cat Barrie (CB)	New Head of Professional Standards Department
Betsy Stanko (BS)	Independent Adviser to PCC
Keith Attwood (KA)	Independent Adviser to PCC
Philip Tolhurst (PT)	Independent Adviser to PCC
Claire Morrison	Secretary to PCC Executive Director

### 1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

NA welcomed all present to the first meeting of the Committee.

DB reported that CB will be taking over from SR as Head of the Professional Standards Department and thanked SR for all his hard work.

### 2. Terms of Reference

The Committee signed off the Terms of Reference.

### **3. Ethics and Integrity: Issues, Challenges and Opportunities**

Both the PCC and CC gave an overview of issues, challenges and opportunities EP face in relation to Ethics and Integrity matters, and noted the value in the Independent Advisors pressing them on these issues.

Key points included;

- **Peelian principles:** a reflection on these and the range of matters that police today deal with
- **Diversity:** The need to bring the diversity agenda alive and understand the diverse needs of the people of Essex, so that Essex Police is able to respond to all communities' needs.
- **Gangs:** Dealing with gangs is a new challenge for EP. Some, but certainly not all, involve young people. We can and are learning much from the MPS on this.
- **Leadership:** Officers need to be empowered to make decisions and deal with complex issues. They need to have the confidence to do this rather than worrying about processes and targets. Historically, EP has become risk averse.
- **Public confidence:** Why is it dropping in some areas? Discussion on importance of public confidence in the accuracy of crime figures as well as role of police.
- **How policing has changed:** there are different challenges around integrity to those historically. The phone hacking case was referenced as an example. The important of doing the right thing versus doing a process right was also noted as an example of when integrity comes to the fore.
- **Misconduct:** Essex Police chief officers are now tackling issues of police misconduct head-on. More Police Officers have been dismissed over the past 12 months than over last 5 years. But what more can EP do to address police integrity?
- **Abuse of power:** There are some on-going cultural issues relating to police officer behaviour. For instance, there is an emerging trend of officers abusing powers by unnecessarily accessing police systems. Failure of duty, conduct and incivility are also themes emerging from PSD. How do we tackle these behaviours?
- The staff survey revealed that 63% of officers and staff feel confident in reporting inappropriate behaviour.
- **Corporate learning:** How can EP ensure we learn the lessons emerging from PSD and the wider complaints process?
- **The Police complaints process:**
  - It was acknowledged that it can be very time consuming and causes significant public frustration. It is not sufficiently focused on outcomes for the victim. There is work underway nationally, as well as locally, to seek to simplify the process and make it more accessible to the public.
  - The role of the IPCC was discussed. It does not deal with low level complaints, which are investigated within EP. This in itself can reduce public confidence. The IPCC do not have the infrastructure to deal effectively with appeals. They are currently 35 weeks behind and can take up to 18 months to complete an independent review.

- The public do not understand the complaints process, resulting in an increase of complaints being reported to the PCC Office, who do not have the jurisdiction to deal with them.
- EP and the OPCC have experienced an increase in complaints from members of the public with mental disorders, who are confused by the process and can be serial complainants.

### **Out of Court Disposals**

The Advisors were presented with a briefing paper on the work of the Out of Court Disposal Panel which reviews all disposals determined by Essex Police. LW reported that so far the panel has met 5 times, reviewed 50 cases and has only challenged 2 cases.

BS suggested that the Out of Court panel model, involving members of the community who are independent of the policing reviewing police decision making, was a strong one and Essex Police should think of applying it to other areas.

### **4. Discussion – Key areas for focus over next 12 months:**

The Committee agreed to focus on the following:

- Mental Health: What are the issues and challenges for policing? How can we ensure victims and offenders with MH issues are treated fairly and with respect?
- Leadership and Culture change: How to embed an ethical, values driven culture across the force.
- Behaviours and misconduct issues – Identify learning from complaints
- Secondary employment issues – financial pressures
- Vetting – is the current system fit for purpose?
- Discussion on cases where Police Officers tender resignation whilst under investigation
- Whistleblowing e.g. for suspicions of elder abuse
- Use of social media
- A discussion on when to celebrate Essex Police having done well, as this is important for public confidence
- Institute of Business Ethics to be invited to a future meeting

### **5. Any other business**

There was none raised.

The meeting closed at 8pm.

