

Professional Standards Committee Development Plan 2009/10

<u>2008/09 Performance</u>	Committee's terms of reference	2009/10 Plans
<p>The committee approved a joint Force / Authority Protocol for Handling Complaints relating to Chief Officers. This included the introduction of a conduct and complaints sub-committee to consider any such concerns raised about chief officers, police pension forfeiture and business interest appeals for all officers.</p>	<p>1. To ensure the Authority's effective discharge of its responsibility with regard to complaints & misconduct concerning senior police officers, as well as issues relating to police pension forfeiture and business interest appeals for all officers</p>	<p>A report summarising the number and type of complaints and conduct issues relating to chief officers during the course of 2009/10 will be reported to this committee at its March 2010 meeting. A protocol for considering issues of pension forfeiture will be reported to the November meeting for Members' approval.</p>
<p><u>Complaints</u></p> <p>The committee agreed a joint Force / Authority protocol for the inspection of complaints files</p> <p>The monthly inspection meetings continued and a summary of these was reported to each committee meeting. Members involvement in this work led the Force to develop their arrangements for managing officers receiving a disproportionate number of complaints; and to reassure Members that all future complaint investigations will address any Every Child Matters issues.</p> <p>In preparation for the introduction of the new</p>	<p>2. To oversee the discharge of the Chief Constable's responsibilities with regard to complaints & misconduct concerning police officers, special constables, police staff and contractors under the direction and control of the Chief Constable</p>	<p><u>Complaints</u></p> <p>Recent 'inspection of complaint' meetings have raised concerns about the consistency of quality particularly of locally resolved complaints by BCUs¹. The committee will monitor the Force's progress in improving the quality of how these complaints are handled. All Members are also encouraged to oversee their local BCU's arrangements for handling complaints.</p> <p>As part of its drive to reduce the number of complaints, the Force will be holding focus groups with recent complainants to see if there are lessons they can learn. The outcomes of this will be reported to the</p>

¹ Basic Command Unit

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<p>regulations in December, the department underwent a restructure. This included re-locating complaint investigation advisors to BCUs to help handle more complaints at a local level. The committee was kept informed of these developments and the internal communication and training programme supporting the implementation of the new regulations.</p> <p><u>Conduct</u></p> <p>Members received regular updates on the implementation arrangements for the new Conduct regulations. Despite this being part of the Committee's terms of reference, this has been an area where the committee has had little oversight.</p>		<p>committee later in the year.</p> <p><u>Conduct</u></p> <p>Information on the new procedures and caseloads will now be reported regularly to this committee.</p>
<p>Last year 2% of complaints recorded allegations of racial discrimination. The inspection of complaints protocol agreed by the committee last year, gives a commitment to focus on complaints from minority groups and / or those who might be considered more vulnerable. Members had expressed concern early in the year that the department had a low recording rate for the ethnicity of complainants. This has now improved substantially.</p>	<p>3. To specifically look at the handling of complaints relating to racial incidents</p>	<p>The committee will continue to specifically look at the handling of complaints relating to racial incidents.</p>

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<p><u>Complaints</u></p> <p>The number of complaints continued to rise in 2008/09, with 30% more recorded than the previous year. (NB: the number of compliments received by the Force also increased over the same period.)</p> <p>Following concerns raised by Members at the start of the year, the PS department were able to increase recording rates for the ethnicity of complainants from 40% unknown to 5% unknown. The percentage of complaints resolved locally however did not improve.</p> <p>The PS department also improved the quality and content of the Performance data pack to meet requests from members, including comparative data with other Forces.</p>	<p>4. To monitor trends in the number and nature of complaints & compliments (conduct and direction & control) and misconduct issues concerning police officers, special constables, police staff and contractors under the direction and control of the Chief Constable. To consider more widely the impact of complaints on the efficiency and effectiveness of the force and on public confidence</p>	<p><u>Complaints</u></p> <p>A target to reduce the number of complaints by 10% to 366 allegations per 1,000 officers has been included in this year's Policing Plan. This committee will monitor progress throughout the year.</p> <p>Members will continue to monitor the percentage of complaints resolved locally. It is expected that this figure will increase as the new arrangements with BCUs and departments beds in.</p> <p>The PS department now has its own data analyst. The focus of her work will be to improve the data available for BCUs as they work to reduce complaints.</p> <p><u>Conduct</u></p> <p>Until now the performance pack has only included information on complaints. The report will be extended to include trend data on the volume and nature of misconduct issues and the means by which they are managed. The first of these reports will be available at the November committee meeting.</p>

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The Standards of Professional Behaviour were introduced as part of the new Conduct regulations.	5. To receive regular reports on the standards of professionalism and integrity that the Chief Constable expects the police officers and police staff under his direction & control to uphold, and on policies and procedures introduced by the Chief Constable to ensure that such standards are maintained.	It is recognised that officer conduct has an impact on public confidence levels. A report setting out the measures in place to promote and reinforce high standards of behaviour will be brought to a future meeting of this committee.
	6. To monitor the performance of the Authority and the Force in complying with the duties imposed on them by the Human Rights Act 1998	An assessment of the Authority's own compliance as well as its scrutiny of the Force's compliance will be reported to July's authority meeting. The action plan arising out of that will be reported to the November meeting of this committee.
The 2007/08 annual report on the scheme was reported to this committee in November.	7. To oversee the Authority's Independent Custody Visiting (ICV) scheme having regard to the Secretary of State's Code of Practice	The 2008/09 annual report will be reported to this committee in November. The outcome of the recent review of the ICV scheme is reported elsewhere on this agenda.
The committee continued to receive this regular update as a standing item on the agenda.	8. To receive a regular report summarising IPCC² independent and managed investigations relating to Kent Police activity.	The committee will continue to receive regular update reports. A report setting out the means by which the Force identifies and implements any lessons learnt on this and other professional standards issues, will be

² Independent Police Complaints Commission

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		presented to this committee later in the year.
The annual report setting out all public liability claims received during 2008 is reported elsewhere on this agenda.	9. To oversee the responses to and management of civil claims against police officers and police staff	An annual summary of claims will continue to be reported to this committee.
A post implementation review of the Force's vetting arrangements was considered by the PIR group. This was considered to be the most appropriate group for the report as its focus was on securing value for money.	10. To consider reports of internal reviews in accordance with the programme determined by Audit and Finance committee	Future reviews will be considered by this committee if and when appropriate.
The Authority's arrangements for overseeing the Force's professional standards issues was assessed as part of the HMIC ³ / AC ⁴ pilot inspection of the KPA in January. The inspection report noted the significant progress the committee had made during the course of the year.	11. To monitor government, Association of Police Authorities (APA) and other external agency proposals, advice and actions related to the above terms of reference and advise the Authority or Chief Constable as appropriate	The committee will continue to respond to all proposals, advice and related actions as they arise
The PS department's risk register was reported to the November meeting. None of these risks were considered substantial enough to be included in the Force risk register. All reports to the committee included an assessment of risk as part of the checklist.	12. To consider risks and risk management in relation to any matter within its terms of reference	This year an update on the highest risks professional standards risks will be included as part of the ACC's ⁵ regular current issues report to this committee.

³ Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary

⁴ Audit Commission

⁵ Assistant Chief Constable

<u>2008/09 Performance</u>	Committee's terms of reference	2009/10 Plans

2008/09 performance	Other areas of committee's interest	2009/10 plans
A meeting was held with the RSPCA and Guide Dogs for the Blind in October, as it was apparent that the visits had stopped. Both organisations expressed a willingness to resume visits.	In 2004, the committee agreed a Police Dogs' Visiting Scheme. Since then the RSPCA and Guide Dogs for the Blind have carried out routine inspection visits on the Authority's behalf.	Since October's meeting, only one visit has been carried out. The position will need to be reviewed again.