

SUSSEX POLICE AUTHORITY

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Professional Standards Committee held on 17 March 2010 at County Hall, Lewes.

Present:

Dr L Bush, Dr R Walker, Prof G Bull, Mr G Daniel, Mr A Smith, Mr D Steadman, Mrs K Coakes and Mrs D Longden for the Authority; and DCC G York, C/Supt Chris Ambler, T/C Supt C Parrott, D/I N Wainwright, C/I Peter Mills and Mrs J Payton.

APOLOGIES

141. Apologies for absence were received from Mr P Bratton, Mr F Faiz, Ms E Daniel and Mr B Duncan.

URGENT MATTERS

142. Dr L Bush agreed to chair the meeting due to the number of absentees to allow members of the committee to concentrate on the business. Dr Bush thanked colleagues from the Force for the training on custody procedures provided prior to the committee meeting. The need for training arose out of a previous meeting of the committee and provided answers to the questions raised.

PERSONAL INTERESTS

143. No disclosures of personal interest were made by Members or Officers.

MINUTES

144. **Resolved** - That the minutes of the last meeting of the Professional Standards Committee held on 27 January 2010 be confirmed.

INSPECTION OF COMPLAINTS REGISTER

145. The Committee has moved towards a thematic approach to the inspection of the complaints register. The theme of the meeting on 23 February 2010 looked at complaints arising from discriminatory behaviour, and explored the welfare of the complainant and the officer concerned.
146. There were no major issues of concern.
147. The Committee formally expressed its thanks to T/C Supt Parrott for his support in the inspection process.

148. **Resolved** – That

- (1) the Committee will continue to assess how Members' input can influence processes in the Professional Standards Department and shape outcomes; and
- (2) a review of training needs will take place annually, and will also be given to all new members of this committee.

DELAYS OF APPEALS AT THE INDEPENDENT POLICE COMPLAINTS COMMISSION

149. Concern was expressed by the Committee about the delays in dealing with Appeals at the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC).
150. Mr P Bratton wrote to Mr M Franklin, London and South-East Commissioner, on 17 February 2010, seeking an explanation for the causes of the backlog and suggesting a meeting with the Commissioner to discuss the problems and explore whether there was any assistance either Sussex Police or the Authority could give in clearing the backlog.
151. A meeting with Mr Franklin will take place in May to discuss the issues in more detail.
152. The letter from Mr P Bratton seems to have had a beneficial effect, and the number of Appeals outstanding has now been reduced to 20.
153. The Chair of the Professional Standards Committee will write to Mike Franklin, IPCC Commissioner for London and the South East, expressing the concerns of the Committee, and will extend an invitation to him to attend a future meeting.

154. **Resolved** – That

- (1) the Professional Standards Committee continues to review the level of appeals at the IPCC relating to complaints against Sussex Police; and
- (2) that the meeting between Mr G Bull, the Assistant Chief Executive and Mr Franklin take place in May to discuss in more detail the role of the IPCC and the concerns of the Authority.

COMPARISON OF DATA WITH OTHER FORCES IN THE MOST SIMILAR FORCES GROUP

155. Compared with forces in the Most Similar Forces Group, Sussex has received below the average number of complaints per 1,000 officers.
156. The national average is 338 complaints per 1,000 officers. For the financial year 2008/09, Sussex recorded 280 complaints per 1,000 officers. This is significantly below the national average and the average within the MSF group (371 per 1,000 officers).

157. **Resolved** – That

- (1) the Professional Standards Committee continues to receive regular reports on comparative data from the MSF group; and
- (2) the Committee receives a report at a future meeting as a review of the accessibility of making complaints to Sussex Police.

SELECTION PROCESS FOR INDEPENDENT CCTV MONITORING VOLUNTEERS

158. The training of CCTV Monitoring Volunteers has now taken place. A report on independent CCTV monitoring will go to the Professional Standards Committee as a matter of routine.

159. A more diverse mix of volunteers is being sought, to include young people.

160. The CCTV Monitoring Scheme will be reviewed in one year's time.

161. The Chairman, on behalf of the Authority, expressed his thanks to the volunteers.

162. **Resolved** – That

- (1) the Professional Standards Committee approves the launch of the Independent CCTV Monitoring Scheme on 29 March 2010, and;
- (2) the Professional Standards Committee receives reports on the Independent CCTV Monitoring Scheme on a half-yearly basis, allowing for exception reports, as necessary.

28-DAY RETENTION PERIOD FOR CCTV IN CUSTODY

163. At the Inspection of Complaints Register meeting on 23 February 2010, the committee discussed the issue of the retention period of CCTV evidence, in relation to where complaints are made some time after the incident.

164. National guidelines state that 28 days is a reasonable period for the retention of CCTV.

165. It was felt that the current procedure for retention of CCTV for 28 days was reasonable, as most complaints or enquiries can be expected to come to light within this period, and it is therefore difficult to justify extending the period.

166. If there was considered to be a risk attached to the 28 days' retention in any particular case, a note to this effect should be recorded.

167. **Resolved** – That

- (1) the Professional Standards Committee notes the reasons for current policy relating to the retention of CCTV data within IDHCs; and
- (2) the risk identified by the Professional Standards Committee be added to the Sussex Police Risk Management System, with the controls identified in this report included in the management of the risk.

FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

168. It is recommended that an adjustment to the future timetable for fixed meetings of the Professional Standards Committee be better aligned with the reporting periods that are used within the Professional Standards environment.

169. A new timetable reflecting the changes to the Professional Standards Committee's meeting schedule will be circulated in due course.

170. **Resolved** – That a new timetable for the meetings of the Professional Standards Committee, and the inspection of the Complaints Register for the year 2010-11, be circulated to all members of the Professional Standards Committee.

LAURIE BUSH
Chairman (acting)