



Cleveland Police Ethics Committee

Minutes

Date: Wednesday 29 April 2020

Time: 14:00

Venue: Via Conference Call

Attendees:

Name	Role
Dave Smith	Committee Chair
Richard Smith	Committee Vice Chair
Tresor Bukasa	Committee Member
Georgina Fletcher	Committee Member
Khan Hanif	Committee Member
Craig Marshall	Committee Member
Stuart Green	Committee Member
Jenni Salkeld	EDI Manager – Cleveland OPCC
Isaac Holmes	EDI Officer – Cleveland OPCC
Liz Byrne	Acting Assistant Chief Executive – Cleveland OPCC
Ian Arundale	Temporary Deputy Chief Constable – Cleveland Police
Roger Whiteley	Service Improvement Team – Cleveland Police
Charlotte Rumins	Community Hub Advisor – Cleveland OPCC (Minutes)

Apologies:

Name	Role

No.	Discussed	Outcome/Decision/ Attachment
1	Introduction and Apologies Dave Smith opened the meeting with a round of introduction and noted that Abbas Momtazi has recently resigned from the Committee. It was noted that the minutes of the previous meeting have not yet been approved for circulation and they would be circulated to follow.	

2	<p>Declarations of Conflicts of Interest (if any)</p> <p>No conflicts of interest were declared.</p>	
3	<p>Submissions</p> <p><u>Key Worker Benefits</u></p> <p>JS and IA provided an overview of the submission in relation to Officer uptake of key worker benefits during Covid-19 and the public perception of these behaviours.</p> <p>GF noted that she felt that if the Police have been defined in the government guidance as front line key workers, which they have been, she does not feel there is an issue with them receiving the benefits. In response to the example of quicker access to supermarkets, she felt that if they were on a short lunch break and needed to avail themselves to this opportunity it would be more appropriate than if they had used this opportunity in their spare time.</p> <p>DS queried whether the reaction would have been the same if it had been a nurse who had been taken to the front of the queue as the public's perception of the police as key workers may differ as a result of the focus on NHS and care workers</p> <p>TB noted that it would be good practice for the supermarkets to also provide a notice on their doors that they will prioritise key workers with a definition of who would fall under the key worker category as outlined by the government and when prioritising the key worker the supermarket security should also ask whether the person is in a rush or not.</p> <p>RS noted that from his experience uniformed officers have joined the queue in a discrete way until invited to go to the front but that he felt members of the public's overwhelming view was that they should be invited to go to the front of the queue.</p> <p>DS noted that police officers need to be cognisant of the public perception but that they should be able to avail themselves of the benefits as they are key workers. They should also ensure they are parking appropriately when utilising the benefits.</p> <p><u>Policing Powers</u></p> <p>IA provided an overview of the submission and noted that the Force are dealing with enforcement for public health reasons and are now considering using punitive powers to control and constrain assembly and free movement. IA noted that there has not been a large number of complaints in response to the Covid-19 Policing Powers.</p> <p>DS noted that he and RS have recently provided a written response to the Force on a number of issues raised in relation to the Covid-19 Policing Powers.</p>	

	<p>RS noted that his view is that the overwhelming majority are happy with the balance that has been applied in relation to the powers.</p> <p>GF noted that the powers will be reviewed at certain time points to ensure that they are still appropriate and she feels that this is important. She added that the four E's are important and she would be concerned if Officers were moving through these to enforcement too quickly. She added that she has concerns that officers should not be tempted to use the powers as a tool of intervention for a non-Covid-19 related issue.</p> <p>KH noted that he feels it is currently too soon to comment on the use of the powers and until we are a few months into the situation it will be difficult to tell if they have been used proportionately or not.</p> <p>TB noted that he understands the measures are available in the short term and the powers should continue to be reviewed at the appropriate points in time to ensure they are proportionate to the current situation.</p> <p>DS noted that the public in general seem to be willing to be co-operative with the requirements but there are some countries where similar restrictions are leading to a reaction from the public. If this were to be the case locally we would be in a different ethical position.</p> <p>CM noted that a great deal of the issue is dependent upon the individual police officer, their manner of addressing the issue and common sense. CM queried what training officers have received to address the issues.</p> <p>IA noted that daily updates are issued in relation to good practice and training which includes examples of lessons learnt from across the country for supervisors to brief their staff. Due to the speed of the spread of the virus there have been no formal training courses produced and delivered and training is instead provided within briefings. IA also noted that the enforcement is low level, usually a fixed penalty notice, and if there is an additional offence the enforcement for the main offence is to be used as opposed to the additional Covid-19 enforcement.</p> <p>LB noted that discussions have also taken place through the PCC Scrutiny process and that the PCC is largely supportive of the Force's approach of consent based policing.</p> <p>TB noted that the new regulations also provided the government with the power to renew any of the new regulations every six months and recommended that some form of appropriate training, including the option for online training, should be provided to frontline staff.</p> <p>IA noted that there are a number of information videos readily available on the Force intranet site, if the regulations were to remain</p>	
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for two years formal training would be rolled out but the Force are currently still in the major incident phase and training in its usual form could therefore not be managed at this time.

Social Distancing

It was noted that officers and staff are facing ethical dilemmas in relation to the dangers of carrying out their duties where they cannot comply with social distancing requirements.

KH noted that individual circumstances would differ based on their own home circumstances. CM noted that the challenge is similar to medical personnel but PPE may not be used if officers were required to have direct physical contact with members of the public and queried what PPE is available to officers.

IA noted that officers are using the same criteria and specifications as recommended to medical staff but the difficulty is that the situations sometimes happen too quickly for PPE to be considered and applied or it may not remain appropriately in place in circumstances such as arrest. There is also the difficulty of not knowing where Covid-19 is a risk factor when responding to a situation. IA noted that when a person is in danger the prime focus of police officers is to put themselves forward and assist.

CM queried whether there are any statistics available in relation to the numbers of staff who have contracted Covid-19. IA agreed to supply national figures in the most appropriate manner.

DS noted that the duty of protecting life overrides the fact that the Police officer may contract Covid-19 when facing a situation. IA compared the situation to the BAU approach to officers dealing with an incident where a member of the public may be armed with a knife and appropriate PPE is provided to the best of the Force's ability.

DS noted that there are likely to be officers and staff who have pre-existing conditions which would increase their vulnerability to the virus. IA noted that this has been asked of staff and the wellbeing of staff and officers is being considered throughout. Special measures would be implemented for those officers and staff if required. It was noted that the Silver command team are also driving forward testing for key workers and ensuring staff and officers are aware they are able to be tested as they are key workers.

Social Media

An overview of the dilemma was provided and it was noted that there are risks with inadvertently highlighting individuals, as police officers, and materials which may be in the background when entering pictures on Facebook.

DS noted that he and CM have come across two examples of the particular dilemma through their work on the ICSP and provided an

<p>overview of both examples. One example had led to a member of the public being targeted and the other had caused issue for a police officer within their community. DS noted the importance of ensuring sensitive information is not divulged inappropriately even when the perceived benefits of posting the images are known.</p> <p>CM noted that the local connection with a bobby on the beat is a valuable quality and he feels that on the one hand the posting of images is helpful. However, he felt that it may put some officers in danger.</p> <p>LB noted that one of the issues is that you could be an officer that is currently in a public facing role and could then move into a more covert area of work but once your image is shared on the internet it is permanent.</p> <p>DS noted that the degree to which officers are provided with guidance on what they should and shouldn't put into the public domain is important to alleviate some of the potential risks and issues.</p> <p>IA noted that the submission will be referred back to John Dodsworth to reconsider the current policy in relation to social media.</p> <p>RS noted that he sees the difficult balance with the submission and the key is professionalism when posting on social media identifying themselves as an officer in the Force.</p> <p>IA noted that the image should not contain any third party information and it should not be something which could potentially be used detrimentally.</p> <p>GM noted that she assumes there would be an element of consent before images of members of staff are posted.</p> <p>DS asked that this matter be revisited within a future meeting with representation from the communications team.</p> <p>RW noted that every new recruit receives input from Standards & Ethics on the dangers of social media.</p> <p><u>Spit Hoods</u></p> <p>DS noted that the Committee have previously discussed the ethical issues around the use of 'spithoods' and their view remains the same. They should be seen as an essential part of the protective equipment available to frontline officers but should only be used where the use can be justified and with consideration of any consequences to others. An increased use of 'spithoods' in the present circumstances would not raise any additional ethical issues for the Committee.</p> <p>KH noted that the safety of the officer is paramount and it would be</p>	<p>Agenda item for next meeting</p>
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	<p>appropriate for officers line managers to provide additional guidance if required.</p> <p><u>Welfare of Families</u></p> <p>GF noted she felt it would be possible to ask officers and staff to come forward if they have concerns in respect of the welfare of their families and they could then, potentially, be moved to duties which would provide a lower risk and queried whether this would be the case. IA noted that the welfare of staff and their families is considered and the concerns are dealt with on a common sense basis as and when they are presented.</p> <p>DS noted the point of testing and queried where the police currently sit in relation to the priority for testing. IA noted that police officers and staff could have been considered earlier but testing and tracking is now an available option.</p> <p>DS noted that police officers are obliged to act in certain ways which could put them at risk but that they also need to take all of the protective actions that are required of them to keep themselves and their families safe and to self-identify if they present any of the known symptoms.</p>	
<p>4</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>KH asked if there has been an increase identified of burglaries since the Covid-19 situation. IA noted that broadly there has been a 25% decrease of the major crime categories and these figures reflect nationally.</p> <p>Discussions took place in relation to the use of Webex and CM noted that he had issues joining via phone in the first instance. DS noted that it does feel slightly dislocated talking to people you are unable to see. DS noted that it may be worth exploring the visual aspect for future meetings. LB noted that asking attendees their views individually as opposed to opening up the discussion has also worked effectively on other conference calls.</p> <p>IA noted that in the circumstances the attendees have delivered great responses to the submissions.</p>	