

Agenda item

Police and Crime Panel

Meeting to be held on 12 October 2015

COMPLAINTS – LANCASHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL.

Contact for further information:

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Executive Summary

This report sets out details of a complaint made by Mrs L against the Panel. The complaint relates to the way that the Panel considered a written statement made by Mrs L on 14th January 2015 and reported to the meeting of the Panel on 25th January 2015.

Recommendation

That the Panel:

1. Note the report in relation to Complaint against the Panel.
2. Note the answers to the questions raised by Mrs L.

Background and Advice

Mrs L complained about:

- The inadequate response to her statement of 14th January to the Chair of the Panel.
- That the Panel failed to scrutinise the Police and Crime Commissioner with regards the legal requirements for him to publish information.
- In relation to her statement inaccurate Minutes of the Panel of 25th January 2015.
- Being informed there was no complaints procedure for complaints against the Panel.

a) Complaints against the Panel.

Mrs L requested a copy of the complaints procedure for complaints against the Panel. There is no a formal written procedure similar to the procedures for complaints against the Commissioner, and Mrs L was informed accordingly. However the Panel had agreed that any complaints about it should be

referred to Chair of the Panel who with the assistance of the Secretary will try to resolve the complaint. The Secretary via the Chair has apologised for not making it clear at the outset that Mrs L could complain to the Chair.

b) Inadequate Response and Minutes of the Panel of 25th January

A copy of Mrs L statement of 14th January and the minute of 25th January is attached (....).

Mrs L statement was circulated and considered by the Panel, and the views of the Commissioner were sought upon the statement. The minutes reflected discussion and the information given to the Panel, and to that extent the minutes are correct. Neither the Panel nor the Chair were given any details as regards Mrs L complaint against the Police.

Mrs L says the response appears to her to demonstrate the rather dismissive and disinterested attitude the Panel took when considering her statement. Both the Chair and Secretary accept that the response does not reflect the main issues set out in the statement, and on behalf of the Panel the Chair has apologised for not properly addressing the issues raised in the statement.

c) Questions to the Commissioner

The Chair has asked the Police & Crime Commissioner to consider and answer direct to Mrs L the following questions from Mrs L statement of 14th January:

- i. Has the Commissioner raised the low level investigation figures with the Chief Constable in 2014?
- ii. Is the Commissioner monitoring complaints submitted by victims of crime bearing in mind that victims of crime are a priority in the document "Five Promises to Victims and Witnesses (March 2013)".

The Chair has invited Mrs L to this meeting of the Panel so that she can express any concerns she may still have as regards her questions or any other questions direct to the Panel.

d) That the Panel failed to scrutinise the Police and Crime Commissioner with regards the legal requirements for him to publish information.

This matter was raised by Mrs L direct to the Commissioner about the availability of minutes of the Strategic Scrutiny meetings and they are now published on the Commissioner's web site.

Finally in her complaint Mrs L referred to reports from the Home Affairs Committee over recent years about the work of Commissioners. Whilst the Commissioner does occasionally make comments upon these reports, the Chair has agreed that the Panel should also look at these reports in relation to the work of Commissioner.

The Panel are asked to note the current position regarding this complaint and the questions asked by Mrs L.

Consultations

N/A

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Legal Implications

Members have agreed that complaints against the Panel itself should be addressed to the Chairman of the Panel who with the assistance of the Secretary will try to resolve the complaint. If a satisfactory response is not received the complainant can refer the matter to the Local Government Ombudsman:

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Risk management

If the complaint is not satisfied the complainant can refer the matter to the Local Government Ombudsman

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 List of Background Papers

<u>Paper</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Contact/Directorate/Tel</u>
Minutes	January 2015	David Fairclough HR, Legal & Corporate Services 01254 585642