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**POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER**

**FOR DYFED-POWYS**

**COMPLAINTS SCRUTINY FRAMEWORK**

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# 1. Executive Summary

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 established Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs), who have a statutory duty and electoral mandate to hold the police to account on behalf of the public.

In line with the Policing Protocol 2023 the PCC has a legal duty to :-

*17n) monitor all complaints made against officers and staff, whilst having responsibility for complaints against the Chief Constable.*

The Chief Constable is responsible to the public and accountable to the PCC for:-

*21(k) managing all complaints against the force, its officers and staff, except in relation to the Chief Constable, and ensuring that the PCC is kept informed in such a way as to enable the PCC to discharge their statutory obligations in relation to complaints in a regular, meaningful and timely fashion. Serious complaints and conduct matters must be passed to the Independent Police Complaints Commission in line with legislation*

The purpose of this document is to outline the Assurance and Scrutiny activity which will be undertaken by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner which will monitor/audit complaint matters both internally i.e. complaints raised with the OPCC and externally i.e. complaints raised with Dyfed Powys Police Force, Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC)

The purpose of this document is not to interfere with the appeal process under the Police Reform Act 2002. Any decisions made by the Relevant Appeal Body can only be overturned by the courts through the Judicial Review Process.

In accordance with the Specified Information Order, the OPCC will publish an **annual report** to demonstrate how the PCC holds the Chief Constable to account in respect of complaints performance. Additionally the PCC will provide an assessment of their own performance in carrying out other complaint handling functions.

## 2. Quality of Service Dip Sampling

### **Who**

The Assurance Team and/or anyone the PCC considers suitable.

### **What**

Five closed complaint cases will be considered each month. The theme/subject will be identified either from the IOPC quarterly Performance Data, National or Local concerns which have been identified as a theme from Trend Analysis.

### **When**

Monthly

**Where**

Microsoft Teams or in the OPCC

**Why**

The role of dip sampling is to scrutinise the performance of the Forces' complaints management process. The volume of police complaint cases that are handled by the Professional Standards Department of Dyfed Powys Police dictates that it would be impractical for the Commissioner to oversee every complaint case. Dip sampling of such cases enables the Commissioner to fulfil his oversight and monitoring responsibility under the legislation. The purpose of dip sampling is not to review the final decision reached in individual cases, but rather to undertake a general review of compliance with procedure, complaint handling techniques and natural justice to ensure public confidence in the police complaints system. Dip sampling should further be used as a tool to identify learning outcomes and trends for discussion and action with Dyfed Powys Police (see Trend Analysis – Statistical Assessment section).

**How**

There is a dip sampling policy which will be adhered to. There will be monthly dip sampling following a set programme, unless issues of concern are raised or there are thematic issues. The dip sampling will run parallel with the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) thematic key strands, allowing the OPCC and IOPC to share best practice and carry forward any points for action. Other areas of work within the Commissioner's team can also feed into the dip sampling programme which will then in turn feed into a wider dip sampling programme of scrutiny, the results of which are presented to the Police & Crime Commissioner.

### 3. Trend Analysis – Statistical Assessment

**Who**

The Assurance Team

**What**

Analysis will be undertaken of the documents outlined below to identify any trends or patterns that may become evident to inform how complaints are dealt with, or if there are certain issues apparent in certain complaint areas:

IOPC Quarterly Complaints Information Bulletin  
IOPC Investigation summaries and learning recommendations  
IOPC Learning the Lessons Bulletin  
OPCC Community Concerns

**Why**

Trend analysis will be used as a tool for performance measurement, for the Professional Standards Department (PSD), Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and performance across

the whole of Dyfed Powys Police. It will inform us how the Professional Standards Department are handling their complaints alongside our own complaint handling systems, but will also inform us when there are further widespread or repetitive issues that need to be addressed outside of the complaints arena.

**When**

Quarterly

**How**

A Key Performance Indicator (KPI) spreadsheet is maintained in respect of all complaints/ community concerns that are received by the Commissioner's Office. The trend's themes identified will inform future assurance/scrutiny activity.

Additionally, the above mentioned documents will be studied by the Assurance Team to ascertain if there are any trends or patterns evident from the information, which will be discussed in the Professional Standards Assurance Board.

## 4. Deep Dive

Trend analysis – statistical assessment data that identifies a further widespread or repetitive issue that needs to be addressed outside of the complaints arena will be analysed separately through the 'deep dive' process. An initial assessment will be carried out by gathering all relevant details, analysing similar complaints, involvement of the Quality Assurance Panel (QAP) where appropriate and identifying the key force stakeholders/departments. Evidence will then be gathered to assess the current picture and identify any obvious areas for concern. For example, the actual subject of a repetitive complaint may be generated due to an omission from a policy and therefore police response to the same situation differs – this identifies that the root cause of the issue is the policy. The purpose of the deep dive process will be to identify the root cause of the issue and look at what processes/training/delivery could be changed to eradicate the issue, which in turn will lead to a decrease in complaints received concerning that particular issue.

## 5. Quality Assurance Panel (QAP)

**Who**

Quality Assurance Panel (QAP)

**What**

To consider and discuss finalised complaints that have come to the attention of the Assurance Team for having particular issues or fit the criteria of a certain theme dictated by trend analysis work. The complaints will be analysed for the way in which PSD have dealt with them and whether it is a fair and reasonable approach and the impression made upon people who are not in the police, regarding the service provided.

**Where**

Quality Assurance Panel (QAP) Meeting – Police Headquarters

**When**

Annually

**Why**

The purpose of QAP is to measure performance on a more strategic level with a level of independent oversight.

**How**

A thematic issue to review or cases of note will be brought to the attention of the group.

A request will be made to the Professional Standards Department for all complaint reference numbers relating to closed cases according to the criterion or criteria specified during a specific time period, and from that data, a selection will be made of a random sample of case reference numbers. Once the case reference numbers have been decided, the corresponding electronic cases for review will be requested from Professional Standards Department, which the group can look at and can lead onto further discussion.

The outcomes of the discussions will be recorded and any suggestions/comments will be reported back to PSD, but will also be recorded on the KPI Complaints report.

## 6. Meeting Structures

**Professional Standards Assurance Board (PSAB)**

The Professional Standards Assurance Board will be the scrutiny forum for all functions carried out by the Force's Professional Standards Department which will enable the PCC to discharge their statutory obligation in accordance with the Policing Protocol 2023.

The Board shall meet four times a year, once every three months. Additional meetings can be convened if the Commissioner and Deputy Chief Constable are in agreement where there is urgent business to transact.

The [Terms of Reference](#) provides information on how the Board will operate and the matters that will be discussed during the meetings.

**Monthly meetings**

The OPCC's Assurance Team meet with the Senior Manager of PSD and the Complaints and Misconduct Supervisor to discuss specific complaint cases and any oversight concerns identified from complaint reviews. It provides an opportunity to discuss any updates on any local or national

changes or actions taken from the quarterly PSAB.

## **IOPC**

There will be quarterly meetings held between the IOPC Regional Director , the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Head of Assurance to discuss thematic issues that have arisen and need to be addressed, whether they are local or national.

Additionally the Head of Assurance will meet the Regional IOPC Liaison Officer to discuss the performance of Dyfed Powys Police Professional Standards Department and to discuss any themes occurring from complaint dip sampling and complaint reviews

## **APACE Complaints Network meeting**

There are quarterly meetings held between APACE Complaints and Casework Network, attended by the Head of Assurance to discuss local and national complaints policy and procedures and the implementation across all Commissioners' Offices.

Next Review May 2026