

AGENDA ITEM 7

Essex Police and Crime Panel	EPCP/021/15
Date: 26 November 2015	

Leadership, ethics and accountability: Response to the inquiry by the Committee on Standards in Public Life

Report by the Secretary to the Panel

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Purpose of report and background

On 29 June the Committee on Standards in Public Life published the report 'Tone from the top - leadership, ethics and accountability in policing'. The report followed an eight month inquiry which considered whether the accountability model for local policing was effective in supporting and promoting high ethical standards.

Within the report the Committee made a number of recommendations. Recommendations 9 and 10 are for Police and Crime Panels:

Recommendation 9

Police and Crime Panels should review the PCC's Annual Report in public session attended by the PCC as part of their annual scrutiny programme and make any recommendations as appropriate.

Recommendation 10

As a matter of good practice:

- PCCs should publish a forward plan of decisions identifying the subject matter of the decision, why it is key, the meeting at which the decision is due to be taken, who will be consulted before the decision is taken and what reports/papers will be available for inspection; and
- Police and Crime Panels should produce a forward plan of work specifying, as appropriate, the information required from PCCs in order for them to carry out that work.

The Committee also endorsed within their report recommendations made by the Home Affairs Committee and would like to bring this to the attention of Police and Crime Panels:

Selflessness | Integrity | Objectivity | Accountability | Openness | Honesty | Leadership

Recommendation 19

The Committee endorses the Home Affairs Committee's recommendations that:

- Police and Crime Panels inquire and report into the circumstances whenever a chief constable's service is brought to an end irrespective of whether the Schedule 8 scrutiny process is formally engaged.

The Committee asks for a full and considered response to be provided to these recommendations by 29 November 2015 at the latest.

The Panel's Response

The Panel contributed to the inquiry with a written submission and members of the Panel also met with members of the Committee when they visited Essex.

Recommendation 9

Police and Crime Panels should review the PCC's Annual Report in public session attended by the PCC as part of their annual scrutiny programme and make any recommendations as appropriate.

The Panel agrees with this recommendation and does review the Commissioner's Annual Report in public with the Commissioner response.

Recommendation 10

As a matter of good practice:

- PCCs should publish a forward plan of decisions identifying the subject matter of the decision, why it is key, the meeting at which the decision is due to be taken, who will be consulted before the decision is taken and what reports/papers will be available for inspection; and
- Police and Crime Panels should produce a forward plan of work specifying, as appropriate, the information required from PCCs in order for them to carry out that work.

Although not a matter for the Panel to decide, it can see merit in Commissioner's publishing a Forward Plan of decisions in the same way as Council's exercising executive decision-making arrangements publish a forward plan of key decisions.

The Panel agrees with the second recommendation and already considers a forward plan of work at each meeting.

Recommendation 19

The Committee endorses the Home Affairs Committee's recommendations that:

- Police and Crime Panels inquire and report into the circumstances whenever a chief constable's service is brought to an end irrespective of whether the Schedule 8 (of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011) scrutiny process is formally engaged.

As Panels have a role in the appointment of a Chief Constable the Panel agrees that Panels should receive a report into the circumstances surrounding a Chief Constable's service being brought to an end.

Recommended:

That the Panel agree the proposed response as set out above.