

**OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER
FOR HUMBERSIDE
DECISION RECORD**

Decision Record Number: **31/2022**

Title: Complaint Handling Triage Team

Executive Summary:

The PCC identified good practice in complaints handling elsewhere and has encouraged the force to establish 3 posts of Initial Complaint Resolution officers within PSD for a period of 3 years at a cost of £96,480 wef January 2022, following funding from the PCC the 3 posts will form part of the staff target operating model of Humberside Police.

The funding is made available from efficiencies within the OPCC budget.

Decision:

To provide funding for three years to establish the Triage team.

Background Report: Open

Police and Crime Commissioner for Humberside

I confirm I have considered whether or not I have any personal or prejudicial interest in this matter and take the proposed decision in compliance with my code of conduct.

Any such interests are recorded below.

The above decision has my approval.

Signature



Date 19/07/2022

**POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER
FOR HUMBERSIDE**

**SUBMISSION FOR:
DECISION**

OPEN

Title: Complaint Handling Triage Team

Date: January 2022

1. Executive Summary

The PCC identified good practice in complaints handling elsewhere and has encouraged the force to establish 3 posts of Initial Complaint Resolution officers within PSD for a period of 3 years at a cost of £96,480 wef January 2022, following funding from the PCC the 3 posts will form part of the staff target operating model of Humberside Police.

The funding is made available from efficiencies within the OPCC budget.

2. Recommendation(s)

To provide funding for three years to establish the Triage team of £96,480 annually.

3. Background

As a result of the Police Complaint and Conduct Reforms of 2020 the OPCC became the review body for public complaints. The legislation gave OPCC's options around their level of involvement in the recording and management of Police Complaints. Level 3 being the most involved with OPCC's taking on the resolution of all police complaints themselves, Level 1 being the taking on of the review function only and level 2 being somewhere in between. The vast majority of OPCC's opted for Level 1 and that is the position here in Humberside. In addition the legislative changes allow a period of time for the complaint handler to resolve a complaint without formal recording of it under Schedule 3 of the Police Reform Act 2002, this is commonly referred to as 'Service Recovery'.

The current complaint management process is focussed on the FCR attempting initial service recovery if the dissatisfied person rings in direct. If the complaint is received directly within PSD, an attempt is made to service recover the complaint but this is limited by the current capacity within the Team. It should be noted that if the complainant is unhappy with an attempt to service recover their complaint and they insist it is recorded under Schedule 3 it should so be recorded. Currently it is acknowledged that Humberside PSD provide an excellent service to complainants whose complaints are recorded within Schedule 3. The instigation of an Initial Complaint Resolution Team will not reduce this service. It will also not reduce the number of expressions of dissatisfaction the force receives. What it will do is provide

the complainant with a better customer contact with the force when they are dissatisfied.

Benchmarking by the OPCC has identified that Humberside Police are one of the few forces nationally that does not have a specific Team within their Professional Standards Department dedicated to service recovery activities. This was illustrated in the latest IOPC figures, where on average, most other Forces deal with 38% of complaints through service recovery whilst Humberside deal with 8%.

To address these issues and improve quality of service to complainants, it is proposed via the OPCC that a dedicated Team be established consisting of 3 posts graded as Scale 5. The important ingredient for the success of the team will be the recruitment of the right people who possess a temperament for dealing with constant dissatisfaction, they will have excellent communication skills and would benefit from experience in a customer service role, They will deal with complaints through contact, explanation and where appropriate apology avoiding formal recording of the matter and improved customer service. This process is becoming the standard approach by most forces and is viewed as good practice by the IOPC.

It is considered that the 3 posts will be adequate to achieve capacity to attempt service recovery of all complaints received by the force based on current numbers. Humberside logged 1406 complaints in 2020/21 of those 1264 were formally recorded under Schedule 3. This equates to 8% being dealt with outside Schedule 3 compared to 38% nationally. To achieve this it is anticipated that the Complaint Handler will need to research a number of available sources to be able to provide a reasonable and proportionate explanation, they would include police systems, BWV footage, policing policies and SOP's, as well as the criminal law and the Police Conduct and Complaint Management Regulations. The team ideally will be located at Priory Police Station with the current Complaint Management Sergeant managing them on a day to day basis and with the support of the wider PSD function available in the same building.

4. Options

There are three options.* More can be included and please include narrative for each option

Option 1 - Do nothing - don't fund

The force have budgetary pressures that mean expanding police staff at this time is not an option without support to pump prime.

Option 2 – Fund partial contribution

A smaller team will not meet expected demand for the service and will lead to heightened dissatisfaction.

Option 3 – Fund full amount

The recommendation is that an OPCC funded Initial Complaints Resolution Team (Service Recovery) comprising 3 x Police Staff be established within PSD. The team

would be supervised by PSD and housed within the Force estate. It is requested that the team are accommodated within Priory Police Station as this would allow the team to be supported by the wider PSD function within the same building

5. Risks

The success of the team is heavily reliant upon the recruitment of the right people with the skills and temperament to deal with disgruntled people. This will be the focus of the recruitment process. The commitment of funding for 3 years provides a sufficient period of time for the team to become embedded and the benefits realised.

6. Contribution to Delivery of the Police and Crime Plan

This investment links directly with Aim 1 of the plan, Engaged, Resilient and Inclusive Communities. The team provides opportunity to directly improve the trust and confidence of policing as well as provide clear routes to raise concerns.

7. Financial Implications

This requires an annual investment of circa £100k which the PCC would cover the investment for the first three years before the force absorbs cost into base budget.

8. Legal Implications

None

9. Equalities Implications

None

10. Consultation

This has been designed in consultation with the PCC office and the force taking known good practice from throughout the policing family.

11. Communication Issues

None

12. Background documents

None

13. Publication

OPEN

This matrix provides a simple check list for the things you need to have considered within your report. If there are no implications please state

I have informed and sought advice from HR, Legal, Finance, OPCC officer(s) etc prior to submitting this report for official comments	Yes
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Is this report proposing an amendment to the budget?	Yes
Value for money considerations have been accounted for within the report	Yes
The report is approved by the relevant Chief Officer	Yes
I have included any procurement/commercial issues/implications within the report	Yes
I have liaised with Corporate Communications on any communications issues	Yes
I have completed an Equalities Impact Assessment and the outcomes are included within the report	N/A
I have included any equalities, diversity and or human rights implications within the report	Yes
Any Health and Safety implications are included within the report	Yes
I have included information about how this report contributes to the delivery of the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan	Yes