

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ETHICS COMMITTEE, HELD ON MONDAY 15
JANUARY 2018 AT CHURCH HOUSE**

PRESENT:

Bishop David Walker (Chair)
David Arnold MBE
Dr Ruth Bromley
Nasir Hafezi
Paul Horrocks
Peter Joyce
Sean McHale
Shaid Mushtaq
Cym D'Souza

IN ATTENDANCE:

Ian Pilling	Greater Manchester Police (GMP)
Arif Nawaz	Greater Manchester Police (GMP)
Dave Byrne	GM Combined Authority (GMCA)
Emma Stonier	GM Combined Authority (GMCA)

EC/18/01 INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed members of the Ethics Committee to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Roy Walters, Ruth Purdie and Sally Lester.

EC/18/02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received.

**EC/18/03 MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD 5 DECEMBER 2017 AND
MATTERS ARISING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2017 were submitted for approval. A Member requested that under item EC/17/19 iii an amendment was made to reflect the suggestion made that the Deputy Mayor considered raising the recording of crime with colleagues in other police services.

Matters arising

i. Communications

The Ethics Committee considered the communications strategy developed by the small working group with support from GMP and the GMCA. The strategy covered communications to both internal and external audiences. The three principal audiences identified were; the police, members of the public and stakeholder organisations such

as Local Councillors and Local Authorities. As the strategy was tabled at the meeting members were also asked to consider this outside of the meeting and forward any comments to the working group or the Governance Officer.

The group highlighted that without resourcing the strategy would not be able to be delivered and requested that the issue of resourcing this was considered by the GMCA. Overall support from the GMCA to the Ethics Committee was also discussed since the transfer from the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office to the GMCA and Members felt that it would be useful to have a conversation at the appropriate level between the GMCA, GMP and members of the committee to ensure support and ways that the Ethics Committee feedback to the Deputy Mayor were clearly identified.

ii. Body Worn Video

a. 30 second audio delay

GMP updated the Ethics Committee that the 30 second audio delay was a technical issue relating to how the software was designed. It was highlighted that there could potentially be issues with some of the recordings if the recording of the audio did not begin as soon as the equipment was turned on. This issue was noted as being with the manufacturer and the Committee were informed that this would also be an issue for any police force who used the same equipment.

b. Stop and Search Feedback

The Ethics Committee were given an update about Stop and Search feedback. The Home Office has guidelines regarding best practice when carrying out stop and search and this outlines that members of the public should be able to provide feedback regarding their experience. The Police and Crime Commissioner's office developed a phone app but feedback from this has proved limited and an email address for feedback is currently being provided. The Home Office is expected to release new guidance outlining that the mechanism for feedback should be anonymous and future feedback options were currently being and will be presented to the Deputy Mayor for consideration. Overall the number of complaints received about stop and search was low and the number of stop and searches carried out has dropped over the last few years. GMP policy is that all stop and search encounters are recorded and were not aware of anything that suggested this wasn't taking place.

Members' feedback included; that promotion and publication of feedback methods needed to be ongoing to have an impact; that information on how to complain needed to be clear; and that complaints about stop and search may not be raised due to a perception that it wouldn't make a difference.

Members queried the number of stop and searches which led to charges/arrests and the number which led to further action. GMP agreed to bring an update on this to the next meeting.

The Committee was also updated that the College of Policing had recently issued guidance which outlined that 'smelling cannabis' should not be grounds for stopping someone. It was noted that this was currently being debated.

c. Victim Reluctance

The Ethics Committee were provided with an update regarding victim reluctance when prosecuting domestic abuse cases using Body Worn Video evidence. Members were informed that the use of Body Worn Video was mandatory when attending a case of domestic abuse. The decision to take a case forward to prosecution is decided on a case by case basis by the individual officer, GMP and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). The PPIU and other partner agencies also provide support for vulnerable victims. Members raised cases they were aware of where particularly vulnerable victims no longer supported prosecution and due to evidence from Body Worn Video the prosecution had gone ahead. It was noted that GMP Policy is to support positive action in domestic abuse cases and that HMIC also inspected police forces relating to this.

Following discussion it was agreed that a small working group would look into the area of Body Worn Video again to assess the impact of this on victims when prosecuting domestic abuse cases. Key areas of focus were noted as being; decisions made re; prosecution; use of Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPOs); impact of changes to the Bail system and effects of Body Worn Video in how domestic abuse cases are dealt with. The small working group will bring clear terms of reference to the next Committee meeting before commencing their work in full. GMP confirmed they were happy to support this approach as much as they could do. It was also suggested that the group may wish to liaise with experts within the field with the aims of working in a partnership approach.

iii. Extremism and Prevent Agenda

A preliminary meeting of the small working group was scheduled for January 22nd and it was confirmed a further update would be brought to the next meeting.

RESOLVED/-

1. To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 5th December 2017, subject to the amendment outlined above;
2. That the Communications Strategy was a standing item on the agenda;
3. That overall support for the Ethics Committee and resourcing for the Communications strategy was taken back for consideration by officers;
4. That an update on Extremism and the Prevent Agenda was provided at the next meeting;
5. That GMP bring an update to the next meeting re; conversions of stop and searches to arrests, including by breakdown of crime;
6. That the Governance Officer circulate the HMIC Thematic Report re; Domestic Abuse to the Ethics Committee;

7. That Ruth Bromley, Cym D'Souza and Nasir Hafezi form a small working group to further investigate Body Worn Video and Domestic Abuse and bring an update to the next meeting of the Ethics Committee.

EC/18/04 SPIT GUARDS

GMP introduced the issue of Spit Guards to the Ethics Committee. They asked for guidance and input from the Ethics Committee regarding the purchase and use of spit guards including whether if they were introduced they should be limited to specific staff groups. 20 police forces nationally have purchased spit guards and the GMP Police Federation Branch has asked that this be looked at by GMP. Nationally the Police Federation is supportive of the introduction of spit guards. Work was underway to investigate the prevalence, instances and effects of their use to establish the potential impact and consequences of using them.

Members of the Ethics Committee had the following comments and questions to help inform further discussion;

- Whether spit guards would be used on a child. It was confirmed that there was no national guidance but that if GMP was to implement their use then they would have policies related to when it was appropriate to use spit guards;
- That information regarding the frequency officers were spat at/bitten would be useful to inform decisions;
- How long it took after arrest to de-escalate a situation following the use of a spit guard/hood;
- What was the risk of death/complications and had spit guards been implicated in any causes of death in custody;
- Safeguards in place regarding their use to ensure they were not used offensively and used was proportional;
- Whether these were a deterrent in police forces where they were in use or whether there was any evidence to indicate they exacerbated situations;
- That how they were used and accountability regarding their use was important;
- Requested that heard opinion of GMP's police officers about the use of spit guards and how many officers were supportive of their introduction;
- Requested information about how many people were charged with assault for spitting/biting each year. It was confirmed GMP were undertaking research about this;
- That GMP's Hepatitis B vaccination policies were also looked at when researching this area;and
- To assess the primary motivation for their introduction (infection prevention or to prevent spitting/biting).

It was agreed that a small working group would be convened to investigate this further and that they would provide the Ethics Committee with a more comprehensive update at the next meeting. The Committee also requested to see examples of spit guards/hoods.

RESOLVED/-

1. That Paul Horrocks, Sean McHale and Peter Joyce would form a small working group to look into this further and report back to the next meeting.

EC/18/05 ETHICS COMMITTEE CONFERENCE

An update was provided regarding the holding of an Ethics Committee conference. In principal there was support for an Ethics Conference. The Committee were informed that the Deputy Mayor of Chief Constable were not available on initial date suggested as this coincided with the introduction of the IOPS system, meaning it would be difficult to release police staff to attend at this time. A date later this year may be possible to hold this event. The option of holding this at a GMP venue was also noted to ensure it was easier for police staff to attend.

A scoping document was required to move this forward and the area of GMCA support was highlighted by Members as being crucial if this was to go ahead. It was suggested that a meeting between GMCA, GMP and members of the small working group might be useful to discuss this further.

RESOLVED/-

1. That further discussion would take place between GMCA, GMP and the small working group.

EC/18/06 FUTURE AREAS OF WORK

The Ethics Committee discussed potential future areas of work which included; economic crime, information sharing, online abuse and grooming, identification of key partners for the Committee to work with and the Committee meeting groups across Greater Manchester. Following discussion it was agreed that at the next meeting the Committee would receive initial information about Economic Crime from GMP which outlined potential ethical issues they might like to investigate, particularly in relation to police response and prevention and detection and make a decision regarding further investigation of this.

It was also highlighted that it would be more difficult to provide a comprehensive update about information sharing as this was often agreed on a case by case basis.

RESOLVED/-

1. To receive further information about economic crime and police response to this to assess if the Ethics Committee would like to investigate this further.

EC/18/07 ETHICS COMMITTEE VACANCY

The Ethics Committee discussed the vacancy on the Committee following a Member standing down last year. It was also noted that Members' current term ended in April 2018. The Committee requested a decision from the Deputy Mayor/GMCA regarding the extension of their current term and it was agreed to discuss the vacant position further once more clarity about the future role of the Ethics Committee had been received.

The Committee highlighted the importance of ensuring that any new Member had the appropriate skill set for the Committee and went through an application process.

RESOLVED/-

1. To receive an update regarding Members' tenure at the next meeting; and
2. To make a decision about recruitment to the vacant position once they had received more clarity from the GMCA.

EC/18/08 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of other business.