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DYFED-POWYS
POLICE AND CRIME
COMMISSIONER

Quality Assurance Panel Handbook

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1.0	27/09/2016	Hannah Hyde	
2.0	26/04/2017	Caryl Bond	To reflect the addition of reviewing FCC calls
3.0	11/01/2018	Claire Bryant	Changes to reflect developments to the QAP remit and frequency of meetings
4.0	21/06/2018	Caryl Bond	Further Changes to reflect developments to the QAP remit, membership size and frequency of meetings.

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1. Volunteer Policy

This document should be read in conjunction with the Police and Crime Commissioner's Volunteer Policy. The Policy is an overarching policy covering the broad principles of volunteering for the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). All volunteers will be provided with a copy of the Policy. It is also available on the PCC's [website](#) or by request to the Commissioner's office.

The Policy provides further information on the following aspects of volunteering:

- 1) Management of the Volunteer Schemes;
- 2) Eligibility criteria;
- 3) Recruitment, application and vetting;
- 4) Training;
- 5) Probationary period and tenure;
- 6) Volunteer roles and responsibilities;
- 7) Expenses and insurance;
- 8) Termination of appointment;
- 9) Confidentiality and disposing of documentation;
- 10) Publicity guidelines; and
- 11) Settling difference and complaints against the Police.

2. Quality Assurance Panel Handbook

The Quality Assurance Panel has been established to review the quality of Police contact with the public, in a transparent and independent manner, on behalf of the communities within the Dyfed-Powys area.

The Panel will review any area of police contact with the public they may be called upon to look at, for example, complaints, Police handling of calls in to the Force's Communication Centre i.e. 101, 999, Stop and Search records, Hate Crime Incidents etc.

This Handbook provides detailed guidance on the role of the Quality Assurance Panel.

3. Management of the Quality Assurance Panel

The running of the Panel is co-ordinated within the PCC's office. Panel Members will be provided with a single point of contact on joining the scheme, and will be kept updated of any changes.

4. Recruitment and Eligibility

The Panel will consist of a maximum of 15 individuals who meet the eligibility criteria detailed in the Role Specification at [Appendix A](#). The OPCC will advertise positions as and when vacancies open up.

The eligibility criteria will form the basis for shortlisting suitable applicants to become a Panel Member.

Applicants on the shortlist will be invited to attend an informal interview at DPP Headquarters (HQ) in Carmarthen. They will also be asked to undertake a short practical exercise based on scrutiny.

A final decision will be made by the interviewing team and communicated in writing to the applicant. Panel Members will be appointed pending Non Police Personnel Vetting (Level 2) clearance being granted. Appointment to the Panel will be set for an initial term of three years.

We welcome applications from diverse backgrounds and are happy to assist those who may require additional support in applying and participating in the Panel. Each application will be judged on its own merits and in order to safeguard the independence of the Panel, the Commissioner reserves the right to refuse any application.

Feedback will be provided to unsuccessful applications, on request.

5. Training

Successful applicants will be asked to attend an initial training day at DPP HQ, where inputs will be provided by the PCC's office, and any other relevant persons.

Panel Members will be informed in greater detail of the review process, i.e. the information they will be asked to scrutinise, the way in which they should provide feedback, and how their findings will be reported and acted upon.

Panel Members may be asked to attend DPP HQ for refresher training, or training on specific areas, as and when it is deemed necessary by the PCC's office, or if a need has been identified by the Panel. Panel Members may liaise with the PCC's office about any training requirements they feel are relevant to the role.

6. The Scrutiny Process

The Quality Assurance Panel will meet on a bi-monthly basis; 6 times a year. The PCC's staff will provide background information such as performance data,

national and local developments or feedback from other assurance functions in order to advise the Panel's future activities. A rolling forward work plan for each financial year will be drafted with Members, which will set out each meeting's areas of focus.

Members will be expected to attend the 6 core meetings over the year. The Panel meetings will be held at DPP HQ in Carmarthen, as the confidential information scrutinised by the Panel cannot be removed from HQ. It is the intention that as the Panel's activities develop, there will be additional engagement meetings held across Dyfed-Powys with community groups, this will help gain a greater insight into the issues that different individuals face and their experiences.

A quorum is needed for a scheduled meeting to take place, which is at least 7 of the current Panel membership.

Meetings will last a day, with lunch and refreshments provided.

During the day, the Panel will usually examine and scrutinise a number of case files relating to the area of focus which were closed during the preceding 6 months. If the selection of cases does not allow a sufficient pool to choose a dip sample from, cases may be requested from up to the preceding 12 months. The PCC's staff will request a full case list prior to the Panel Meeting and randomly select the dip sample for scrutiny.

The Panel will be split into smaller groups to scrutinise the cases. Having a number of individuals considering the same case will result in balanced and objective feedback.

The Panel is required to electronically review certain types of files, which will require members to view read-only copies of documents on a PC screen. It is therefore considered essential that Panel members have basic I.T. skills to undertake this task, including but not limited to navigating through electronic files and documents.

For each case scrutinised, the Panel will be asked to consider whether it was handled in a fair and proportionate manner; looking at issues such as the tone and timeliness of correspondence and updates, the use of jargon or acronyms, and whether they felt the outcomes were suitable. The Panel will ensure that complaints and misconduct cases are dealt with consistently and fairly, for officers, staff and those with protected characteristics. Any perceived unfairness

should be highlighted and reported upon by the Quality Assurance Panel for further review.

When scrutinising calls the Panel will be asked to consider a variety of aspects including: the manner of the call handler, whether the caller's needs are identified, the way in which the information has been recorded and the timeliness of the calls; with the appropriate responses to emergency calls being identified and actioned.

When reviewing any types of cases, the Panel will fill in report forms noting their feedback and findings on each case. From these forms the OPCC will produce a report, which, after being approved by the Members, will be shared with the head of the relevant department / strategic lead. The report will highlight any concerns raised by the Panel, any areas for improvement, and any areas of best practice.

The relevant department head will be asked to provide a formal response to the issues identified by the Panel. Both the Panel report and the formal response will be submitted to the Commissioner for consideration. The report will also be provided to Dyfed-Powys Police's Audit and Quality Assurance Group to ensure appropriate oversight of any subsequent actions. Reports will be published on the PCC's website.

7. Impartiality and Confidentiality

During the course of their duties, Quality Assurance Panel Members will acquire considerable personal and confidential information about individuals and police matters. They are therefore asked to sign an Undertaking of Confidentiality Agreement on joining the Panel. Panel Members should be aware that the improper disclosure of information acquired during a panel meeting may attract civil or criminal proceedings.

Volunteers should also notify the OPCC if they are arrested or charged with a criminal offence, or are under investigation. They may be suspended from undertaking further volunteering duties pending the outcome of any proceedings.

Appendix A

Quality Assurance Panel Member – Role Specification	
The criteria contained within this Role Specification will form the basis for shortlisting suitable applicants to become a Panel Member. These criteria are the necessary requirements to enable an effective performance within the role.	
Criterion	Competency
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be 18 years of age or over; • Must live or work in the Dyfed-Powys area (Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire or Powys); • Must be willing to travel to Dyfed-Powys Police Headquarters in Carmarthen to attend Panel meetings; • Must be independent of the Police and the Criminal Justice System, i.e. the OPCC will not appoint serving police officers, police staff, serving members of the OPCC itself, special constables, or anybody with a direct involvement in the criminal justice system, such as solicitors or probation officers; • A person who has been employed by Dyfed-Powys Police Force or the OPCC must have a minimum 1 year break before being appointed to serve on the Panel. • A person who is on the Police and Crime Panel or is a councillor or an employee of a council which is represented on the Police and Crime Panel is not eligible for appointment to the Quality Assurance Panel; • Must declare of any significant political activity which includes holding office, public speaking, making a recordable donation or candidature for election in the last 5 years; Must be granted vetting clearance once through the interview stage.
Working with people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to demonstrate the ability to work as part of a team; • The ability to establish and maintain good working relationships with a wide range of people.
Effective communication skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing; • The ability to interpret written / statistical information; • Must have basic IT skills, including, but not limited to, navigating through electronic files and documents; • Able to demonstrate the ability to manage commitments and make a reliable contribution to the Panel.
Scrutiny skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous experience in a role involving analysing, reviewing

	<p>or developing services, evaluating performance or inspection;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates the ability to question, challenge, weigh up issues, and make balanced, reasonable, proportionate and objective judgements.
Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to demonstrate enthusiasm for improving the service user's experience. • Ability to attend the 6 core meetings a year.
Respect for people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to treat all people fairly and with respect, to value diversity and respond sensitively to difference; • Demonstrates the ability to be open to new ideas and methods of working.