

For Information	
Public/Non Public*	Public
Report to:	Audit and Scrutiny Panel
Date of Meeting:	10th December 2015
Report of:	DCC Fish
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Agenda Item:	6

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS CONFIDENTIAL REPORTING PROCEDURE

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To inform the Audit and Scrutiny Panel regarding the above procedure and to outline how the organisation, in general and the Professional Standards Directorate, manages and deals with those members of the organisation who make reports concerning breaches of Professional Standards.
- 1.2 In particular, how they can be provided with support and confidentiality, when appropriate and necessary.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Panel receive assurance from the processes in place relating to confidential reporting as detailed within the report.

3. Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 To provide the Panel with relevant information and oversight in respect of how Nottinghamshire Police ensures that appropriate systems are in place to both encourage and support officers and staff to report concerns regarding unethical behaviour or 'wrong doing'.

4. Summary of Key Points

- 4.1 There can be no more important qualities for members of the police service than that they are honest and act with integrity. Without these key attributes public trust and confidence will be eroded. The reputation of any organisation must always be considered as one of its most cherished assets.
- 4.2 The Procedure for Professional Standards Reporting aims to create a climate where staff feel a genuine commitment to openness and transparency when reporting breaches of Professional Standards, their motivation arising from a desire to maintain the integrity of the police service and in the knowledge that such action will be universally acknowledged as 'doing the right thing'.
- 4.3 The force's Professional Standards Reporting Procedure defines how Nottinghamshire Police will protect and support its staff by providing a broad

range of options for reporting breaches of Professional Standards and providing consistent and meaningful support to colleagues who report concerns.

- 4.4 Members of staff have a clear responsibility to report suspected breaches of Professional Standards by others in Nottinghamshire Police and should feel that they can report such breaches openly and with the support of their colleagues and managers in line with our PROUD Values and Code of Ethics.
- 4.5 The procedure identifies guiding principles and some examples of what activity or conduct should be reported, before outlining the different mechanisms for making such reports, which can be done anonymously, confidentially or in an open report.
- 4.6 Professional Standards Directorate have a key part to play in this procedure once information comes into the Directorate, including agreeing a 'Statement of Expectations' with the member of staff and including offering support from a group of trained 'Supporters'.
- 4.7 The 'Advocates' have been established as part of this procedure to offer support on a one to one basis. The volunteer police officers and police staff have been given training and an input from PSD as to the procedure and they do not work within PSD, but can be utilised where necessary as a conduit for the staff member in terms of the progression and updates of any enquiry. This is in addition to any welfare support.
- 4.8 The 'Advocates' are being developed to include officers/staff who are being investigated for gross misconduct, this will also be in addition to any welfare support they have, and will include additional support from CIC. The advocates identified are attending a training and development day involving Learning and Development and Professional Standards Directorate. Liaison with the Force Corporate Communications Department to promote and re-launch the refreshed approach to supporters is continuing.
- 4.9 For any officers and staff who are concerned coming forward to report any suspicion of 'wrong doing' or unethical behaviour, the force has provided an anonymous and confidential e-reporting system called 'Integrity Messenger'. This system allows two-way communication with the force counter-corruption unit while preserving the anonymity of the referee for as long as they feel the need. It also allows rapport and confidence to be built which may lead to the referee providing personal details in due course.
- 4.10 In the relevant period (April 1st 2015 to September 30th 2015) 30 referrals were made to the Counter Corruption Unit comprising of Integrity Messenger, Confidential Reporting Line & anonymous internal contact. This compares to 33 referrals in the previous six months.

5. Financial Implications and Budget Provision

5.1 No specific financial implications are noted

6. Human Resources Implications

6.1 No specific HR implications are noted

7. Equality Implications

7.1 This document has been drafted to comply with the general and specific duties in the Equality Act 2010; Data Protection Act; Freedom of Information Act; ECHR; Employment Act 2002; Employment Relations Act 1999 and other legislation relevant to policing.

7.2 This procedure is robust and the evidence shows there is no potential for discrimination and that all opportunities to promote equality have been taken.

8. Risk Management

8.1 It is essential the public have confidence in the service Nottinghamshire Police provide.

8.2 The overwhelming majority of individual members of police personnel including Police Officers, Police Staff and members of the Special Constabulary within the Nottinghamshire Police are dedicated, hard working, compassionate, and deliver policing services with a high degree of integrity. Regrettably, there are a small number of police personnel that are guilty of and vulnerable to, unethical behaviour, dishonesty and corruption. The harm they do far outweighs the numbers they represent

8.3 We all have a part to play in enhancing the integrity and reputation of the Force. This process starts with recognition that we are all individually accountable for our actions and responsible for our behaviour

9. Policy Implications and links to the Police and Crime Plan Priorities

9.1 By having a Professional Standards Reporting Procedure we are able to set out ways that staff can make reports concerning breaches of Professional Standards and ensure we support the organisations 'Vision', 'Values' (PROUD) and 'Plan' 'To cut crime and keep you safe', 'To spend your money wisely' and 'Earn your trust and confidence', ensure all relevant parts of the organisation are given help to improve our service and ultimately achieve the force priorities.

10. Changes in Legislation or other Legal Considerations

10.1 None.

11. Details of outcome of consultation

11.1 None

12. Appendices

12.1 None