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| **External Complaints Scrutiny Group**  **21st January 2025**  **10:00-15:00**  **Durham Police HQ**  **Attendees**  **Chair**: DS  **ODPCVC:** KB, JT  **Durham Constabulary:** Sgt DW, CC  **Members:** CM, BB, JD-D, AG, WT  **Apologies:** SS, SM, RS, MH, DM | | | |
|  | **Subject** | **Action / Discussion** | |
| **Part A - Panel Members only** | | | |
|  | Chairs Welcome | DS welcomed everyone to the meeting. | |
|  | Housekeeping | DS informed the panel of the general housekeeping rules of the meeting. | |
|  | Introduction and Apologies | Panel Members gave a brief introduction about themselves.  Apologies were noted. | |
| **Part B – Formal Meeting and Discussion** | | | |
|  | Conflict of Interest/Undertaking of Confidentiality | DS reminded members of the confidential nature of the meeting and how this was going to be monitored. Members of the group were requested to declare their interest in any cases that were being discussed as the meeting progresses. |  |
| 5. | Minutes of the previous meeting  - Accuracy/Website  - Discussion if names should be included | The minutes were agreed as an accurate record.  Members of the panel expressed how they wouldn’t feel comfortable having their full names included in the minutes and would only like their initials recorded.  **Action- JT to remove the names from the previous minutes.**  The panel agreed that they are happy for the minutes from the previous meeting to be included on the PCC website once the name amendments have been made. | **JT** |
| 6.  6. | Action Log/Recommendation Updates | A discussion took place reading through the Action Log and the log has been updated accordingly. |  |
| 7. | Review of Terms of Reference  - Vice Chair Election | A copy of the Terms of Reference was given to members of the panel prior to the meeting.  DS informed the panel that there needs to be a vice chair, in case he can’t attend the meeting and asked anyone if they would like to take that role. BB volunteered as the new vice chair of the panel, this will be reviewed in 1 year. |  |
| 8. | Organisational Learning | * Body worn footage should always be turned on. * PACE was not followed. This could be individual learning for the officer. * There was a learning issue about the tape recorder not being turned off. |  |
| 9. | Training Requirements | There were no training requirements. |  |
| 10. | Individual Scrutiny of Complaint Files (2) | Panel members were given time to read and discuss the case files provided by the Professional Standards Department. |  |
| 11. | Lunch | Lunch was provided. |  |
| 12. | Formal Meeting and Discussion | 2 cases were considered by panel members  **CO/00296/24**   * The panel expressed concern over the statement from the police which suggested that they did not want to scare the complainant but they actually did scare her. * The panel thought that the timeliness in which the complaint was handled was reasonable and they were happy with how PSD responded. * However, in the letter sent to the complainant, the panel felt as though there was no recognition that the complainant was in distress and there was no acknowledgement that her concerns were being addressed. * The panel thought that the complaint wasn’t investigated further enough back and they felt as though there were still a lot of underlying issues that needed investigating. * DS felt unsettled that officers were tasked with entering someone’s house in the middle of the night. What justification has the police for entering someone else’s premises unless there is suspicion of a crime being committed. Whoever tasked this should have thought about the consequences. * The panel thought that there wasn’t enough communication within the Force, the neighbourhood team were tasked with doing reassurance visits after a recent crime in the area but no one informed the control room of this. * The panel didn’t like how, when the complainant called the control room to ask if a police officer had visited in the middle of the night, the call handler responded with ‘I don’t know’, when they should have reassured the complainant that they would make some enquiries and get back to them.   **CO/0088/23**   * The panel identified that there were interesting parallels between the 2 cases, as in the first case, the warrant card wasn’t shown sufficiently and in the second case, the body worn footage wasn’t turned on. * The panel couldn’t understand why the complaint investigation lasted from August 2022 to August 2024. * The panel felt as though the police officers could have provided information to the complainant in a timely manner, because the complainant was informed that she wasn’t receiving any updates because the officers were on other duties. * The panel have expressed that they think it should be automatic that officers turn their body worn footage on, this would give more clarity around the investigation process. Additionally, if body worn footage was turned on, it would have reduced the amount of time the investigation took. * The incident happened on 24th December, but the investigation didn’t get resolved until 9th October. The complainant was informed that they were waiting for more information from police officers. * The case was straight forward but the process was complicated. * The panel felt as though there were too many duplications in this case. * The panel identified that PACE was not followed. This could be individual learning for the officer.   **Action- CC to remove any duplicates and inform the panel how many documents she has removed.** | **CC** |
| 13. | Summary of Recommendations | **CO/00296/24 Recommendations-**   * There needs to be better communication within the Force, between police officers and control room. * When visiting members of the public, police officers need to make sure that their identity cards are clearly shown.   **CO/0088/23 Recommendations-**   * Body worn videos should always be turned on in these situations. This may be an organisational issue. * There was a timing issue. Although the case was going to court, reports should have been sorted earlier. There wasn’t compliance for the police to have reports completed within an appropriate timescale. * There was a learning issue about the tape recorder not being turned off. * In the letter sent to the complainant, there should have been recognition of the fact that the body worn footage was not turned on and there should have been an apology. * DS requested copies of the Force Policy on BWV be shared with the Committee. |  |
| 14. | Any Other Business | DS would like the panel pre-meets to take place 3 weeks prior to the panel.  The panel expressed that it would be much easier to have the cases sent to them electronically prior to the meeting.  **Action- SS to see if it is possible for the panel to have electronic copies of the cases**  **Action- JT to send the minutes of the meeting to all panel members for them to feedback any changes that they would like to be made.**  The theme for the next panel will be complaints relating to Violence Against Women and Girls that have been completed in the past 12-18 months. | **SS**  **JT** |
| 15. | Date of Next Meeting | **The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 20th May 10:00am** |  |