

Police Complaints Information Bulletin

Force Commentary Sheet

Reporting Period: Reporting Period: 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021

Commentary:

During this period Kent Police have taken longer to log and contact complainants than the national average however this has been addressed by increasing the number of resources within our complaints department to be able to meet the needs of complainants more quickly. Kent Police records more allegations than our Most Similar Forces, however one complaint may involve multiple allegations and these are each recorded separately to ensure that the complaint is answered in its entirety. Failing to record and address all aspects of a complaint is one of the most common reasons for complaint reviews being upheld to the IOPC therefore we are scrupulous about separate logging of multiple allegations and getting things right first time.

Within Kent Police all reports of dissatisfaction are recorded, including those relating to issues of general service, such as delayed attendance. Many of these complaints are able to be resolved quickly and informally to the satisfaction of the complainant outside of Schedule 3. This resolution, where appropriate, will always be attempted first to ensure a timely explanation and/or apology is given. Overall average investigation periods have risen sharply over the last twelve months however Kent's performance is in line with the national trend which has been driven by a rise in complaints nationwide.

Kent makes significantly more referrals to the IOPC than the MSF average. However, the proportion of referrals which resulted in independent investigation was in line with the MSF. Kent Police deliberately takes a very open and transparent approach to IOPC referrals in order to ensure public confidence.

In relation to outcomes, Kent is performing above both the MSF and national average and demonstrating that it has embedded the learning approach required through the 2020 reforms. Formal disciplinary outcomes arising from complaints are rare nationally and although none in the current data set have resulted in formal proceedings there are several still under investigation where this is likely.

The proportion of outcomes which are reviewed by the IOPC is in line with the national average however fewer are upheld in respect of Kent cases.