

ANALYSIS OF IPCC COMPLAINTS REPORT WITH REFERENCE TO WILTSHIRE CONSTABULARY

Introduction

1. In February 2015, the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) published details of police complaints statistics for the financial years 2012-13 and 2013-14. The below is an analysis of that report with reference to Wiltshire Constabulary. The full report can be found here:

http://www.ipcc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Documents/research_stats/complaints_statistics_2012-13_and_2013-14.PDF.

Complaints and Allegations

2. *Complaints Recorded*

Wiltshire does relatively poorly on this: the 2012/13- 2013/14 change is 23% against a national average of 15%. 4 out of the 8 in our MSFG group (MSFG) have done better than us and West Mercia has seen a very significant drop of 12%.

3. *Complaints recorded within 80%/ 10 day target*

Wiltshire performed relatively poorly: in 2013/14 65% were so recorded against a national average of 80% within 10 working days. Within our MSFG only Devon and Cornwall performed worse (53%). It is of concern that there was a significant year on year deterioration for this indicator (93% -65% for 2012/13 and 2013/14 respectively). Note that the problems with recording which we have discussed do not account for the change because they occurred in July-September 2014.

4. *Allegations recorded*

Wiltshire again performed relatively poorly: nationally there was a 10% change from 2012/13 to 2013/14 against 21% for Wiltshire. It is however important to note that 3 forces within our MSFG did significantly worse with Norfolk seeing a similar year on increase of 70%.

5. *Allegations per 1000 employees*

Wiltshire is marginally above the National average for both 2012/13 and 2013/14 but this is not particularly statistically significant. The year on year increase is roughly in line with the national picture though 4 of the forces in our MSFG did rather better. The changes in staffing levels will have influenced the picture here, and overall I see relatively little cause for serious concern in relation to this indicator.

6. *Means of complaint finalisation*

In overall terms Wiltshire does exceptionally well on this indicator. IPCC encourages Local Resolution wherever possible and Wiltshire excel in this area - for 2013/14, 63% (against a national average of 33%) were resolved by Local Resolution and Wiltshire significantly outperformed 6 forces within the MSFG. A significant year on year improvement is also evident in relation to this indicator.

7. *Time taken to finalise allegations*

This is a very important indicator in relation to the performance of PSD .In overall terms Wiltshire has done exceptionally well. It has performed rather better than the national average and substantially better than 6 of the forces within the MSFG. There is no significant year on year change; generally very good news in relation to an indicator which is much more meaningful than the "ten day recording" issue.

8. *Outcomes of complaint investigations*

The changes imposed by PRSRA and IPCC in the period were such as to militate against drawing fully meaningful conclusions from the data. Wiltshire's performance was however comparable with the national average and largely in line with that of the MSFG.

9. *Time taken to finalise Complaint cases*

This is again extremely good news as Wiltshire performed very significantly better than the national average in both 2012/13 and 2013/14- 59 days against a national average of 93 for 2013/14. The picture is the same when judged against the MSFG. This is one of the most important indicators in relation to PSD customer service delivery.

Appeals

10. *Appeals received by OPCC Wiltshire*

Appeals against investigation are significantly lower than the national average (41% against 52%). Appeal numbers against Local resolution are significantly above the national average (48% against 36%). These differences are most likely a simple reflection of the fact that Wiltshire settles many more complaints by local resolution than most other forces. I have not identified any serious concerns in relation to this particular indicator.

11. *Outcome of appeals determined by OPCC Wiltshire*

The number of appeals that I have upheld is significantly greater than the national average (in 2013/14 29% against 22% for investigation appeals and 29% against 21% for local resolution appeals). I have identified issues in relation to the handling of some complaints by Wiltshire and this is significant in relation to the relatively high proportion of upheld appeals. I believe that outside of Wiltshire, most appeals are determined by Chief Inspectors or Superintendents rather than independently, though it may be a step too far to suggest that this accounts for the difference.

12. *Outcome of appeals determined by the IPCC*

The percentage upheld is substantially in excess of those dealt with by police forces. This can with some justification be taken to suggest that police are less likely to uphold complaints which are assessed above the conduct threshold; this is something to which I have referred in my annual integrity reports.

13. *Outcome of non-recording appeals to IPCC*

The number of upheld appeals for Wiltshire is significantly above the national average (69% against 49%). This would tend to suggest that there may be a case to review the associated decision process followed in relation to non-recording of complaints. Only 7 forces have a greater proportion of upheld non-recording appeals than Wiltshire.