



Cleveland Independent External Ethics Committee Minutes

Date: 26th October 2023

Time: 16.00 – 18.30

Venue: Cleveland Police Central HQ / MS Teams

Attendees:

Name	Role
Dave Smith	Committee Chair
Paul D Woodvine	Committee Member
Tony Traynor	Committee Member
Shirley Johnston	Committee Member
Jayden Foster	Committee Member
Tresor Bukasa	Committee Member
Kahn Hanif	Committee Member
Neal Gillson	Sgt, Ethics Lead, DSE - Cleveland Police
Heidi Spencer	OPCC (Minutes)

Apologies:


Name	Role
Stuart Green	Committee Vice- Chair
Sarah Soppitt	Committee Member
Craig Marshall	Committee Member
Elise Pout	OPCC

Apologies not received:

Name	Role

No.	Discussed
1	Welcome & Introduction DS welcomed everyone to the meeting and started with a round of introductions.

	It was explained that the meeting was being recorded to facilitate the minute taking.	
2	Apologies for Absence Apologies for absence were noted.	
3	Declarations of Conflicts of Interest Members were reminded to declare any conflicts of interests at any points throughout the meeting. The importance of confidentiality was reiterated, and members were reminded that any information discussed in the meeting should not be shared with other people and especially the media outlets including social media. It was also noted that the minutes of the meeting, once agreed would be available to the public through the OPCC website.	
4	Minutes from meeting 9th August The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting held on the 13 th August 2023.	
5	Ethical Submission 1. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freemasons <p>This dilemma was brought to the IEC by NG following discussion at the Ethics and Standards Board. The issue is should the police require officers and staff to disclose their membership if they are a Freemason and if so, what should be done with the information?</p> <p>There are a number of regulations, such as those relating to notifiable associations which require notification to their employers if a force member is also a member of such associations.</p> <p>The other issue is public perception – our police through public consent and this requires trust.</p> <p>TT – noted that he had to inform his employer of becoming a member of the IEC</p> <p>NG – Freemasons are unique due to being a secret organisation.</p> <p>TB – Police officers who are Freemasons need to declare their membership because of the potential conflicts of interest.</p> <p>PDW – Transparency is key and the police need to be open and honest.</p> <p>TT – if you are not doing anything wrong you have nothing to fear. Employment/recruitment should be based on merit and not being a Mason.</p>	

	<p>JF - Section 51(5) of the legislation stipulates that PSNI officers must notify the Chief Constable of their inclusion in groups “if membership of the organisation in question might reasonably be regarded as affecting the officer’s ability to discharge their duties effectively and impartially”.</p> <p>JF -agree with the way the PSNI require their officers to disclose any interests and associations.</p> <p>JF -don't believe this requires them to disclose the specific membership, however, the interest must be declared, and this is classed as 'being in a notifiable organisation' which I would find is important in order to uphold trust and confidence if members of the public have the perception - this could affect officer's abilities to conduct their duties.</p> <p>Summary –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee believe that openness, honesty and transparency are at the heart of ethical policing and are essential for public confidence • Membership of any organisation that has secrecy as a key part of its ethos and requires fidelity to that ethos raises the strong possibility of real or perceived conflicts of interest effecting judgements, especially in relation to issues such as promotion, employment and procurement. • The Committee’s view was unanimous that membership of any such organisation, or indeed relationship, would be expected to be disclosed at any time when it would be reasonable to assume it might impact upon the fair and effective operation of the organisation. • The responsibility for disclosure should rest with the individuals concerned and, where appropriate, they should recuse themselves from the proceedings. • This process should be clearly specified in the guidance and policies where appropriate. <p>NG/DS to feedback to the Ethics and Standards Board</p>	<p>NG/DS</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Matters Arising/Updates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from Cleveland Police  <p>IEC views and recommendation feedb:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of Reference for the Ethics and Standards Board <p>There have been a few changes to The Terms of Reference for the Ethics and Standards Board. Superintendent John Miller is the head</p>	

<p>of Professional Standards. Previously it was Deputy Chief Constable Ian Arundale who was the chair of that meeting.</p> <p>New Deputy Chief Constable Victoria Fuller was approached and was initially going to take the chair of the Ethics and Standards Board. However, she is already chair of the committee that the Ethics and Standards Board answers to and hence there is a conflict of interest.</p> <p>John Miller would also like to thank the IEC, and everyone involved with all the work that has been done. Cleveland Police has recently had some positive feedback and lifted out of special measures and the efforts of this group has certainly been a part of that.</p> <p>On the 20th September 2023 His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) announced Cleveland Police is out of “special measures”.</p> <p>Cleveland Police has been under the oversight of the HMICFRS since April 2019, and following a number of in-depth inspections over the last four and half years, it has been recognised that there have been many significant improvements across the service delivery of Cleveland Police.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of Reference – Members Attendance <p>This item followed on from a discussion at the last meeting in relation to the number of attendees of this committee required as a minimum to make it quorate. It was agreed that 50% of the total membership should be sufficient.</p> <p>Meeting dates to be sent out for 2024.</p> <p>A suggestion was made to do a doodle poll where you can have 5-6 options and you can pick more than one. HS to arrange.</p> <p>Members not attending will be encouraged to send in a written submission relating to ethical dilemmas where the committee make recommendations.</p> <p>Also, a recording of the meeting can be distributed to members not attending but will need to be used no more than one week or maximum of 15 days after the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Code of Ethics – Update <p>A Code of Ethics was established in 2014 because there was a concern that there was no ethical basis for policing. It has now come to a point where the Code of Ethics needs to be reviewed. The College of Policing along with the Chief Constables Council and the Home Office and others have been reviewing the Code of Ethics. The new product will launch sometime in December and the principles have been refined to an essentially 3 principles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment <p>The OPCC will put out a recruitment advert on their website and on social media to promote for new members to join the EIC.</p>	<p>HS</p> <p>HS</p>
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<p>7</p>	<p>Ethical Submission 2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RCRP and THRIVE <p>THRIVE is a model that has been applied to every phone call to the Police to make sure it captures vulnerability properly and ask if there are any threat, harm, or risk. Should this be asked every time?</p> <p>TT – Declared an interest, as he has been in an operational discussion about publication of this with Northumbria.</p> <p>NG – Explained THRIVE - The call taker wants to establish 3 things when someone phones. They need to find out what is happening and if this is something the police need to be involved in. Using the toolkit might better identify if the police need to be attending under different circumstances.</p> <p>DS – The IEC did support the principle of RCRP, but our main concern was how do you ensure that the right support is identified and available. What is the process by which you do that and is the toolkit sufficient to make those decisions?</p> <p>JF - I think elements of THRIVE should be applied, but not on it's own. It needs to work in conjunction with the tool kit and be underpinned by human rights. If it's not deemed to need a police response, it should be handed/dealt with by the right agency. However, as mentioned a concern of mine would be if it was deemed to not need a police response and THRIVE was not conducted, and then serious injury/death occurred following police contact over the phone, would this be investigated by professional standards/IOPC as I'm aware serious injury/death following police contact is a mandatory referral to the Independent Office for Police Conduct.</p> <p>DS – Do we need to use THIRVE if we have already done the Toolkit questions right Unsure about what the questions are but are they sufficiently and cover for vulnerability/risk? Is it duplicating something that is already in place?</p> <p>The Committee felt unable to provide a response to this issue because a lack of information and felt it might be useful to compare the RCRP toolkit to THRIVE.</p>	
	<p>AOB</p> <p>The forward plan Elise has been working on will be brought forward to the next meeting along with future dates.</p>	
	<p>Date for next meeting: Thursday 13th December 2023</p> <p>Cleveland Police HQ / Teams</p>	

