

Joint Audit & Ethics Committee – Monday, 14th March 2022

Dip-Sampling of Complaints – Grievance Audit

Report by Committee Members Paul Richardson and David Jones

1. Introduction

- 1.1 A visit was undertaken to Lancashire Constabulary HQ on behalf of the Joint Audit & Ethics Committee (JAEC) on 26th January 2022 to conduct an audit of grievance cases closed during the period October 1st to December 31st 2021.
- 1.2 David Jones (DJ) and Paul Richardson (PR), JAEC members, initially met with Emma Cooke (EC), Constabulary Employee Relations Manager, and were provided with documentation relating to the current grievance procedure, introduced in June 2020 as well as files which had been closed during the reference period.
- 1.3 DJ and PR wish to place on record their thanks to EC for the time and effort which had gone into preparing for the audit and for the assistance provided on the day

2. Grievance file audit findings

- 2.1 A total of ten files were examined, comprising all the closed cases during the period under review. Of those ten files, eight had been progressed under the June 2020 procedure with the remaining two being dealt with under the previous procedure. The findings of the JAEC representatives are outlined below.
- 2.2 Overall summary

The panel were content that all cases had been investigated and processed in accordance with the designated procedure
- 2.3 Areas of good practice
 - Where individuals had submitted a grievance, welfare support had been proactively offered to those individuals as part of the process.
 - Where a grievance had been submitted, attempts were made by the Constabulary to reach an informal resolution as an alternative to formal resolution and, where appropriate, mediation was offered. However, the formal procedure was adopted where appropriate.

- Where a submitted grievance did not fulfil the definition of a grievance as outlined in the procedure (for example, if the grievance related to existing terms and conditions), this was identified at an early stage and the applicant was duly informed.

2.4 Areas for further comment

- All files were accurately documented and well presented. It was suggested that the unique reference number allocated to each case should also be recorded on the summary sheet.
- To assist in future audits, the panel undertook to draft a revised audit template
- It was suggested that, to test the revised audit template, the next audit should take place during the April to June period, following which an assessment would be made as to the frequency of future audits.

David Jones

Paul Richardson

JAEC