



**POLICE & CRIME  
COMMISSIONER**  
for Leicester,  
Leicestershire & Rutland  
Your Communities - Your Commissioner

18 January 2024

Mr Rupert Matthews (Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicestershire)  
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicestershire  
Police Headquarters  
St Johns  
Enderby  
Leicester  
LE19 2BX

Dear Mr Matthews,

I am writing to provide feedback and recommendations from our attendance over the last year on behalf of the Ethics and Transparency Panel.

As Chair and as a group, we as the Ethics and Transparency Panel (ETP) really value the openness and transparency that the Force has shown us thus far. Our general thoughts from information that has been discussed and that we have been given access to has been excellent and we have no major issues to raise. We would however like to provide some positive feedback on areas where there has been a demonstration of good practice and recommendations for areas where there may be an opportunity for improvement.

### **Main Observations of the Panel**

Although the formation of the Ethics and Transparency Panel has faced some turbulence since its conception in 2022, it now feels that we have a stable Panel with members who are dedicated and committed to making a difference to communities and the public. The Panel currently has 6 independent members who bring a range of diverse experiences and expertise on a whole host of topical areas and represent a large proportion of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. While the Ethics and Transparency Panel can easily be discarded as 'just another panel,' the complex and dynamic issues that are tackled in an accessible manner allows the Panel to feel that we are representing the views of the residents and communities of LLR.

However, while our role is to represent the views and raise concerns on behalf of the wider community, we have often been met with challenge when trying to raise and discuss specific incidents of public interest i.e. live or ongoing internal investigations. While we understand that the Force is limited in what can be disclosed due to the risk of compromising an investigation, it has often left us in a predicament when faced with questions from the public or when trying to advocate on behalf of the Force to communities. In order to overcome this, we have been advised that we can ask more holistic questions relating to the incident in question and wider issues relevant to the incident, i.e. around conduct, proportionality, compliance and around policies and procedures in place by the Force by way of learning.



Over the last 12 months, we have been welcomed by a number of different departments across the Force. We have been given the opportunity of completing familiarisation visits and had an insight into 9 key departments including; contact management, custody, Safeguarding Hub, Tactical Support and several others. We found the visits invaluable in undressing how the Force operate and utilises its time and resources. We can confirm that any information required or questions asked have been forthcoming and any follow up always completed. Thus far we have found that all visits have demonstrated best practices being adhered to and in many departments, we have found the Force to be utilising modern ways of operation and collaboration with other agencies and stakeholders. We look forward to continuing our visits in 2024.

As a Panel we aim to continually push the boundaries of our scrutiny and work. One element we are glad to report on is the unprecedented access granted on the review of Body Worn Video (BWV) footage. We believe that this is a novel element of the Ethics and Transparency Panel and a first for a panel like ours to have the access to scrutinise. Having reviewed 6 instances of BWV footage in 2023, we are satisfied that the Force is again using best practice to record arrests and when exercising their powers of stop and search. We have also been given the opportunity to dip-sample closed complaint files and look forward to reviewing custody records and potential other areas in 2024.

It is hoped that the Panel's continuation of BWV footage review and various dip-sampling will provide independent scrutiny to suggest improvement, recommendation and an opportunity for reflective learning for the Force and increased trust and confidence for the general public.

### **Recommendations**

1. When producing reports and documentation for the Ethics and Transparency Panel to consider, members would benefit from more detailed and in-depth papers from Leicestershire Police and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.
2. At meetings, there is an increased need felt for consistency in membership and attendees. Members acknowledge that with the nature of the Force there is regular movement with officers. If and when a deputy is required, it would be beneficial for the Panel to receive an introduction from the individual deputising and a brief description of their role to enable members to have a better understanding of the department.
3. Ethics and Transparency Panel meetings could benefit from more consistent Agendas for the quarterly meetings with a greater focus on the forward plan for 2024 meetings.
4. A second tranche of Familiarisation Visits would be beneficial, especially for the newer members of the Ethics and Transparency Panel. It would be great to have an insight into the more operational side of policing where some of the most critical and complex decisions are made i.e. dispatch and response teams. Members acknowledge that these more operational visits may be difficult to facilitate due to the nature of the role.



5. An 'Action Tracker' may be a useful tool to track and follow up on discussion points and actions from previous meetings, especially where the Force and/or OPCC have been asked to bring an update back to a future meeting. This will support the constructive discussions that take place around topical issues both at a national and regional level and will help with tracking change and learning and with advocating this to communities in order to strengthen public trust and confidence.

In summary, we are as a panel with access and information provided thus far, we are assured that the force operating well as an organisation, employing best practice in many areas and continue to improve in others. Over the next year we will continually push the boundaries of our scrutiny work and report back accordingly.

Yours sincerely,

**Vipal Karavadra,**  
on behalf of the Ethics and Transparency Panel,

**Chair, Ethics and Transparency Panel**

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