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June 2019

**SCRUTINY PANEL REPORT
2018/19 QUARTER 1**



**COMISIYNYDD
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DYFED-POWYS
POLICE AND CRIME
COMMISSIONER**

**Police and Crime
Commissioner for Dyfed-Powys**

**Scrutiny Panel
Dip Sampling Exercise**

Review of 2018/19 Quarter 1 (January – June 2019)

Public Service Bureau Complaint cases

June 2019

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1. Overview

At the twelfth meeting of the Commissioner's Quality Assurance Panel held on the 13th of June 2019, Members received an input from Mr Gavin Lemon the Senior Manager within the Professional Standards Department on the Public Service Bureau. An overview was given on the structure of the Professional Standards Department and how formal complaints and dissatisfactions are categorised, differentiated and addressed. The Panel was also given an overview of the changes to the Public Service Bureau (PSB) over the last year. It was explained that the up until January 2018 the Police and Crime Commissioner's office had ownership of the PSB and the recovery of dissatisfactions. A decision was made in 2017 for the PSB to move back under the responsibilities of the Force, with a restructure of the PSB then taking place in April 2019. Since April 2019 the PSB have been working on a new model, where any dissatisfactions received by the department are logged, assessed for their suitability for service recovery, logged on a recording system called DISSAT and ownership is then taken by the two members of staff in the PSB to resolve the dissatisfaction. Prior to this model being implemented, once a DISSAT was recorded it was assigned to Chief Inspectors within the Force to resolve. It is anticipated that as the PSB now have ownership of all concerns, complaints will be easier to monitor and as a result should be resolved quicker, providing a better level of service to the public. For this meeting, the Panel were given 9 DISSAT cases prior to the changes and the new model and 9 DISSAT cases post changes to review.

The Panel therefore reviewed a total of 18 DISSAT cases ranging from January to June 2019.

2. Progress made since last meeting

On the 19th and 20th of March four members of the Quality Assurance Panel observed an Officer Safety Training day. This gave the Panel members a valuable insight on how Officers are trained to use 'Use of Force' and the range of different tactics that they are able to use to suit different situations including; handcuffing, unarmed skills, drawing and use of the baton and irritant spray and limb and body restraints. This provided the Panel with information on how 'Use of Force' tactics should be used correctly and will help inform the Panel's future scrutiny on reviewing 'Use of Force' incidents.

3. Background, Purpose and Methodology

The background and purpose of the Panel along with how the dip sampling is carried out and what the Panel is asked to consider is detailed in the Quality Assurance Panel handbook, which is available on the [PCC's website](#).

4. Summary

- The Panel commented positively on seven of the cases that they had been dealt with fairly and appropriately with a good level of service being given.
- It was noted that nine of the cases had been dealt with promptly, with initial contact being made quickly. The Panel also noted significant improvements in cases being resolved in a timely manner since the implementation of the new model due to case ownership being passed between officers.
- The Panel found that in 10 out of the 18 cases there was no or little evidence recorded on the log to note the outcome of the case, whether the complainant was happy with the outcome and therefore why the case had been closed. The Panel felt it would be useful to have a conclusion box added to the form noting a summary of the outcome and the rationale.
- Whilst Panel Members recognised that the appropriate actions were likely to have been taken, it was felt that there was a lack of detail being

recorded on the logs, due to gaps and a lack of evidence of actions being taken, making the audit trail difficult to review.

- It was noted that from the log there was no way to determine when the complaint was received by Dyfed-Powys Police, only the date of when the complaint was inputted and recorded.
- The Panel made an observation that all email correspondence to complainants appear as an email from "complaints", the Panel felt that possibly an email from the "Dissatisfaction and Complaints Resolution Department" may be more suitable wording.

Professional Standards Department comments

PSD is pleased to see that at a very early stage of the new service recovery model being introduced, the Panel have already noted an improvement in the way dissatisfactions are being handled. It is hoped that as the new model (and staff) are embedded there will be further improvements.

In respect of the lack of information on certain Dissat cases (i.e. as to the action taken to resolve the matter and confirmation as to how the case has been closed), these observations are duly noted and will be addressed by the Complaints and Misconduct Supervisor who will ensure that moving forward the Bureau staff provide clear information on the Dissat record to evidence the actions taken so that this is clear for an independent reviewer to see what has happened.

In respect of the comments on the format/set up of the Dissat system, again these are noted and ordinarily consideration would be given as to whether it was prudent to make changes to the system. However, it is worth noting that the Force's IT Department is currently very busy and the Dissat system is going to be phased out in the very near future. The reason for this is that the impending reforms to the police complaints system (which have now have a confirmed implementation date of early 2020) will see the IOPC collect data on low level dissatisfactions / service recovery matters. In order for the IOPC to collect this

data, it will need to be captured on Centurion (complaint system). Therefore, Centurion is going to replace the Dissat system and so in the circumstances it would not be an effective use of the IT Department's time to make changes to the system. In any event, it is likely that any request for minor changes would not be seen as a priority and would be unlikely to get actioned before the system is phased out.

In respect of the e-mail address 'complaints', we note the observations of the Panel but do not intend to change this to 'Dissatisfaction and Complaints Resolution Department' or anything else at this stage. Ultimately, in contacting the Department individuals are dissatisfied and are 'making a complaint' and so it is difficult to see how they would be irritated by an e-mail address which in essence refers to their reason for contacting the Department. Furthermore, we need to keep the e-mail address simple and easy for the public to understand (as well as ensuring it is easy to input).

Questions raised

- A question was asked regarding the difference between the "due date" recorded on the record and the "review date". The Panel queried how these dates are decided and set.

Professional Standards Department comments

This is a historical feature of the system. These dates are not used by us and are self-generated by the system. We don't use them for anything because as far as we are concerned the due date for any Dissat is ASAP and cases should be reviewed regularly. Dissat cases are supposed to be quick fixes taking a matter of days not weeks. The system does need a review, as there are a number of issues with it, but as per my earlier response, we do not intend to review it now as the system is going to be phased out in due course.

- The Panel queried whether there was a Policy in place which states the number of attempts that should be made to make contact with a complainant before closing a case.

Professional Standards Department comments

There is no specific policy, but there needs to be a 'reasonable attempt' to engage with the complainant.

Detailed Observations

5. Public Service Bureau Cases – Pre operating model changes

Case 1

- The Panel felt that the author of the correspondence to the Officers involved was very clear, demonstrating a positive tone.
- The Panel felt that the complaint has been resolved and dealt with well.
- The Panel noted that although arrangements had been made to address the concern of the individual, there is no note on whether the individual was happy with the outcome prior to closing the case. The Panel recognised that the individual would have been spoken to by the Public Service Bureau and would have had this outcome explained to them, however they felt that for evidence and recording purposes, consideration should be given to noting that the individual was happy and therefore the case could be closed.

Case 2

- The Panel felt that this case had been appropriately dealt with and noted positively that there was a multi-agency response initiated and therefore had been appropriately closed.
- The Panel felt that from the log of the complaint it was unclear as to whether the complaint had been finalised. Possibly a box is needed to

show what date the case was finalised. A question was raised as to whether it would be useful to have a conclusion box, noting the date and rationale for closure.

Case 3

- The Panel noted positively that once this case was passed to the investigating officer it was dealt with within 4 days.
- There was a delay overall due to the complaint being passed around before decision as to who would be the responsible individual to respond.
- Members felt that the written explanation of the case closure did not correlate with how the complaint was dealt with by the investigating officer. The officer stated that vulnerabilities had been considered, however no evidence was present of contact having been made between the investigating officer and the officers present at the incident.

Case 4

- From what the Panel could see with this case the complainant had received minimal contact from the Force despite there being two DISSATs and an ongoing formal complaint with a Member of Parliament being copied in to correspondence.
- It was felt that the contact made was intermittent and was mainly regarding the resolution of the first DISSAT submitted. The complaint had been open for a period of 10 months, which the Panel considered was due to the case being passed from one individual to another with no one point of contact or owner. There was also an example of the case not being handed over to a colleague during a period of leave.
- The Panel noted that the complaint seemed to have been escalated to a formal complaint, but that this had not been recorded clearly on the log. The report noted the case had been closed.
- The Panel noted that there was no further information provided within the resolution box and no information to note how the letter of apology was received by the complainant and whether they were happy for the case to

be closed. There was also no evidence of discussions between held between the Force and complainant.

Case 5

- The Panel felt that there is no evidence on the form to note how the case was dealt with. It was recognised that the complaint may have been dealt with via phone calls, but there is no evidence or audit trail on what was discussed. The Panel were therefore unable to comment on how the case had been dealt with.

Case 6

- Members acknowledged the low nature of complaint meant that the case was finalised quickly, however it was felt that a courtesy call or some form of acknowledgement would have been appropriate before closing the case.

Case 7

- Members noted positively that the Force Communications Centre had acted promptly to review the calls to set the investigation in motion.
- Members felt that as within earlier cases, there is no evidence to show why the complaint was closed and what the outcome was. The Panel felt it would be useful to have a case summary or case outcome box on the form, which would ask the officer to provide a description as evidence of how the case was concluded.

Case 8

- The Panel felt that the recording of the complaint was difficult to follow with evidence gaps in the timeline. It was noted that there was no evidence recorded as to whether the first dissatisfaction had been finalised, as the areas in which complainant was unhappy about seem to remain unaddressed. Members recognised that action may have been taken but this was not evidenced on the log.

Case 9

- The Panel felt that the complaint had been dealt with promptly, with initial contact being made with complainant quickly.
- The Panel felt that the complaint had been investigated fairly and that it was clear that the complainant was satisfied with the action being taken.

6. Public Service Bureau Cases – Post operating model changes

Case 10

- This case had not yet been finalised and it was therefore difficult for Panel to comment.

Case 11

- This case was logged and resolved immediately, with an update being logged as evidence.
- This case was dealt with fairly and appropriately, giving a good level of service to the complainant.

Case 12

- The Panel felt that this case had been actioned promptly with early initial contact being made to complainant.
- It was felt that from the record it was unclear as to whether initial complaint had been addressed. As in previous cases it was felt that due to a lack of detail recorded on the complaint log, it was difficult to understand whether complaint had been appropriately closed.

Case 13

- In the Panel's opinion the complainant was initially given good customer service with contact being made quickly asking complainant for further details regarding their case.

- The Panel also noted that the complainant was asked several times if they wished to make a formal complaint due to the nature of the case, the Panel felt that this was positive, as it was ensuring that the caller understood their rights.
- It was also thought that the complainant was given good advice regarding their right to contact Victim Support.
- The Panel noted that an improvement could be made in ensuring all attempts to contact the complainant are logged to demonstrate all actions undertaken to update the complainant.

Case 14

- The Panel felt that there was a delay with this case receiving attention as it was re-assigned to a few different officers before being prioritised. As this case involved a vulnerable individual affected by an alleged crime, it was felt that this could have been prioritised sooner.
- Again, the Panel noted that there was no record of action being taken and therefore no evidence or reasons given as to why the case had been closed.

Case 15

- The Panel felt that this case had been dealt with openly and that the timeline of events had been recorded well on the log.
- The Panel did feel that the reason given to the complainant was based on assumption rather than fully investigating the concern. However, the Panel noted that the complainant was happy with the response given.

Case 16

- This case was found to have been logged and progressed swiftly by the Customer Service Advisor.
- However, the Panel did note some missing information not recorded on the form including the complainant's address.

Case 17

- The Panel thought that this case had been dealt with well and as a result had prevented a complaint being unnecessarily escalated.

Case 18

- This case was dealt with quickly and was closed within one day of being logged.
- The Panel felt that possibly a reference to the availability of the Body Worn Video footage could have been made within the log as the complainant had specifically referred to this.
- It was noted that good advice was given to complainant in relation to submitting a Freedom of Information request.