**Report of the Chief Constable to the Chair and Members of the Audit Committee**

**23rd March 2017**

**Executive Officer: Mr Simon Nickless, Deputy Chief Constable**

**Status: For Information**

**Transforming Professional Standards in Cleveland Police**

1. **Purpose** 
   1. This report is to update Members on the work in progress to transform the force’s Professional Standards Department (PSD).
2. **Recommendations** 
   1. It is recommended that Members note the content of the report.
3. **Background** 
   1. Recent findings from various hearings, including the Investigatory Powers Tribunal, employment tribunals and misconduct cases, raised some concerns and questions about the Professional Standards Department (PSD) of Cleveland Police. This coincided with a planned formal review of the Professional Standards Department as part of the Chief Constable’s Towards 2020programme and the Police and Crime Commissioner’s aim, as outlined in the Police and Crime Plan developed in 2016, to establish Cleveland Police as a national lead in terms of professional standards.
   2. The case for transforming professional standards in Cleveland Police was set out in detail in January 2017 and has been widely published internally and externally. It is important to note that the review is about the culture of the organisation and not just about one team, PSD.
   3. John Armstrong QPM is the independent lead for this review. He is an appointee recommended by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary with significant experience in modernising and reforming professional standards. Superintendent John Lyons is the lead Cleveland officer. The review is overseen by a programme board jointly chaired by Deputy Chief Constable Simon Nickless and the PCC’s Chief Executive Simon Dennis.
4. **Review framework**
   1. Three over-arching principles are driving the transformational work:
5. Organisational effectiveness – to ensure consistent and appropriate outcomes as evidenced by robust processes and procedures to resolve complaints, conduct and death and serious injury (DSI) following police contact matters, with clear accountability, responsibility and authority for decision-making within a defined Scheme of Delegation and Governance supported by robust performance scrutiny and internal challenge that ensures high quality investigations and casework leading to the ability to operate in a timely and consistent fashion across all aspects of assessments and casework;
6. Embedding a culture of integrity, fairness and impartiality – to enhance reputation as evidenced by a strict adherence to the regulatory and legislative framework with demonstrable, auditable transparency in decision making and procedures together with effective internal and external mechanisms to provide challenge and accountability;
7. Constructive and positive stakeholder engagement – to maintain and enhance relationships as evidenced by a clear and current understanding of internal and external stakeholder perspectives with regular engagement with stakeholders, especially those who have least confidence in the police complaints and misconduct system and a willingness to respond to constructive commentary and to influence improvements in policing standards.
   1. The review is operating across three phases:
8. To reconcile the past and to properly understand the impact of previous working practices in Professional Standards. It was important to identify and facilitate the perspective of all those expressing concern over the manner in which their individual case had been handled. This phase is drawing to a close, and has proved invaluable in informing and shaping the future.
9. Providing tangible support to PSD to develop improved working practices. The importance of addressing improved working practices cannot wait until a future structure is identified. Work has been and is ongoing to coach and mentor the PSD leadership and wider staff in producing more professional assessments of conduct, terms of reference for investigation, and improving the standard of investigator’s reports. Tasking and coordinating of casework is being re-modelled, and more transparent decision making and governance is now in place. Irrespective of what the future may look like, the importance of swift and rapid reforms to the prevailing operating procedures cannot be over-stated.
10. Determining the future, longer term structure and remit of Professional Standards and progressing from a department solely or predominantly focussing on complaint management and enforcing discipline to taking a more holistic approach to professional standards. This phase is now beginning to move forward, and involves detailed consultation within the force, seeking a wider organisational perspective on exactly what the force wants from its Professional Standards Department. The review is considering a case for any wider collaborative or strategic alliance with one of more neighbouring forces, and is incorporating in its methodology the impact of forthcoming legislative change to the complaint frame, in particular any prospect for increased participation of the OPCC in complaint handling to build upon the innovative approach to service recovery already evident here in Cleveland.
11. **Progress to date**
    1. A Scheme of Delegation for PSD has been drawn up and publicised internally and externally, supported by a Scheme of Governance.
    2. There has been a demonstrable shift in the quality and standard of initial and final assessments of conduct in PSD casework, promoting transparency and accountability in decision making.
    3. PSD senior leaders and staff have been provided with bespoke professional training and development, coaching and mentoring to better appreciate the regulatory and procedural framework.
    4. PSD leadership is fully engaged in the transformational process through a series of Checkpoint meetings.

* 1. An external Reference Group has been established and will hold its inaugural meeting on 31st March 2017. The purpose of this Group is to provide external critique, challenge and support to the transformational process. Group members are drawn from independent external bodies as well as internal staff.
  2. Regular communication updates with stakeholders area taking place. A total of 18 individual cases have been subject of review and scrutiny, 6 of which have now reached a conclusion.
  3. The review team has engaged widely with internal and external stakeholders, including national bodies and representatives from other public sector organisations to identify and develop good practice.

1. **Key priorities in future design**
   1. The review team is currently focussing on:

* process mapping of the PSD work and activity and mapping of current and predicted demand;
* engaging within the force is progressing to identify future structures and the wider and more holistic remit of PSD role and responsibilities;
* progressing to conclusion specific historic case management issues.

1. **Implications**
   1. Finance

There are no financial implications arising from the content of this report.

* 1. Diversity and Equal Opportunities

There are no diversity or equal opportunity implications arising from the content of this report.

* 1. Human Rights Act

There are no Human Rights Act implications arising from the content of this report

* 1. Sustainability

There are no sustainability implications arising from the content of this report.

* 1. Risk

There are no risk implications arising from the content of this report.

1. **Conclusions**
   1. This report provides Members with an update on the progress made towards transforming professional standards in Cleveland Police.
   2. Further updates will be provided as the various elements of the programme of work develop.

Simon Nickless

Deputy Chief Constable