

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS PANEL

ACTION

A meeting of the Professional Standards Panel was held on Friday 30 October 2009 in the Members Conference Room at Police Headquarters.

PRESENT:	Mr Ted Cox JP (Chair), Cllr Mary Lanigan (Vice Chair), Mr Peter Hadfield, Mr Aslam Hanif, Mr Mike McGrory JP, Cllr Hazel Pearson OBE.
OFFICIALS:	DCC Bonnard, Inspector Steve Gillson, Mrs Joanne Monkman, and Miss Kate Rowntree (CC) Mrs Jayne Harpe (CE)
ADDITIONAL MEMBERS	Cllr Ron Lowes.
MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC	Mr Gerald Walsh and Mrs Gillian Siddle.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Caroline Barker, Cllr Dave McLuckie, Mr Peter Race MBE and Supt Darren Best.

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interests.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING 29 JULY 2009

One amendment was made to the minutes of 29 July 2009 – The Deliberate Damage report was presented by the Deputy Chief Constable. The minutes were agreed as a true record.

OUTSTANDING RECOMMENDATIONS

The Grievance Procedure had been updated and re-written following the recent Employment Tribunal result and updates in legislation. This report would be submitted to this Panel following a 28 Day Consultation Phase.

Complaints Against Police – Diversity Issues - Members Briefing had been arranged for 10 November 2009. This item was discharged.

Deliberate Damage Report – Members agreed that the report would remain in the same format. This item was discharged.

CIVIL CLAIM STATISTICS

The Legal Advisor presented the Civil Claim Statistics for the period 1st April 2009 – 30th September 2009. The Panel was informed of the number and types of civil claims against the Force received during that period, the amount paid out for those claims finalised during the period and the amount recovered. The report also detailed a comparison between the Basic Command Units.

The question was asked why Employer's Liability was so high in

the Middlesbrough area. A written reply would be given by the Deputy Chief Constable. DCC

ORDERED that:

1. Members noted the number of claims received remained the same as the number of claims received in the same period last year. Motor liability was the leading category.
2. There had been a 23.1% increase in the number of claims finalised when compared with the same period last year.
3. 28.85% of finalised cases during the period were successfully defended which was to be compared with 21.43% successfully defended during the same period last year.
4. The 37 cases settled during the period cost the Force £164,612. This was to be compared with the 33 cases settled during the same period last year at a cost of £190,479.
5. Middlesbrough remained the area with most claims.
6. The contents of the report be noted.

Whilst Legal Services had no control over the number of claims received, feedback was provided on a case by case basis to ensure assistance was given to Basic Command Units in managing risks.

COMPLAINTS AGAINST POLICE

A representative from the Professional Standards Department presented the Complaints Against Police for the period 1st July 2009 to 30th September 2009. The Quarterly Progress Report on Complaint Issues for Cleveland Police for the period 1st July to 30th September 2009 was attached to the report.

There had been a 29% increase in the number of cases recorded during that period (100 to 129), with a 9% increase in the number of complaints (up from 183 to 199).

Complaints of "other neglect/failure in duty" and "Incivility" continued to outnumber those of "Assault" allegations, 42 and 47 complaints respectively, compared to 31 in the "Assault" categories.

38% (55) of completed complaints had been locally resolved. During that period 85.5% (47) of locally resolved complaints had been by District and 14.5% (8) by the Professional Standards Department.

A draft document was passed for discussion to Members which covered number 10 of the Policing Pledge – *"Acknowledge any dissatisfaction with the service you have received within 24 hours of reporting it to us. To help us fully resolve the matter,*

Head of
Professional
Standards
Dept

discuss with you how it will be handled, give you an opportunity to talk in person to someone about your concerns and agree with you what will be done about them and how quickly'. The document would provide data to the Police Authority in January 2010 based on October 2009 to December 2009 data.

208 letters of appreciation had been received. Members pointed out that this exceeded the number of complaints received.

ORDERED that:

1. The contents of the report be noted.

DELIBERATE DAMAGE STATISTICS

The Deputy Chief Constable informed Members of the cost to the Force of deliberate damage by way of forced entry into premises for the period 1st July 2009 to 30th September 2009 and of the operational results achieved through such forced entry and other premises searches.

Members were informed that the Force had paid out £12,762 in compensation for acts of deliberate damage, this compared to £10,741 paid out in the same period during the previous year. Whilst 28824 searches were conducted, only 223 (7.9%) resulted in deliberate damage compared to 8.6% in the previous year. The value of property, cash and drugs seized totaled £571,947 and this compared to £610,916 seized during the same period in 2008.

Members agreed that the report should remain in the current format and the statistical data added value which could be used in documents circulated to the public.

ORDERED that:

1. The contents of the report be noted.
2. The operational benefits accruing to the Force in terms of property, drugs and cash seized, outweigh the cost of the damage claims be noted.
3. The report to remain in its current format.

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

ORDERED that pursuant to the local Government Act 1972, excluding the press and public from the meeting under Paragraphs 1 and 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

CASES FROM THE COMPLAINTS REGISTER

Members of the Complaints Panel were shown the cases from the Complaints Register which had previously been selected by the Panel Chair.