

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR LEICESTERSHIRE

ETHICS AND TRANSPARENCY PANEL

PAPER MARKED

Report of	OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER
Subject	FORCE FAMILIARISATION VISITS
Date	TUESDAY 28 JUNE 2023 13:00 – 15:00
Author	SHRUTI PATTANI – EVALUATION AND SCRUTINY OFFICER

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the departmental visits that were undertaken by the Ethics and Transparency Panel (ETP) members across the force.
2. The report will detail the departments visited, the comments and feedback provided by the ETP members and set out any recommendations that were made.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that the Panel notes the content of the report.
4. Any recommendations made as a result of the departmental visits are to be considered and implemented as necessary

Background

5. At the last meeting on the 28 March 2023, it was agreed that the panel undertake visits to a number of different departments across the force. The purpose of these visits was not only to provide an introduction to the force but to allow for an open insight into various teams on a strategic and operational level. It's important to note that this is the first time an independent scrutiny panel has had this level of open access to the force.
6. A range of departments were selected to provide a good overview of the force, including any specific teams requested by panel members. The visits were timetabled logistically based on location (Appendix 1). Due to availability, panel members agreed to divide the visits between them, ensuring at least one member was able to attend each visit. There was a total of nine departments visited as outlined below.

Departmental Visits

Safeguarding Hub

7. Panel members discussed the link between exploitation and the number of children and young people with special education needs and disabilities (SEND) being referred, including whether an increased focus on this could be explored. There was good discussion around multi-agency working, youth services and social care, with special interest in the department having dedicated social workers. The Panel highlighted that current research has shown that young people with SEND being rolled off from academy schools into Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) is most commonly where exploiters are targeting them as they know that they will have less protection.
8. A question was raised on the number of referrals coming through to the team and that at the moment, it seems that only high-risk cases are being brought to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) due to resource and capacity. The Panel took the view that although opportunities to support and disrupt sooner are being potentially missed, there is recognition of the fact that along with its complexities, this is a significant challenge that leadership faces. The vision for the team and the culture that is being developed around treating children and young people as victims where grooming and exploitation has occurred was shared with the panel. The panel felt that not only would this help children, young people and families get the support that they need but also have a positive impact on trust and confidence and be great learning for other forces to share.

Professional Standards Department

9. A general overview was given on misconduct and the seriousness of breaching the values of honesty and integrity, with examples given of real-life cases and the decision-making around this. The panel was introduced to the force's vetting and disclosure team and teams handling all notifiable associations; including business interests and gifts and gratuities. The panel was surprised to learn about the complexities of the decision-making and amount of work the team undertakes, for example when assessing vetting and misconduct applications and the commitment the team has to upholding their own high standards, with no compromise due to changes in demand.
10. Questions were asked on the training provided on standards and behaviour and when and how often training is provided. The importance of applying a common sensical approach to theory that had been taught was discussed. The panel noted the openness and honesty of the team with regard to how complaints and conduct cases are dealt with and how the culture this creates can either strengthen or weaken integrity. It was felt that the building of trust and confidence hoped from this is clear and a priority for force and should be reflected in the feedback of the force.

Custody

11. Members received a tour of the custody suite with a detailed explanation of the process when an individual or young person is booked into custody. The department is working

on embedding a more trauma-informed approach within the suites, which was demonstrated to the panel members visually within the environment, for example by the use of calming colours and murals with positive quotes and through training provided to the custody sergeants, especially around mental health.

12. Members were introduced to Turning Point and the Custody Nurse, both of whom are available on-site to provide medical assistance and support around rehabilitation, especially in terms of drugs intervention. It was acknowledged that although the effects of the support can take years to surface, the fact that the help and support is being accepted is showing positive signs. Members were taken through the Independent Custody Visitor (ICV) Scheme and the potential introduction of Custody Detention Scrutiny Panels (CDSPs) for which a separate paper has been written to consider embedding this into the ETP's programme of work through review and dip-sampling

Contact Management Department

13. One of the main areas of interest and discussion by panel members was around force performance and demand, especially in relation to answering 101 calls. As this has come under heavy scrutiny both locally and nationally, the Panel was reassured that performance is monitored and scrutinised by the Force's Gold Group. Demand was discussed, including the force's use of PowerBI and the ever-increasing number of reporting tools were spoken about, including Online Home and other telephony platforms. It was noted that although this aid accessibility, it also has the ability to have a significant impact on demand and duplicate reporting.

The panel were made aware of the huge emphasis being placed on retention due to there being a high staff turnover for various reasons. CMD updated that they have ran super-courses over the last year with a lot of energy being spent on upskilling and offering well-being support, with further opportunities being made a priority. The panel had a particular interest in the wellbeing support and the considerations made for staff, given the nature of the role and were reassured that a holistic approach with good wrap-around support was provided.

Firearms, ARV and Dogs

14. A brief introduction and overview were provided on the team and the different routes into becoming a specialist firearms officer, including the bespoke training and authority required to use specific weapons and firearms. The complexities of quick and efficient decision-making were discussed with panel members, including the importance of using the National Decision-Making Model (DDM) and specialist training received by firearms officers when reacting to challenging and potentially life-threatening situations to ensure that there is a lawful and proportionate reaction.
15. The panel explored post-incident and recovery for officers and gained an insight and understanding that being a specialist firearms officer can come with a large amount of stress and struggle, for example, with elements such as use of reasonable force there can be pressure to be able to recall the incident and justify the decision made.

16. Panel members had the opportunity to visit the Dogs section to see how police dogs are trained, looked after and form part of an incident or investigation, with a brief introduction to one of the dog trainers. The brilliant conditions of the on-site kennels at were shown to the panel along with an overview of the OPCC Animal Welfare Scheme and how the force works to ensure the welfare of working dogs is kept paramount.

Tactical Support Team (TST), Road Policing and Drones

17. Panel members were given a tour of the public order site, method of entry room, fleet, TST van, motorcycles and the force car garage. Discussions were had around policing football games, the force's use of motorbikes and the requirements to be an advanced pursuit driver. Panel members were interested to learn that the force operates the 'Bike Safe Scheme' where specialist officers help members of the public to ensure that their bikes have been checked and that they are riding safely.
18. A live drone demonstration was organised for the panel members. The team has grown from one member to four over the span of four years and the team outlined that drones have saved 46% of helicopter use, which the Panel acknowledged has been of an enormous financial benefit to the force. The main purpose of the drone usage is to help in the case of missing persons, searches on cannabis factories and pre-planned events, with images being able to be sent directly from the drone to CMD and allow for a faster response on the ground when tackling crime.

Domestic Abuse Resolution Team (DART)

19. The panel members were given an overview of DART and the Domestic Abuse Threat Assessment Unit. Of particular interest was the Victim Survey completed at the end of video calls. Since September, over 1000 victims have been surveyed with 99% of them being happy with the service received, which the Panel felt would have a positive impact on trust and confidence. It was explained that there are no geographical barriers to supporting victims and the force are now able to support Leicestershire victims across the whole country and world, as far as India and the Caribbean to date.
20. The work of the Threat Assessment Unit was discussed in terms of using clusters of risk to identify high threat (of homicide) domestic abuse relationships. It was felt that there was a link to the Exploitation Team and the work of PREVENT in relation to how they support victims and assess risk and that a vulnerable person may be at risk of exploitation or radicalisation. The panel were sighted on the work completed around problem management plans and the reduction in incidents following interventions.
21. The Panel felt that the handbook that the team has developed is a brilliant resource and thought that it may be a useful tool to roll out to response officers, given the fact that 1 in 5 calls are domestic related. This would help newly recruited response officers who may have limited knowledge of molestation orders and Clares Law and in turn, have a significant impact on victims. The pages on 'language matters' were highlighted

as being great at countering any victim blaming which has been a huge issue across this and other types of abuse for a long time.

Prevent

22. It was felt that this was one of the most impactful visits in terms of widening knowledge, understanding and confidence when speaking about radicalisation and being able to challenge misconceptions in the media, in conversations with others and in understanding why specific communities may have negative views of Prevent. While Prevent is a strategy and not a team, the panel felt that it was valuable to learn about the multi-agency working to deliver interventions and how those agencies share information and support referrals based on need and expertise within the wider team.
23. As most of the referrals come from schools, with there being around 700 per year, it was positive that those early signs of post-pandemic affects are being seen and picked up. It was felt that campaigns within schools are key in identifying early signs of exploitation and radicalisation and they need to be frequent and consistent for them to be able to maximise impact, especially in relation to online platforms and in prisons. The Panel discussed SEND vulnerability and that it was felt this is a key focus in assessing risk of being radicalised, with again, links to exploitation.

Corporate Communications

24. The Panel felt that it was great to have an overview and better understanding of the campaigns being worked on and their impact. Exploitation campaigns were discussed with one panel member sharing findings from young people who have experienced exploitation but not recognised it as such, or in its early stages until a point where it was too late and harm has been caused. The feedback provided by the Panel was that the campaigns share extreme examples which don't often relate to a young person's reality or make clear those early signs of grooming. An example used was the 'Young Lives Campaign' which was felt to be sporadic and inconsistent
25. As a result, it was felt that impact was not being maximised, especially with research finding that the messages may not stay present in young people's minds and help them to identify exploitation or seek help. As many of the referrals come from schools, the Panel felt that the need for campaigns to be consistent is essential in terms of tackling all forms of exploitation and avoiding missed opportunities and young people only becoming known when the risk is high. The force reassured that campaigns are currently puts out alongside workshops a few times a year with the aim of creating behavioural change and providing schools with the correct tools to make a difference.
26. Digitally, the team confirmed that they have now reduced the number of social media platforms due to the high risk being posed for the force. The force now uses an alternative platform which allows for the scrutiny of social media accounts, allows for proper analytics and puts the welfare of the officer as paramount. The team's challenges in stopping miscommunication via social media was discussed with the panel and the incident of disorder in East Leicester was used as an example. The

impact of misinformation from other broadcasting houses was also discussed with the Panel advised that the team have experts in media law in-house to ensure that the necessary challenges are made before information goes out into the public domain.

Panel's Recommendations

27. Following the visits, the recommendations made have been outlined below:

- a. In addition to the ongoing vetting work needed for recruitment, PSD had to comply with the government's request to re-vetting all serving officers following the Casey Review. The outcomes/findings from this review, e.g. any officers dismissed or disciplined as a result and what for are to be brought back to the next meeting.
- b. Suggestion for communications and engagement team to share use of molestation orders and Clares Law work across the force. Consider how the DART handbook could be redesign and condensed for response officers who are attending these calls.
- c. Safe and considered communication of DART, potentially a public briefing, could increase confidence and trust, especially in the case of VAWG, if the team are known to those who either work with victims or those that are experiencing any form of domestic abuse.
- d. A number of similarities and overlaps have been identified between departments, i.e. DART, Prevent and the Safeguarding Hub. For example, when response teams conduct searches in homes, by looking a little deeper at items such as book titles on shelves, they could identify something of concern that could then be reported to Prevent. Could there be better sharing and learning between teams within the force.
- e. Frequent and consistent campaigning of exploitation and radicalisation in schools so that children and young people can recognise the signs earlier, including more nuanced examples that relate to them.
- f. A heavier focus on SEND, particularly in relation to Prevent and the Safeguarding Hub. As SEND increases the risk of grooming, abusers target this group and by seeing them as vulnerable to all forms will help early identification and referral to relevant teams. It was acknowledged that Prevent is already doing this well.
- g. Could the financial benefit of increasing the force's use of drones be shared wider in terms of innovation and cost-effective ways of policing.

Summary

28. Overall, the panel members felt that undertaking the departmental visits was an extremely insightful and a valuable exercise allowing them to really get beneath the

force's surface. The panel fed back that due to the force being so open and accommodating of the visits they had the opportunity to gain a greater appreciation of the work being undertaken and the challenges faced by officers and the force both operationally and strategically. This opportunity for unrestricted access has allowed for the panel to really dive deep into the heart of the force and endeavour to provide some reassurance to communities on the work being undertaken by the force to continually work to increase public trust and confidence.

29. The comments and recommendations put forward in this paper will be taken into consideration and look to be implemented and actioned. A progress update will be provided at the next ETP meeting.

Implications

Financial:	Nil
Legal:	Governance and procedures are in accordance with legislation and statutory guidance.
Equality Impact Assessment:	Current procedures are in line with existing Equality Impact Assessments in place within the Professional Standards Department.
Risks and Impact:	Nil
Link to Police and Crime Plan:	Proposal is in line with the Nolan Principles and Code of Ethics.
Communications:	To be published on the OPCC website

Background papers

Appendix 1 – Timetable of Visits

Person to Contact

Shruti Pattani – Evaluation and Scrutiny Officer, OPCC

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Ethics and Transparency Panel
Force Departmental Visits Timetable

Panel Members – Vipal Karavadra (Chair), Jawaahir Daahir, Louise Bradley and Matthew Youngs

Wednesday 10 th May 2023			
09:00 – 10:30	11:00 – 12:30	13:30 – 15:00	15:30 – 17:00
Force Exploitation Team	Professional Standards	Custody	
Vipal, Jawaahir, Louise	Vipal, Jawaahir, Louise	Jawaahir, Louise (TBC)	

Wednesday 17 th May 2023			
09:00 – 10:30	11:00 – 12:30	13:30 – 15:00	15:30 – 17:00
Contact Management Department	Firearms & ARV Training	Domestic Abuse Resolution Team (DART)	
Matt	Matt and Vipal	Matt and Louise	

Tuesday 23 rd May 2023			
09:00 – 10:30	11:00 – 12:30	13:30 – 15:00	15:30 – 17:00
Communications and Engagement	Tactical Support Team, Road Policing and Drones	Prevent Team	
Matt and Louise	Matt, Louise and Vipal	Matt and Louise	