



Police and Crime Commissioner

for Dyfed Powys

Complaints Dip Sampling Report

Date Quarter 1 April – June 2025

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Introduction

A series of dip sampling of complaints cases was undertaken by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) between April and June 2025.

The OPCC reviewed a total of 12 randomly selected closed complaint cases that were handled by the Professional Standards Department (PSD) between October 2024– April 2025. The main purpose of this scrutiny work is to independently review that the recording and handling of complaints complies with the guidance set out by the Independent Office of Police Complaints (IOPC) and that the service provided to the complainant is reasonable and proportionate.

The background and purpose of scrutiny dip sampling work, alongside how dip sampling is carried out is detailed within the [Complaints Scrutiny Framework](#) which is published on the OPCC website.

The Policing and Crime Act 2017 and supporting regulations made significant changes to the police complaints and disciplinary systems. They introduced a number of changes designed to achieve a more customer-focused complaints system in February 2020.

The complaints system has expanded to cover a broader range of matters. Formerly, the way that the term ‘complaint’ was defined meant that it needed to relate to the conduct of an individual officer. Now a complaint can be made about a much wider range of issues including the service provided by the police as an organisation. This is designed to increase access to the police complaints system.

The IOPC expects forces to consider the information they keep about complaints with the intent of the reforms in mind – a positive obligation to increase access and to collect information that enables forces and local policing bodies to learn from complaints and other matters.

IOPC Statistics

Each quarter, the IOPC collects data from Dyfed Powys Police about how they handle complaints. The IOPC uses this to produce information bulletins. These set out performance against a number of measures and compare each force's data with their most similar force average and the overall results for all forces. The data can be found on the IOPC statistics here: [Publications Library | Independent Office for Police Conduct \(IOPC\)](#)

Complaints handled under Schedule 3 of the Police Reform Act 2002 are eligible for their complaint to be reviewed either by the Police and Crime Commissioner or the Independent Office for Police Conduct. However, complaints handled informally outside of schedule 3 are not entitled to a review of their complaint.

Complaints dealt with outside the requirements of Schedule 3 must be handled with a view to resolving them to the complainant's satisfaction. Handling a complaint outside the requirements of Schedule 3 provides an opportunity to address promptly the concerns a complainant has raised. Some complaints do not require detailed enquiries in order to address them. For example, the complainant may only want an explanation, or for their concerns to be noted or passed on. Handling such complaints outside of Schedule 3, promptly, may be the most efficient, effective, and beneficial way to resolve the complaint. It can assure the complainant that their concerns have been listened to and addressed, while potentially providing a learning opportunity for the force (and, if appropriate, any individuals involved)

Summary of findings

Positive

- Responses provided by PSD were detailed and contained sufficient information to understand the action taken.

- Good practice of handling a complaint through OS3 was identified within two of the cases.
- Evidence of good communication between complaint handlers and complainants. Complainants preferred contact methods adhered to.
- PSD routinely followed up any telephone conversations with detailed emails addressing what had been discussed and what the complainant could expect to happen next which managed expectations.

Area for Improvement

- Supervisors should provide PSD with an update of any action/outcome of a complaint which they have handled informally outside of schedule.
- In some cases it was difficult to identify what the outcome of the complaint was or if it had been concluded and whether the complainant was satisfied with the outcome.
- In some cases there was a delay in the initial contact made by PSD.
- Complaint handlers not providing updates to complainants, in line with the 28 day update guidance from IOPC.
- Unprofessional terminology used within one case.

Dip-Sample Findings

April – Outside schedule 3 (OS3) Neighbourhood Policing

Case number	Complaint summary	Handling Type	OPCC observations
1	Complainant dissatisfied with handling of neighbourhood policing in relation to lack of response/updates.	OS3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It took 15 days for PSD to acknowledge complaint. Consider this to be untimely however the acknowledgement provided was productive.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaint was allocated to the complaint handler the same day who then called the complainant within 2 days and agreed plan of action. Complainant was required to chase for a response from the complaint handler. This was due to the complaint handler working nights which PSD called to explain. Once allocated only contact from complaint handler was 27th of October and on the 1st of December; however, positive that the complaint handler has notified PSD of the outcome.
2	Dissatisfied with response from police in handling neighbourhood dispute.	OS3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact from PSD made on the same day. Allocated to the complaint handler on the same day. Complainant thanked PSD for their contact. Contact from the complaint handler was effective and detailed. Query- Note that the complainant has further contacted PSD in March 2025? Does this indicate that the complainant remains dissatisfied.
3	Complainant is dissatisfied with police attending their address despite complainant's wishes to remain anonymous.	OS3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Body worn video footage observed by PSD who were satisfied with officer's conduct which was considered courteous and polite. It has been resolved by passing comments to local Sargent for their knowledge. Query - Why was the complainant's wishes to remain anonymous not respected and why does this not appear to have been considered/addressed in the complaint?

May – Outside schedule 3 (OS3)

Case number	Complaint summary	Handling Type	OPCC observations
1	Complainant believes that officers have disclosed to neighbours that they are paedophiles.	OS3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timely contact made by PSD and the complaint handler. Complainant was happy with the outcome. Good example of OS3.
2	Unhappy that officers have visited them 3 days in a row.	OS3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficulty in contacting complainant. Officers had justification to attend the complainants residence. Not clear if officers have contacted complainant to resolve; however, correspondence from PSD is clear in terms of the handling of the complaint.
3	Complainant suspects that a Dyfed Powys Police Community Support Officer has an undisclosed business interest and is inappropriately using police systems causing consequences to the complainant.	OS3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate enquiries were undertaken with South Wales Police. Outcome whilst is clear, does not mention the option of formally recording the complaint.
4	Complainant wants the Anti-social Behaviour warning letter to be removed as she perceives it as an Antisocial Behaviour Order.	OS3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unprofessional terminology to describe complainant- <i>"The lady does talk a lot so be prepared, my call was 40 mins"</i>. PSD have corresponded with Data Protection – necessary enquiries. Inconclusive closure, unknown why complainant seeking a freedom of information request. Does this suggest that they remain dissatisfied?

June – Outside schedule 3 (OS3)

Case number	Complaint summary	Handling Type	OPCC observations
1	Concerns that a Police Sargent has breached confidentiality as they have spoken about an ongoing case to other members of the public.	OS3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timely initial contact made by PSD. • Clear expectations set with the complainant. • Email between PSD and the complaint handler is clear and detailed for what is expected. • Supervisor advised that there would be a significant delay in responding to the complainant due to leave and 3 other complaints - Good practice that PSD sought a replacement to handle this complaint • Query - OPCC not sure if the complaint recorded actually reflects the complaint received - the complainant specified breach of confidentiality and reputational damage. • Case was closed before it was confirmed whether the supervisor has responded to the complainant - Not sure what the outcome was. • Handled more as a no further action rather than Os3? • Initial contact was good but it took a month to contact the complainant further for additional information.
2	Complaint is dissatisfied with the Force's response / investigation into their assault. They state the Force are not providing updates when requested.	OS3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timely response from PSD and complaint handler. • Complainant was clearly notified of the outcome. • Handled very well - good example of OS3.

3	Unhappy with the Force's response to reports of someone taking photos of them without permission	OS3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allocated on the same day to the complaint handler due to safety concerns – But the complaint handler did not respond until a week later. Would it had been better to send it to the Contact Centre if there were immediate concerns? Complaint handler contacted the complainant via the phone but was hung up on, follow up email sent. Closed but it was noted that the complainant was still aggrieved as they wanted to speak with someone in person - Did the complaint handler seek alternative methods to discuss with the complainant?
4	Dissatisfied with the Force's handling of a stolen horse trailer.	OS3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate enquiries made. Delay in initial contact from PSD- enquiries were made before the complaint was acknowledged.
5	Claims that a Police Community Support Officer is harassing and targeting them.	OS3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delay in initial contact from PSD. Closed due to ongoing investigation against the complainant. – Dealt more as a no further action rather than OS3? Email from the Force Contact Centre to PSD contains little information. – Do PSD liaise with the contact centre on what information would be best captured when complainants come through?

PSD Comments

We acknowledge the report and confirm that it will be shared amongst the complaint handling staff here in PSD to ensure that any learning is picked up.