

SURREY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

Revised Complaints Protocol

10 September 2013

SUMMARY

The Police and Crime Panel has a responsibility to informally resolve non-criminal complaints about the conduct of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, as well as criminal complaints or conduct matters that are referred back to it by the Independent Police Complaints Commission.

This report encloses the revised Protocol for dealing with such complaints. All amendments have been highlighted.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Police and Crime Panel is asked to agree the revised Complaints Protocol in Appendix 1.

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2012 make Surrey's Police and Crime Panel responsible for overseeing complaints made about the conduct of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (DPCC).
- 1.2 The Protocol attached at Annex 1 sets out the manner in which complaints will be dealt with, including details of timeframes once a complaint has been submitted.

2.0 REVISIONS

- 2.1 Having been agreed by the Panel at its meeting in December 2012, the Protocol has been used on a number of occasions to assess and deal with complaints against the Commissioner.
- 2.2 Based on these initial cases, members of the Complaints Sub-Committee have suggested two minor amendments to the Protocol. These are as follows:
 - That the Complaints Sub-Committee has sight of all complaints prior to the establishment of a hearing.
 - A process for dealing with vexatious complaints be included in the Protocol.
- 2.3 The first amendment is to acknowledge that, due to the drafting of the Regulations, determining whether a complaint is "in scope" is not always a straight forward matter and that such judgements should be made by the Complaints Sub-Committee as a whole.
- 2.4 The second amendment is to better outline the options open to the Panel when dealing with vexatious complaints. These are already outlined in the Regulations, but it was felt they should be set out clearly in the Panel's own Protocol.
- 2.5 All amendments are highlighted in Annex 1.

3.0 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 It is vital that any complaints process is open to all residents and that each and every complainant is treated with respect and courtesy. The Complaints Protocol has been designed to be an equitable process and will be monitored by the Panel's Support Officer to ensure that it is fit for purpose.
- 3.2 In addition to the formal Protocol, a shorter, plain English version of the document has been put together, and this will be made available on the Panel's website.

4.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 The Panel is asked to agree the revised Protocol, as contained in Annex 1.

5.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Agreeing the Protocol will ensure that the Panel can fulfil its duty to informally resolve non-criminal complaints about the conduct of the PCC and DPCC.

6.0 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

6.1 Once agreed, the Protocol will form the basis of the complaints process.

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