

Committee(s): Police	Date(s): 14 th September 2012
Subject: HMIC Integrity Re-Inspection 2012	Public
Joint report of: Town Clerk and the Commissioner of Police (Pol 66/12)	For Decision

Summary

Last year, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) conducted a nationwide review of police relationships in the aftermath of high-profile allegations about police integrity, including the 'phone hacking' scandal. The review's findings, published in December 2011, were reported to your Committee in April 2012. HMIC conducted a second review of all forces and police authorities in June 2012 which included the City of London.

Although no formal recommendations have yet been published, there were a number of issues identified by HMIC in an initial 'Force Feedback' document (attached) which the Force is now proposing to address:-

- Oversight by the Police Authority of the declaration of declined gifts;
- Reviewing Corporate Card use and introducing stringent control measures around issue and monitoring;
- Review the requirement to introduce mandatory random drug testing for police officers, reporting to SMB in October 2012.
- Review resourcing for the Force's Counter Corruption Unit

The review also considered how the Police Authority scrutinised the Force over aspects of integrity. As a result of the process, a need has been identified for Members to receive quarterly updates at the Professional Standards and Complaints Sub-committee of the following information:-

- The ACPO Team's Hospitality/Gifts Register
- Register of Business Interests (Secondary Employment) declared by Police Officers and agreed by the PSD/ACPO.
- Corporate Credit cards – statistics on number of users, purpose of usage, etc.
- Where drug testing is introduced, a summary of the test results.
- Register of Media Contacts

Recommendations

That the measures being introduced by the Force and the Committee to strengthen the mechanisms to monitor and manage issues concerning police integrity, as outlined in the report, be noted and endorsed.

Main Report

Background

1. In July 2011, following the high profile 'phone hacking' scandal, the Home Secretary asked HM Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) to conduct a review of instances of undue influence, inappropriate contractual arrangements and other abuses of power in police relationships with the media and other parties, and to make recommendations.
2. The review's findings, published under the title 'Without Fear or Favour' in December 2011, were general rather than for each individual Force. The findings were reported to your Committee in April 2012 and they included four main recommendations:-
 - **Forces and authorities should institute robust systems to ensure risks arising from relationships, information disclosure, gratuities, hospitality, contracting and secondary employment are identified, monitored and managed.**
 - **Forces and Authorities should be clear concerning boundaries and thresholds in relation to these matters. Such limits should be consistent and Service wide.**
 - **Training courses (including Strategic Command Courses) should include appropriate input in relation to integrity and anti-corruption.**
 - **Chief Officer teams should review their corporate governance and oversight arrangements to ensure that those arrangements are fulfilling their function in helping promote the values of their force.**
3. In the Committee report, the Force outlined the key aspects of the City Police's Standard Operational Procedures (SOP) in respect of Notifiable associations, Gifts and Hospitality, Business Interests, Disclosure of Information, Purchase Card Usage and Media Relations. Members were informed that the Force had made use of a self-assessment tool produced by HMIC to identify areas of vulnerability attached at Appendix B) . This has now become the on-going Integrity Improvement Plan for the Force.
4. Members were also informed that there would be a second inspection later in the year and that the Force was awaiting the publication of national guidance to identify further opportunity to strengthen its systems. The Commissioner undertook to report back following the second round of inspection.

Current Position

5. On 10th and 11th June 2012, HMIC re-inspected the Force and the Police Authority on the issue of Integrity. The Force interviewed senior members of the Force and representatives from the Professional Standards Directorate

(PSD) as well as the Town Clerk, the Policy Officer for Police, the Chairman of the Committee, and the Chairman of the Professional Standards and Complaints Sub-Committee.

6. The interviews centred largely on the Force's systems to monitor integrity issues and how the Police Committee scrutinised those systems. The focus was on:-
 - Officers' relationship with Media and the Force's systems to record such contacts.
 - The levels of acceptability relating to Hospitality / Gifts received
 - The Force's and the City Corporation's systems to ensure compliance with regulation and best practice in respect of procurement
 - The Force's policies on the use of Corporate Credit Cards
 - Information available on Police Officers having a Secondary Employment / Business Interests
7. HMIC provided a draft 'Force Feedback' on 17 July 2012 (attached at Appendix B). Overall, the HMIC draft report confirms that the City of London Police have made good progress in many of the areas outlined within the report. Out of the seven inspected areas, four of them ('Governance and Oversight', 'Relationships with the media and others', 'Information Disclosure' and 'Additional employment') were reported on favourably and no recommendations for improvement were issues. Some of the areas for improvement are outlined further below, alongside proposed measures to address these.
8. Turning to the Police Authority, the document highlighted that *"the Corporation Committee is intrusive and challenges cases and decisions made by PSD at the quarterly meeting."* The document does comment about the City Corporation's practice of not recording declined gifts and hospitality. The views expressed during the inspection was that keeping records of declined hospitality could amount to a considerable administrative burden. HMIC suggests that there was an *"absence of understanding"* (Point 4, bullet point 4) in the Corporation of the importance of recording declined gifts/hospitality.
9. The City Corporation fully accepts HMIC's view that police officers and staff need to account for any sensitive external relationships, such as those with the media, contractors, etc. and that this may be achieved through recording declined as well as accepted offers. As to the Police Authority, there is an expectation on all Members of the Common Council (and external members) to observe the City of London's Code of Conduct, which includes mechanisms to declare personal and prejudicial interest where these arise. These mechanisms continue to be effective and proportionate, and are consistent with the systems which other authorities have in place.
10. There were no perceived matter of factual inaccuracy within the draft report presented by HMIC, and it is therefore expected that the final HMIC report will remain unchanged. Although the usual approach would be to wait until final HMIC report prior to taking any action, the Force recognises the importance of

taking immediate steps to address the issues raised within the report. The Chairman of the Committee and the Chairman of the Professional Standards Sub-Committee have also agreed with the Town Clerk that it would be appropriate to introduce measures to strengthen the monitoring of the Force's systems.

Measures being introduced by the Force

11. There are several areas within the report where the City of London Police recognise that immediate action is required:-

- a. **Declined Gifts** (Point 4 – Gifts and Hospitality – bullet point 2) *“All gifts and hospitality should be recorded onto the IT Sharepoint central register but the recording of declined gifts and hospitality is not mandated [by the Force].”*

The Force's Response:- A new electronic Hospitality/Gifts Register introduced late 2011 does allow for staff to declare 'declined' gifts. The SOP defines the term 'gift' and provides guidance to staff on when they can be accepted or when they should be declined. The policy quite clearly states, "All such gifts should nonetheless be subject of a declaration in the Force register". In light of the comments made by the HMIC concerning the Corporation's response to registering declined hospitality, the Force has also taken steps to reinforce its own existing policy on this issue through further communication with Staff. This message will be reinforced by the use of CityNet (City of London Police intranet) and will be incorporated in the regular PSD messages sent to staff. PSD will provide quality assurance that staff are recording declined gifts.

- b. **Corporate Credit Cards** (Point 5 – Procurement and contracts – bullet point 2 & 3) *“The force does not complete additional vetting of staff who are issued with cards and it was apparent that the process to obtain one was relaxed. There has not been any profiling of units that would need them or the limits that should be placed on individual cards. Many card holders had credit limits which they had never, and were unlikely to ever reach. In a Force of approximately 1,210 staff there are currently 378 cards issued (approximately 31% of the Force) and comment was made several times that having a card was seen as a 'status symbol' or 'as part of the job'.*

The Force's Response:- In addition to a review of all corporate credit/purchase card issue, the Force recognised in 2011 that it needed to provide additional governance around card management and introduced an audit process to quality assure staff activity and spend. Additional measures were introduced, whereby staff are not automatically re-issued with cards when they expire and where a card has not be used for a period of time it is automatically withdrawn. Where staff fail to reconcile statements on time, their card is cancelled.

The Force accepts that policing the City of London is quite different to the rest of the UK and there may be a need for some specialist areas of the Force to have a larger percentage of their staff issued with cards. However, the Force does agree with HMIC that there needs to be more governance over initial issue and has committed that by the end of September 2012, all Directorate Heads will be asked to review their list of staff issued with cards to confirm whether a card is necessary. The Policy/SOP will be changed to introduce new criteria for issue, which will be more stringent and will require Directorate Heads to agree a business case for more junior members of staff to be issued with cards. Shared Services is leading on this action, reporting to the Director of Corporate Support.

- c. **Counter Corruption Unit** (Point 7 – Proactivity- bullet 1) – “The force CCU exists within PSD but is small and has a lack of resilience”
The Force’s Response:- Resourcing of the City of London Police Counter Corruption Unit has been raised for further consideration through the City First Change Programme Director and is being addressed in discussion with the Assistant Commissioner.
- d. **Random Drug Testing** (Point 7 – Pro-activity – bullet 3) – “CoLP does not undertake drug testing.”

The Force’s Response:- Random drug testing has previously been discussed and discounted for City of London Police support staff (being City of London Corporation employees). A somewhat complicated draft policy had been prepared by PSD for drug testing police officers, within the last two years, which met opposition from union representatives and progress on this area has slowed. The Force recognises the benefit in introducing testing for police officers and will research other Forces, identify good practice and introduce a system, which will be easy to administer and manage. An options paper will be prepared for the October Strategic Management Board. Staff consultation and full Equality Impact Assessment will need to be undertaken prior to the introduction of any new procedures. This work will be lead by HR Services, reporting to the Director of Corporate Services.

Measures being introduced by the Police Committee

12. As a result of preparing for this inspection, the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman of the Police Committee, the Chairman of the Professional Standards Sub-Committee (all of whom were interviewed by HMIC) agreed on a number of measures to strengthen the Police Committee’s monitoring of the Force’s systems. Some of these, for example the reporting of Hospitality Registers, had already been identified by the Committee as areas where systematic monitoring by Members could contribute to more consistent improvement at Force level.

13. Therefore it is proposed that the following data is presented quarterly, in the form of an update report, to the Professional Standards and Complaints Sub-Committee:-
- The ACPO Team's Hospitality/Gifts Register
 - Register of Business Interests (Secondary Employment) declared by Police Officers and agreed by the PSD/ACPO.
 - Corporate Credit cards – statistics on number of users, purpose of usage, etc.
 - Where drug testing is introduced, a summary of the test results.
 - Register of Media Contacts
14. The Head of Professional Standards is consequently intending to submit the above reports to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee in November.

Corporate and Strategic Implications

15. The Police must demonstrate transparency in the delivery of policing services. The reputational risks associated with any breach of conduct in respect of integrity are high, and robust systems must be in place to provide public confidence.

Conclusion

16. In the aftermath of high-profile allegations about corruption and media relationships nationwide, Police integrity remains very much a sensitive issue. HMIC has conducted a second round of inspections in all forces and police authorities in June 2012, and feedback has been received for the City of London. Both the Force and the Authority have taken the view that measures should be implemented arising from the process and those are outlined in this report.

Appendices

Appendix 'A' – Draft HMIC Integrity Re-inspection 2012 – Force Feedback report

Appendix 'B' – Force 'Without Fear or Favour' self-assessment Action Plan.

Contact:

Ignacio Falcon

Policy Officer

020 7332 1405

ignacio.falcon@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Lorraine Cussen

Superintendent

Head of Strategy, Review & Performance

(020) 7601 2201

lorraine.cussen@cityoflondon.police.uk