

4th August 2021

Dear Councillor Haleem and members of the Police & Crime Panel

Police and Crime Commissioner’s Annual Report 2020/21

Many thanks for your letter dated 3rd August 2021 providing the Panel’s comments on the draft Police and Crime Commissioner’s Annual Report 2020/21 discussed at the Police and Crime Panel meeting of 19th July 2021.

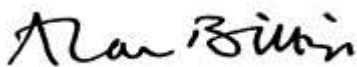
I have provided a table below outlining the response to the issues raised. A copy of the revised report is also provided for information.

Comment	PCC response
<p>Professor James highlighted that the draft Annual Report stated that there had been six meetings of the Independent Ethics Panel (IEP) held during April 2020 to March 2021. However, from visiting the Commissioner’s website, Professor James was unable to locate any IEP agendas since June 2019 and no minutes of IEP meetings held during 2021.</p>	<p>A decision was made in 2019 to only publish the minutes rather than the agenda for the Independent Ethics Panel meetings. The minutes do include a draft work programme for the panel.</p> <p>The OPCC are currently reviewing the procedure for publishing IEP minutes with the Panel.</p>
<p>The section of Tackling ASB records many positive achievements/developments but I would have liked to have seen some comment on the rise in recorded levels of drug offences, which is relatively high compared with national rates, and on the rise in recorded levels of anti-social behaviour.</p>	<p>Drug offences Additional information about increased drug offences has been included at the final bullet on page 12 as follows:</p> <p><i>“The level of recorded drugs offences increased in South Yorkshire during the pandemic as it did nationally. This may have been as a result of offences being more visible during lockdown and reduced levels of other crime may have allowed officers to be pro-active in seeking out these offences.”</i></p> <p>ASB The heading highlighted at the start of the section of the report which shows the increase in ASB on page 14 has been changed to add in ASB and now reads:</p> <p><i>“The coronavirus lockdowns and restrictions have impacted on levels of recorded crime and ASB, performance and outcomes. This needs to be taken into account when looking at decreases or increases in recorded incidents and crime.”</i></p> <p>It is not proposed to add anything further in the Annual Report as discussions around this issue have been held during Panel meetings and at performance sub-group meetings during the year. To add something specifically about ASB would mean adding</p>

Comment	PCC response
	<p>additional background information to many other measures for consistency which is not practicable.</p> <p>Discussions with the Panel during 20/21 have included the fact that an increase in ASB was also seen nationally during the period of coronavirus restrictions. Some instances will be linked to breaches of lockdown but there may have been an increase as people, confined to their own homes and local communities, could have been impacted more than usual and have been more likely to report cases.</p> <p>Levels of ASB can be monitored and discussed further at performance sub group meetings as well as panel meetings during 21/22 taking account of the above.</p>
<p>The section on Treating People Fairly also lists some positive achievements. The meetings held with BAME community leaders represent an important attempt to reach out to these communities but it would have been useful to see comment on work that has been put in place during this period that is ongoing, particularly in relation to stop and search.</p>	<p>The following has been added to page 16 at the end of the first bullet:</p> <p><i>“The Independent Ethics Panel have lead members for Stop and Search and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. The work they have undertaken during 2020/21 and will undertake during the next year has focussed on gaining a better understanding of stop and search disproportionality and ensuring external scrutiny of stop and search activity is effective. Work has also included looking at maximising the opportunities presented by the continued recruitment of additional police officers to improve the diversity of South Yorkshire Police’s workforce.”</i></p>

The report will now be finalised taking account of the above and a final version published on the OPCC website.

Many thanks and all good wishes,



Dr Alan Billings