



**Lancashire  
Constabulary**  
police and communities together

**REPORT TO: JOINT AUDIT AND ETHICS COMMITTEE**

**DATE: 26 JUNE 2017**

**REPORT AUTHOR: MEMBERS OF AUDIT & ETHICS COMMITTEE**

**SUBJECT: SCRUTINY OF COMPLAINT FILES – JUNE 2017**

## **1 Issue for Consideration**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to enable Members of the Committee to comment at the meeting on the Constabulary's procedures for handling and investigating complaints in respect of files they have viewed.

## **2 Recommendation**

- 2.1 To receive a report on the scrutiny of complaints files.

## **3 Background**

- 3.1 The Commissioner has requested that the Joint Audit and Ethics Committee undertake the scrutiny of complaints against police officers and police staff.
- 3.2 In the last quarter, Members of the Committee reviewed 16 files which were selected at random and comprised of a cross section of complaint type. The files can be analysed by type as follows:

| <b>Complaint type</b>          | <b>Number</b> | <b>Outcomes</b>   |
|--------------------------------|---------------|---|
| Local Resolution by Division   | 5             | 4 cases resolved<br>In one case an officer had failed but not sufficiently serious for action to be taken |
| Direction & Control            | 3             | Not upheld  |
| Full investigation by PSD      | 2             | 1 case partly upheld  |
| Full investigation by Division | 2             | 1 case partly upheld  |
| Complaint withdrawn            | 1             |   |
| Complaint Disapplied           | 1             |   |
| Appeal cases                   | 2             | Not upheld  |

- 3.3 Generally the quality of the complaint process was found to be good, with positive engagement with complainants and reasonably prompt resolution. The reviewers were pleased to note that the process was transparent and all complainants received a full copy of the internal report
- 3.4 The only area of concern was that there were delays in dealing with some cases. Professional Standards Department (PSD) have some resource problems which they hope to resolve shortly and which will assist in addressing the issue of delay. In addition, PSD are reviewing its structure and processes to meet the demands and changes on the horizon and hope this will be completed by April 2018. The Reviewers were pleased to note that Appeals, which had, in the past, been subject to delays, were dealt with promptly, following the allocation of a specific resource to deal with appeals.
- 3.5 PSD has been developing new policies and procedures to enable it to deal more effectively with the challenges which it faces. A new initiative has been developed to focus on service recovery where that is appropriate. A new policy has been implemented in consultation with IPCC to deal with persistent complainants.
- 3.6 Overall the Members did not have any issues of serious concern and were satisfied that the complaint handling process was being followed appropriately and in line with statutory and IPCC requirements.

#### 4 Implications

|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Financial:</b>                     | Resource requirements to enable development and implementation of the above can be found from existing budgets. |
| <b>Legal:</b>                         |   |
| <b>Equality Impact Assessment:</b>    |   |
| <b>Risks and Impact:</b>              |   |
| <b>Link to Police and Crime Plan:</b> |   |

#### 5 List of attachments / appendices

## 6 Background Papers

- None

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