



ORIGINATOR: CHIEF CONSTABLE

PAPER NO. AP14/48

**SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL –
18 JUNE 2014**

SUBJECT: COMPLAINTS AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS UPDATE

SUMMARY:

1. This report relates to Complaints, Misconduct and Professional Standards information for the period 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014
2. The report provides the following information at Appendix 1.
 - Complaints about Police Officers and Police Staff
 - Service Recovery
 - Lessons Learned

RECOMMENDATION:

1. The Accountability and Performance Panel is asked to note the contents of this report.

1. KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION:

- 1.1 The legislative framework governing the recording and management of public complaints is the Police Reform Act 2002. Aspects of this legislation have been amended by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 which came into effect on 22 November 2012.
- 1.2 Appendix 1 contains the following information:
 - Table A – Key indicators relating to the handling of complaints
 - Table B – Contextual information relating to allegations recorded and outcome
 - Table C – Complaint cases and allegations
 - Table D – Allegations finalised by investigation
 - Table E – Allegations finalised by other means
 - Force Appeals
 - Direction and Control Complaints
 - Service Recovery
 - Complaints from Visibly Ethnic Minority Groups
 - Lessons Learned
- 1.3 The complaints statistics for the period 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014 are attached at Appendix 1. The number of public complaints received for this period is 379 which is an increase of 46% compared to the same period in the previous year when 259 complaints were recorded. The number of allegations contained within each complaint have also shown an increase for the period 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014 of 62% with a total of 570 allegations compared to 351 recorded in the same period in the previous year. Early analysis shows that the rise in complaints are following a national trend. A change to recording procedures are also likely to have an impact on the number of complaints being recorded following the discontinuance of the Dissatisfaction Process. Complaints previously recorded as dissatisfaction are now directed to either Service Recovery or the Public Complaint process.
- 1.4 The IPCC produce national complaint statistics on a quarterly basis however this data is not available for inclusion in this report. Publication is expected during the month of June. The IPCC statistics will provide comparative data that will allow analysis of the Suffolk Constabulary performance within the context of the national picture. For the purpose of this report some information on complaint numbers has been sought from most similar forces and feature in Appendix 1.
- 1.5 Direction and Control Complaints which are those concerning policies and procedures rather than the conduct of an individual, have been subject to change following the introduction of new IPCC Statutory Guidance. From the 22nd November 2012 all such issues are recorded as public complaints under the category of 'organisational'.
- 1.6 A new category entitled 'Service Recovery' has been introduced as part of a Complaint Reduction initiative to ensure complainants are provided with an opportunity for issues to be addressed in an immediate and non-bureaucratic manner. This process is initiated within Professional Standards and is focussed on the needs and preferences of the complainant in relatively low level issues (i.e. those that fail to reach a certain threshold of seriousness).
- 1.7 In response to the continuing rise in public complaints the Professional Standards Department have introduced a Complaint Reduction Initiative aimed at educating officers and staff in complaint avoidance. Full details are included in the Key Findings.

1.8 Lessons Learned as a result of complaints received by Suffolk Constabulary are included in Appendix 1.

2. IPCC REPORT ON POLICE HANDLING OF ALLEGATIONS OF DISCRIMINATION

2.1 In July 2013, the IPCC published a report on how the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) handled allegations of racism. Following this report, the IPCC sought to widen the scope of their report to cover all areas of discrimination and look into the next three largest three police forces: Greater Manchester Police, West Midlands Police and West Yorkshire Police. Subsequently, the IPCC published its final report in June 2014.

2.2 The Constabulary Professional Standards Department was aware of the previous IPCC report relating to the Metropolitan Police Service, and some research by Professor Graham Smith (which supported this latest IPCC report) in relation to Greater Manchester Police.

2.3 As the result of the previous report and research, PSD are undertaking the following –

- Under the PSD Departmental Plan, a Diversity Action Plan has been initiated lead by a Detective Inspector;
- The PSD Senior Management Team have been specifically briefed by Professor Graham Smith, in conjunction with the Suffolk Ethnic Police Association (SEPA) in relation to the findings of his report (Disproportionality in PSD Investigations);
- The Head of PSD attends, and reports to, the Diversity Programme Board;
- On 11th June the PSD department as a whole will be undertaking a full days Diversity Training delivered by the Suffolk Diversity Unit and the SEPA.
- The Head of PSD will be considering the recommendations contained within the latest IPCC report in relation to the PSD action plan and any wider implications for the Force and will report to the Deputy Chief Constable.

2.4 An update on the Constabulary response to the IPCC report on police handling of allegations of discrimination will be included in the Complaints and Professional Standards update report at the December meeting.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

3.1 There are no significant financial issues associated with this report.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS:

4.1 There are no significant risks in relation to this report.

ORIGINATOR CHECKLIST (MUST BE COMPLETED)	PLEASE STATE 'YES' OR 'NO'
Has legal advice been sought on this submission?	No
Has the PCC's Chief Finance Officer been consulted?	No
Have equality, diversity and human rights implications been considered including equality analysis, as appropriate?	Yes
Have human resource implications been considered?	No
Is the recommendation consistent with the objectives in the Police and Crime Plan?	Yes
Has consultation been undertaken with people or agencies likely to be affected by the recommendation?	No
Has communications advice been sought on areas of likely media interest and how they might be managed?	No
Have all relevant ethical factors been taken into consideration in developing this submission?	Yes