**Minutes of the Independent Ethics Committee**

**Wednesday 26th February 2025 17:30**

**Watson Room, Police HQ and Microsoft Teams**

**Present**:

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| Independent Members | Role |
| David Smith | Independent Member – Chair |
| Craig Marshall | Independent Member |
| Alan Black | Independent Member |
| Richard Salkeld | Independent Member |
| John Dixon-Dawson | Independent Member |
| Natalie Brown | Independent Member |
| Marion Holloway | Independent Member |
| Staff Attending in Advisory Capacity | Role |
| Andrea Petty | Chief of Staff- PCC |
| Sweety Sahani | Head of Business Services – PCC |
| Jenny Thompson | Business Services Assistant (Notetaker)- PCC |
| DCC Ciaron Irvine | Deputy Chief Constable |
| Supt Yvonne Dutson | Superintendent-Head of Professional Standards/Counter Corruption and Vetting Unit. |
| Christine Carrick | Office Manager, Professional Standards Department |

**Apologies**

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| Name | Role |
| Beth Fotheringham | Independent Member |
| Sara MacCallum | Independent Member |
| Abigail Coleman | Area Coordinator, Community Peer Mentors- PCC |

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| 1 | **Chairs Welcome** | **Action** |
|  | The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. |  |
| 2 | **Housekeeping** |  |
|  | The Chair informed the panel of the general housekeeping rules of the meeting. |  |
| 3 | **Introduction and Apologies** |  |
|  | Panel Members gave a brief introduction about themselves.  Apologies were noted. |  |
| 4 | **Conflict of Interest/Undertaking of Confidentiality** |  |
|  | The Chair 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 progressed. |  |
| 5 | **Minutes from the Previous Meeting held on 30th October 2024**  **i) Accuracy/Website**  **ii) Discussion if names should be included** |  |
|  | The minutes were agreed as an accurate record. Members of the Committee are happy for their names to be included in the minutes and for the minutes to be added to the PCC website.  YD assured the Committee that the feedback they provided at the last meeting regarding Force Values was fed back to the Commander who thanked the Committee for their input.  DCC Irvine informed the Committee that CC Rachel Bacon had a piece of work that went to an SLG meeting regarding the Force Values. The SLG team had a discussion that the Force is moving towards Durham not having their own code but using the national values which represents Durham’s Code of Ethics. DCC Irvine assured the Committee that even though Durham will be moving towards the national values, the Durham Difference will still remain. He confirmed that Durham Police will still ensure that they abide by the highest standards of practice. |  |
| 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** |  |
|  | A copy of the Terms of Reference was given to members of the panel prior to the meeting. The members agreed the changes to the quoracy requirement and these minutes can now be regarded as the working Terms of Reference for the Committee and be added to the PCC website. |  |
| 8 | **Training Requirements** |  |
|  | No training requirements were identified. |  |
| 9 | **Gifts and Gratuity/Overseas Training** |  |
|  | DCC Irvine informed the panel that a while ago, 4 police officers from Durham Police travelled to Bahrain to deliver some training. At the invitation of the Minister, the police officers accepted some parting gifts. They anticipated that the gifts they would be receiving would be small gifts, but on their departure from Bahrain they were given a watch each. The police officers made the decision to accept the watches so as not to offend the Minister, but on their way from the airport they informed DCC Irvine about the gifts.  DCC Irvine informed the panel that the police officers cannot accept these gifts as it is unethical and not in line with the Durham forces’ Gifts and Gratuities Policy.. They have been informed that if they return the watches, they will damage the relationship between the UK and Bahrain. Natalie Brown (NB) asked if there is anything in the Home Office policy that limits gift giving. DCC Irvine informed her that there has been no guidance from the Home Office as Durham Police are the first Force in the UK to do business in Bahrain.  DCC Irvine considered putting the watches on display in HQ but there is no display value to them. He has decided that the ethical solution is to donate the watches to charity so they can draw the value into their national fundraising. The Committee agreed that they are happy for the watches to be donated to a national charity. DCC Irvine will inform the Bahrainians that the watches have been donated to charity. There was some consideration given to the watches being given to a local charity but it was felt this might be contentious. DCC Irvine confirmed that the national charity would be a police focussed charity and that he is a representative on the Board of that charity. This was not felt to be a concern.  Durham Constabulary attended Bahrain to train officers by running national leadership courses. Concern was expressed about Durham being seen to be working closely with a country with a poor record on human rights. DCC Irvine stated that they had been invited by the Home Office to work with Bahrain to try to improve how the police and criminal justice systems work in Bahrain. DS asked if Durham Constabulary’s work has had a measurable impact on the Bahrainians. DCC Irvine informed the panel that up until a couple of years ago, Bahrain only had 1 prison, which they struggled to manage the capacity of. Due to more officers being trained, they have been able to open another prison and that this is an open prison. Also, as there is a stigma in Bahrain for women to visit a police station, a family centre has now opened adjacent to the police station to help women feel comfortable to report to the Police. Durham’s input has influenced this development. It was recognised that Bahrainian culture is very different from our own and that there are many factors which make quick change difficult.  Questions were also raised about the use of the funding received by Durham for providing these services. The Committee felt it important that, in line with the Code of Ethics, transparency around this income and how it is used should be transparent. |  |
| 10 | **Race Inclusion Delivery Group- Terms of Reference** |  |
|  | The Race Inclusion Delivery Group is a new meeting that has been created within the Force. Sweety Sahani (SS) and Yvonne Dutson (YD) are both in attendance at the meeting. The Chair of the meeting is ACC McAdam. The Terms of Reference was given to members of the panel prior to the meeting.  **Action- DS to circulate his comments regarding the Terms of Reference to other members of the panel and collate all responses and send to YD.** | **DS** |
| 11 | **Code of Ethics** |  |
|  | This item to be added to the agenda for the next meeting. | **JTh** |
| 12 | **Summary of Recommendations** |  |
|  | * **DS to circulate his comments regarding the Race Inclusion Terms of Reference to other members of the panel and collate all responses and send to YD.** * **JTh to add Code of Ethics to the agenda for the next meeting.** * **JTh to add Review of Non-Crime Hate Incidents to the forward plan.** * **Sweety Sahani to give an overview on Public Accountability themes at the next meeting.** |  |
| 13 | **Any Other Business** |  |
|  | Review of non-crime hate incidents to be added to the forward plan. | **JTh** |
| 14 | **Date of next meeting** |  |
|  | **The next Independent Ethics Committee will take place on Wednesday 25th June 17:30.** |  |