

## INDEPENDENT ETHICS PANEL

22 JANUARY 2015

PRESENT: A Lockley (Chair)  
L Christon, M Ismail, M Lewis and A Macaskill

Officers: M Buttery and S Parkin (OPCC)  
S Hemsley and A Holt (SYP)

Apologies for absence were received from S Mellors and  
E Redfearn

### 1 CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the inaugural meeting.

### 2 PRESENTATION BY OPCC

M Buttery thanked E Redfearn for establishing the Panel.

M Buttery gave a presentation to Members of the Panel with an overview of:

- Policing and crime context in South Yorkshire
- Role of the PCC
- Support arrangements for the PCC
- Joint Governance Framework
- Emerging issues/challenges

M Lewis queried how community cohesion was identified and addressed. Information provided by local communities is a key part of all operational decisions and a key part of the strategic intelligence assessment which is incorporated into the strategic planning process.

Members of the Panel requested copies of the presentations from today's meeting.

A glossary of acronyms was also requested.

#### **Actions:**

- a) Copies of the presentations to be circulated with the minutes – S Parkin**
- b) A glossary of acronyms be produced – S Parkin**

### 3 PRESENTATION BY SOUTH YORKSHIRE POLICE

DCC Holt gave a presentation which provided Members of the Panel with an overview of:

- Key facts and figures in relation to staffing numbers and 999 calls

- Information about the Senior Command Team
- The Force Structure
- How South Yorkshire is policed
- Force Accountability
- The Code of Ethics and FIRST Principles
- The Complaints Process

DCC Holt suggested Members of the Panel may find it useful to see a major incident room.

**Action: Arrange for Members to attend a major incident room as part of their induction – S Parkin and A Fletcher**

#### 4 TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members discussed the Terms of Reference. There was some concern around whether the Terms were too broad and whether there needed to be a hierarchy of priorities. Members agreed to revisit the Terms of Reference in 6 months.

A discussion also took place around the advisory nature of the Panel and its ability to make a difference. M Buttery confirmed that the Panel was not a decision making body. She explained that there was no statutory obligation on the Commissioner to establish a Panel; however the Commissioner saw the Panel as an important tool to assist him in making key decisions.

Members agreed that the Panel's ability to influence would depend on its credibility. They wished to establish this as soon as possible by tackling some key areas.

**Action: Terms of Reference to be revisited in 6 months – Panel Members**

#### 5 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

S Parkin informed the Members that declarations of interest forms had been sent out with their appointment letters. It was agreed that any further declarations of interest which arise as a result of specific agenda items would be raised at the start of each meeting.

A Lockley raised that even though he had made a declaration of interest he had not received a declarations of interest form.

**Action: Declarations of interest form to be sent A Lockley – S Parkin**

#### 6 PANEL PROTOCOLS / WAYS OF WORKING

A discussion took place about the ways of working of the Panel. M Buttery identified a number of areas where a protocol should be put in place, including:

- Support by the Office
- Rules of engagement – single points of contact
- Media handling

- Private and public sessions

Media handling was discussed and it was agreed that this would form part of the protocol. A statement would be sent to Members about the role of the Panel to assist them in responding to any media enquiries. In the interim period Members of the Panel were asked to come through the OPCC if they received any media requests. However, it was advised that if anything did come up which Members felt comfortable to answer they should answer rather than say 'no comment'.

To assist the Chair at Panel meetings Members were asked to:

- a) let the Chair and the Office know prior to the meeting if they feel particularly strongly about an item to be raised in the meeting to avoid any surprises.
- b) inform him of any specific interests they may want to follow up in the work of the Panel.

Members were asked to sign a declaration relating to the Official Secrets Act.

DCC Holt advised that he would not be supplying members with papers which may compromise the force if taken away, so he may ask Members to receive papers and return them in the meeting.

A discussion also took place on the subject of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Members were unclear of its implications for their own correspondence on Panel matters. It was recognised that they might be the subject of FOIA requests as an extension of a public body.

It was agreed that the creation of the Panel is positive and should be used as an opportunity to strengthen trust and confidence, but that training on FOIA and the protective marking scheme would be given.

**Actions:**

- a) **A written protocol should be developed – OPCC and Chair.**
- b) **An input on the protective marking scheme to be provided as part of the Panel induction – S Parkin and A Fletcher**
- c) **A standard statement in relation to the role of the Panel to be produced to ensure a consistent approach – F Topliss**
- d) **Members of the Panel to be added to the media distribution list – F Topliss**
- e) **FOIA to be included as part of Members Induction Training – S Parkin and A Fletcher**

7 CODE OF CONDUCT

S Parkin circulated the Code of Conduct and asked Members to confirm they would abide by the following values:

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability

- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership
- Fairness
- Respect

**Action: An electronic copy of the Code of Conduct to be sent to Members of the Panel – S Parkin**

## 8 LEGACY ISSUES

A report of the Chief Executive and Solicitor was submitted which informed Members of the Panel of the legacy issues facing South Yorkshire Police.

DCC Holt provided an overview of the various investigations currently taking place.

### Hillsborough

A Lockley suggested that the Panel keep a watching brief until the conclusion of the inquest unless a specific request is made from the Commissioner or Chief Constable.

However, DCC Holt offered to produce a more detailed report on Hillsborough in the meantime.

S Parkin informed Members that the IPCC provide regular updates in relation to the Inquest and suggested that these be sent out to Members when received.

### **Actions:**

- a) A more detailed report on Hillsborough be brought to a future meeting – DCC Holt**
- b) IPCC Hillsborough Updates be forwarded to Members of the Panel as and when received – S Parkin**

### Child Sexual Exploitation

DCC Holt informed the group that there was a multi-agency action plan which was monitored by a number of groups and agencies including the Commissioner.

Members were clear that they did not want to duplicate work already taking place and requested more information before taking a view on where they could add value.

**Action: South Yorkshire Police to give a Presentation on Child Sexual Exploitation at the next meeting to assist in identifying potential ethical issues – DCC Holt**

### Orgreave

DCC Holt provided an update on the IPCC's interest in Orgreave. Members agreed to make a decision about their involvement once a decision from the IPCC had been received.

Members agreed that it would be useful to have an understanding of the relationship between the Police and mining communities.

This led onto a wider discussion around the diversity of areas and communities of South Yorkshire. It was agreed to provide an overview as part of the member induction. Members also expressed an interest in 'getting out and about'.

**Action: Members to be provided with information about the different areas and communities of South Yorkshire as part of their Induction – SParkin and A Fletcher**

## 9 WORK PROGRAMME

A discussion took place around a report by the Chief Executive on proposals for the content of a work programme.

Panel Members discussed whether they were just going to receive data or be more hands on to obtain first-hand experience. It was agreed that hearing things direct was important. DCC Holt informed the group that Supt Hemsley ran a number of Ethics Focus groups and that it may be possible for Members to attend these.

It was agreed that A Lockley would spend some time working with the officers in the OPCC to develop a work programme.

### **Actions:**

- a) **Members to attend one of the Force's Ethics Focus Groups – S Parkin and S Hemsley**
- b) **The Chair to work with the OPCC on developing the work programme – A Lockley and E Redfearn**

## 10 INDUCTION

The following areas were identified to be included in the initial Panel Member induction programme:

- Professional Standards Department
- The 4 policing districts
- An operational police station
- Atlas Court
- Training
- PSU – Public Support Unit (tactical training in Public Order and Riot Control)
- Attend a major incident room
- Operations Room during an EDL March

It was acknowledged that this could not be undertaken in one session.

**Action: S Parkin and A Fletcher to work on developing an induction programme for Members**

11 IMPROVING POLICE INTEGRITY: REFORMING THE POLICE COMPLAINTS AND DISCIPLINARY SYSTEMS

Members received a report on the Home Office consultation document: Improving police integrity: reforming the police complaints and disciplinary systems.

The report covered 3 main headings: complaints, the police disciplinary system and whistleblowing.

A discussion took place around the current complaints system which is complex and not easy for the public to understand.

DCC Holt suggested that Members may be able to strengthen South Yorkshire Police's complaints system by taking a look at complaints dealt with by 'early service recovery'.

In relation to the proposed changes around the disciplinary system, Members were supportive of disciplinary hearings being heard in public, this was in line with other professional bodies.

DCC Holt was of the view that this should be proportionate and only when in the public interest to do so.

DCC Holt informed Members that the force had a robust whistle-blowing procedure in place but expressed concern around the proposed changes in relation to whistle-blowers being offered protection. Officers must be able to investigate criminal activity.

It was agreed that a copy of the Commissioner's draft response to the consultation would be sent to Members for comment.

**Action: Copy of the consultation response be sent to Member for comment – S Parkin**

12 SECONDARY BUSINESS INTERESTS, ASSOCIATIONS AND POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

A Lockley requested that political representation be included in the report to the next meeting.

**Action: Political representation be included in the report to the next meeting – DCC Holt**

13 AOB

None

14 DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The next meeting will held on Wednesday 11 March 2015, at 6.30pm, at South Yorkshire Police Headquarters, Carbrook House, Carbrook, Sheffield, S9 2DB.

CHAIR