

Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent Decision

PCCG-2019-067	Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent Decision
Subject	Implementation of Complaints Reform
Summary	To record the decision of the Police and Crime Commissioner regarding the model he wishes to adopt in relation to the police complaints reform introduced by the Policing and Crime Act 2017.

DECISION

- 1. The Policing and Crime Act 2017 (the Act) includes changes to the police complaints system with Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) being given the opportunity to take on more responsibility in this area, should they so wish.**

Correspondence from the Home Office has indicated that the relevant secondary legislation will pass through Parliament by the 10th January 2020 in order for it to be enacted on 1st February 2020.
- 2. The Act provides PCCs with three options from which to choose:**

Model 1 - this gives PCCs the role of enhanced oversight of the complaints system and how it functions locally. It also gives them the responsibility for handling appeals (referred to as 'Reviews' in the future) against the outcomes of low level complaints that are currently handled by the Head of Professional Standards under delegated authority from the Chief Constable. This option is mandatory.

Model 2 – in addition to the responsibilities in option 1, all complaints made against the police will be received and recorded by the office of the PCC. This option places a duty on the PCC to make initial contact with complainants to understand how best their issues might be resolved. This model also gives PCCs the ability to resolve low level, customer service related complaints outside of the normal complaints system.

Model 3 - this incorporates the duties of Models 1 and 2 but also places a responsibility on the PCC to keep the complainant updated and informed throughout the handling of the complaint, including the outcome and the right of review.
- 3. The OPCC worked with the Professional Standards Department and Change Management Team at Gwent Police to develop an options paper which detailed the pros and cons of the PCC adopting Model 1 or Model 2 (Model 3 had already been discounted due to the resource implications and complicated nature of establishing the new system).**

4. I can confirm that I considered the options paper on 25th November 2019 and have agreed to adopt Model 1. There are some conditions attached with this decision which are detailed below:

- The Public Response Unit (PRU), which currently sits within my office to deal with low level complaints, will retain its identity on transfer to Gwent Police;
- Funding for the two posts currently in the PRU will be transferred to Gwent Police and this money will be ring-fenced for these roles;
- A bespoke process will be put in place to deal with and keep me updated on complaints received from elected members;
- Staff within the PRU will continue to act as an 'advocate' for the complainant, following the process through from start to finish; and
- Work will continue within my office to ensure appropriate oversight arrangements are in place.

It is my understanding that work between my office and Gwent Police will now commence to ensure the appropriate arrangements are put in place by the implementation date of 1st February 2020.

Jeff Cuthbert B.SC., MDIPD, Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent

I confirm I have considered whether or not I have any personal or prejudicial interest in this matter and take the proposed decision in compliance with my code of conduct. Any such interests are recorded below.

The above request has my approval.

Signed 

Date 25/11/19

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Background papers	Complaints Reform Options Paper