

Independent Ethics Panel – Work Plan 2022-2024

Assurance Report	Report Author
Independent Ethics Panel	Head of Governance
	Date of the Report
	28 June 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.

The Panel last met on 21 June 2022. The main item for discussion and agreement was the IEP's Work Plan for 2022-2024. IEP also received a presentation from the Chief Constable on her recently announced "Cultural Change Programme" (see below 1.2.2.)

1. IEP Work Plan – June 2022 - May 2024

- 1.1 A proposed work plan for the IEP, how it will organise itself to deliver that work and the support it will receive from the OPCC and SYP was discussed and finalised at the IEP on 21 June 2022.
- 1.2 In summary the IEP will build on its previous work and concentrate activity in the following areas of focus:
 - 1.2.1 **Supporting police legitimacy in communities** through reality testing the public's experiences / interactions with SYP, including the fair and proportionate use of tactics in the policing of protests, disproportionality issues in stop and search and the use of force and the response to violence against women and girls This area of focus will be discharged mainly through the work of Member Themed Leads.
 - 1.2.2 **Looking internally within SYP to assess the embeddedness of ethical standards** in the way its people, think, make decisions and behave. SYP launched its Cultural Change Programme on 5 May 2022. The PCC welcomes this approach, within the wider organisational development of SYP, and has asked the IEP to consider how it is best placed

Independent Ethics Panel – Work Plan 2022-2024

to provide assurances to the PCC and Chief Constable on the effectiveness of this Culture Change Programme.

1.2.3 The IEP supports the PCC in his ***'Holding the CC to Account'*** responsibilities in the following areas:

- Assuring the PCC (and Chief Constable) that complaint procedures are effective and complaints are effectively handled.
- Assuring the PCC (and Chief Constable) that equality and diversity duties imposed on the Chief Constable are properly exercised.

1.2.4 The complaints responsibility will continue to be discharged through the existing Member Themed Lead approach.

1.2.5 The equality and diversity duties of a Chief Constable are wide and intertwined throughout policing. The PCC helpfully sets out the focus for the IEP in this regard within his Police and Crime Plan:

'I want to see better representation of women and those from ethnic minority groups at all ranks and in all roles. The national uplift of police officer numbers has presented a critical opportunity to get this right. This is why I have asked the Independent Ethics Panel to look at how SYP recruits, trains, promotes and retains officers and staff.'

The IEP will allocate two members to this area of focus to test out the following agreed hypothesis:

'Considering national good practice, and recognising the current social and economic climate, there is nothing more that SYP can do to improve its workforce representation'

1.2.6 ***Scanning the horizon*** to identify potential ethical issues for future policing, including technological developments, the impact of changes to legislation and the use of discretionary powers. The role of the Chair of the IEP will be to ensure this responsibility is fulfilled through proactive communication and engagement with, for example: IEP members; key officers within the OPCC and SYP; peer IEP Chairs.

1.2.7 At each meeting the IEP will routinely consider public facing messaging from its discussions.

2. Update on Stop and Search

New external scrutiny arrangements are now in place with the recruitment of a new panel of lay members. This panel has met three times since the start of 2022.

The IEP / OPCC has attended and observed the work of the new panel on each occasion and can confirm that its members have gained in confidence since their initial training which formed part of the first meeting and are becoming more confident in their scrutiny with each

Independent Ethics Panel – Work Plan 2022-2024

meeting, asking searching and well-informed questions and examining in detail evidence from Body Worn Video (BWV) footage.

There is still scope for improvement in the regularisation of BWV in all instances. It is also noted that the diversity of the panel by age and ethnicity could be strengthened. SYP is hoping to be able to increase membership from under-represented groups through the next round of recruitment taking place.

Disproportionality continues to be monitored.

Recommendations

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

Report author details

Erika Redfearn, Head of Governance

Contact details: OPCC, 0114 296 4132

Signed:



Date:

28 June 2022