

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS & DIVERSITY COMMITTEE – 4 MARCH 2010

DIP SAMPLING OF COMPLAINTS FILES

REPORT BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide members with an update on the dip sampling of files that has taken place since the last meeting of the Professional Standards & Diversity Committee on 29 October 2010.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In accordance with Section 77 of the Police Act 1996, every police authority in carrying out its duty with respect to the maintenance of an efficient and effective police force is required to keep themselves informed as to the Force's manner of dealing with complaints.
- 1.2 As part of this requirement, a selection of complaints files, representative of the profile of complaints and disposals, is inspected each quarter to understand the processes followed by the Force for handling complaints, and to determine, through a structured process, whether or not proper procedures are being followed.
- 1.3 The Police Authority identifies at least one member each quarter to select a sample of completed complaints files for inspection. The files are assessed against a checklist of expected actions to assess their compliance with procedure.

2. COMPLAINTS FINALISED BETWEEN 1 OCTOBER 2009 TO 30 NOVEMBER 2009

- 2.1 On 3 December 2009 Mr Colin Weston dip sampled a selection of complaints files finalised between 1 October 2009 and 30 November 2009. Six files were inspected and a copy of the dip sampling form completed for each case is attached to this report for members' information.
- 2.2 Mr Weston found the files to be generally in good order. Two matters were referred to the Professional Standards Department one was a delay in the recording of a complaint. The circumstances were noted.
- 2.3 The second matter related to a concern about the time that had elapsed between communications with a complainant in relation to a complaint that could not be investigated due to reasons of Subjudice. A standard letter was sent to the complainant indicating that further correspondence would be provided once the case had been concluded, however over 10 months elapsed before the next correspondence inviting them to pursue the complaint. The complaint was withdrawn.

2.4 Mr Weston referred the matter to the Force to consider whether they felt the complainant should have received more regular communication in this case.

3. RECOMMENDATION

3.1 Members are asked to note this report.

M J GOSCOMB
Chief Executive

Any members' queries to Martin Goscomb on (01202 or 01305) 223966