

Panel- proposed policy

This proposal is based on the premise that the OPCC will receive and make the decision whether to record complaints, and then whether to disapply, and then pass the matter to the Panel based at KCC for it to be locally resolved.

- When the decision has been made to record a complaint, the Chief Executive of the OPCC will:
 - send a record of the complaint to the complainant and will include the contact details of the named individual at KCC
 - pass the record, and copies of all the associated paperwork, to the named individual for the panel. This will be no later than two working days after the complaint has been recorded.

- On receipt of the complaint, the NI will
 - convene a meeting of the sub committee of the Panel. This will be within three weeks of receiving the complaint.
 - write to the complainant, setting out timescales, and what they may expect from the process. They will also request that they comment on the matter, and give two weeks to respond.
 - write to the person complained about, and ask them to comment on the matter, giving them two weeks to respond.

- The NI will compile a brief report for the panel, setting out the pertinent details of complaint, and making suggestions for the next steps.

- The committee will first consider if any action needs to be taken. If not, it will record its reasons, and the NI will finalise the case, informing all the parties.

- If, on considering the report, the committee feels that the matter needs to be formally resolved, it will decide its course of action, and will suggest an action plan based on the local resolution principles. This plan will be drawn up by the NI. It will also include an indicative timeframe.

- The committee will also decide whether it wishes to
 - reconvene to consider the matter when the action plan has been completed
 - refer the matter to the Panel when the action plan has been completed
 - agree that the Chair of the sub committee be empowered to sign off the work
 - allow the NI to sign off the work

- For more straightforward complaints, the resolution of the complaint could be reached by the writing of, or commissioning of, an explanatory letter or phone call. After this letter had been sent, the matter would be closed.

- The plan may include (for example):
 - An explanatory letter being written by an officer of the Panel (or on behalf of the Panel)
 - An explanatory letter being written by an officer of the OPCC
 - A suggested change to OPCC policy
 - A request that an apology is tendered

- The plan may, in more serious cases, first require more information being collected from the OPCC/Commissioner (in addition to the response previously given) or that the Deputy/Commissioner be required to appear before the sub committee or Panel to provide an explanation and answer questions.
- Once the actions from the plan have been completed, the matter may be referred back to the sub committee or Panel, or signed off by the officer (or Chair).
- When completed, both parties will be notified and the matter closed.