

Public Complaints

Professionalism | Respect | Integrity | Dedication | Empathy



Executive Summary

Cases and Allegations

There were 571 complaint cases recorded within Lincolnshire Police in 2018/19, this is a 17% increase on the number of cases in 2017/18 (488).

There were 791 recorded allegations in 2018/19 which is a 13% increase on the 2017/18 period (703). Lincolnshire Police have always been praised by the Independent Office of Police Conduct (IOPC) for their diligence in accurately recording each complaint into the separate allegation categories and recognise that each complaint often contains numerous allegations. They state that if this was comparable to the National Crime Recording Standards (NCRS) we would be one of the most compliant forces.

There are a number of genuine reasons why we are seeing an increase in complaints; we are more proactive in recording complaints and look to provide an approachable and accessible complaints process to the public. We also understand we may be receiving more complaints as we are not getting some of our service right. What is important is that when people feel things have not gone right or how they would expect there is a transparent and trusted process to record their complaint and it will be investigated or resolved.

The figures in the IOPC annual report show Lincolnshire recorded a high level (440) of allegations per 1,000 employees than some other forces. However the number of employees does not reflect the number of people working with us through our strategic partnership with G4S (an additional 584). Therefore if we included all employees, the number of allegations per 1000 employees would be 328.

The most common type of complaint allegation continues to be "Other Neglect or Failure in Duty" which often relates to a general dissatisfaction with police being unable to meet public expectations (49% count = 388) which is 5% higher than the 2017/18 period. The most significant reduction has been seen in the category "incivility, impoliteness and intolerance" which has reduced from 20% to 15% compared to the 2017/18 period.

Other Neglect or Failure in Duty

I am currently analysing the Quarter 2 data for 2019 (1st July to 30th September 2019) and it has been identified that the greatest proportion of allegations in this category relate to concerns of an unsatisfactory investigation and not providing a sufficient service to victims. This includes failing to investigate crimes or incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour in a timely manner and not updating the victim; this is seen across all areas of the force, particularly those in response roles.

This is enforced by comparing these types of allegations with the user satisfaction data which shows that the biggest areas of dissatisfaction are "follow up" and "actions" by the officers. This will be discussed at the Quality of Service Board in December 2019 and an action plan set to ensure that we provide a high quality of service to the public and seek to reduce the number of complaints in the future. I then intend to repeat the analytical exercise for Quarter 4 (1st January 2020 to 31st March 2020) to see if there has been a reduction in the number of complaints noting that if the new police regulations come into force on 1st February 2020, the recording categories will change slightly.

Incivility, impoliteness and intolerance

As above, analysis of those allegations recorded in this category have identified that the greatest proportion of complaints relate to allegations of rude or disrespectful behaviour by our officers and staff. There is no correlation to any specific department or specialism. This will be discussed at the Quality of Service Board in December 2019 to ensure that we treat all members of the public with respect and courtesy and seek to reduce the number of complaints in the future and an action plan set as above.

Timeliness

97% of complaint cases are recorded within the 10 day recording target and this ambition has been consistently achieved within Lincolnshire despite the increase in the number of complaints received.

Many of our expressions of dissatisfaction are resolved there are then by listening to the complainant, apologising and providing an explanation for why things went wrong. For those complaints that we do record, it is positive to note that we locally resolve 71% of all allegations; this normally involves a senior officer speaking to the complainant, reviewing the circumstances of the incident and providing an explanation of to the complainant.

Ambition

We are concerned the number of complaints has risen and it is important that we record them accurately because someone is unhappy with our service. I believe we have a culture in Lincolnshire that where we have got something wrong we apologise, recognise the need to put it right and learn from any mistakes to prevent it happening to someone else. The common lessons learnt are shared through our quarterly publication of The Standard which all staff are encouraged to read.

Within Professional Standards a review takes place for every officer/staff member who receives three or more complaints within a twelve month period. This information is provided to the Manager to discuss the collective conduct with their team member in order to change behaviours and prevent further complaints.

D/Supt Suzanne Davies

7th November 2019