



Ethics and Transparency Panel Annual Report

November 2025

Report Date	November 2025
Report Author	Vipal Karavadra, Ethics and Transparency Panel Chair
Security Classification	Not Protectively Marked/Official

Purpose of Report

1. The Ethics and Transparency Panel serves as an advisory body to the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), providing assurance that ethical standards and integrity are embedded within Leicestershire Police. The panel ensures that professional standards and the delivery of policing services remain upheld, adding value beyond audit and scrutiny.
2. This report, presented by the Chair on behalf of the Ethics and Transparency Panel, outlines how the panel is fulfilling its responsibilities outlined within the terms of reference through scrutiny of policies, reports, and deep dives, as well as the panel's consideration of emerging ethical issues, both locally and nationally that impact the force.
3. The report aims to showcase the panel's work and provide reassurance that policing is being carried out in a way that enhances internal and external trust and confidence in ethical governance and decision-making. Where concerns have been identified, the report includes advisory recommendations to support improvements for the public.

Request of the Board

4. In its advisory role on ethics and integrity, the Chair on behalf of the Ethics and Transparency Panel requests that the PCC and Chief Constable review the contents of this report. The panel would particularly welcome the views of the PCC and Chief Constable on the following questions:
 1. Are they satisfied with how the Ethics and Transparency Panel has held the Chief Constable to account on this subject?
 2. Do you have any recommendations or feedback you would like to offer to the Ethics and Transparency Panel in relation to this matter?

Summary

5. Over the past year, the panel believes that Leicestershire Police ("the Force") and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) have demonstrated good ethical standards and delivered a good level of service to the communities of Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland. The Force has evidenced this in several ways, notably, the panel discussed the Suzy Lamplugh Trust super-complaint, during which the Force outlined its commitment to developing a delivery plan based on the Trust's recommendations. Furthermore, the prioritisation of stalking and harassment for 2025/2026 was highlighted, reflecting the Force's transparency and proactive approach to addressing serious concerns.
6. To follow up on the work undertaken last year, the panel has engaged in a series of constructive discussions both within and outside the organisation, particularly though not exclusively on matters relating to organisational culture. While there have been some changes within the OPCC office and the wider force. The panel

recognises that, despite organisational changes, there remains a strong and sustained commitment to improvement and an open approach to feedback. This continued focus will be essential in consolidating recent progress and addressing emerging challenges in the year ahead.

7. Throughout the year, the panel has engaged in meaningful discussions around issues affecting organisational culture. Both the Force and the OPCC have demonstrated transparency regarding the ethical and public-facing impacts of these challenges. As highlighted in last year's review, the panel has consistently acknowledged the significant budgetary pressures faced by the Force. These financial constraints have necessitated a range of savings measures over the past year. The Force has provided reassurance that, while budgetary challenges are expected to continue, robust plans are in place to mitigate their impact. These plans have been openly shared and discussed with the panel, and there is confidence that the Force is taking appropriate steps to minimise these effects, particularly in relation to frontline policing. The panel remains assured that the Force is committed to maintaining service delivery and public trust despite ongoing financial pressures.

Panel Background

8. Over the past 12 months, the Ethics and Transparency Panel has convened on more than ten occasions through formal panel meetings and scrutiny sub-panel sessions, undertaking crime sampling and review activities. Members have also participated in relevant training sessions and attended additional meetings as required. The panel is pleased to note that, throughout this period, full and unrestricted access has been provided to all information, visits, and further details requested across the force.
9. All Ethics and Transparency Panel meetings held this year have been well attended by both Panel members and invited Force representatives including senior leadership, consistently achieving the required quorum. Each meeting has benefited from a diverse range of representation, fostering constructive discussion and meaningful challenge.
10. Since our last report we have fully welcomed several new members to add additional skills and oversight, all of whom were interviewed thoroughly and vetted to appropriate levels.

As of today, there are currently 10 members on the panel with differing lengths of term:

- Vipal Karavadra (Chair) – member since September 2022
- Dr Louise Bradley – member since September 2022
- Matthew Youngs – member since September 2022
- Kieran Breen - member since September 2023
- Kathleen Harris-Leighton - member since September 2023
- Lisa Vine - member since September 2023
- Dr Denis Tanfa – member since October 2024

- Nikki Plant - member since October 2024
- Katie Walker - member since October 2024
- Frances Deepwell - member since October 2024

11. Bringing in the new panel member has made the group more diverse and added fresh perspectives to how things are reviewed. However, the panel has identified delays in the provision of training for these new members. As a result, they have not yet been able to participate in sub-panels, which has limited their involvement in more detailed scrutiny activities. This issue has been acknowledged by the OPCC, and work is underway to address the gaps. Once all panel members are fully integrated into the sub-panels, it will enable more robust scrutiny, including increased opportunities for dip-sampling and the suggestion of recommendations. This forms part of the wider effort to establish a more cohesive and effective scrutiny structure across both the OPCC and the Force.
12. There are four scrutiny sub-panels that currently undertake dip-sampling and reviews to support the work of the panel and offer a more in-depth scrutiny into the application of processes, policies and procedures. The four sub-panels consist of the follow areas of scrutiny:
 - Review of Public Complaints
 - Custody Detention Scrutiny Panel (CDSP)
 - Out of Court Resolutions (OOCR) Panel
 - Hate Crime Scrutiny Panel (HCSP)
13. Currently six of the panel members are assigned to a sub-panel(s). This is subject to change, and it is the goal to ensure that all panel members are involved in a sub-panel. This change is due to occur by the end of the annual year (2025). All four panels run on a quarterly basis, and the sub-panels present an annual report to the Ethics and Transparency Panel for comment. In the last year an annual report has been provided by the OOCR Scrutiny Panel, the annual report for the CDSP is in progress and the Hate Crime Scrutiny annual report is due in December 2025.
14. The following information summarises the work of the panel throughout these meetings over the last 12 months including the work of the scrutiny sub-panels. The Ethics and Transparency Panels have been well attended by the respective panel members, along with the sub-panels in which the lead panel members attend. It has been highlighted that there have been some issues with the attendance of the Hate Crime Scrutiny panel in which the July meeting had to be cancelled twice as it did not meet the quorate.

Review of Policies and Procedures

Over the past 12 months, the panel has been provided with access to a range of policies and procedures relevant to the areas under discussion within the meetings. This access has enabled public scrutiny of documents that are not ordinarily available to the wider public, thereby enhancing transparency and accountability.

The panel have reviewed and scrutinised policies across several areas, including Leicestershire Custody Procedures, particularly in relation to the strip searching of children in custody, Pension Forfeiture cases, Appropriate Adults and the Suzy Lamplugh Trust Progress Report. In addition to reviewing existing policies, the panel was invited to contribute its views on the development of local procedures. This included providing feedback on whether Leicestershire Police should revise its eligibility criteria for Out of Court Resolutions (OOCRs), which currently differ from national guidance.

The panel has found that all feedback and comments provided have been acknowledged and appropriately considered. The Gifts and Gratuities Register is reviewed quarterly by the panel to ensure that the acceptance of any gifts or gratuities remains reasonable and proportionate, taking into account the specific circumstances of each gift. This quarterly review is a mandatory requirement, as outlined in the panel's terms of reference, and feedback is consistently welcomed and acted upon. In the last annual report, the panel requested that the Force provide greater detail regarding the value of gifts and gratuities. This was to enable the panel to make more informed decisions about the appropriateness of accepting such items. In response, the Force has begun implementing this recommendation, and the updated registers now offers improved transparency.

The panel expressed concerns about the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) training, specifically the lack of tailored content addressing the needs of transgender individuals. These concerns were acknowledged by the Force, and discussions took place with panel members to address the gaps in training. The Force has since taken steps to amend the training provided and has introduced a new mandatory Code of Ethics Training for all officers and staff. This training is currently in the early stages of being rolled out across the organisation.

Ethical Dilemmas

The panel continues to consider the discussion of ethical dilemmas to be a valuable part of the meetings. It has been brought to the panel's attention that there are plans to expand this section further, placing greater emphasis on ethical considerations. This expansion will enable the Force to gather more feedback, particularly as ethical dilemmas within policing continue to feature prominently in national and local media. Over the past year, the panel has provided commentary and feedback on a range of ethical issues that the Force currently faces or may encounter in the future. These discussions have helped to capture public perceptions and facilitate meaningful discussion around the potential impact of various approaches. Among the dilemmas discussed were whether the Force should adapt its Out of Court Resolution (OOCR) eligibility criteria to include individuals who do not make admissions in interview, particularly for low-harm offences, in order to avoid unnecessary criminalisation; the use of volunteers as appropriate adults; and the recording of non-hate crime incidents. These discussions have proven to be insightful and have supported the Force in considering the ethical implications of its policies and practices.

Panel members feel they have been able to engage in open and constructive discussions with members of the Force regarding ethical dilemmas, and that their perspectives and feedback have been acknowledged.

Body Worn Video (BWV)

Over the past 12 months, the panel has reviewed five randomly selected instances of Body Worn Video (BWV) footage during its meetings. These clips are selected by the Assurance Officer following their attendance at the internal Use of Force Scrutiny Panel. The panel's primary focus is to determine whether the use of force was appropriate and necessary. Alongside this, the panel also considers officers' conduct and their interactions with members of the public to assess whether incidents were handled professionally and effectively. Overall, the Panel considered the BWV footage reviewed to reflect good practice and an appropriate application of force. The panel have been provided with the opportunity to review a range of incidents captured on BWV.

In relation to one review, the panel raised concerns regarding the arresting officer's response to the detainee's disclosure of mental health issues, as well as the use of captor spray. Following the review, recommendations were made to support wider learning for frontline officers, particularly around the appropriate language to use when engaging with individuals experiencing mental health difficulties.

Concerns have also been raised by panel members regarding the limited time available for reviewing BWV footage. Following discussions between the panel members and the OPCC, several suggestions were considered to enhance the effectiveness of this section of the panel's work. Panel members expressed support for the proposal to have a lead panel member attend the internal scrutiny panel led by Force. It is believed that this setting will provide a more comprehensive opportunity to scrutinise the practices of Leicestershire Police, with sufficient time allocated for meaningful review. This approach will enable the lead panel member to provide informed feedback during panel meetings, ensuring that BWV scrutiny is both thorough and impactful.

Ethics and Transparency Panel Scrutiny Sub-Panels

Review of Public Complaints

The purpose of reviewing and scrutinising closed complaints is to assess how well the complaint was handled, whether the outcome was appropriate and identify any themes or trends both for individual and organisation learning. The purpose of the dip-sample is to examine the code of conduct taught to officers, examine the behaviour and performance against the policies and procedures currently in place.

The reviewing is undertaken exclusively by Ethics and Transparency Panel members and reviews take place four times a year in person with a representative from the OPCC and representatives from the Professional Standards being present to answer any questions and provide additional information if requested.

Currently two Ethics and Transparency Panel are part of the process, and they each randomly select up to 10 closed complaints from a spreadsheet which documents case numbers, the allegation result and types of complaints e.g. age, impolite language, police action following contact etc. PSD will assist and collate these cases for the panel members; issues have been highlighted regarding the significant number of pages including supplementary documents e.g. BWV footage which can be time-consuming. As such there has been a push for more panel members to get involved in the complaints dip-sample, although this has not been facilitated within the past year, it is the hope to begin this within the next annual year if support is provided by PSD.

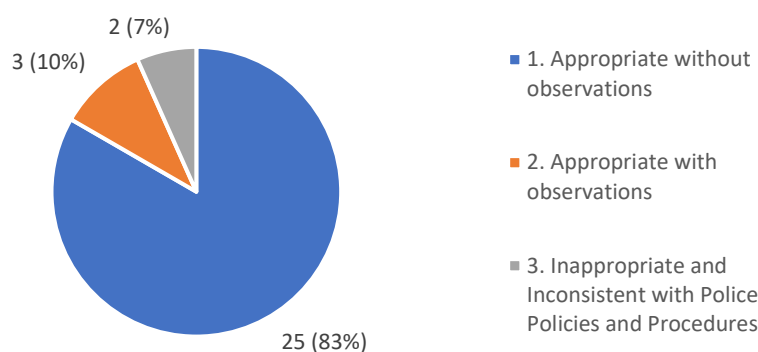
As part of the review, panel members complete an online feedback form which contains a number of questions including:

- Have the allegations been clearly identified
- Has the Complaint Handler responded to each of these allegations
- Do you feel that the outcome provided by the Complaint Handler was appropriate
- Overall Feedback

There are 4 categories used to code the review of complaints:

1. Appropriate without Observations
2. Appropriate with Observations
3. Inappropriate and Inconsistent with Police Policies/Procedures
4. Panel fails to reach Conclusion.

In the last 12 months, there have been 30 closed complaints reviewed by panel members with the following observations:



Overall, the panel was impressed by the methodical, transparent, and professional approach taken in handling and investigating complaints. It is evident that the Force treats complaints with seriousness. The Panel also noted PSD's commitment to continuous improvement, highlighting their openness to feedback and willingness to implement changes based on recommendations. This positive approach is reflected in the outcome of the review, with 83% of complaints assessed as appropriate without any observations.

The panel identified some assurance gaps during the review. In 10% of the complaints, while the panel agreed that the complaint handler had managed the case appropriately, they did make some observations. Specifically, they felt that clearer initial information should have been provided to the complainant, and that more feedback around compassionate communication was needed, highlighting that the officer had shown a lack of compassion in their interactions. Additionally, recurring themes were observed in complaints relating to the FEO and custody environments. These often involved the absence of audio recordings, which, due to legal restrictions, meant a definitive judgement on service appropriateness couldn't be made.

The ETP members who partake in the dip-sampling sessions have observed that often when mistakes are made it appears to stem from officers not consistently following correct procedures, which appears to be fundamental PACE codes of practice. The panel suggested that ongoing, targeted training in core PACE knowledge is essential in reducing complaints.

The panel wished to highlight that PSD consistently are supportive and transparent particularly when members ask granular questions and are extremely accommodating and welcoming.

Custody Detention Scrutiny Panel

The purpose of the Custody Detention Scrutiny Panel (CDSP) is to review historic custody records to ensure that both local and national policies, procedures and legislation has been followed. The panel objectively reviews a detained persons journey through the custody environment to provide assurance that they have been managed in an appropriate, ethical and proportionate manner which are fundamental to public trust and confidence. The panel is made up of Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) and members of the Ethics and Transparency Panel and meetings are scheduled 4 times a year with a representative from the OPCC and Custody present.

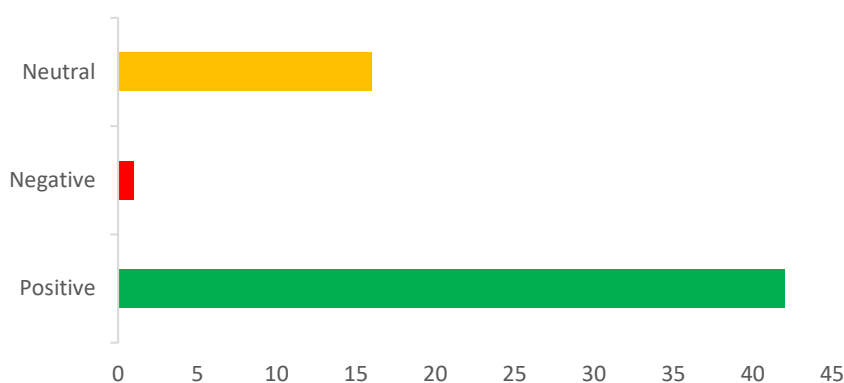
The panel reviews a number of randomly selected custody records with the view to evaluating the professionalism, appropriateness, and timeliness of documentation for each individual who passes through custody. In addition to this, the panel also holds an advisory role, sharing feedback on quality assurance and updates to procedure.

Topics selected for review are often influenced by national data or policing concerns raised at a national level. However, the panel is encouraged to identify and propose local issues for inclusion in the review. Common themes include mental health, access to support services, and the promotion of dignity and respect.

In the last 12 months, the CDSP have convened three times, in February, May, and August 2025. Across these meetings, a total of 59 custody records have been reviewed, representing various custody suites and a diverse range of demographics. During each review, the panel considers a broad set of factors, including the duration of detention, access to rights and entitlements, levels of observation, mental health

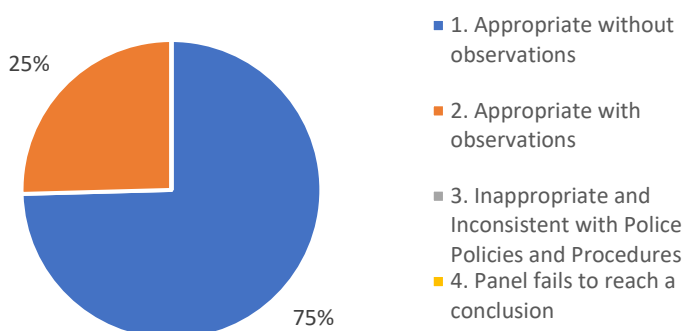
support, and, where relevant, the use of strip searches and the treatment of juveniles.

Over the past 12 months, feedback from the panel on the 59 custody records selected for dip-sampling has provided an overall assessment of their quality and compliance:



Similarly to the review of complaints, there are 4 categories used to code the review of complaints:

1. Appropriate without Observations
2. Appropriate with Observations
3. Inappropriate and Inconsistent with Police Policies/Procedures
4. Panel fails to reach Conclusion



The CDSP reviewed 59 custody cases and were generally assured that Leicestershire Police effectively managed detained persons. While one case received overall appropriate feedback, it was noted as negative due to specific concerns: a delay in the inspector's review post-authorised detention and missed recording opportunities regarding the Appropriate Adult (AA) process, individual feedback was provided in this instance. The main gap in assurance was inconsistent detail in officers' records, for example, lack of information on whether food was offered or provided, and no explanation for delays in AA attendance. The panel felt that incomplete records can hinder assurance and transparency.

The panel expressed overall positive impressions of how vulnerable individuals, particularly those with mental health needs and under-18s, are appropriately managed within the custody environment to ensure their safeguarding. As highlighted in the previous annual report, the panel again observed that individuals were booked in promptly, with clear documentation of welfare checks. While the speed of booking in is a national requirement, the panel acknowledged that it may vary depending on the level of demand faced by the Force across Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland.

The ETP members sitting on the panel overall highlighted that the quality of custody records was very high. The panel observed that thorough due diligence was consistently applied to more complex cases, particularly where detainees had additional needs, such as medical or cultural considerations, which were appropriately acknowledged and accommodated.

The panel acknowledged that while missed observation intervals remain a concern, it is important to note that these instances represent only a small fraction of the total records reviewed. The panel commended the custody officers and sergeants, highlighting a clear positive: despite the pressures inherent in managing custody suites, pressures that custody leads have been transparent about with the ETP, staff consistently demonstrated a rigorous attention to detail in ensuring that detained persons received regular welfare checks. In cases where checks were missed, custody staff were, almost without exception, conducting them within a 1–2-minute window of the scheduled time.

The ETP noted that there were a couple of cases involving vulnerable individuals or detainees with additional needs where the involvement of a healthcare professional (HCP) was sought. However, the documentation surrounding this support was limited. While the ETP members clarified that they do not expect medical details to be included in custody records, they recommended that it would be good practice to improve the documentation of HCP involvement. Rather than simply noting the time of attendance, it was suggested that records should include the rationale for seeking healthcare support, the role of the HCP, and the duration of their engagement with the detainee. This would enhance transparency and support more effective scrutiny of the care provided to detainees.

Out of Court Resolution (OOCR) Panel

The term 'Out of Court Resolutions' (OOCR) refers to a range of options available to the police to use in certain cases as an alternative to a prosecution. By using these alternative resolutions correctly, the police can deal with less serious offences, and offenders with little or no previous offending history in a way that is both proportionate and rehabilitative. Additionally, the resolutions are designed to address the need make good any loss or harm sustained by the victim or community.

The purpose of the OOCR Panel is to ensure that the use of Out of Court Resolutions is appropriate and proportionate, consistent with national and local policy, and consider the victims' wishes where appropriate. The panel will make

recommendations and identify learning. Membership of the panel includes Magistrates, Police, CPS, and local services such as Turning Point and Victim First. Following the time pressures and OOCR changes mentioned in last year's annual report, the panel has updated its structure to help things run more smoothly and make workloads more manageable for the Force's Prevention Directorate. These challenges, driven by increased workload, reduced staffing, and budget limitations, prompted a new structure to be introduced in the last 12 months which would take the meetings from two per year in which 30 cases are reviewed in each, to four meetings per year in which 15 are reviewed each time, focusing on either adult or youth OOCRs. The panel were supportive of this change, and this was introduced in September 2025. The cases were still required to be 30% domestic incidents in line with national guidance. There is a national requirement for the PCC to facilitate regular scrutiny panels to review the Police use of OOCRs. The revised structure eases pressure on both the OOCR team and panel members, enabling more focused discussions and manageable workloads. While the agreed changes were originally intended to take effect from September, they were implemented earlier during the March meeting as only 15 cases were reviewed. At that time, 15 youth cases were reviewed, with 30% of these being domestic-related.

There are 4 categories used to code the handling of cases:

1. Appropriate and consistent with Police Policies and/or the CPS Code of Practice,
2. Appropriate with observations,
3. Inappropriate and inconsistent with Police Policies and/or CPS Code of Practice
4. Panel fails to reach a conclusion.

In the past 12 months, only one panel meeting has taken place, which was held virtually on 13th March 2025. Although a second meeting was scheduled for September, it had to be postponed due to the Chair's last-minute withdrawal and insufficient attendance. This meeting was rescheduled for November but again had to be cancelled due to insufficient attendance from external partners.

Youth:

1. Appropriate and consistent with Police policies and/or the CPS Code of Practice	5
2. Appropriate with observations	6
3. Inappropriate and inconsistent with Police policies and/or the CPS Code of Practice	4
4. Panel fails to reach a conclusion	0

Following the March meeting, which focused exclusively on OOCRs for youths, the panel concluded that 73% of the incidents were handled appropriately. However, observations were noted in several cases. These often highlighted missing rationale or a lack of consideration or documentation of broader support measures.

Additionally, it was observed that some reports lacked sufficient detail regarding interventions and outcomes. Despite these areas for improvement, the panel overall felt the cases were managed effectively.

In relation to the cases that were identified as inappropriate and inconsistent with Police policies and/or the CPS Code of Practice, the common issues included:

- Missed opportunities to engage children and families through educational or diversionary pathways.
- Preventative referrals and safeguarding actions not consistently considered or applied.
- Supervisory rationale often absent or unclear, affecting transparency and accountability.
- Insufficient exploration of underlying factors such as mental capacity or family dynamics.

The last annual report documented that there was more of a wrap-around care and support for youths, which includes greater service involvement as cases go to a panel specifically for youths which is multidisciplinary and focused on the needs of the child. This was highlighted again in the last 12 months however it was noted that there was a shift in how effective OOCRs were being used for children with the last review presenting more positive results. General themes documented that:

- Conditions were not appropriate/meaningful/enforceable, therefore more of a 'tick box' than constructive.
- A referral should have been made instead of an OOCR being issued to ensure wider assessment/support/intervention received by the involved youth.
- CPS involvement should have been sought as the OOCR was not addressing the offending history.
- A 'lack of curiosity' seen from officers to ensure child/young person's wellbeing. It was highlighted OOCRs should be a resource to also safeguard.

The panel raised concerns, particularly regarding the lack of intervention and exploration of underlying factors, especially in relation to the safeguarding of vulnerable individuals. The panel believes that training on referral opportunities, including safeguarding referrals, could be implemented to address this. The lead inspector remains aware that improvements are still needed in the Force's use of OOCRs, and the panel feels assured that he will continue to drive those improvements forward.

Where the panel found that cases were appropriate and consistent with Police Policies and/or the CPS Code of Practice, it was evident that officers had a clear understanding of the policy relating to OOCR. For example, inspector sign-off was often completed where required, nearly all offences were suitable for an OOCR to be issued, and referrals, where made, were effective, with multi-agency involvement proving productive.

The panel felt that officers were receptive of the panel's comments and in more than one case, shared their thoughts in relation to standards of practice. The newly introduced feedback monitoring system was recognised as effective and well-executed by the Force, demonstrating openness and transparency. Additionally, the panel highlighted the strength of the partnership between the OPCC, the Force, and both statutory and voluntary partners.

The panel noted that, compared to previous years, there has been steady progress in the assessment of OOCR incidents, which are increasingly found to be appropriate and consistent with Police Policies and the CPS Code of Practice. However, it is acknowledged that further improvements are still required.

Over the past year, the OOCR panel responsible for reviewing adult cases has faced challenges due to low attendance from partner agencies. This has led to the cancellation of key meetings, undermining the panel's ability to assess and scrutinise the use of OOCRs. These panels play a critical role in ensuring police accountability and providing assurance that complex decisions to administer OOCRs are appropriate and justified.

Hate Crime Scrutiny Sub Panel

The purpose of this sub panel is to scrutinise the way hate crimes are dealt with and ensure they are compliant nationally and locally to policies and procedures. The aim is to effect change by improving service and encouraging the sharing of national practice and improving victim experience.

The panel is the OPCC's only entirely voluntary panel and following a successful recruitment drive in April 2024, has 8 full time volunteers who attend 4 panels per year at FHQ. This panel is diverse in its representation and has several members with lived experience of hate crime. Additionally, an ETP member regularly attends and provides valuable feedback into the ETP process.

The Force's hate crime provides a randomly selected list of hate crime occurrence numbers in which the OPCC randomly select 3 cases of hate crimes for the panel to review each meeting. These cases are closed and redacted full. The panel will refer to scrutiny questions that relate to Force policy and procedure for hate crimes, and using these questions, determine whether the case was handled appropriately and consistently.

There are 4 categories used to code the handling of cases:

1. Appropriate and consistent with Police Policies,
2. Appropriate with observations,
3. Inappropriate and inconsistent with Police Policies,
4. Panel fails to reach a conclusion.

Three panels have been held so far in 2025 (January 2025, April 2025 and October 2025) and the results from these combined are as follows:

1 (Appropriate and consistent with Police policies)	2
2 (Appropriate but with observations)	1
3 (Inappropriate and inconsistent with Police policies)	2
4 (Panel fails to reach a conclusion)	0

During the April meeting, significant concerns were raised regarding a hate crime case and how it was handled by Leicestershire Police. The main issue highlighted was that the victim was repeatedly misgendered throughout the crime report. This was particularly concerning to the lead member of the Ethics and Transparency Panel, who also sits on the Hate Crime Scrutiny Panel and has a strong background in LGBTQ+ inclusion. Additionally, the panel raised broader concerns about legislation that guides policing based on general public views, which they felt was outdated and could lead to the dismissal of issues affecting the LGBTQ+ community.

Importantly, the panel recognised that the Hate Crime Team had already identified the issue before the meeting and took immediate action by providing officer feedback. Their transparency and proactive response were seen as a positive indication that the team took the matter seriously and understood the importance of learning from it.

During quarter two, the Hate Crime Scrutiny Panel encountered attendance challenges. The scheduled meeting was cancelled due to the panel not meeting the required quorum, and a subsequent attempt to reschedule the meeting was also unsuccessful for the same reason. These repeated issues have raised concerns about the volume of dip-sampling currently being undertaken. Panel members have expressed their support for the OPCC to introduce changes and recommendations aimed at improving the panel's effectiveness. This includes a review of the panel's Terms of Reference to amend the quorum requirements, enhance flexibility by enabling virtual and hybrid attendance, and appoint an additional member from the Ethics and Transparency Panel to strengthen scrutiny of hate crime cases.

During the most recent Hate Crime Scrutiny Panel (HCSP) meeting in October, two cases were reviewed. One was assessed as appropriate and consistent with police policies and procedures, while the other was deemed inappropriate. The ETP member identified that, although the HCSP is in its infancy and as a result only five cases have been looked at, the cases which relate to LGBTQ+ victims were not appropriate and consistent with police policies which was a concern.

During the most recent Hate Crime Scrutiny Panel (HCSP) meeting in October, two cases were reviewed. One was assessed as appropriate and consistent with police policies and procedures, while the other was deemed inappropriate. It was noted that, although the HCSP is still in its early stages and has only reviewed five cases to date, cases involving LGBTQ+ victims have consistently been assessed as not appropriate or not aligned with police policies and procedures.

The ETP member sitting on the HCSP has expressed the impressive manner that the meetings are carried out and this is consistently celebrated by the panel. It was identified that all individuals feel that the environment was open, supportive, and allowed for meaningful discussions, with the atmosphere is professional and yet honest and welcoming. It is the ETP's hope that this remains as the HCSP continues.

For the ETP there are two main areas of concern for consideration. Firstly, the feedback mechanism for Force staff, relating to the handling of hate crime cases, is inconsistent in terms of responses from Force staff. To date, it is more likely that the HCSP will be fed back Force staff responses when the HCSP members have been complimentary. Whereas there have been occasions, where Force staff have not responded to perhaps more negative feedback. Therefore, the HCSP do not know if it has been taken on board, or what will be done to ensure the situation is not repeated.

Recommendations

When considering the above summary, the Ethics and Transparency Panel makes the following recommendations to the Chief Constable and Police and Crime Commissioner:

- Continue to strengthen and expand partnerships with local community groups and leaders, recognising and celebrating the rich multicultural diversity of Leicestershire and Rutland. It is suggested the OPCC work with the panel to develop public-facing communications that highlight the panel's work, findings, and impact. This could include annual summaries or community briefings to build public trust and transparency.
- In light of the concerns raised through the HCSP, it is recommended that an audit be conducted focusing specifically on LGBTQ+ hate crimes. This will help determine whether the highlighted cases are isolated incidents or indicative of a broader pattern requiring further attention.
- Continue to work on the use of Out of Court Resolution, the appropriateness of when and how utilised. This was highlighted in the previous annual report. The Panel recommends exploring the feasibility of potentially creating a dedicated vulnerable adult panel in relation to OOCRs, similar to the existing youth-focused panel. This would address the identified gap in support for adults facing challenges related to mental health and wellbeing, which can contribute to offending behaviour. Unlike youth cases, the panel have highlighted that adult cases currently lack a multidisciplinary forum that provides wrap-around care and coordinated service involvement. A vulnerable adult panel would hopefully aim to provide early intervention and reduce the risk of offending linked to unmet mental health and wellbeing needs.
- Suggest the OPCC and the Force actively promote and ensure consistent participation from partner agencies in Out of Court Resolution (OOCR)

panels. Recent panels have experienced notable issues with attendance, which undermines the effectiveness. To maintain the integrity and impact of these panels, it is essential that all relevant partners are encouraged to prioritise attendance or appropriate delegation and contribute meaningfully to discussions and decision-making.

- The Force should continue to strengthen its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) training, with a particular emphasis on supporting the LGBTQ+ community. It is recommended that it should include tailored content that promotes respectful language, greater awareness of identity, and inclusive approaches to crime reporting and victim support. To ensure the training is both relevant and impactful, it is recommended that individuals with lived experience are actively involved in its development and delivery, including the ETP members. Collaboration with external community organisations is also encouraged, to help ensure that practices reflect real-world experiences and respond to the evolving needs of LGBTQ+ individuals.

----- **End of Report** -----