

Independent Ethics Panel – Well-being

Assurance Report	Report Author
Independent Ethics Panel	Interim Chair
	Date of the Report
	29 November 2022

Urgent:	No
Security Classification	Official

Exceptions

The Independent Ethics Panel (IEP) assists the Commissioner in understanding the progress being made in delivering the 'Fair Treatment' strategic priority of his Police and Crime Plan and in providing assurance in relation to PCC and Chief Constable statutory responsibilities.

- 1.1 The IEP's programme of culture work is focused on supporting the roll out and embedding of SYPs' Values and Behaviours Framework, expressed in its "FIT" commitment, to Fairness, Integrity and Trust. Well-Being is a key component of that Framework.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to offer the Police and Crime Commissioner re-assurance about SYP's approach to the well-being of its officers and staff.
- 1.3 IEP received a detailed presentation by Chief Inspector Jayne Forrest on 25 November, at the instigation of Deputy Chief Constable Forber in response to a question from the chair of IEP about how SYP was approaching the cost-of-living crisis, its implications for the workforce and more widely, for policing in South Yorkshire.
- 1.4 SYP has invested in and developed a wide-ranging strategy, covering officers and staff alike. It has preventative and reactive dimensions.
- 1.5 The central premise is that if SYP is to operate at maximum effectiveness and efficiency, it has to be an exemplary employer, ensuring a workforce fit for the many challenges it faces. SYP therefore seeks to discharge its duty of care to its employees, demonstrating the value it places in its people. The commitment of the

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senior command team to the well-being programme is unequivocal. It promotes a culture of openness and trust. It acknowledges that any individual may face crisis in their professional and personal lives and the need for timely and appropriate support to be available.

- 1.6 The presentation focused on how SYP understands and responds to the challenge of the psychological and physical well-being of its workforce.
- 1.7 SYP has received national recognition and awards for several of its initiatives which reflects positively SYP's investment in well-being, its credibility with the work force and the creativity of some of its approaches.
- 1.8 IEP members were shocked to learn of the extent of mental ill-health across the police nationally (4484 suicides of serving officers between 2011 and 2020¹).
- 1.9 Amongst many continuing initiatives, we noted:
 - The 2021 staff survey which recorded increased levels of organisational support, greater fairness, improved performance and emotional energy
 - Sophisticated and varied communications strategies with the work-force, including a dedicated intranet page, a well-being toolkit, the back up buddy app
 - A cost of living working group, recognizing the financial pressures to which staff may be subject, the availability of financial aid
 - Support for those whose role it is to support personnel subject to conduct or complaint investigations, including welfare support officers and champions
 - Access to counseling support on a 24/7/365 basis, open to personnel and family members and enhanced investment in Occupational Health support
- 1.10 In summary, one of the PCC's priorities is support for the vulnerable. SYP has recognised that those whose duty it is to protect and support the vulnerable may also become vulnerable and in need of support. The strategy presented to us has the hallmarks of an emotionally intelligent organisation, investing in its own precious personnel resource. It strives for constant improvement. It encourages openness whilst respecting confidentiality. It demonstrates that well-being requires leadership at all levels but especially from the most senior most echelons and ensures this is

¹ [Police Officer suicides in England and Wales between 2001-2020 - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk)

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provided. In short, in relation to commitment to well-being, SYP has the characteristics of an excellent employer.

- 1.11 IEP can re-assure the Police and Crime Commissioner that well-being is a core part of SYP's offer to its work-force.

Recommendations

The Commissioner is recommended to consider the contents of the report and comment on any matters arising.

Report author details

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Signed:

M Lewis

Date:

29 November 2022