

LEICESTERSHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY

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Meeting **PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

Date **THURSDAY 27 MAY 2010 – 10.00 A.M.**

Report of **CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

Subject **ANALYSIS OF QUALITY OF SERVICE RESPONSES AND
PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO FORM Z AND ACCOMPANYING LETTER**

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to inform members of the analysis of the quality of service response forms received to the end of April 2010 and propose amendments to the form and accompanying letter forwarded to members of the public on resolution of their complaint.

Background

2. By minute 9/05 (20 January 2005) the Committee approved a new regime to try to capture customer views. When Professional Standards Department send out their final letter on a complaint file they also enclose a letter and questionnaire from the Chief Executive together with a pre-paid reply envelope. The responses arrive in the Police Authority office where the results from the surveys are compiled.
3. At the Professional Standards Committee meeting held on 3 September 2009 members resolved that the quality of service survey form be made clearer to ensure that the person completing the form was aware that opinions were being sought on the process of the complaint and not the investigation or outcome, and likewise the accompanying letter also provide greater clarity in this regard.
4. It is important that the public have confidence in the way complaints against the police are handled. This provides one mechanism for judging the satisfaction levels of those in the complaints system

Analysis of Responses Received

5. Fifty-seven responses were made in the twelve months to the end of July 2008, a further ninety-five in the twelve months to the end of July 2009 and a further sixty between August 2009 and the end of April 2010. A summary of those responses are found at Appendix 1.
6. The key questions to which Members will have particular regard are question 2 (complaint taken seriously), question 7 (complaint investigated thoroughly) and question 10 (overall satisfaction with outcome).
7. Table 2 in Appendix 1 shows those completely, very or quite satisfied that their complaint was taken seriously equated to 65% in 2007/08, 60% in 2008/09 and 53% in 2009/10. Given the relative sample sizes there is no evidence that the level has changed over this period.

8. Table 7 sheds light on satisfaction that the complaints are investigated thoroughly equated to 41% in 2007/08, 51% in 2008/09 and 42% in 2009/10. Given the relative sample sizes there is no evidence that the level has changed over this period.
9. Table 10 provides overall satisfaction with the outcome. This equated to 41% in 2007/08, 45% in 2008/09 and 40% in 2009/10. Once again there is any no statistical evidence that the level has changed over this period.
10. It may be a concern that there is no statistical evidence that satisfaction levels are increasing and indeed there is limited evidence that satisfaction levels are falling.
11. There is a targeted local objective to increase the use of Local Resolutions (i.e. the respondents to this survey). The table below shows the satisfaction levels coupled with the increasing use of Local Resolutions

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Satisfaction			
Complaint taken seriously	65%	60%	53%
Investigated thoroughly	41%	51%	42%
Outcome	41%	45%	40%
Use of Local Resolutions	39%	50%	55%

12. It may also be a concern that whilst there are “improvements” in the “target” indicator the levels of satisfaction may be declining. This may be a symptom of the theory that concentration on targets does not necessarily lead to an improvement in service, the theory that was put forward by the Home Office to justify the removal of all targets other than the Single Confidence Measure.

Reasons for Responses

13. Respondents were asked for the reasons why they have answered in the way that they did. Table 11 shows these comments grouped into themes.
14. It is very notable that only a minority of respondents (35% last year and 41% this year) have given reasons that actually relate to the way that the complaint was handled. It is worth noting that included in this are persons who are making positive comments and suggestions, these are the only people we can be certain have understand that the survey relates to the complaints process since it can be assumed that they understood the nature of the survey since they must have harboured a degree of dissatisfaction with the initial handling of the aspect in order to make a complaint in the first place.
15. The reasons given by the remaining respondents do not relate to the complaints process itself. The majority refer to the original service provided (which is what they complained about) but others disagreed with the decision made but have made no comment on the process itself and a few seemed unaware that the process had concluded.
16. In summary it appears that only just over a third of respondents have completed the survey in the manner in which it was intended, that is getting respondents to judge the quality of service they received whilst their complaint was being dealt with.

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
About complaint process	34%	35%	41%
About original issue	33%	31%	51%
Unclear	33%	34%	8%

N.B. These figures do not include respondents who made no comments and hence given no indication as to the basis on which they have completed the survey.

17. This issue was raised at the time of the last report with suggestions as to how to address this issue in order to get a genuine assessment of people's perceptions of the process.

Issues

18. Where persons indicated that they were unaware that the process had been completed there may be three separate issues. Firstly it could be a communication issue where they do not recall having been told although every complainant receives a closure letter sent to the address provided for the investigation.
19. Alternatively it would appear that there are some people who will never see an issue as being "closed" until they get the resolution that they wanted in the first place.
20. However, the actual comments made indicate that many of these people do not consider that a matter is closed when they are told that something specific will happen (e.g. that an Officer will have to attend a certain training course). These people only consider it closed when they have had confirmation that this has actually taken place. In light of this consideration could be given to providing further information to the complainant when such actions had taken place.
21. The current situation is that the Police Reform Act (PRA) obligates the Force to give certain notifications in certain ways with specific timescales. In relation to a notification to a complainant that a complaint is now closed, this must be accompanied with an Appeal Notification which is 28 days from the date of the letter. After that period, and again in accordance with the PRA, if the complainant does not lodge any appeal with the IPCC then the complaint is closed. From 1 April 2010, significant alterations have been made to the letter sent to complainants and these now include the full contract of what was agreed with the complainant at the beginning of the process for complaints dealt with by way of local resolution.

Proposed Amendments to Quality of Service Form and Accompanying Letter

22. From the analysis of responses received it is clear that some respondents complete the quality of service form believing it relates to the outcome of the complaint rather than the process that was followed to resolve the complaint. Members considered this issue at their meeting on 3 September 2009 and resolved that the quality of service form, together with accompanying letter be amended to provide clarity on the purpose of the survey form.
23. Proposed amendments to both these documents are outlined at Appendix 2 with the amendments shown in bold type. It is proposed that the survey form contain additional questions in relation to local resolution and the complainants understanding and agreement for complaints to be resolved in this way. It is also proposed that the final question (question 15 but previously question 10 on the form) asking how satisfied the respondent was in the outcome of the complaint be removed as this could mislead the respondent into thinking that the Authority could take any action in this regard.

Recommendation

24. The Committee is RECOMMENDED to:-
 - (a) discuss the analysis of the quality of service responses received; and
 - (b) approve a new quality of service survey form and accompanying letter to be implemented with immediate effect.

Implications

Financial: none. Legal: none. Diversity: para 6. Risk Management: Police Authority oversight of the complaints process is a key factor in ensuring public confidence in local policing.

Background Papers None

Person to Contact

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PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS QUALITY OF SERVICE SURVEY RESPONSES
AUGUST 2007 TO APRIL 2010

N.B. Not every respondent answered every question which is why the totals do not always add to the same each time.

1. How did you first initiate your complaint against the Police?

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Visiting the Station	11	8	10
Telephoning	11	22	10
Letter	23	37	29
Via Solicitor	0	3	0
Other	12	25	11

2. Were you satisfied that your complaint was taken seriously?

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Completely Satisfied	12	17	9
Very Satisfied	13	19	10
Quite Satisfied	12	21	13
No view	2	6	6
Quite Dissatisfied	2	11	3
Very Dissatisfied	3	2	7
Completely Dissatisfied	13	19	12
% Satisfied	65%	60%	53%
Confidence Intervals	+/- 12%	+/- 10%	+/- 13%

3. Were you satisfied that the information provided to you clearly explained the complaints process?

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Completely Satisfied	10	18	8
Very Satisfied	14	24	18
Quite Satisfied	14	27	16
No view	1	8	4
Quite Dissatisfied	4	6	6
Very Dissatisfied	5	1	2
Completely Dissatisfied	9	11	6
% Satisfied	67%	73%	70%

4. Were you satisfied with the frequency of updates you received during the investigation?

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Completely Satisfied	7	14	4
Very Satisfied	12	19	9
Quite Satisfied	15	14	13
No view	2	9	7
Quite Dissatisfied	3	10	8
Very Dissatisfied	2	6	5
Completely Dissatisfied	15	22	14
% Satisfied	61%	50%	43%

5. **Were you told how long it might take to investigate your complaint?**

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Yes	30	53	24
No	25	36	35
% who were told	55%	60%	41%

6. **How do you feel about the length of time taken to investigate your complaint?**

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Completely Satisfied	7	16	4
Very Satisfied	11	13	8
Quite Satisfied	10	23	12
No view	4	12	8
Quite Dissatisfied	5	6	7
Very Dissatisfied	6	3	8
Completely Dissatisfied	14	20	13
% Satisfied	49%	56%	24%

7. **Are you satisfied that the complaint was investigated thoroughly?**

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Completely Satisfied	6	14	5
Very Satisfied	9	16	8
Quite Satisfied	8	18	12
No view	8	7	6
Quite Dissatisfied	4	8	9
Very Dissatisfied	3	7	4
Completely Dissatisfied	18	24	15
% Satisfied	41%	51%	42%
Confidence Intervals	+/- 13%	+/- 10%	+/- 13%

8. **Overall how do you feel about the handling of your complaint?**

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Completely Satisfied	6	15	7
Very Satisfied	10	19	5
Quite Satisfied	12	13	19
No view	2	8	5
Quite Dissatisfied	5	8	3
Very Dissatisfied	4	8	5
Completely Dissatisfied	17	23	16
% Satisfied	50%	50%	52%

9. **Bearing in mind your expectations at the beginning of the process, how satisfied were you with the outcome of the complaint?**

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Completely Satisfied	6	14	3
Very Satisfied	12	10	6
Quite Satisfied	4	16	14
No view	3	10	5
Quite Dissatisfied	6	9	6
Very Dissatisfied	3	7	5
Completely Dissatisfied	23	28	21
% Satisfied	39%	43%	38%

10. Overall how satisfied were you with the outcome of the complaint?

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Completely Satisfied	7	10	3
Very Satisfied	10	12	4
Quite Satisfied	6	20	17
No view	3	11	6
Quite Dissatisfied	5	7	5
Very Dissatisfied	2	3	5
Completely Dissatisfied	23	30	20
% Satisfied	41%	45%	40%
Confidence Intervals	+/- 13%	+/- 10%	+/- 12%

11. What are the reasons for the answers you have given above?

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Directly Relating to Complaints Process			
Insufficient Feedback	0%	1%	3%
Issues with Complaint Handling	5%	10%	19%
Length of Complaint Investigation	10%	1%	16%
Process Change	7%	4%	0%
	22%	16%	38%
Positive Feedback	12%	19%	3%
	34%	35%	41%
Original Issue			
Original Issue	33%	31%	51%
Unhappy / Unaware of Closure			
Unaware of Closure	2%	12%	3%
Unhappy with Decision	17%	10%	3%
Unhappy with Decision - Report	0%	3%	0%
	19%	25%	6%
Non Specific – Negative			
Non Specific – Negative	14%	4%	0%
Other	0%	3%	3%

12. Of those who marked question 2 “completely, very or quite satisfied”, their answers to question 7 were:

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Completely Satisfied	6	14	5
Very Satisfied	9	15	8
Quite Satisfied	8	17	11
No view	8	3	3
Quite Dissatisfied	4	1	5
Very Dissatisfied	0	3	0
Completely Dissatisfied	1	4	0
% Satisfied	64%	81%	75%

13. Of those who marked question 2 “completely, very or quite satisfied”, their answers to question 10 were:

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Completely Satisfied	7	10	3
Very Satisfied	9	11	4
Quite Satisfied	6	20	16
No view	3	7	3
Quite Dissatisfied	5	4	3
Very Dissatisfied	2	0	3
Completely Dissatisfied	4	5	0
% Satisfied	61%	72%	72%

DRAFT



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Date: As postmark
Ref: PA3/G/form Z

Dear Sir or Madam

Professional Standards – Quality of Service Survey

Leicestershire Police Authority is interested in your views about the police complaints process. As you have recently had experience of this process, **we are interested in receiving feedback from you as to how satisfied you were in the process that was followed and the service you received from the officer investigating your complaint.** Your views could identify ~~where you felt things were done well and~~ also areas where improvements can be made.

I would be extremely grateful if you could spare a few minutes to complete the enclosed **satisfaction survey questionnaire.** This **survey questionnaire** aims to examine the service that you received from the Police from when you first made the complaint to the present time. **Please note that the survey refers to your satisfaction in the process that was followed in resolving your complaint and not the investigation or the outcome.**

The reference number at the top of the **survey form questionnaire** will allow the Authority to access the case details and look at the process **followed to resolve your complaint** ~~of the investigation.~~ If you prefer to respond anonymously, please tear off the reference number on the top right hand corner of the **form questionnaire.**

When you have completed the **form questionnaire,** please return it using the prepaid envelope provided.

Finally, thank you for taking the time to complete and return this form and for assisting us in ensuring that the service provided in resolving complaints meets the expectations of the public.

Yours faithfully

Robert Swinfield
Chief Executive

If you require translation of information please contact 0116 248 2691

إذا احتجت إلى ترجمة هذه المعلومات الرجاء الاتصال على الرقم 0116 2482691

যদি আপনার এসব তথ্যের বাংলা অনুবাদের দরকার হয়, তাহলে এই নম্বরে যোগাযোগ করুন: 0116 2482691

اگر نیازمند ترجمه این اطلاعات هستید لطفاً با این شماره تماس حاصل فرمائید 0116 2482691

Si vous avez besoin d'une traduction de ces informations, appelez le 0116 2482691.

જો તમારે આ માહિતીના ભાષાંતરની જરૂર હોય તો મહેરબાની કરી 0116 2482691 પર ફોન કરો.

0116 2482691 نه گه ر ڀڻوڀسٽيٽ به ته رجومه كردنه وي نه م زانباريانه هه به تكايه ڀڻوه ندي بکه به م ژماره ته له فونه وه 0116 2482691

ਜੇ ਇਸ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦਾ ਤਰਜਮਾ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਫ਼ੋਨ ਕਰੋ - 0116 2482691

Haddaad u baahan tahay akhbaartani oo luqaddaada ku turjuban, fadlan waxaad la soo xiriirtaa telefoonka 0116 2482691.

如閣下需要以下資料的翻譯本，請打電話 0116 2482691

اگر آپ کو اس معلومات کا ترجمہ درکار ہو، تو براہ کرم 0116 2482691 پر رابطہ کیجئے۔

If you require this information in large print, braille or audio tape
please contact 0116 248 2691

8. Were you told how long it might take to resolve ~~investigate~~ your complaint?

Yes No

9. How satisfied were you ~~do you feel~~ about the length of time taken to resolve ~~investigate~~ your complaint?

Completely Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Quite Satisfied	No view	Quite Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Completely Dissatisfied
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. Are you satisfied that the level of investigation into your complaint was ~~investigated~~ appropriate ~~thoroughly~~?

Completely Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Quite Satisfied	No view	Quite Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Completely Dissatisfied
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. Overall how satisfied are you over the ~~do you feel about the~~ handling of your complaint?

Completely Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Quite Satisfied	No view	Quite Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Completely Dissatisfied
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. Bearing in mind your expectations at the beginning of the process, how satisfied were you that the process followed was in accordance with those expectations. ~~with the outcome of the complaint?~~

Completely Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Quite Satisfied	No view	Quite Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Completely Dissatisfied
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

13. Overall how satisfied were you with the outcome of the complaint?

Completely Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Quite Satisfied	No view	Quite Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Completely Dissatisfied
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

14. Do you wish to give reasons for your answers above, or have any further comments regarding possible improvements that could be made to the complaints process?

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THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Please return using the enclosed prepaid envelope.

If you have any queries regarding this questionnaire, please contact:

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