

Official



**POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER**
For Leicester,
Leicestershire & Rutland
Your Communities - Your Commissioner

Ethics and Transparency Panel

26 June 2024

Ethical Dilemma Pride Parade and Stonewall

Report Date	Tuesday 19 March
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Security Classification	Official

Purpose of Report

1. As an advisory body to the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), the Ethics and Transparency Panel is required to provide assurance to the Commissioner that ethics and integrity are embedded within Leicestershire Police and ensuring that the highest levels of professional standards and delivery of policing services to the public are being upheld
2. The purpose of this report is to seek members' views on the ethical dilemma outlined below.

Request of the Panel

3. It is recommended that the Panel notes the contents of the report and discusses their views. The Panel is encouraged to provide feedback and any relevant recommendations in relation to this matter.

Pride Event in Leicester

4. Leicestershire Police attends the Pride Event in Leicester. This takes three primary forms:
 - The policing operation to ensure and support a safe event discharging our legal responsibilities regarding large events
 - A recruitment opportunity to continue the great work that shows we are over achieving regarding LGBT+ representation in the force compared to the local LGBT+ population in Leicestershire; and
 - An opportunity to take part in the PRIDE march off-duty but in full uniform as part of supporting the community event, our network and our approach to diversity.
5. The Policing operation is the same approach we have for all public events and does not really receive any comment.
6. The recruitment event has a marked police vehicle and motorbike the public can sit in or on and engage with a police officer in terms of the role and work. This is very popular with people of all ages and many of the PRIDE attendees are families, young people and not just those of the LGBT community but showing support to the LGBT community. The police recruitment van and engagement table are at the same location.
7. The PRIDE March involves meeting outside the Curve and then as a group, usually alongside other 999 services such as fire and ambulance, in full uniform forming part of the procession through the city centre. The attendees are in uniform, often

will carry redundant and obsolete painted equipment such as a round shield and they are doing this in their own time.

8. The inclusion provides very positive feedback internally and externally, but also criticism from some groups. For example, there is a Twitter account which regularly tags in Leicestershire Police on LGBT+ matters and has criticised Leicestershire Police and our LGBT+ Network for supporting officers and staff who identify as transsexual. In particular, during Pride Month in June and LGBT+ History Month in February, the account has challenged use of images of the trans flag.
9. An argument is that such support is political and therefore against policing's Code of Ethics. The posts take different forms from threatening legal action against the force after seeing officers from the LGBT+ Network at Leicester Pride with "Police with Pride" signs and a decommissioned riot shield painted in the colours of the trans flag, to general criticism of involvement to highlighting individual officers publishing their pictures. The online criticism is not limited to Leicestershire Police. Last year the account said it will attend Pride events across the country to challenge policing's participation, we did not see this in Leicester.
10. Leicestershire may attract more criticism and comment because we are highly visible in supporting our diversity networks. In regard the decisions regarding PRIDE last year and in response to the criticism of police attendance and use of defunct shields painted in LGBT colours the following decision was made by the force on social media by specific groups and individuals. The decision was fully supported by the internal network and the Independent Advisory Group, with positive feedback received locally and on social media.
11. *Whilst we understand that some may see the link to a political movement regarding PRIDE we do not think that is the reality view within our local communities in Leicestershire. We see that first hand each year at PRIDE where our local communities support the event. This was specifically evident previously when Leicester City were playing at home and crowds in pubs came out in support of the march and event, and last year when you could see so many families and young people engaged. Leicestershire Police is proud to be an organisation where we strive to be a place where you can be yourself and we benefit enormously from our diversity, as this helps us respond and provide a good service to our communities. PRIDE provides an opportunity to demonstrate this commitment to diversity, helps to build local confidence in our service and shows our people we care about this.*

In considering the challenge regarding attendance.

1. *Leicestershire Police will be supporting PRIDE. This will be in the form of recruitment, engagement and officers and staff supporting the event.*

2. *Officers and staff will be off duty where not formally deployed, but they have the force permission to wear operational clothing and be identifiable as members of Leicestershire Police.*
3. *As in previous years epaulettes and anything additional will continue to be at the individual expense and will be in keeping with the values and standards the force expects of all its staff whether on or off duty.*
4. *We authorise the use of the shields and equipment as previously utilised at PRIDE and this is a policy decision made by me on behalf of the force. They have been used for many years, they were obsolete or not used and have been recycled for a positive reason. Our approach has been positively received within LGBT+ community and conversely, I have not seen any detrimental feedback or concerns within the event.*
5. *If there is a formal complaint my expectation is that this should not be focussed on the individual officers or staff members but is a force decision made by the Chief Officer Team. Whilst the public complaint system cannot be overridden we hope that this gives sufficient for all those wanting to engage at PRIDE to feel supported.*
6. *Any complaint or social media negativity will be managed by the force in consultation with the network and if needed the IAG. Individual force members irrespective if they align with the LGBT+ community should not be expected to respond on social media to justify their actions, this is a force supported event.*

Stonewall

12. Stonewall related to the decision to engage or not engage in the Stonewall Workforce Equality Index.
13. Stonewall has come into a lot of media focus due to the difference of perspectives related to political role, gender and trans issues and link to the broader LGBT+ areas. Many different companies and public sector organisations withdrew from Stonewall. Leicestershire Police took guidance internally from the LGBT+ network, the external Intendent Advisory Group, the Police Federation and Unison. A decision was made to continue with Stonewall as it provided an external assessment of our work, there was no similar external independent assessment available and the feedback was that it supported our approach to recruitment, representation and demonstrate our approach to diversity. This costs around £2500 per year.
14. The force does receive Freedom Of Information requests relating to the costs of Stonewall, criticism from some individuals or groups on our interaction with them, there are different views on engagement with Stonewall within the LGBT+

community and there is work and an additional cost to make a good submission to the equality index process.

15. I am sure that many of you will already be aware that the publication of the Stonewall Top 100 Employers based on the Workforce Equality Index submissions for 2023 placed Leicestershire Police once again in the Top 50 (placing 47th this year) and the only police force in the country to do so.

16. Because Stonewall operate on a 3 year cycle for submissions there have been a number of discussions had this year and given that we have consistently featured as a top 50 company over the last two years, and a Diversity Champion for several years prior to that, a decision has been made to look for other opportunities to continue to develop our approach to LGBTQ+ Inclusion, and we hope to continue to link this into the 3 year submission cycle. However, we will not be renewing our membership this year but we will make an informed organisational decision when renewals are due for 2024 as to whether we renew then or wait again before doing so. The feedback from the internal network, Unison and the IAG has positively supported Stonewall engagement and the results has been seen as positive.

17. A link to the full list is below should you wish to review those who feature as a Top 100 employer for 2023. [The Full List: Top 100 Employers 2022 \(stonewall.org.uk\)](https://www.stonewall.org.uk)

Summary

18. What is the Ethics Panel's view on police participation and approach to PRIDE?

19. What is the Ethics Panel's view in regard the principles and approach the police should take to all public events, which range from village fetes, to large events such as Pride to faith and religious celebrations?

20. What is the view of the ethics panel in regard Leicestershire Police approach to Stonewall?

----- **End of Report** -----