Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR LINCOLNSHIRE AND LINCOLNSHIRE POLICE Policy Document

1. POLICY IDENTIFICATION PAGE

POLICY TITLE:	Anti Fraud And Corruption Policy For the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire And Lincolnshire Police
POLICY REFERENCE NO:	PD 161 (5)

POLICY OWNERSHIP:	
ACPO Commissioning Officer:	OFFICE OF POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR LINCOLNSHIRE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER AND DEPUTY CHIEF CONSTABLE
Portfolio / Business-area Owner:	PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS
Department Responsible:	PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS
Person Responsible:	SUPERINTENDENT PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Links or overlaps with other policies/strategies:

INTELLIGENCE AND COVERT POLICING PROTOCOL FOR PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS PD 73(1)
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS REPORTING POLICY PD 48(2)
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS POLICE COMPAINTS AND MISCONDUCT POLICY PD 21 (3)
VETTING POLICY PD 130 (2)

POLICY EFFECTIVE DATE:	JUNE 2014
POLICY REVIEW DATE:	JUNE 2015

VERSION:	DATE:	REASON FOR ISSUE:
	Feb-2010	New policy.
(1)	July 2011	Annual review, updated in light of new Bribery Act legislation.

(2)	March 2012	Updates relating to Local Policing Body (transition to Police and Crime Commissioner).
(3)	November 2012	Updated to reflect new Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire. Transition note removed.
(4)	May 2013	Annual review.
(5)	June 2014	Annual review. Updated to reflect the establishment of the Chief Constable as a Corporation Sole.

2. Legislative Compliance

This document has been drafted to comply with the principles of the Human Rights Act.

Public disclosure is approved unless otherwise indicated or justified.

Adherence to this policy will ensure compliance with all relevant legislation and internal policies.

3. POLICY STATEMENTS/INTENTIONS

3.1 *The principles and scope of the policy*

Fraud and corruption can have a severe impact on the operation, status and reputation of an organisation, particularly the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire (OPCC) and Lincolnshire Police, and should therefore be opposed at every opportunity.

The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Lincolnshire and Lincolnshire Police are committed to a culture of honesty, integrity and propriety in the holding of public office and the use of public funds. The Lincolnshire Police vision is 'Serving with PRIDE', Professionalism, Respect, Integrity, Dedication and Empathy which further builds on the public's trust and confidence which we currently enjoy.

Fraud and Corruption are an ever-present threat to our organisations. They undermine our ability to police in a professional and cost effective way and may affect the way we utilise our finite resources. Neither the force nor the PCC will tolerate fraud or corruption in the administration of our responsibilities, whether they are from inside or outside our organisations. Both will seek to apply all available sanctions, including civil, criminal and disciplinary in the case of fraud or corruption being identified. The current world economic climate is putting pressure on our society and there is an ever-growing need to be robust in deterring and detecting fraud and corruption within the organisations. There is untold damage that can be caused to our reputation by any of our employees being involved in fraud or corrupt practices, as it can seen by our public as a diversion of public funds for personal gain.

For the purposes of this policy Fraud and Corruption have been defined as follows:

> **Fraud:** The intentional distortion of financial statements or other records and/or the misappropriation of assets or otherwise for gain. This may include: falsifying travel and subsistence claims, falsifying overtime or flexi claims, and obtaining employment through false qualifications.
>
> **Corruption:** The offering, giving, soliciting or acceptance of an inducement or reward which may influence a person to act against the interests of the organisation, and can be simply described as 'the misuse of power for a

private gain'. This may include: gifts and hospitality, inappropriate association, drugs misuse, computer misuse, sexual misbehaviour against the public, pecuniary interests of the police and Chief Constable, Police and Crime Commissioner, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner and staff, and disposal of assets.

This policy applies to ALL Members employed by Lincolnshire Police and the PCC - Police Officers, Police staff, staff of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, commercial partner(s) staff and all external persons with whom the PCC and the Chief Constable conducts business.

It should be read in conjunction with the Codes of Conduct for employees, the Confidential Reporting ("Whistle blowing") Policy, the Nolan Principles and Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, which supports members of the organisation to report suspected illegal activity without fear of victimisation or detriment as a result of making a disclosure.

3.2 *The aim of the policy*

The aim of the policy is to prevent fraud and corruption within Lincolnshire Police and the OPCC. The policy will assist individuals and their line managers in ensuring that their actions can withstand scrutiny. The overall aim is to maintain the reputation and integrity of Lincolnshire Police and the PCC.

4. INTRODUCTION/LEGAL BASIS

4.1 *The origins/background information*

The integrity of the force has a massive impact upon public confidence. In order to discharge its duties to the public members of the organisation need to act within the principles of PRIDE. The introduction of The Bribery Act 2010, places an obligation on the organisation to have in place policies that ensure all transactions it undertakes are carried out with integrity. This policy will go some way to address the standards expected and should be read in conjunction with The Business Interest and Additional Employment Policy PD 23(2) and The Gifts and Hospitality Policy PD 26(3).

Responsibilities

Senior officers and senior managers of the organisation are required to deal swiftly and firmly with those who defraud or who are corrupt.

All members of the OPCC and Force (including commercial partners on business for Lincolnshire police) have a duty to report any suspected fraudulent or corrupt practice affecting the PCC or the Force at the earliest opportunity.

Members of outside bodies and members of the public are also encouraged to report any suspected fraudulent or corrupt behaviour.

Individuals and organisations such as suppliers, contractors, service providers that the PCC and Force conducts business with, will act towards the PCC and Force with integrity and a total absence of fraudulent or corrupt practices.

The OPCC Chief Finance Officer has statutory duties and overall responsibility for the financial administration of the Force and PCC (s.151 of the Local Government Act 1972, s.112 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 and the Financial Management Code of Practice issued under section 17 of the Police Reform and

Social Responsibility Act 2011) and therefore must be informed of any initial report, giving rise to any suspected fraud or corruption.

The statutory responsibilities of the Police Force Chief Finance Officer are largely identical to those of the Chief Finance Officer of the PCC. They are set out in paragraph 4 of Schedule 2 and paragraph 1 of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 and the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011.

In those cases where sufficient evidence is available, criminal and/or disciplinary action will be taken by the organisations. Civil recovery (including civil court action) of funds lost by fraud and corruption will be considered in all established cases.

Senior officers and senior managers of the organisations will ensure that effective procedures, practices and controls are in operation in their areas of responsibility to minimise the opportunities for fraud and corruption.

The PCC and the Force will demonstrate that it is creating a strong deterrent effect by publicising successful cases of fraud and corruption and any successful recovery of losses.

4.2 ***Motivators/Driving Forces***

The prevention of Fraud and Corruption is an essential element in maintaining the reputation of the Force and the PCC. Both organisations need to ensure that through their policies and procedures, behaviours that affect the integrity and reputation of the Force and OPCC are highlighted and addressed appropriately.

The Bribery Act 2010 requires organisations to have in place adequate procedures to prevent bribery occurring.

4.3 ***General Principles of the Policy***

The policy aims to address corruption and fraud within the Force and OPCC by compliance with The Bribery Act 2010. The policy also sets out a clear pathway for prevention, reporting and investigation of such issues.

4.4 ***Anti-fraud and corruption strategy***

The PCC and Force are committed to an effective anti-fraud and corruption strategy based around the following strands:

- Honest culture
- Encourage prevention
- Promote detection and timely reporting
- Identify a clear pathway for investigation
- Training
- Provide support and guidance for staff that may be in financial difficulty. These staff members are most a risk of fraudulent or corrupt practices
- Record of Lincolnshire Police and Staff who have been subject of any County Court Judgements of who have been declared Bankrupt for example. These notices are securely stored in the Professional Standards Department (PSD).

There is a high level of external scrutiny of organisational affairs by a variety of bodies including:

- Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary (HMIC)
- External Audit
- HM Revenue and Customs
- Internal Audit
- Local Communities
- The Media

Application of this policy applies to the Chief Constable, all officers and staff employed by the Chief Constable, the PCC, Deputy PCC and all officers engaged in carrying out duties of the PCC. Detection, prevention and reporting of fraud and corruption is the responsibility of the Chief Constable, the PCC, Deputy PCC and the OPCC. The PCC and Chief Constable offer reassurance that any concerns will be treated in confidence and properly investigated without fear of reprisal or victimisation. All suspected fraud and corruption will be investigated in accordance with this strategy and policy.

Guidelines for Reporting Irregularities and How the PCC and Chief Constable Will Respond are attached at Appendix 1.

CULTURE

The Chief Constable and PCC are determined that the culture and tone of the organisation is one of honesty and integrity and opposition to fraud and corruption.

There is an expectation and requirement that all individuals and organisations associated in any way with the PCC and Chief Constable will act with integrity and both will lead by example in these matters. All staff are positively encouraged to raise any concerns they may have as it is often the alertness of such individuals that enables detection to occur and the appropriate action to be taken against fraud or corruption. Concerns may be about something that:

- Is unlawful
- Is against the organisation's Standing Orders or policies
- Falls below established standards or practices
- Results in waste or loss to the organisation
- Amounts to improper conduct.

The Chief Executive and DCC (delegated to Head of Professional Standards Department) is responsible for following up any allegation or suspicion of fraud or corruption received and will do so through clearly defined procedures. These procedures are designed to:

- Deal promptly with the matter
- Record all evidence received
- Ensure that evidence is sound and adequately supported
- Ensure security of all evidence collected
- Notify relevant bodies
- Implement disciplinary procedures where appropriate.

If necessary, a route other than a normal line manager may be used to raise such issues. Examples of such routes are:

- OPCC Chief Finance Officer or Force Chief Finance Officer
- OPCC Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer
- Staff Associations
- Bad Apple confidential reporting process.
- Direct to the Anti-corruption department (Professional Standards Department)

There may be circumstances where a person may prefer to contact an external agency through the following contacts:

- Government fraud helplines (see www.gov.uk)
- Internal Audit
- Public Concern at Work – independent charity offering free advice on fraud or other issues of malpractice
- Crimestoppers

If a person decides to take the matter outside the organisation, they should ensure that they **do not** disclose 'Confidential' or 'Restricted' information.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 protects employees who report suspected fraud or corruption activities from any reprisals, as long as they meet the rules set out in the Act. Put simply, the rules for making a protected disclosure are:

- The information disclosed is made in good faith.
- The person making the disclosure must believe it to be substantially true.
- The person making the disclosure must not act maliciously or make false allegations.
- The person making the allegation must not be seeking any personal gain.

Under the Act, the designated officer required to receive disclosures is the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer. The designated officer required to receive disclosures relating to Lincolnshire Police is the Deputy Chief Constable (delegated to the Head of Professional Standards Department).

Members of the public are also encouraged to report concerns through any of the above avenues or through the Professional Standards Department or the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC).

Allegations/concerns can be made anonymously; however, it should be noted that such cases can be more difficult to investigate. The likelihood of action will depend on:

- The seriousness of issues raised
- Credibility of the concern
- Likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources.

Senior management are responsible for following up any allegation of fraud and corruption received and will do so by:

- Dealing promptly with the matter;
- Recording all evidence received;
- Ensuring that evidence is sound and adequately supported;
- Ensuring security of all evidence collected;
- Notifying the relevant bodies; and
- Implementing internal disciplinary procedures where appropriate.

The PCC and Chief Constable can be expected to deal swiftly and thoroughly with any person(s) who attempts to defraud the organisation or who are corrupt and therefore should be considered as robust in dealing with financial malpractice.

PREVENTION

The PCC and Chief Constable recognise that a key preventative measure in the fight against fraud and corruption is to take effective steps at the recruitment stage to establish, as far as possible, the previous record of potential staff, in terms of their

propriety, integrity and honesty. In this regard temporary and contract staff should be treated in the same manner as permanent staff. Vetting and security clearance are therefore a prerequisite to appointment.

The PCC and Chief Constable are committed to working and co-operating with other organisations to prevent organised fraud and corruption. Wherever possible, the PCC and Chief Constable will be prepared to help and exchange information with other PCCs, forces and organisations to deal with fraud.

The PCC and Chief Constable will assess the possibility of fraud within their risk management processes. This will include consideration of the following:

- Three key fraud risk factors (opportunity, motive and rationalisation)
- Likelihood, significance and pervasiveness of fraud risks
- The risk of management over-ride of control
- Mitigating programmes and controls to each identified fraud risk.

The organisations are committed to raising the awareness of the key fraud risks with appropriate staff.

All employees are expected to follow any Code of Conduct related to their personal professional qualifications and also abide by and Rules of Conduct as published.

Standards in public life – the 'Nolan Principles'

The Committee on Standards in Public Life is an independent public body which advises government on ethical standards across the whole of public life in the UK (also known as the Nolan Committee). The Committee believes that 'Seven Principles of Public Life' should apply to all in the public service. The PCC and Chief Constable will seek to develop its working behaviour around these principles (see below). All such declarations will be recorded in a public Register maintained by the Chief Executive and made available to the public on request.

Selflessness
Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

Integrity
Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in their performance of the official duties.

Objectivity
In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability
Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness
Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty
Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership
Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

The Police and Crime Commissioner, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner and staff are also required to declare in a public Register any offers of gifts or hospitality which are in any way related to the performance of their duties in relation to the organisation. The Register will be held by the Chief Executive and made available to the public on request.

ACPO and the senior leadership team are required to comply with policy PD26 (Gifts & Hospitality). The register will be held by Professional Standards. It is periodically published for public access, and is available for inspection.

Significant emphasis has been placed on the thorough documentation of financial systems, and every effort is made to continually review and develop these systems in line with best practice to ensure efficient and effective internal controls. The adequacy and appropriateness of the organisation's financial systems is independently monitored by both Internal and External Audit. Senior management places great weight on being responsive to audit recommendations.

Arrangements are in place to continue to develop and encourage the exchange of information between the PCC, police force and other agencies on national and local fraud and corruption activity in relation to PCCs and police forces.

Fraud Response Plan

Suspected fraud or corruption alleged to have been committed by a OPCC officer or a contractor should be immediately reported to the OPCC Chief Executive or, in the case of an allegation being made about the Chief Executive or in his/her absence, to the OPCC Deputy Chief Executive or Chief Finance Officer.

In the cases allegations related to Police staff or contractors of the Lincolnshire Police any allegation should be reported to their Line Manager, Professional Standards Department, or for anonymity through the Confidential Reporting 'Bad Apple' system. The implementation in 2010 of Lincolnshire Police 'Bad Apple' reporting facility contains on its web page advice in relation to debt planning and where to obtain help and advice (access via Police Systems 'quick links' on intranet home page or http://hq-svr-apps-03/badapple/default.asp) (internal link only).

Individuals are encouraged to put their name to the concern and information wherever possible. All information will be treated as confidential. Anonymous concerns will be investigated. However, at the appropriate time it may be necessary for the individual raising the concern to come forward as a witness, but they will be afforded anonymity in line with the Force's reporting person's policy.

Information must be disclosed in good faith. Malicious, false or vexatious allegations must not be made and appropriate action will be taken against the instigators of such allegations.

OPCC staff may utilise the process outlined in the Confidential Reporting ("Whistle blowing") Policy. The Force's Confidential Reporting (Whistleblowing) policy (PD48-7)

is owned by the Deputy Chief Constable and is available on the Force intranet: http://intranet.lincspolice.local/Library/Policies/P/Professional-Standards-Reporting-Policy-PD-48-7-.pdf

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 gives statutory protection to employees who speak out against corruption and malpractice at work.

The PCC has a duty to report all suspected fraud to its external auditors. The OPCC Chief Finance Officer at the earliest opportunity will do this.

Fraud Risk Indicators: The following are warning signs that fraud/corrupt practices may be occurring:

- Employees under stress without a high workload
- Always working late or arriving early
- Reluctance to take leave
- Refusal of promotion
- Unexplained wealth
- Sudden change in demeanour or lifestyle
- Cosy relationship with suppliers/contractors
- Suppliers/contractors requesting to deal with one particular staff member
- Improper use/access of computer records

DETECTION & INVESTIGATION

The array of preventative systems, particularly internal control systems within the organisations, has been designed to provide indicators of any fraudulent activity, although generally they should be sufficient in themselves to deter fraud.

It is the responsibility of management to prevent and detect fraud and corruption. However, it is often the alertness of staff and the public that enables detection to occur and the appropriate action to take place when there is evidence that fraud or corruption may have been committed or is in progress.

Despite the best efforts of managers, supervisors and auditors, many frauds are often discovered by chance or 'tip-off', and the PCC and Chief Constable has arrangements in place to enable such information to be properly dealt with.

Depending on the nature and anticipated extent of the allegations, the provider of the organisation's Internal Audit will normally work closely with the management and the investigating agency to ensure that all allegations, suspicions and evidence are properly investigated and reported upon.

The relevant misconduct/disciplinary procedure concerning the suspected individual will be initiated where the outcome of the Audit Investigation indicates improper behaviour. In addition, civil legal action may be taken for the recovery of money or property misappropriated from the organisation.

All managers and supervisors should ensure that controls are in place to prevent and detect fraud and error. There is a need to be aware of the possibility of fraud when reviewing or presented with, for example, claims, forms, and documentation. Issues that may give rise to suspicions or allegations are:

- Documents that have been altered, use of correction fluid, or different pens and different handwriting.
- Claims that cannot be checked, particularly if prior authorisation was not given.

- Confused, illegible text and missing details.
- Delays in documentation completion or submission.
- Lack of vouchers or receipts to support claims.

The Officer to whom the report of suspected fraud or corruption has been made will instigate and oversee a proper and timely investigation. It may be appropriate for the investigation to be conducted by the Force Professional Standards Department. The principles of the Force Professional Standards Policy will be adhered to at all times.

The investigation shall take account of the requirements of the criminal law and advice should be sought from the Force solicitor at the earliest opportunity to determine whether the alleged act may constitute a criminal offence.

Where an allegation of fraud or corruption is made against a Lincolnshire Police Officer, Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) or support staff the details will be forwarded to the Professional Standards Department for investigation. Dependent on the allegation a decision will be made by the appropriate authority whether to suspend the individual whilst any investigation is ongoing.

TRAINING

The organisation recognises that the continuing success of its Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy and its general credibility will depend largely on the effectiveness of programmed training and the responsiveness of the Chief Constable, PCC, Deputy PCC and of employees throughout the organisation.

To facilitate this, the Chief Constable and PCC supports the concept of induction and training, particularly for staff involved in internal control systems, to ensure that their responsibilities and duties in this respect are regularly highlighted and reinforced.

The possibility of disciplinary action against staff who ignore such training and guidance is made clear.

4.5 ***Legal Basis***

The precise definitions of fraud are set out in the Fraud Act 2006 and cover fraud by false representation, fraud by failing to disclose information and fraud by abuse of position.

The Bribery Act 2010 creates offences of:

(a) Bribing another person to induce a person to perform improperly a relevant function or activity or to reward a person for the improper performance of such a function or activity.

And

(b) Requests, agrees to receive, or accepts a financial or other advantage intending that a function or activity should be performed improperly whether by that person or another.

This is a common sense approach for individuals and line managers. However responsibilities under the Bribery Act 2010 should be in line with the Business Interests 7 Additional Employment Policy PD23 (2) and the Gifts & Hospitality Policy PD 26(3).

4.6 ***Human Rights Considerations/Articles Engaged***

Application of this policy has the potential to engage Articles 3 and 8 of the European Convention of Human Rights/Human Rights Act 1998, i.e. prohibition of degrading treatment and right to respect for private and family life. Such an interference must have a legitimate aim which in this case is:-

a) The prevention of crime and disorder.
b) The protection of the rights and freedom of others.

Where there is a potential interference with an individual's rights there must always be sufficient reason and the interference must be justified, proportionate and least intrusive.
Proportionate means that the action taken in pursuit of the policy must be proportionate to its aims. In this case the policy seeks to ensure that the force complies with the disclosure requirements of the legislation and the described revelation methods are proportionate to achieving that aim. It is also relevant that revelation to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) does not automatically mean disclosure to the defence and use in court. Proportionality will also be addressed in the decision as to whether material revealed in accordance with the policy is actually disclosed.

The courts have demonstrated time and again that ensuring defendants have the right to a fair trial, Article 6 ECHR/Human Rights Act 1998 is of paramount importance and this policy reflects that.

5. APPENDICES

Guidelines For Reporting Irregularities - Appendix 1

Initial Equality Impact Assessment Form – Appendix 2

6. IMPLICATIONS OF THE POLICY

It is recognised that the guidance contained under this heading may not be directly applicable to all policies. Where it is relevant however, the following areas should be considered:

6.1 ***Financial Implications/Best Value***

The OPCC Chief Finance Officer and Force CFO have statutory duties and responsibility for the financial administration of the Force and PCC and therefore must be informed of any initial report, giving rise to any suspected fraud or corruption.

6.2 ***Human Resources/Training***

All officers and staff must complete a mandatory NCALT counter corruption training course.

6.3 ***Strategic/Business Plan***

N/A

6.4 ***Risk Management***

Fraud is considered as part of the Force and PCC's Risk management processes.

6.5 ***Health and Safety***

N/A

6.6 ***Diversity***

An Initial Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out with regard to this policy and is attached as an appendix.

6.7 ***Children and Young People***

N/A

6.8 ***Crime and Disorder Act***

N/A

6.9 ***Internal Policy/Strategy Links***

The Policy links to the OPCC 'Employee's Code of Conduct'.

Business Interests & Additional Employment Policy PD 23(2)

Gifts & Hospitality Policy PD 26(3)

Professional Standards Reporting (PD48-7)

6.10 ***Consultation***

Nil

6.11 ***Publication***

The policy is published on the PCC website, Lincolnshire Police Force website and on the Force Intranet.

7. PROMOTION/DISTRIBUTION

The Policy is distributed to the PCC and members of staff.

Policy available via Force Intranet.

8. MONITORING/REVIEW

Approval of this policy

Version 5 of this policy was approved by the Chief Executive in July 2014.

Review and monitoring

This policy will be subject to review to ensure it remains current and monitored annually. The Chief Executive will do this. The next date for review is June 2015.

The Force Risk Management Board maintains oversight of all policies.

Appendix 1

GUIDELINES FOR REPORTING IRREGULARITIES

Attention is drawn to the information contained within the 'Culture' section of the policy document, which identifies potential avenues of bringing suspected wrong-doing to the attention of others. Individuals intending to report irregularities should normally give consideration to the following issues:

- Do not approach, interview or accuse anyone suspected of being involved.
- Assemble all the facts and documentation available from the sources immediately to hand.
- If the information has come from a member of the public by telephone, then information notified should be written down, date and time noted, and the name and address of the supplier of the information recorded, and if they are willing to make it available.
- Prepare a briefing note of the circumstances.
- Do not make further enquiries without authorisation.

HOW THE PCC WILL RESPOND

In instances where an allegation of fraud or corruption is made:

1. The action taken by the organisation will depend on the seriousness of the concern. The matters will:

    - be investigated internally by an appropriate manager;
    - be referred to the police force if there is evidence of a criminal offence;
    - be referred to the External Auditor if there is evidence of financial impropriety; and
    - form the subject of an independent external or internal enquiry.

2. In order to protect individuals and the organisation, initial enquiries will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take. Concerns and allegations which fall within the scope of existing procedures will normally be referred for consideration under those procedures.

3. Some concerns may be resolved by agreed action without the need for investigation.

4. Within 10 working days of the concern being received, the PCC will respond by:

    - acknowledging that the information has been received;
    - indicating how it intends to deal with the matter;
    - giving an estimate of how long it will take to provide a final response;
    - telling the complainant whether any initial enquiries have been made; and
    - letting complainants know whether further investigation will take place and if not, why not.

5. If additional information is required from the complainant, they have the right to be accompanied by a professional association, trade union or a friend who is not involved in the area of work to which concern relates.

6. The organisation will take steps to minimise any difficulties which complainants may experience as a result of raising a concern.

7. Where there are no legal constraints and confidentiality issues, the complainant will receive information on the outcome of any investigation.

HOW THE CHIEF CONSTABLE WILL RESPOND

Officers and staff within Lincolnshire Police should follow the Confidential Reporting (Whistleblowing) Policy P48(7).

Appendix A provides Guidance on Professional Standards reporting. See http://intranet.lincspolice.local/Library/Policies/P/Profressional_Standards_Appendix_A_Guidance_on_professional_standards_reporting.pdf