



# Dorset Police and Crime Panel Complaints Sub-Committee

Minutes of a meeting held at Dorset County Council,  
County Hall, Dorchester on 7 July 2015

## **Present:** **Members**

Bournemouth Borough Council  
Bobbie Dove

Christchurch Borough Council  
Bernie Davis (Vice-Chairman)

East Dorset District Council  
Barbara Manuel

Dorset County Council  
Ian Gardner (Chairman)

Officer advisers to the Dorset Police and Crime Panel Complaints Sub-Committee:  
Andy Frost, Community Safety and Drug Action Manager, Dorset County Council  
Jonathan French, Corporate Policy and Performance Officer (Complaints), Dorset County Council  
Fiona King, Senior Democratic Services Officer, Dorset County Council

Also in attendance:  
Dan Steadman, Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer to the Police and Crime  
Commissioner for Dorset.

## **Election of Chairman**

### **Resolved**

1. That Ian Gardner be elected Chairman for the remainder of the year 2015/16.

## **Appointment of Vice-Chairman**

### **Resolved**

2. That Bernie Davis be appointed Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the year 2015/16.

## **Apology**

3. An apology for absence was received from Iain McVie.

## **Code of Conduct**

4. There were no declarations by members of any disclosable pecuniary interests under the Code of Conduct.

## **Terms of Reference**

5. Members received the Dorset Police and Crime Panel Complaints Sub-Committee's Terms of Reference, which had been agreed by the Dorset Police and Crime Panel at their meeting on 3 June 2013.

## **Noted**

## **Complaints Monitoring Protocol**

6.1 The Sub-Committee considered a report by the Chief Executive, Dorset County Council, which outlined the Sub-Committee's responsibility and working arrangements for handling non-criminal complaints against the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), and criminal complaints and conduct matters that were referred back to the Panel by the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC).

6.2 Members were advised that only complaints that fell within the following areas could be considered:

- Complaints relating to rudeness by the PCC;
- Complaints relating to inappropriate references to people, places or issues by the PCC; and
- Very minor or spent convictions by the PCC.

6.3 Members were also advised they would not be conducting investigations into any complaints as they did not have any enforcement powers, their role was to make suggestions in order to find assist in the informal resolution of a complaint.

6.4 Following a question from the Chairman regarding public perception in respect of the Chief Executive to the Police and Crime Commissioner handling complaints initially, members were advised that the Chief Executive's role also included that of the statutory responsibilities of the Monitoring Officer to the Police and Crime Commissioner.

6.5 One member commented that previously a Police and Crime Panel member had responded directly to a complainant and asked whether this was appropriate. The Community Safety and Drug Action Manager advised that the Panel's agreed Protocol should be used for handling all complaints. He further advised that the current Protocol was set to be reviewed and that he would clarify that point in the revised Protocol.

### **Noted**

## **Exempt Business**

### **Exclusion of the Public**

#### **Resolved**

7. That in accordance with Section 100 A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the public from the meeting in relation to the business specified in minutes 8 - 10 because it was likely that if members of the public were present, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act and the public interest in withholding the information outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information to the public.

### **Consideration of a Complaint against the Police and Crime Commissioner (Paragraph 7)**

8.1 The Sub-Committee considered a complaint against the Police and Crime Commissioner. The complaint was considered against the criteria of inappropriate references to people, places or issues.

8.2 The Chief Executive to the Police and Crime Commissioner circulated a report for members to consider in relation to the complaint. Members were also given a letter containing additional comments in relation to the complaint from the complainant for them to consider.

8.3 Members, following a detailed discussion, concluded that the complaint should not be upheld for the reasons that it had been appropriate for the PCC to disclose the information he had, that he had acted reasonably in relation to his statutory duties and that he had not used unreasonable influence on an investigation.

8.4 The Chief Executive to the Police and Crime Commissioner advised members that opportunities had been taken as a result of this complaint to review and amend the policy relating to the safeguarding of children to ensure consistent and timely action.

**Resolved**

9.1 That the Complaint was not upheld.

9.2 That the Chairman of the Sub-Committee write to the complainant to advise them of the Sub-Committee's decision.

**Reason for Decision**

10. To consider complaints made against the Police and Crime Commissioner in line with the Sub-Committee's Terms of Reference.

Meeting Duration: 2.00pm – 3.25pm