



## Annual Ethics Report

**Report from:**

**To:** Chair and Members of the Audit Committee

**Date:** November 2024

**Status:** For information

**Executive & Presenting officer:** Sergeant Neal Gillson

### 1 Purpose

- 1.1 This report is to update members of the ethics work of Cleveland Police and to provide a strategic overview of the structures and functions comprising ethics within the organisation. This report naturally overlaps with the Directorate of Standards (DSE) report and some items may be referred to in both reports as a result.
- 1.2 The report covers the period 31 October 2023 to 1 November 2024, this being the only report since November 2023.

### 2 Background and information

- 2.1 Previous reports have documented the journey Cleveland Police has experienced. This included the HMICFRS police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy (PEEL) assessments of Cleveland Police in 2018 / 2019, to being removed from national oversight arrangements (special measures), to more favourable recent reports and findings.
- 2.2 Significant work took place to achieve those improved findings and reports from the Inspectorate, and those efforts continue to do this day – ethics is an ongoing journey and the overall Standards and Ethics portfolio is central to this work.
- 2.3 This paper will update on the continuation of that work, plus the new actions and workstreams.

### 3 Ethics portfolio

- 3.1 There are well established functions within the ethics arena which will be briefly introduced. The various functions support one another and are well connected, as will be highlighted, enhancing the collective value provided.

### Ethics and Standards Board

- 3.2 The Ethics and Standards Board is an internal function and provides strategic oversight and the monitoring and scrutiny of the standards of ethical and professional behaviour, including the prevention and investigation of complaints and misconduct matters.
- 3.3 The Ethics and Standards Board has a formal strategy with an overarching aim of embedding the Code of Ethics and achieving the highest standards of professional behaviour.
- 3.4 The Ethics and Standards Board retains this strategy and function, although it has been remodelled since the last report, details as follows. Where previously chaired by Superintendent John Miller, the Board is now chaired by T/ Superintendent Matt Murphy-King, Head of Directorate of Standards and Ethics.
- 3.1 Ensuring appropriate representation and attendance is key, both to the reach of the board, but also to the effectiveness of the discussions that take place on ethical matters. Efforts to achieve this included gaining representation from various investigatory and investigatory roles. Previously these areas of business would not necessarily be present, and turnover in those areas lead to an area which required attention.
- 3.2 Over twenty additional persons, mostly Chief Inspectors, have been approached and join the invitation list. Given their operational roles, attendance will not be as consistent as the core invitees, but their involvement will enrich the board in various ways.
- 3.3 This affords the committee to have representation from CID, Response policing, Neighbourhood Policing, specialist uniform roles, and specialist investigators in addition to the usual lay members, the OPCC, Learning and Development, Human Resourcing, Legal, DSE, Business Support, Executive Project Management, EDI, and more.
- 3.8 In this reporting period, the Ethics and Standards Board has considered the following ethical dilemmas (further details in appendix 1):
- Freemasonry in policing
  - Use of THRIVE and Right Care Right Person
  - Property and volume of unaccounted for items
  - Checking gender on booking-into Custody
  - How *open* should calendars be
  - Charging for missed appointments
  - Informing the narrative, or informing the trolls

- Compensation in train and travel delays
  - Accepting sponsorship to force sports teams
- 3.9 This totals 9 dilemma items discussed by the Board, which compares with 11 dilemmas discussed in the 2022 to 2023 period, and 11 in the 2021 to 2022 period.
- 3.10 The Ethics and Standards Board has also contributed or developed a number of items, including:
- Lessons learned – culture of learning and reflection
  - The launch and implementation of the 2024 Code of Ethics
  - Artificial Intelligence in Policing
  - Right Care Right Person (RCRP)
  - Gifts, Gratuities and Hospitality policy
  - Business Interest policy
- 3.11 Each meeting produces a written report of the meeting which is shared amongst shareholders and retained on the force's intranet site. An example can be found in appendix 2.

#### Independent Ethics Committee

- 3.12 Externally, the Independent Ethics Committee has made significant contributions to ethical considerations and is chaired independently by Mr Dave Smith. The Committee is supported by the OPCC.
- 3.12 The Independent Ethics Committee meets bi-monthly, with the potential to hold extraordinary meetings as necessary.
- 3.14 Full meeting minutes are published on the [OPCC's website](#), alongside lay member details.
- 3.15 The committee has considered and provided recommendations on the following ethical dilemmas:
- Freemasonry in policing
  - Use of THRIVE and Right Care Right Person
  - Property and volume of unaccounted for items
  - Checking gender on booking-into Custody
  - Due diligence in firearms licensing
  - Compensation in train and travel delays
  - Dress and appearance policy, does it discriminate
  - Accepting sponsorship to force sports teams
  - Should the force challenge the Home Secretary
  - Discrimination in policing

- 3.16 This totals 10 dilemmas discussed in this period, compared with 11 in the 2022 to 2023 period, and 12 in the 2021 to 2022 period.
- 3.17 The committee has also assisted in the following operational developments, policies and procedures:
- The launch and implementation of the 2024 Code of Ethics
  - RCRP
  - Gifts, Gratuities and Hospitality policy
- 3.18 Feedback is provided each meeting to the Committee by the Operational Ethics Lead, documenting what has been done with the views, thoughts and guidance of the committee. An example can be found in appendix 3.
- 3.19 Recruitment and membership continues to be prioritised by the Committee which is managed by Chair, Vice Chair and members, and supported by the OPCC. There are 10 members in the Committee throughout the reporting period.

#### Youth Ethics Commission

- 3.20 The Youth Ethics Committee is a group ran by the OPCC in partnership with an external provider. The Youth Committee regularly to discuss different topics, and in the reporting period met once for an ethics related discussion and provided their views on one ethical dilemma, namely:
- Policing drugs – what is an effective approached to managing drugs in communities
- 3.21 The OPCC continue to work with this provider to develop a pool of young people who will be members of this committee and the Independent Ethics Committee have agreed to support this by having a member present at the Youth Commission meetings where possible.
- 3.22 Along with the OPCC, the Operational Ethics Lead works with this group, providing information ethical dilemmas, and how this area of business can influence what the police force does.

#### Ethics Advocates

- 3.23 The Ethics Advocates and the development of the group were highlighted in previous reports. Briefly, the Ethics Advocates are staff and officers of various ranks and roles who have an interest in ethics and have received training and inputs. This included two dedicated ethics CPD events, advanced discussion on the Code of Ethics, and practical experience in discussing ethical matters that impact on policing.

- 3.24 The Ethics Advocates are a point of contact for colleagues to approach regards any concerns or advice, and also will be a function for centralised messages to be cascaded. The Ethics Advocates are a visible and publicised group, with awareness assisted by badges, information on the internal intranet, email signatures, and posters.
- 3.25 The group continue to mature and grow, with membership standing at 60 individuals. This contrasts with a membership 11 persons in 2021. The members currently represent over 29 departments and teams, affording excellent reach across the organisation.
- 3.26 The group have discussed the following dilemmas:
- Freemasonry in policing
  - Property and volume of unaccounted for items
  - Recording crimes – balancing safeguarding and the impact on the accused
  - Checking gender on booking-into Custody
  - How *open* should calendars be
  - Charging for missed appointments
- 3.27 This is a total of 6 dilemmas discussed, comparing with a total of 6 discussed in the period 2022 to 2023, and 5 discussed in the 2021 to 2022 period.
- 3.28 The group have discussed the following matters:
- Code of Ethics feedback
  - Artificial Intelligence in Policing
  - RCRP

### Regional ethics

- 3.29 Cleveland Police is an active member of the Norther Regions Ethics Committee (NREC) which meets every three months and discusses ethical dilemmas and similar issues. The NREC is attended by numerous forces with representatives from the various Professional Standards and Anti-Corruption units.
- 3.30 Cleveland Police is represented here by the Operational Ethics Lead Sergeant Neal Gillson and Superintendent John Miller (up until his stepping down from role in November 2024).
- 3.31 Cleveland Police has raised ethical dilemmas which have been approved for discussion at one of the meetings in the reporting period, namely:
- Freemasonry in policing
- 3.32 The NREC have been advised on the ethics programme employed by Cleveland Police and has the activities have been complimented upon by other forces for the proactive and forward-thinking work. Papers which introduced the Ethics Advocates have been shared and with other forces looking to replicate a similar programme. Durham Police have also benchmarked the Cleveland Police Ethics Committee work in the development of their structure.

- 3.33 The NREC have provided information which impacted some actions within the force, namely:
- Importance of discussing ethical matters
  - What a good ethics structure looks like
  - Managing communications regards contentious issues with the public
  - RCRP
  - Discrimination in misconduct

#### Prevent Team

- 3.34 The Prevent Team has two officers whom work within DSE and CCU, ensuring lessons from misconduct and complaints are embedded, trends are identified, and assisting in ensuring a culture of reflection and learning is adopted across the organisation.
- 3.35 The Prevent Team will present to persons and teams (more details below in section 4) and reports to the Ethics and Standards Board.

#### Learning and Development

- 3.36 Although a separate function which will be covered in another report, it is important to note the role of the Learning and Development Team (L&D) here. Ethics is *the gold thread of training* and is embedded into all facets of training.
- 3.37 L&D deliver training ranging from initial student officer training, specialist training such as specialist investigations, to ongoing training such as First Aid and Personal Safety Training. Ethics is a key message built into the curriculum of all training.

#### Organisational Development Team

- 3.38 Also important to recognise is the work of the Organisational Development Team (OD Team) who work to provide a collection of training and development opportunities, particularly for those in leadership roles. Although documented in their own report, the OD programme is underpinned by the Code of Ethics and goes a long way to enhancing the ethical behaviours and appreciation of the force.
- 3.39 An example of the OD Team's work is the Masterclass Series, referred to in section 4.

#### Ethics Committee linkage

- 3.40 There is linkage with all the ethics committees which assists in collaboration and enhances the collective outputs. For example, the Operational Ethics Lead attends the Ethics and Standards Board, Independent Ethics Committee, Youth Committee, Ethics Advocates and Regional Ethics Committee. A representative from the OPCC also attends all of the above functions. Mr Dave

Smith, Chair of the Independent Ethics Committee also attends the Ethics and Standards Board.

## **4 Initiatives and activities**

### Ethical dilemmas

- 4.1 As highlighted above, there have been numerous ethical dilemmas discussed within the organisation and is in keeping with the view that discussing ethical dilemmas allows the best decisions to be made with sound under-pinning. Such discussion also encourages people to examine the ethical practice in their day-to-day roles with a view to embed ethics into every aspect of business.
- 4.2 An outcome from ethical dilemma discussions may be a definitive answer as to how to respond to a situation. It may also be that the discussion does not achieve a definitive answer, rather it explores options so that if encountered elsewhere, persons are fore-armed with information to assist make an informed and ethical decision.
- 4.3 The awareness of ethical dilemmas in the organisation is assisted by corporate communications and messaging, the work of the above committees and boards, the Ethics Advocates, an internal intranet page housing the dilemmas, and awareness in other presentations (see below).

### Staff development – Masterclass series

- 4.4 After the success of previous Organisational Development Team's Masterclass Series', Cleveland Police continued with the Masterclass programme in 2024. The programme was open to all officers and staff and included two separate Ethical Leadership and Corruption Prevention classes in the reporting period. The classes were online via Teams, and the inputs were subsequently recorded without an audience and made available for persons to access on the internal Code of Ethics intranet site.
- 4.5 One was presented by the Operational Ethics Lead, the other by the CCU Prevent Officer.

### Online material

- 4.6 The internal Ethics page continues to be developed with various material available for all to view. Inputs such as the bespoke Department Specific CPD inputs and Masterclass series are broken down into segments on the Ethics Bitesize page and have been well received.

### Student officer and staff inputs

- 4.7 The Operational Ethics Lead and Prevent Team officers attend every new intake of student officers, as well as intakes of people taking staff roles,

including PCSO, control room staff and more. The inputs outline the professional requirements of the Code of Ethics, as well as highlighting the standards expected of those within the organisation. This is a fixed and valued part of the initial training new entrants experience.

### Code of Ethics

- 4.8 Underpinning a great deal of the work of the force, particularly in this realm is the Code of Ethics which was updated in February 2024. The pre-consultation work documented in previous reports was taken on board by the College of Police in the new product.
- 4.9 A working group was formed to discuss and plan the rollout of the Code of Ethics, reporting to the Ethics and Standards Board its progress. This included mandating the training of the Code for the entire force.
- 4.10 The College of Police provided seven modules for the training of the new Code, including one *in-person* input, delivered by the Operational Ethics Lead, Ethics Advocates, and trainers within force Control Room.
- 4.11 To date, there have been over 30 inputs, delivering to over 1,000 persons within the force, with the delivery programme to continue into 2025. These inputs have been well received and have been adapted to emphasise the wider ethical framework within force.
- 4.12 Other work has taken place to embed the new Code, including posters, banners, and other visual aids across force in conjunction with the Corporate Communications team.
- 4.13 The work of Cleveland has been recognised, with requests to speak on the College of Police's 2025 implementation inputs and discussions to highlight the work completed by Cleveland Police in this area.

## **5 Implications**

### Finance

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

### Diversity and Equal Opportunities

- 5.2 Whilst there are no diversity or equal opportunity implications arising from the content of this report, it should be noted that some topics considered are intrinsic to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion agenda.

### Human Rights Act

- 5.3 There are no Human Rights Act implications arising from the content of this report, it should be noted however that topics considered can often appear to have Human Rights implications, which are always considered.

#### Sustainability

- 5.4 There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

#### Risk

- 5.5 There are no risk implications arising from this report.

### **6 Conclusion**

- 6.1 Cleveland Police, the OPCC and partners continue to develop both internal and external ethical structures to provide strategic oversight, monitoring and scrutiny of the standards of ethical and professional behaviour.

## Appendix 1 – Ethical Dilemmas

	Topic	Ethics Committees	Organisational learning, outcomes, decisions
		Independent Ethics Committee (IEC) Ethics Advocates(EA). Ethics and Standards Board (E&S) Youth Commission (YC)	
1.	Should officers and staff declare membership to Freemasonry (similar groups)? This was a recommendation from the DMIP to MPS although research by failed to show any links with FM and corruption / integrity	E&S (September 2023) IEC (October 2023) EA (November 2023)	<p><b>E&amp;S</b> – the Board discussed if there was a specific need, and indeed if Freemasonry was prevalent currently, would current generations of officers / staff know of Freemasonry, let alone join? There were arguments for and against requiring this. Freemasonry is described as charitable work so could fall into the Business Interest policy. Previous discussions to make Freemasonry exempt on religious grounds have been successfully challenged, Freemasonry is a values system, not a religion. Additionally, if Freemasonry was required, would other groups have to be also? The decision was yes, similar groups would also qualify. Arguments against included the inclusion into private lives, as well as the thought that there is enough positive obligation from the Code of Ethics and other policies to report and or distances themselves from any conflict of interest or inappropriate circumstances, reporting matters as required.</p> <p><b>IEC</b> – The committee felt that the main issues are public trust, transparency, and balancing the rights of individuals. There is an element of secrecy with Freemasonry, and there are, historically at least, issues of membership being too influential in policing. Addressing concerns over secrecy and achieving transparency must not be too influenced by negative headlines. The group did recognise that there are positive obligations from policies (NA &amp; BI), as well as Code of Ethics, and if integrity is impacted by membership, would people remove themselves already?</p>

			<p>Overall, the committee felt transparency was key, but implementation and what happens next were important too. The Committee recommended that people must declare any conflict of interest. Those within the force are to be advised to declare membership of Freemasonry and similar groups, with consideration for perceptions if not declared and there were issues, rather than mandating membership be declared.</p> <p><b>EAs</b> – two groups discussed this and held completely opposing opinions. One group felt entirely comfortable that the force ask officers and staff to declare membership to Freemasonry and similar groups. The main reason behind that would be to address and issues of public perception and in the interest of transparency. The other group felt there was sufficient positive obligation from other areas, such as Code of Ethics and policy, that a person would already declare any conflict of interest or issue. The second group felt the requirement would represent too much of a <i>Big Brother</i> impact on people’s lives and not be proportionate to any potential issue. The group also queried if Freemasonry was a factor in policing at all.</p> <p><b>Outcome</b> – on careful consideration it was deemed that there are sufficient safeguards and positive obligations in place to mitigate the risks presented by Freemasonry and similar.</p> <p>As such, there would be no requirement to require membership to Freemasonry and similar groups unless there was a conflict of interest or issue, at which point appropriate reporting mechanisms exist.</p> <p>This was not taken lightly, and the suspected harmful history of Freemasonry on policing was considered. The 2023 investigation by the Metropolitan Police Service into the same topic assisted – this was a nation wide research into any corruption linked to Freemasonry which found no cases.</p>
2.	Should police THRIVE calls that RCRP would deem not appropriate for police involvement.	IEC (October 2023) E&S (November 2023)	<p><b>IEC</b> – the Committee certainly saw merit in the suggestion of dispensing with THRIVE when appropriate, even suggesting that a THRIVE for sake of it may be counter-productive in certain cases. However, the Committee also felt that they needed to see more of the RCRP toolkit and THRIVE before they could give further support. As such, this will be revisited.</p>

			<p>Update, the RCRP toolkit process and decision tree was shown to and discussed by the Committee who felt it was sufficient to not require a THRIVE on all occasions.</p> <p><b>E&amp;S</b> the group supported the approach, agreeing that on occasion where police were not to be involved, not applying THRIVE was the correct and even ethical approach to take. This will require training, assurances of correct decision making, and professional judgment, but support is provided to the initiative and has been fed back to the RCRP implementation team.</p> <p><b>Outcome</b> - THRIVE for sake of THRIVE is not appropriate if RCRP deems otherwise, fed back to RCRP implementation team who used the points to support the Gold level decision</p>
3.	Property – how to deal with the large volume of property which is not accounted for / added in error?	E&S (November 2023) EA (November 2023) IEC (December 2023)	<p><b>EA</b> – the group agreed that property is an issue that requires attention and action, however, the blanket archiving was an approach they had concerns over. There was reassurance that anything that was linked to a live case, or was due to be retained for a set period of time etc would not be archived.</p> <p>The group felt that individuals would need to manage their property, and if that person no longer worked in the organisation, for the appropriate team to manage it.</p> <p>It was felt that currently measures to manage property properly are not followed – crime investigations are <i>closed</i> without property being disposed of, people retire and property is not managed as part of their exit and similar issues, so the is a performance issue. The group agreed that something must be done, but feel a blanket archiving, even with safeguards, is fraught with danger and a safer approach would be required.</p> <p><b>E&amp;S</b> – the board felt the issue of property is deep-rooted and will require lots of focus, with people being accountable for their property.</p> <p>The board felt that a blanket archive would be inappropriate, although there were suggestions of different approaches, mostly involving local commands, teams and individuals addressing their own property, and doing so professionally from now forward. The current situation is a symptom of poorly managing property to date, so tackling that must be key.</p>

			<p><b>IEC</b> – The Committee agreed that with appropriate care and consideration, it would be reasonable to delete the property. This would be records that were partially complete and entered in error for example.</p> <p>Care to not jeopardise cases or appeals must be taken. And another strong recommendation is that the systems / culture must be addressed to ensure that the situation does not occur again.</p> <p><b>Outcome</b> – the views were passed to those managing the project and the force did archive a high number of items. This was done with appropriate due diligence and assurance that live cases would not be impacted. Additionally, if there was anything more sinister than poor management of property or items added in error being deleted, this would be flagged.</p> <p>It is important to note that a large number of the items were found to system errors – be that duplicates when two people book one item onto the system, or if someone partially enters one bit of property and does not complete the entry – the partial entry would still class as an unaccounted for item of property.</p> <p>The force has implemented Op Carlton to remedy the property issue, managing the archiving of suitable items, reviewing existing property, awareness, and forward-facing scrutiny of property management.</p>
4	Outcome Codes – do we do manage the balance of safeguarding and impact on lives?	EA (February 2024)	<p><b>EA</b> – this was discussed with strong views from different sides. It was argued well that the need to record allegations, whether they are fully investigated or not, is key to safeguarding – are police effectively protecting people if they don't record matters to monitor trends, seek non-convicted sexual orders, building intelligence pictures etc?</p> <p>It was raised that allegations can be made and be recorded with little to no evidence, or even on occasion where the allegation is suspected to be false.</p> <p>There will likely be times where malicious allegations are made and police are complicit in compounding the harm by recording such matters.</p> <p>Another element was raised – NCRS mean that police record crimes where ambiguity exists. The example provided was where a person wrote on social media that a named person sexually assaulted them and another commented “<i>me too</i>”. Without further</p>

			<p>clarification as to when, where, or even if it was the same offender, another crime was recorded against the alleged offender but no further investigation took place as the victim did not want to speak with police.</p> <p><b>Outcome</b> - Each case will be assessed by own merits and it is important for all aspects to be considered.  This was a good example where the boards / committees will not provide a definitive answer, however the discussions will help those making decisions to arrive at the most appropriate outcomes. In this discussion a lead from a safeguarding and investigation aspect was present, as was a lead from crime recording and management.</p>
5	<p>Checking gender on booking in?  Should we make it a default part of the process?</p>	<p>E&amp;S (February 2024)  IEC (February 2024)  EA (February 2024)</p>	<p><b>E&amp;S</b> – this is topical, a recent case where a person who presented and appeared to be male was actually female, and this was only discovered after a strip search had commenced.  There are elements of PACE that may conflict here –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- If the detainees gender is not clear, they should be asked and treat as they answer, unless that answer conflicts with how they live their life;</li> <li>- Code C – searches must be performed and observed by those of the same gender of the detainee;</li> <li>- Extra sensitivity is required when dealing transvestites and transsexuals;</li> </ul> <p>The Board saw that this is important to get right, the management of detainees, including their needs is key. As such, custody staff should be confident in their training to ask for gender when appropriate to do so, and respond in an appropriate day.</p> <p><b>IEC</b> - The Committee discussed the situation regards what is asked and recorded of individuals when they enter police custody, with a focus on ensuring their rights and wellbeing are best provided for, as well as ensuring the correct gender person performs any search.  The Committee queried why this information is not asked already, and suggested that asking for both birth sex and identified gender would capture any spectrum of answer. As for searching, where there is doubt, an informed and considered decision is required, and it would be best to go with a person’s sex as a default.</p>

			<p>The Committee recognise this is a complicated matter, and that awareness, compassion, and common sense are required to achieve a satisfactory outcome as often as possible.</p> <p><b>EA</b> – it was highlighted that sometimes we ask detainees questions for their treatment, others are for recording purposes. This could fall into both.</p> <p>It is important to protect officers and DO's in this, they need to feel supported and equipped to make decisions, as well as protected in cases where negative outcomes arise from sound decisions.</p> <p>Overall, the question should be asked before a suitable search is made only, using previous recording and training to lead to good outcomes as often as possible.</p> <p><b>Outcome</b> – Awareness is key, staff must be sufficiently trained and have awareness, so they deal with such matters appropriately. The views of this were passed to Custody Management who are making this part of their ongoing training and development</p>
6	<p>Due diligence in firearms.</p> <p>The IEC wished to discuss the current suitability checks for those applying for firearms / shotgun licenses as the current process does not include obtaining details of those whom live with the applicant, nor whom has unsupervised access to the address.</p>	<p>IEC (February 2024)</p> <p>Discussed in E&amp;S November 2024</p>	<p><b>IEC</b> – the Committee raised this and spoke with the Firearms Licensing Manager who discussed processes and limitations. The main issue is the National form provided for forces in the application process does not extend to asking about others beyond the main applicant.</p> <p>The force completes home visits and intelligence checks but was not currently able to further this, although the benefit in doing so was appreciated and was something the Firearms Licensing Department were assessing.</p> <p><b>Outcome</b> – The concerns from the IEC were shared with others in the Intelligence and therefore Firearms Licensing Unit. Other forces are implementing Project Titanium which extends the checks made and ongoing obligations of applicants / holders.</p> <p>Force will continue to assess this and will report back on any changes.</p>
7	<p>Open calendars</p> <p>Is there a standard approach that should be taken in terms of how <i>open</i> and <i>visible</i> a person's work calendar should be?</p>	<p>E&amp;S (February 2024)</p> <p>EA (February 2024)</p>	<p><b>E&amp;S</b> – there are positives in all settings – calendars <i>open</i> to all may lead to misuse, or sensitive data in calendars may not be secure. Conversely, transparency is a fundamental part of policing, and collaboration is easier when a person can view another's commitments when seeking to book meetings.</p>

			<p>Also, can managers perform their roles better with access to that information, or do people require a level of privacy?  There were varying views, with people saying their calendar would be open-to-all as they had nothing to hide, whilst others working in sensitive areas may need to safeguard activities.  Overall, it was felt that the default should be that no person can add events to other's calendars without their accepting the event, and that the default should be for a person's calendar so show their commitments as <i>busy</i>, but only those with specific reason be able to see greater detail.</p> <p><b>EA</b> – the group saw this from several angles, and although it was agreed that an open approach may lead to misuse, that should not deter selecting that approach if it were the best option.  The Advocates felt that the default should be calendars to show items in a person's diary, but not the specifics. Greater access should be on a <i>share as needed</i> basis.</p> <p><b>Outcome</b> – this was fed back into the COT meeting which raised the question, and was communicated to force. IT are able to set a default to people's diary settings, and this remained being open in as much as events would show as <i>busy</i> only but no greater detail unless the user alters this.  It was also reinforced to ensure that sensitive information is not visible to all in calendars.</p>
8	<p>Charge for missed OH appointments?  Approximately 9% of Occupational Health appointments are not maintained, incurring costs on the force, both directly and indirectly.  An option explored was to financially charge for missed appointments.</p>	<p>E&amp;S (February 2024)  EA (February 2024)</p>	<p>The options explored included a financial charge be made, either to the individual, or to the Command. The latter was suggested for occasions when commitments imposed on the individual from their Command meant appointments were not kept.</p> <p><b>E&amp;S</b> – the Board felt that the discussion quite rightly shone light on the issue which was a concern, but was against a financial penalty. Root causes were to be explored – did people not see value in the appointments? were appointments made against a person's wishes? and how often would a person be at work and not be able to attend due to ongoing operational reasons?  It was agreed that deeper understanding of the issue was to be explored - if failures were wilful then this was to be dealt with as a performance matter.</p>

			<p>Overall, it was feared that financial charges would be counter-productive, although other avenues to improve attendance rates were encouraged.</p> <p><b>EA</b> – the Advocates felt strongly against financial charges. If made against Commands, it would detract from their ability to complete their function, and if made against the individual, would those in need of support be discouraged in seeking it in case a charge was incurred?</p> <p>More information and examination was suggested, exploring the reasons behind missed appointments. If people missed appointments simply from neglect or similar, that was unprofessional and would need to be addressed by their Command.</p> <p><b>Outcome</b> – Charging for missed appointments was not supported and will not be implemented. Work to improve attendance is ongoing with relevant workstreams.</p>
9	<p>Informing the narrative or feeding the trolls. A submission that invited discussion as to the levels of interaction forces should have with the public, particularly in times of criticism of police action.</p>	E&S (May 2024)	<p><b>E&amp;S</b> – the board enjoyed the discussion, seeing the importance of communications, with an internal impact on morale, but externally on public confidence, legitimacy and policing by consent. There were several points raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The force seeks to address false information if it exists;</li> <li>- Subjudice and public perception are important constraints in this;</li> <li>- The critical voices tend to be from the vocal minority;</li> <li>- Do we seek to air our failings as quickly?</li> <li>- Are the OPCC, PC and force in different positions here, and some better placed to respond?</li> <li>- Balance is key, silence is not always an option and a failure to communicate will lead to people creating their own narrative, whilst being too defensive will be counter-productive.</li> </ul> <p><b>Outcome</b> – this topic resurfaces in the 2024 Code of Ethics training, emphasising how public trust and legitimacy is influenced strongly by communication and interactions between the force and public.</p>

			<p>Although definitive strategies and stances were not to be achieved, such discussions make parties better informed and provide greater understanding.</p> <p>The force's approach to addressing false information in a professional manner, but not getting into debates were seen as mature and professional.</p>
10	<p>Who keeps compensation from train travel? Where officers and / or staff are using public travel for work purposes, and there are delays that lead to compensation, should the individuals involved claim money?</p>	<p>E&amp;S (May 2024) IEC (June 2024)</p>	<p><b>IEC</b> – the group were initially divided, with some saying that the individual should receive any compensation in all circumstances, others saying not if recompensed in some form already. All agreed that refunds, i.e. where the train was cancelled, then the payer would receive the money back, be that the force or the individual.</p> <p>Some believed if that a person was already being recompensed in terms of overtime or TOIL, it would not be right for them to receive compensation also – the money should be paid to the force who in turn recompense the individual.</p> <p>One sentiment was put forward that the individual should receive the money as it was one <i>small win</i> in an otherwise very difficult job. The following was agreed –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- If this was a refund, whomever paid for the travel should receive the refund;</li> <li>- If it is compensation, the force should be compensated and then compensate the individual, via overtime payment or TOIL.</li> </ul> <p><b>E&amp;S</b> – it was discussed and cases could be imagined where an individual was inconvenienced greatly, however it did not sit right that the individual, on public duty, would be compensated directly by the train / travel company.</p> <p>Such individuals would either already be at work / on duty, so their time was being compensated by their salary, or if they were delayed beyond their working day, would be compensated by other means such as TOIL.</p> <p><b>Outcome</b> – it is not appropriate to seek compensation from Travel operators, persons are sufficiently compensated from the Organisation already. The Chief Constable supported this approach and it has been implemented into policy</p>

11	<p>Dress Code</p> <p>Previously discussed in the E&amp;S, this discussion explores whether the current Dress and Appearance policy should be renewed to modernise it, particularly when the EIA indicates it is potentially discriminatory against females.</p>	IEC (June 2024)	<p><b>IEC</b> – the main points highlighted were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The policy seems a bit outdated, it's main premises are set from policies drafted some decades ago</li> <li>- Safety is key in the policy, for example, long hair being tied-up in operational roles will likely always be necessary,</li> <li>- The policy needs to be set some limits though and where people are in the outlier area, there needs to be a consistent, fair and pragmatic appeal and review process</li> <li>- What is an “outlier” is subjective though,</li> <li>- Appearance must not be offensive, and must not bring the force to disrepute</li> <li>- Must remember that in some roles, persons are involved in very delicate matters, such as the delivery of a death message, so the force must have a standard and professionalism appropriate to this.</li> </ul> <p><b>Outcome</b> – the discussion supported the views of the E&amp;S and Regional ethics committees where minor adjustments to better reflect the community would be beneficial, although care must be taken to not sway too far, and professionalism will always be important.</p> <p>The committees have provided their views, and it is for the relevant dress and appearance board and function to assess and act. It is indicated that there will be guidance nationally from the NPCC lead which supports the suggestions.</p>
12	<p>Sponsorship</p> <p>Should the force football team accept monies to purchase equipment? And further discussion into sponsorship generally</p>	<p>E&amp;S (October 2024)</p> <p>IEC (September 2024)</p>	<p><b>IEC</b> – the committee distinguished the difference between sponsorship and donations, with caution and due diligence required in both.</p> <p>If this offer, and other offers, involve the wearing of logos, and / or the other party communicating their links to the force, this would require greater scrutiny, but could still well be appropriate and ethical.</p> <p>Donations however would also require scrutiny and review, indeed would the donator expect things in return beyond overt links to the force?</p> <p>So long as suitable review and due diligence were in place, the benefits from these ventures justified them. The benefits would</p>

			<p>include those to the individual, such as participation in sports and morale; and to the force and public in a fitter, happier force to serve local communities.</p> <p><b>Outcome –</b> The views of the IEC were taken into the discussions in the Ethics and Standards Board in October 2024. Both committees were of similar opinion and such activity will be assessed using Procurement procedures, and principles provided here.</p>
13	<p>Home Secretary</p> <p>When the incumbent Home Secretary made reference that police forces should withdraw from overtly supporting causes such as Pride, should those within policing challenge that?</p>	IEC (October 2023)	<p><b>IEC –</b> it was raised in the committee whether forces would, and indeed should, counter directions from the Government if they went against certain principles.</p> <p>It was raised in the context that police forces were instructed to cease involving themselves in engagements such as Pride marches and “<i>get back to basics</i>” by the then Home Secretary.</p> <p>In that meeting, the relationships between forces and Government was highlighted, as was the principle that policing should remain independent of politics.</p> <p>As reassurance, it was put that at the time of the Home Secretary instructing this, the force was engaged in Pride month and did not plan to cease that in any form.</p> <p><b>Outcome –</b> there could be a duty on Chief Constables and police leaders to challenge the Home Secretary or Government when and where required, although that would have to be done via proper channels and mediums such as the NPCC.</p>
14	<p>Discrimination in policing</p> <p>Do police forces do enough to counter discrimination.</p>	IEC (December 2023)	<p><b>IEC -</b> The Committee discussed discrimination in how the police treat and deal with different demographics of society. This was supported by some information from the force regards complaints of discrimination, training, and demographic data of the force and local area.</p> <p>The Committee felt this was hugely important to trust and confidence in policing. Some of the group felt reassured, others describe lived experience that they believed to show discrimination exists.</p> <p>The Committee agreed that scrutiny is key. The force has some external scrutiny but must be developed. Training is essential so the force should ensure that is effective, and people are happy to call out and challenge discrimination – only then will an appropriate culture will be achieved.</p>

			<p><b>Outcome</b> – a discussion where an outcome would not necessarily be arrived at, rather increased awareness was crucial, and the matter will be ongoing for the committee, and indeed the force, to continue to explore and assess.</p>
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## Appendix 2 – example of the write-up of the Ethics and Standards Board



Operational Ethics and Standards

POLICING CLEVELAND TOGETHER



PROTECT  
PEOPLE



PROTECT  
COMMUNITIES



TACKLE  
CRIMINALS



BE THE BEST  
WE CAN BE

### Ethics and Standards Board 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024

This document is a record of the Ethics and Standards Board dated 22 May 2024, and is shared with the circulation list for information and recording purposes. It is not a detailed minute of the meeting.

#### Attendees:

John Miller (Chair), Karen Naunton (Deputy Chair), Nadine Smith, Kirsten Gowland, Andrew Prest, Dave Smith, Alex Drinkall, Lisa Ainsely, and Neal Gillson.

#### **Introductions and apologies were passed**

#### **Action and decision log**

Updates passed. Regards the **Dress Code** action, an update was provided that at a recent NPCC-Lead Dress and Uniform Conference which was attended by Eifion Swinnerton-Gismondi, the NPCC Lead is keen to hear from forces who have issues such as the one raise din -force previously, namely concerns as to whether the traditional Dress and Uniform policy may discriminate and impact recruitment. The Conference also focused on having a uniform fit for modern policing, including unisex headwear, and bespoke body armour fit for a variety of people.

From the discussions at that conference, the NPCC Lead plans to provide National Guidance for this and other issues in the next 2 months approximately.

The force is keen to press this forward, and discussion to continue, assisted by any NPCC guidance.

Regards the **force's responsibility to challenge the Home Secretary when appropriate**, the Chair explained there was a route in place to do so via the CC and the NPCC. There was also reassurance that if there was a dictate from the Home Secretary or Government so against existing work and priorities, forces would not necessarily jump to accommodate this and may respond internally or externally. A recent example was the direction from Government for forces to arrest less people to avoid prison over-crowding which lead to a message internally from the CC that it was business as usual and teams to arrest as they are required to do so.

It was raised as to whether we have an appropriate paper trail for this. The response was that there is a clear Governance Structure in place throughout the force that would provide records and accountability for scrutiny.

Chair **John Miller updated** as to the following – VAWG; Vetting; and disproportionality in Vetting .

Neal Gillson updated as to the following from the **recent Regional Ethics** meeting:

- the Angiolini Report
- what forces permit in terms of appearing on television shows, gameshows etc,
- an input from an MI5 employee on how they maintain ethical practices in an organisation based on secrecy, deception and actions that would otherwise be illegal,
- an ethical dilemma as to whether forces should ask staff to not display any national flags in the police premises or in private vehicles – particularly topical with the Israel Palestine conflict.

### **Ethical dilemma –who should be compensated when trains used for work purposes are delayed?**

For context, if a train is delayed between 30-59 mins, the usual compensation is 50% of the cost of the ticket, if the delay is beyond that, 100% cost of ticket is offered as compensation.

In a recent case, officers and staff who went on a conference and travelled back by train had a journey which should have taken 3 hours which actually took 8 hours, meaning they arrived at the destination station well after midnight.

It was confirmed in this case that the money offered was *compensation* and not a refund.

Discussion points included:

- if a drive home was longer than usual, would that be something an individual would be compensated for?
- another stated a commute home in terms of driving home from the place of work is not the same as a train ride home for a business visit – until they get to the home station, the travel on train is still part of the working day;
- in any other industry it seems that the individual and not the company are recompensed, should police be any different?
- The compensation is for the inconvenience that could include having to purchase additional food, calls home to arrange child / pet care until the person is home, and the inconvenience suffered by the individual;
- If the person(s) claimed overtime / TOIL for the delay, would that be compensation enough for them and the force would need to be financially recompensed to cover the overtime / TOIL?

Some principles agreed on were:

- If this is a refund, the organisation would receive any money;
- If the journey did not take place, the organisation would be recompensed as a refund;

The outcome was that the Board would like to seek the views of the IEC before a final stance is provided.

### **Ethical dilemma – informing the narrative or feeding the trolls**

This dilemma explored the way in which the force communicates with the public, particularly in response to situations where a short mobile 'phone recording of police action is shared and goes viral, with a critical view of police action.

Views included:

- The force does try to address any information in the public domain which is harmful and either false, or absent of context;
- Doing so is something requiring care due to issues of subjudice, and public perception ;
- The general views locally are positive, with members of the public themselves challenging those who criticise police;
- The whole approach to this seems defensive – are we only responding to criticism where we feel it is unjust? Are we as happy to communicate our failings?
- It is beneficial to the workforce if false information is challenged and addressed?
- Is the PCC, the OPCC and the Force all in slightly different positions here? Are some better placed than others to respond?

Overall, there was a good discussion, and it is clear that current approaches are well thought out, well-planned and felt to strike the right balance. The views of the IEC will be sought.

### **Independent Ethics Committee**

IEC Chair raised matter of the ethical dilemma discussed in that committee over the firearms licensing, and whether more should be done in terms of asking who may have access to firearms beyond the applicant. Work may be ongoing to resolve this and will feature in the next Ethics and Standards Board.

### **Policies**

The Board felt it timely to confirm that where policies have an ethical aspect, they are seen in this Board where appropriate – that would include early sighting on the policy at the consultation stage.

### **Any other business**

None of note

Neal Gillson

Sergeant 2109 Operational Ethics Lead

May 2024

## Appendix 3 – example of feedback to and from the Independent Ethics Committee



### **Independent Ethics Committee feedback June 2024**

Following the IEC meeting 6<sup>th</sup> June 2024, the committee's views and recommendations on the matters discussed are documented, along with any feedback from the force resulting from the IEC's guidance.

Full minutes are created and held with the OPCC on their website, some direct points are recorded here.

#### **IEC feedback to Cleveland Police**

##### **Ethical dilemma dress code**

The committee discussed the dilemma and found the matter nuanced – on some fronts a change in the standards expected of those in policing is natural and goes with the times, but this can go too far. Where permitting flexibility and individuality in how someone appears, particularly in terms of hair for example, there will be occasions when the person has to provide a delicate service, and an “outlier” appearance may be unsuitable.

The committee feel that as the main premises of the dress code policy are from decades ago, movement away from that may be a natural progression, not an erosion of standards.

Safety must be key, so hair should not be untied if long in operational settings, but a relaxing in the colour of hair may be more acceptable and support inclusion and diversity.

There needs to be a policy with expectations, and a process in place for a consistent, fair and pragmatic assessment of those who push those boundaries.

##### **Ethical dilemma Train compensation**

The committee discussed the dilemma and were divided initially. Some felt that the individual is the person inconvenienced so entitled to the compensation, whilst others felt that if the individual was being compensated already, such as being on-duty and therefore paid, compensation should be paid to the force.

The nuances of the type of cases that could occur were considered. If the matter was a *refund*, the payer should receive the payment. If the matter was *compensation*, then the force should be compensated and the individual be compensated. This may be in the form of payment for being on duty, overtime or TOIL (time off in lieu) if the delays caused a person to be delayed from finishing their duty on the allotted time.

#### **Feedback to the IEC from Cleveland Police**

The organisation is extremely grateful for the views, recommendations, and feedback from the IEC. Indeed, the fact HMICFRS have viewed positively on the ethical work ongoing within the force and has assisted in the removal of Cleveland Police from special measures, highlights the value of this committee.

Regards the **ethical dilemma relating to the Dress Code**, the force is consulting with the NPCC Lead on Dress and Uniform, Melissa Russhard of the Metropolitan Police. A nationwide survey is underway with forces, and it is expected that the NPCC will release guidance for forces, with uniformity across forces being pushed, as well a modernising of policy to balance modern times and standards with public expectations.

The discussions from the IEC have assisted in a specific case where an individual who was on-boarded with a *non-natural* colour hair had been asked to dye their hair or cover it with a wig, has been given permission to maintain this hair, which contradicts policy as it stands, until a National steer is provided. Information and policies will be shared with the committee in due course.

Regards the **ethical dilemma regards train compensation**, there is a policy change in process to reflect that individuals are not to claim compensation direct from train and travel providers. The policy alterations ensure that suitable compensation is made from the force only.

A previous **ethical dilemma examining police property** was discussed by the committee, with a suggestion from the force that swathes of property items to be deleted from the system, albeit with rationale and recording of this. This was supported by the committee on the proviso that the situation could not happen again.

This has taken place, an Operation is in place to monitor this with training and awareness passed to all relevant parties, and there will be greater scrutiny on property management.