

OVERSIGHT

newsletter

Welcome to our monthly newsletter which provides updates about the work of the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC). The newsletter is for complaint handlers in forces and local policing bodies (LPBs).

Reminder to forces: Attach original complaint to referrals

The IOPC Assessment Unit is continuing to receive a number of complaint referrals that do not include the original complaint. Please be aware that we cannot progress complaint referrals without a copy of the original complaint. To prevent delay, please ensure you provide the original complaint with any complaint referral submissions. This includes any complaints originally submitted via the IOPC website. This is because the Assessment Unit do not have access to the online submissions. Please see our referrals [minimum standards guide](#) for more information.

Right first time workshops

Our right first time project is continuing and we are developing guidance and a toolkit which we hope to send in draft form to forces in the next week. Our aim is to improve the handling of complaints and consistency in their delivery. The focus of the guidance will be on early engagement with service users, complaint recording, managing expectations, being reasonable and proportionate in terms of evidence gathering, and demonstrating empathy and understanding.

We hope that you will tell us your views using the questionnaire we send with the guidance, and welcome your suggestions on any support we can provide to complaint handlers and investigators.

In Feb and March 2024, we will host a series of online workshops for complaint handlers covering use of the toolkit and our right first time activities. You will shortly receive a 'save the date' notification for your region. We will send out invitations with more information about the workshops and will ask for attendee details in January.

Race discrimination workshops

On 6 December 2023, we completed the last of our complaint handler workshops dedicated to the handling of complaints involving race discrimination. The workshops were presented by a variety of people from IOPC with different operational and non-operational experience of discrimination complaints handling. We had some excellent presentations from PSD speakers who shared some of their local initiatives and work to improve their complaints handling in this area and cultural awareness of their staff. The IOPC Youth Panel spoke to the attendees about some positive and constructive ideas how to improve the quality of interactions between the police and young people.

We hope you found the guest speakers' presentations engaging, insightful and thought-provoking. We will compile a list of FAQ based on the questions raised throughout the workshops, which we will send with the presentation slides to attendees. Thank you to all attendees for your contribution at the events.

We sent a survey to all attendees after the workshop. We would be grateful if you could take a few minutes to complete this with your feedback. Your views will help us create a toolkit for complaint and review handlers that is tailored to your needs.

Following the workshops, we will begin to compile the toolkit. We will also continue with our programme of dip-sampling cases handled by police forces and will approach the forces we would like to assist us with this task.

Violence against women and girls thematic update

Violence against women and girls case file review

Last month, we updated you on our violence against women and girls case review. We have analysed all the information collected and written a report on our findings. We are now considering those findings, together with what our non-policing stakeholders have told us as part of our engagement work, and how that information might be reflected. As a result, it is likely that we will publish our report early next year.

Police perpetrated domestic abuse case file review

We decided to conduct some additional dip sampling that focuses on police perpetrated domestic abuse (PPDA) case handling. This is in response to an action arising from the Centre for Women's Justice super-complaint into PPDA asking the IOPC to carry out a targeted review of the police handling of PPDA cases. We wrote to six police forces inviting them to be part of this project. Dip sampling will begin in the new year. We will keep you updated on this project as it develops.

? Common questions from forces and LPBs

Q: How should the relevant review body deal with applications where new issues are raised that can't be addressed as part of the review?

A: The RRB should respond to say that any new allegations raised cannot be considered as part of the review and signpost the complainant to the appropriate route for raising these new issues.

Issues raised that are not new complaints - for example, observations about 28-day updates not being received would be dealt with as part of the review process and can be incorporated into feedback given to the force on its complaints handling practice.

Corporate news

IOPC impact in 2022/23

Our newly published [annual Impact report 2022/23](#) focuses on stories about real people and the impact we had on the public and policing. It highlights real-life examples from our new five-year strategy: Building trust and confidence in policing.

You can read examples of how we improved policing and complaints handling, our focus on areas of public concern, and our approach to supporting service users and improving access to the complaints system. The report shows how:

- we handled the case of a transgender man who felt that his reports of hate crimes had not been taken seriously
- we brought together local people and their police force, after a man's death raised concerns in the local community
- our survivor engagement managers stepped in to support vulnerable or traumatised complainants
- our Youth Panel members have been building bridges by encouraging dialogue between young people and the police in Merseyside
- we played our part in removing officers who are not fit to serve

You can watch a video of some key statistics and information from the report, or download a copy to read the real-life stories from [our website](#).

IOPC response to the Government police accountability review

We responded to the Home Office review of investigatory arrangements, which was set up following incidents involving police use of force and driving. You can read a [summary on our website](#).

Latest news

Keep up to date on our investigations and other work to increase public confidence in the police complaints system. You can find our [latest IOPC news](#) on our website.

[Learning accepted by Derbyshire Constabulary following IOPC investigation into contact with Gracie Spinks](#)

[Former Cheshire Constabulary staff member jailed for passing information to members of the public](#)

[West Yorkshire Police officer dismissed for sending and receiving offensive WhatsApp messages](#)

[Lincolnshire Police officers acted appropriately during detention of truck-driver who later died](#)

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If you have any questions, please get in touch with your Oversight Liaison or a member of the Oversight team.

