

# POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR LEICESTERSHIRE

## POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

Report of	OFFICE OF POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER
Subject	ETHICS, INTEGRITY AND COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE – ANNUAL REPORT DECEMBER 2018 TO MARCH 2020
Date	TUESDAY 28 JULY 2020 – 1:00 p.m.
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### **Purpose of Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Panel of the work of the Ethics, Integrity and Complaints Committee for the period December 2018 to March 2020.

### **Recommendation**

2. It is recommended that members comment on the contents of the report.

### **Background**

3. The Ethics, Integrity and Complaints Committee was convened in September 2015 in response to the heightened focus on the integrity of police officers and police forces. In 2011 HMIC published their inspection report '*Without Fear of Favour*' and in December 2012 the follow up report entitled '*Revising Police Relationships: A progress report*'. This second report identified that whilst nationally progress had been made there was still more needing to be done.
4. In addition to the transparency and accountability of decision making being under greater scrutiny there has been a growing vulnerability for senior officers regarding the challenges that policing in austerity brings coupled with the opportunity to demonstrate value based, ethical decision making around operationally complex issues.

### **Ethics, Integrity and Complaints Committee**

6. The Committee undertakes an advisory role and is not a decision making body. It provides a forum for debate on complex operational or personnel issues with a view to defensible decision making. In delivering their remit, the Committee considers both broad thematic issues as well as practical day-to-day matters and on occasion will examine current as well as historic matters. In certain circumstances, the Committee will advise on live operations or events or examine the application of the national decision making model. The

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Committee discuss and provide advice about ethical issues and do not just scrutinise the application of policy and procedure.

7. The Committee provides a transparent independent forum that monitors and encourages constructive challenge over the way complaints and integrity and ethics issues are handled by the Force and overseen by the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). It assists Leicestershire Police to maintain clear ethical standards and achieve the highest levels of integrity and professional standards of service delivery.
8. The aim of the Ethics, Integrity and Complaints Committee is to contribute to developing trust and confidence by:-
  - (a) bridging the gap between academic debate on ethics and operational decision making;
  - (b) influencing changes in force policy;
  - (c) enhancing the debate and development of police policies and practices;
  - (d) anticipating and understanding future ethical challenges that the service will face and influencing any response by the police.
  - (e) Articulating and promoting the influence of professional ethics in all aspects of policing.
9. The work of the Committee focuses on the following three areas:-

### Ethics

10. The launch of the Code of Ethics by the College of Policing in July 2014 set out the principles and standards of behaviour to promote, reinforce and support the highest standards from all those working within the police service (a copy of the Code is attached at APPENDIX 'A'). The principles of the Code are integral to the delivery of policing and are a part of growing police professionalism leading to increased public confidence. Professional ethics is broader than integrity alone and incorporates the requirement for individuals to give an account of their judgement, acts and omissions. The Committee facilitates public scrutiny in this area and by publicising their work assists to build and maintain trust and public confidence.

### Integrity

11. Integrity is pivotal to public trust and confidence and oversight of how this is embedded within the Force requires independence and transparency for the police to have 'legitimacy' with the public it serves. Integrity in policing is about ensuring that the people who work for the police uphold public confidence. It is about how well the police make decisions, deal with situations and treat people day in and day out. If the public don't trust the police to be fair and act with integrity and in their best interests it is unlikely that they will be inclined to assist the police.

### Complaints

12. The Police and Crime Commissioner has a duty to hold the Chief Constable to account on how effectively he discharges his responsibility for responding to complaints and misconduct allegations made against the Force. The Ethics, Integrity and Complaints Committee provide a robust, independent and transparent approach to the oversight of complaints and misconduct matters.

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## **Membership**

13. The Committee comprises 7 members all appointed to the role through an open recruitment process. Appointments to the Committee are for 4 year terms with a maximum tenure of 8 years. More information on the current membership of the Committee, together with equality information on the membership, is included in the annual report at Appendix 'B'. Members receive an annual allowance for undertaking the role.

## **Working Arrangements**

14. The Committee meet in public on a quarterly basis. Dates of all meetings together with agendas, reports and minutes are published on the PCC's website. Media releases are prepared prior to the meeting to inform the public of what will be discussed and immediately following with the outcome of those discussions. Outside of formal meetings members of the Committee undertake dip sampling of complaint files and other areas of work as identified.

## **Annual Report December 2018 to March 2020**

15. As the Committee held its inaugural meeting in September 2015 its annual reports have subsequently been for the twelve month period from that month each year. However the Commissioner's annual report to the Police and Crime Panel covers the period of the previous financial year. As such the Committee agreed that this recent annual report would cover the period up to March 2020 when henceforth it would report on the basis of the previous financial year which aligns it with the Commissioner's annual reporting period.
16. A copy of the annual report is attached at APPENDIX 'B'. The report is published on the Commissioner's website and is distributed at events and engagement opportunities. Following the publication of the report the Chair of the Committee will meet with the Commissioner and the Chief Constable to discuss the work undertaken in the previous year.

## **Implications**

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|-----------------------------|--|
| Finance:                    | The annual allowance for 7 members of the Committee, together with any expenses incurred is contained within the OPCC budget.  |
| Legal:                      | There is no legal requirement to have an Ethics, Integrity and Complaints Committee in place.  |
| Equality Impact Assessment: | The recruitment process for members of the Committee was assessed to ensure no adverse impact on any of the nine protected characteristics. Targeted recruitment is undertaken to ensure the committee incorporates a wide representation. |
| Risks and Impact:           | The Committee provides additional independent assurance to the Commissioner that Leicestershire Police are operating within the standards expected.  |

## **List of Attachments / Appendices**

Appendix 'A' – Code of Ethics

Appendix 'B' – Annual Report – December 2018 – March 2020

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## **Background Papers**

File PCC/2/O/2019

## **Persons to Contact**

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## The Code of Ethics

### Introduction

The policing profession has a duty to protect the public and prevent crime. The public expect every person within the profession to fulfil this duty by being fair and impartial and giving a selfless service.

The Code of Ethics sets out the principles and standards of behaviour that will promote, reinforce and support the highest standards from everyone who works in policing in England and Wales.

### Statutory basis of the Code

The College of Policing issued the Code of Ethics as a code of practice under section 39A of the Police Act 1996 (as amended by section 124 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014).

The Code of Ethics applies to the police forces maintained for the police areas of England and Wales as defined in section 1 of the Police Act 1996 (or as defined under any subsequent legislation) and relates specifically to chief officers in the discharge of their functions.

The expectation of the public and the professional body is that every person working in policing will adopt the Code of Ethics. This includes all those engaged on a permanent, temporary, full-time, part-time, casual, consultancy, contracted or voluntary basis.

### The Code of Ethics

Every person working for the police service must work honestly and ethically. The public expect the police to do the right thing in the right way. Basing decisions and actions on a set of policing principles will help to achieve this.

The principles set out in this Code of Ethics originate from the 'Principles of Public Life' published by the Committee on Standards in Public Life in 1995. The Code includes the principles of 'fairness' and 'respect' as research has shown these to be crucial to maintaining and enhancing public confidence in policing.

The policing principles reflect the personal beliefs and aspirations that in turn serve to guide behaviour and shape the policing culture. The combination of principles and standards of behaviour encourages consistency between what people believe in and aspire to and what they do.

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**Policing Principles**

**Accountability**

You are answerable for your decisions, actions and omissions.

**Fairness**

You treat people fairly.

**Honesty**

You are truthful and trustworthy.

**Integrity**

You always do the right thing.

**Leadership**

You lead by good example.

**Objectivity**

You make choices on evidence and your best professional judgement.

**Openness**

You are open and transparent in your actions and decisions.

**Respect**

You treat everyone with respect.

**Selflessness**

You act in the public interest.

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