



**LINCOLNSHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE
19 MARCH 2010
2.00PM – 4.25PM**

PRESENT

MEMBERS: Mr C Underwood-Frost (Chairman), Mr R Palmer (Vice-Chairman), Mr N Cooper, Mrs A Crowe JP, Mr G Dark

SECRETARIAT: Mr H Hunt (Deputy Chief Executive), Mr J King (Committee and Administration Officer)

FORCE OFFICERS: Mr N Rhodes (Deputy Chief Constable), Superintendent P Wood (Head of Professional Standards), Mrs A Foster (Professional Standards Department)

APOLOGIES: Mr F Mann JP, Mr K Smith

35/09. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL AND / OR PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS

None.

36/09. MINUTES – 14 DECEMBER 2010

Resolved:	Responsible Officer:
1. That the minutes of the meeting held on the 14 December 2010 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.	-

37/09. MATTERS ARISING

Minute 21/09 Item C2 The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that a draft protocol for the reimbursement of police officer expenses was due to be presented to the Authority for approval on 26 March 2010.

Minute 23/09 The Chairman advised that the Professional Standards department would be given adequate notice of any thematic dip sampling the Committee wanted to undertake at future meetings.

38/09. ACTION SUMMARY

Resolved: That 1. the Decision and Action Summary be noted; 2. each member of the Committee be contacted via email to ascertain whether they would like to visit a custody suite.	Responsible Officer: - SSO
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39/09. POLICE AUTHORITY RISK REGISTERS

Resolved: 1. That the report be noted.	Responsible Officer: -
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40/09. FORCE RISK REGISTER/COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman questioned when the historical vetting exercise was likely to be completed. The Head of Professional Standards was confident that all vetting checks would be completed by the deadline of March 2010.

Resolved: 1. That the oral update on the Force Risk Register be noted.	Responsible Officer: -
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41/09. INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITS – OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2009

The Committee and Administration Officer presented custody visiting statistics for the period October to December 2009. Members received an update on the planned County wide roll out of Self Introduction and the proposed 6 month trial of a regional visit report form from April 2010. The Deputy Chief Constable welcomed Self Introduction and the opportunity it gave for custody visitors to seek consent for a visit rather than having to rely on custody staff.

In noting the schedule of re-occurring issues detailed at Appendix 2 of the report, Members questioned whether officers from Professional Standards department were in a position to answer any custody related queries that might arise. It was

suggested that the Force custody lead, Inspector Andrew Leighton be invited to attend future meetings.

<p>Resolved:</p> <p>That</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the summary of custody visits to designated police stations during October to December 2009 at Appendix 1 be noted; 2. the summary of re-occurring issues at Appendix 2 be noted; 3. the analysis of custody visiting times at Appendix 3 be considered; 4. the update on Self Introduction be noted; 5. the 6 month trial of a regional visit report form be noted; 6. Inspector Andrew Leighton be invited to attend future meetings of the Committee. 	<p>Responsible Officer:</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p> <p>CAO</p>
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42/09. COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

The Deputy Chief Executive invited Members to review and update the Committee’s work plan for 2009/10 and to consider work for the forthcoming year 2010/11. It was likely that a number of actions would stem from the forthcoming inspection of the Authority.

<p>Resolved:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the report be noted. 	<p>Responsible Officer:</p> <p>-</p>
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43/09. CONSIDERATION OF COMPLAINTS STATISTICS OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2009

The Head of Professional Standards Department presented a summary of complaints statistics for the period October to December 2009. Members welcomed a dramatic reduction in the number of recorded complaints as compared with the previous quarter and for the corresponding period in 2008/2009. Reductions had been achieved in the majority of complaint categories, most notably in “other neglect or failure of duty” and “incivility, impoliteness and intolerance”. It was too early to say whether this trend would continue into the next quarter.

Members questioned whether some of the complaints were from “serial” complainants and questioned what action, if any, could be taken to address vexatious complaints. It was confirmed that whilst there were a number of

individuals who regularly submitted complaints, regulations prevented any complaint from being classed as vexatious. However, it was possible to apply to the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) for a dispensation not to investigate if a complaint was believed to be vexatious.

The Committee noted that the ethnicity of a significant proportion of complainants had been recorded as “white”. As the County now had a large immigrant population from Eastern European countries such as Poland, Members questioned whether it would also be useful to identify a complainant’s country of origin. It was explained that the current system of capturing details of an individual’s ethnicity had limited flexibility and relied on complainants self defining their ethnic background.

Resolved:	Responsible Officer:
1. That the report be noted.	-

44/09. IPCC REVISED STATUTORY GUIDANCE ON THE POLICE COMPLAINTS SYSTEM

The Committee and Administration officer circulated a briefing note to Members in relation to the police complaints system and the impact that the revised statutory guidance would have on the Authority’s consideration of complaints issues. Members were advised that the new guidance would take effect from 1 April 2010 and would be made available and updated regularly on the IPCC website. The Vice Chairman briefly reported on his attendance at a regional workshop hosted by Leicestershire constabulary.

The Head of Professional Standards presented a document prepared by the IPCC which highlighted areas of change within the revised statutory guidance. These changes had been grouped into themes such as recording or local resolution to make it easier to identify which changes would be most relevant to individual roles.

Following a number of questions and queries, the Chairman requested a further update at the next Committee meeting.

Resolved:	Responsible Officer:
That	
1. the oral updates be noted;	-
2. a progress report be presented at the next meeting of the Committee.	HoPSD

45/09. ANIMAL WELFARE SCHEME – ANNUAL REVIEW

Resolved: 1. That the Annual Review be noted.	Responsible Officer: -
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46/09. POLICE AUTHORITY INSPECTIONS

The Deputy Chief Executive invited Members to consider any preparatory work that might be required of the Committee prior to the HMIC/Audit Commission joint inspection of the Authority. Reference was made to areas within the Inspection framework that were relevant to the work of the Committee, including tackling inequality; improving outcomes for people in vulnerable circumstances such as detainees held in police custody; and ensuring high professional standards for both itself and the Force.

Members emphasised the importance of providing strong evidence and examples of good practice. The Deputy Chief Executive suggested that those areas identified within the Inspection Framework be included within the Committee's workplan to actively progress improvements.

Resolved: That 1. the report be noted; 2. areas within the joint Inspection framework pertinent to the role of the Committee be included and progressed within the 2010/11 workplan.	Responsible Officer: - DCE/CAO
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47/09. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved: 1. That the press and public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that the following items involved the disclosure or likely disclosure of exempt information as detailed in paragraph 1 of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).	Responsible Officer: -
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48/09. LEARNING THE LESSONS REPORT – OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2009

The Head of Professional Standards provided an overview of lessons learned identified from Professional Standards investigations and complaints. Members were also advised of action being taken by the Force to address key recommendations contained within the Independent Police Complaints Commission's "Learning the Lessons" bulletin.

Resolved: 1. That the report be noted.	Responsible Officer: -
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49/09. BREAKDOWN OF COMPLAINTS RECORDED – OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2009

Members considered a breakdown of on-going complaint investigations and cases currently being overseen by the IPCC.

Resolved: 1. That the report be noted.	Responsible Officer: -
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50/09. EXAMINATION OF POLICE OFFICER COMPLAINT REGISTERS AND DIP SAMPLING OF COMPLETED COMPLAINTS FILES

Members dip sampled completed complaint files, performing a detailed inspection to satisfy themselves that cases had been properly and fairly dealt with. Following questions, this was confirmed in all cases.

Resolved: 1. That the complaint files be noted.	Responsible Officer: -
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CHAIRMAN