



# Annual Code of Ethics Compliance Report

24 November 2021



# 1. PURPOSE AND RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 This paper is for information only setting out the progress made to embed the Code of Ethics into Gwent Police. It also provides an update on the force Ethics Committee.
- 1.2 There are no recommendations made requiring a decision.

# 2. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Code of Ethics was introduced by the College of Policing in 2014 in its role as the professional body for policing. It sets and defines the exemplary standards of behaviour for everyone who works in policing.

It is a supportive, positive, everyday decision-making framework and is a constant reinforcement of the values and standards that policing is proud of. It is intended to encourage personal responsibility and the exercise of professional judgement; empowering everyone in policing to ensure they always do the right thing. The national decision model (NDM) placed the Code of Ethics at the heart of the model to reinforce this.

The Code has remained unchanged since 2014, however the College of Policing is currently consulting on an update to the Code of Ethics and members of Gwent Police Ethics Committee have shared their views with the College.

- 2.2 During initial training, officers receive specific inputs on the Code of Ethics and the national decision model. Whilst these are standalone sessions, the Code and the NDM are weaved into all aspects of training.
- 2.3 In 2015, the force Ethics Committee was established. The committee was initially made-up of external individuals (eight in total), comprising existing members from the force independent advisory group (IAG) and other externally recruited members.

In 2016, additional external members were recruited from a local university. In 2017, the committee recruited a cohort of internal police officers and staff, and in recent years the committee has identified representatives from our Chaplaincy team and Special Constabulary, further enhancing the legitimacy and diversity of its membership.

All committee members undertake the role voluntarily, have received training from Gwent police and are vetted to enable them to engage and review all aspects of policing within the force.

- 2.4 Ethics Committee members meet bi-monthly; the committee discuss ethical dilemmas from across the organisation and feed back to the People Strategy Board. The committee is led by DI Laura Bartley and there is representation at a senior level on the committee from the OPCC.



In the past 12 months a total of 5 dilemmas have been discussed over 3 meetings, all held online due to Covid 19. There have been fewer ethical dilemmas submitted for discussion than in previous years. It is hoped the additional focus on Ethics through the Internal Ethics Group will further reinforce the discussions around Ethics across the organisation and generate additional submissions to the committee. A highlight report is submitted to People's Strategy Board following each meeting and a summary of the discussions held published on The Beat to raise awareness of the committee and to ensure transparency.

An Ethics Committee page is set up on The Beat including all core documents and dilemmas discussed.

2.5 In October 2021 the inaugural Internal Ethics Group meeting will take place. It is recognised that the Ethics Committee itself has limited ability to impact the extent to which the wider workforce complies with and adheres to the Code of Ethics. The internal group is looking to bridge this gap. This group will be supported by a Delivery Plan to ensure the Aims and Objectives of the group are met.

The Aims and Objectives are as follows:

- **Ensure a culture of Ethics is embedded throughout the organisation**
- **Empowering people to do the right thing**
- **Encourage challenge and reporting**
- **Ethics at the heart of decision making**
- **Those who demonstrate ethical behaviours are supported**

### **3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 3.1 The purpose of this report is to detail the work that has been undertaken to ensure ethical legitimacy within Gwent Police. There is work ongoing on the national stage that is seeking to further strengthen ethical behaviour within policing. DI Bartley is a member of the South West Regional Ethics Committee and the learning from the committee feeds back into our local committee and will support the work of the IEG from hereon in.

### **4. NEXT STEPS**

- 4.1 There is a clear governance structure that sits behind the national NPCC UK Police Ethics Guidance Group meeting, chaired by CC Richard Lewis. All meetings are currently online due to Covid 19. The regional structure is now established with 4 distinct regions meeting quarterly and reporting in to the UKPEGG. Gwent Police are active members of the South West region.



## 5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 There are no financial considerations for this paper.

## 6. PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 There has been a recent uplift on the committee, with the Special Constabulary and the force Chaplains having a permanent seat on the committee. Improving the diversity across the committee has been our focus.

Payment for our external members of the Ethics Committee was approved at COT in August 2021. A recruitment process will be undertaken this Autumn to increase the number of external members from 5 to 12.

## 7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 Nothing of note.

## 8. EQUALITIES & HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 This report has been considered against the general duty to promote equality, as stipulated under the Joint Strategic Equality Plan and has been assessed not to discriminate against any particular group.

8.2 In preparing this report, consideration has been given to requirements of the Articles contained in the European Convention on Human Rights and the Human Rights Act 1998.

## 9. RISK

9.1 No identified risk at present.

## 10. PUBLIC INTEREST

10.1 In producing this report, has consideration been given to 'public confidence'? **Yes**

10.2 Are the contents of this report, observations and appendices necessary and suitable for the public domain? **Yes**

10.3 If you consider this report to be exempt from the public domain, please state the reasons: (or insert not applicable)

## 11. REPORT AUTHOR



11.1 Detective Inspector Laura Bartley.

## 12. LEAD CHIEF OFFICER

12.1 DCC A Blakeman

## 13. ANNEXES

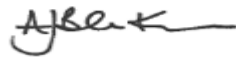
13.1 None

## 14. CHIEF OFFICER APPROVAL

14.1 I confirm this report has been discussed and approved at a formal Chief Officers' meeting.

14.2 I confirm this report is suitable for the public domain / is not suitable for the public domain for the reasons stated in 11.3. *(delete as appropriate)*

Signature:



Date: 10.11.2021

### Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent

I confirm that I have considered whether or not I have any personal or prejudicial interest in this matter and take the proposed decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct.

The above request has my approval.

Signature:

Date:

