

ORIGINATOR: CHIEF CONSTABLE

PAPER NO: AC15/20

SUBMITTED TO: AUDIT COMMITTEE – 25 SEPTEMBER 2015

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON EMBEDDING OF THE CODE OF ETHICS

SUMMARY:

1. This report provides an update on the work undertaken to implement, and embed the nationally developed Code of Ethics into the Suffolk Constabulary.
2. There are no financial risks associated with this report.
3. There no other implications or risks associated with this report.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. The Committee is asked to note the work undertaken to implement the Code of Ethics within the Suffolk Constabulary.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This paper is intended to give an update on how Suffolk Constabulary has implemented and embedded the Code of Ethics since September 2014. It covers the work of the Integrity Working Group, the development of the Norfolk and Suffolk Ethics Committee and the work of Learning and Development.
- 1.2. Communication to Officers and Staff has continued throughout the year, including Force Orders, Constables County articles and Intranet items to keep everyone up to date with the progress of embedding the Code of Ethics into the Constabulary.

2. NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- 2.1. The Committee for Standards in Public Life has recently published the final report of its inquiry into policing accountability: "Take From The Top – Leadership, Ethics and Accountability in Policing". The report makes a number of recommendations which include proposals to introduce more vigorous checks and balances in the accountability structures of local policing including reporting arrangements to the Audit Committee. These recommendations will be discussed at a future meeting of the Ethics Committee.
- 2.2. The National Police Chiefs Council has approved the work on the National Workforce Climate and Staff Engagement Survey for Policing which aims to investigate the impact of workforce factors on service delivery. The work is facilitated by Durham University Business School in conjunction with Durham Constabulary and intentions are to run a version of the survey in each police force across the country. Work on this is still progressing and the developments are being discussed with Chief Officers.

3. INTEGRITY WORKING GROUP

- 3.1. The Integrity Working Group was set up in early 2014 to progress issues of ethics and integrity across both forces. The group has overseen work through to completion on a number of topics including the development of relevant policies, the complaint reduction strategy and research regarding ethics committees. The group still work to an action plan to monitor progress and completed actions.
- 3.2. A key action for the Integrity Working Group was the development of proposals for a joint Ethics Committee. The proposal was approved by Chief Officers at the beginning of March this year and developments on the introduction of the committee are outlined in section 4.

4. ETHICS COMMITTEE

- 4.1. An Ethics Committee for both forces is now in place to help further enhance scrutiny and challenge of issues relating to ethics and integrity.
- 4.2. An Ethics Committee gives those working in policing an independent forum where they can bring issues of policy or practise which cause them ethical dilemmas and where they believe what they are being asked to do is not 'the right thing'. It allows scrutiny of decisions within the policing environment to show transparency to the wider organisation and the public. Ethics Committees are not decision making bodies, they are advisory boards to help those making decisions be more informed.
- 4.3. Ethics Committees started with a proof of concept group, the six original forces involved all had recent issues which made it relevant to them. Cleveland was the initiator with Greater Manchester, Wiltshire, Northamptonshire, Staffordshire and South Yorkshire joining the group. Durham and Essex forces joined at a later stage.

- 4.4. The Code of Ethics will play a practical role to guide the Committee on their advice and will ensure the focus remains on what good policing looks like and how ethical our staff behave, rather than on managing misconduct.
- 4.5. It is important that the Ethics Committee provides an objective view on ethical dilemmas from all over the organisation and therefore the members of the committee represent a wide cross section of ranks, roles and locations.
- 4.6. The first Norfolk and Suffolk Ethics Committee meeting was held on 27 March 2015 and so far another meeting has taken place and another is scheduled for September. The purpose of the meetings are summarised in the Terms of Reference document attached at Appendix 1.
- 4.7. Part of the Ethics Committee work is to discuss and provide recommendations based on ethical dilemmas from Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies. All staff in the both Constabularies are able to submit a paper for discussion by the Ethics Committee; this is currently being communicated out to all staff. At the last meeting, the members of the committee were asked to provide submissions in order to test the process. Submissions relating to transparency of recruitment and promotion processes, as well as the recording of crime data, were debated at the meeting.

5. LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

- 5.1. The Learning and Development team have begun work on reviewing each and every training product to ensure that the Code of Ethics is threaded through the session. Currently, a review of Custody, Personal Safety Training and Student Officer training has taken place with other areas being reviewed later in the year.
- 5.2. The Code of Ethics online training is due to go live on the Learning Portal in November 2015. This will be a self-service training module for all officers and staff.

6. PEEL INSPECTION

- 6.1. In the recent feedback from the PEEL Inspection 2015, Suffolk Constabulary was praised for its vision on maintaining an ethical culture which is widely recognised and understood throughout the Constabulary.
- 6.2. The Inspection highlighted that although the Code of Ethics is not fully embedded, it is understood by the workforce and there is extensive use of the National Decision Making Model.

7. NEXT STEPS

- 7.1. To further embed the Code of Ethics in Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies, work will continue liaising with other forces to share best practice and evidence based policing models, including scoping work on the national climate and staff engagement survey.
- 7.2. The Norfolk and Suffolk Ethics Committee continues to develop, giving the wider organisation the opportunity to submit dilemmas for the committee to consider at their next meeting. These recommendations will be published on the force Intranet pages to ensure transparency through the process.
- 7.3. The Code of Ethics will continue to drive the review of Learning and Development products including embedding the code in the development of Athena training.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no significant financial implications.

9. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

9.1 There are no implications or risks identified.

ORIGINATOR CHECKLIST (MUST BE COMPLETED)	PLEASE STATE 'YES' OR 'NO'
Has legal advice been sought on this submission?	Not applicable
Has the PCC's Chief Finance Officer been consulted?	No
Have equality, diversity and human rights implications been considered including equality analysis, as appropriate?	No
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?	Not applicable
Has communications advice been sought on areas of likely media interest and how they might be managed?	Yes
Have all relevant ethical factors been taken into consideration in developing this submission?	Yes