

Committee minutes

Meeting 5 for the Review of Guidance for Professional Behaviour

Date	11 May 2022
Time	10:30 – 16:00
Location	The Clermont, Charing Cross, Strand, London, WC2N 5HX

Organisations present

Home Office
National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC)
Independent Office for Police Complaints (IOPC)
Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW)
Police Firearms Officers Association (PFOA)
Police Superintendents' Association (PSA)
UNISON

Welcome and apologies

The committee were welcomed to the meeting by the chair. The committee members and the College development team introduced themselves.

Update on Code of Ethics review

The College provided an overview of the key points from the last principles review committee meeting. The development team shared some information about the draft principles and the draft narrative to the principles. The committee were able to provide initial feedback, which included:

- the narrative is well written and clear, but it is hard to get consensus on some things
- there needs to be clarity about the term 'everyone in policing', to ensure it is as inclusive as possible
- it was unclear whether the mission statement was the College's mission or the police mission
- the narrative needs to be less focused on police officers, with more recognition of police staff and volunteers
- the reference to making mistakes could be simplified but learning from mistakes is important
- using plain language is important to ensure that understanding is universal

Discussion around possible structure and theming of behaviour guidance

The development team asked the committee to reflect on how they might like to structure the guidance and how the issues identified for inclusion should be themed. The following points were raised:

- the behaviour guidance should have different headings and titles from existing guidance and the Standards of Professional Behaviour
- language is extremely important and using positive language should be encouraged
- the term 'aspirational' helps to influence and promote positive ideas and keep it engaging

- promote togetherness with language such as ‘we’ instead of ‘them’
- the document should outline what is expected from everyone in policing to provide guidance and not boundaries
- consider including a section on ‘what’s different now you work for the police’ to outline the types of restrictions that officers and staff may encounter

The development team outlined a number of approaches that could be taken to cluster or theme the key issues identified to be included in the guidance, including:

- aligning the themes to the policing principles (under development)
- using the existing models from other sectors as a framework (such as the Midwifery Code of Ethics)
- clustering existing themes identified into a smaller number of categories

Committee members discussed that any option chosen should consider the end user and how easy it will be for them to find the appropriate guidance they need. Having a menu of options with links to specific guidance or force policies was considered easiest, as there is often no central repository for guidance in forces. Clear signposting of where the relevant information could be found was considered important. Committee members discussed that the development team should try clustering the themes into headings and developing some of the draft content to check if this option could work.

A number of headings were suggested, including:

- what’s different now you’ve joined the police service
- leadership
- social media
- respecting the workplace
- on-duty and off-duty expectations
- abuse of authority

A discussion then occurred around language and whether statements should be personal pledges or impersonal statements. It was reiterated that statements should be positive to engage people, and with inclusive pledges – for example, ‘we will treat people as individuals’ – to encourage a collective ownership. Committee again agreed that the guidance should focus on the positive and avoid terms such as ‘disrepute’. Elements of

positivity were considered to be important and to promote where things have gone well. Often, the sharing of good practice is missed out and the focus is on sharing when things have gone wrong.

Feedback on work packages

The committee were asked to provide feedback on the work packages that had been circulated for comment since the last meeting. These topics were:

- abuse of power for sexual purposes
- sub-optimal behaviour
- on-duty and off-duty expectations

General points raised include the following.

- Do not want to replicate or duplicate guidance that already exists.
- Focusing on professionalism to keep it positive rather than misconduct.
- Clear explanation of key issues and terminology to avoid confusion.
- Prevention and escalation – it is about trying to prevent a situation from getting worse, which can often lead to a series of misdemeanours. Outline of potential responsibilities at different levels and hierarchies.
- Where there are issues with matters that aren't suitable for professional standards departments, staff should check on colleagues to try to make sure that it does not escalate into misconduct.
- Off-duty use of social media with colleagues should also remain professional. It was commented that there is a grey area in relation to off-duty behaviour, and priority focus was in the workplace.
- Whistle blowing needs to put in a positive way. In certain circumstances, things need to be reported anonymously – for example, where junior staff are afraid to challenge more senior roles for fear of losing their job.
- It is going to be difficult to have a list of things that people can get into trouble with while on-duty and off-duty.

Prioritising key issues

The College development team recapped the key behavioural issues that the guidance for professional behaviour should address, which were identified at the previous meeting. The committee members were asked to rank their next priorities from the themes presented.

The key priorities were identified as:

1. use of social media
2. wellbeing and welfare support for officers and staff
3. diversity, inclusion and discrimination
4. misogyny and sexism

Purpose of guidance

Committee members were asked to consider the following questions.

- What is the purpose of the behaviour guidance?
- What examples might need to be included to illustrate the behaviour in the guidance?

The guidance should be written:

- in a positive way
- for the profession and the role people can play within that
- in a way that helps people feel supported and not victimised

Overall, the committee identified that when communicating, it is important to think about the broader audience, the context, the language used and the risk of things being misunderstood. It was suggested that wording such as 'you might want to think about how this could be perceived or interpreted' could be used, as opposed to using specific examples. It was agreed that specific examples wouldn't be feasible for every issue, nor would examples cover every issue. The guidance should encourage people to think about the consequences, rather than simply state what is good or bad.

Close

The College development team will begin developing a mock-up draft of the behaviour guidance according to the clustering and themes identified, and will share them with the committee at the next meeting.

Committee members were reminded of the dates for the next meetings. The committee members were thanked for their attendance and contributions.

Appendix 1: Presentation

The slide features a dark blue background with the College of Policing logo in the top left corner and the tagline "Working together to give policing a voice" in the top right corner. In the center, the title "Code of Ethics Review" is displayed in white. Below the title, the text "Professional Behaviour Committee Meeting 5" and "11th May 2022" is shown. A copyright notice "© College of Policing Limited 2022" is at the bottom left. The design includes a cluster of blue squares in the lower right quadrant.

The slide has a white background with the College of Policing logo and tagline in the top corners. The main title "Welcome and apologies" is centered in large blue text. Below it, the word "Agenda" is underlined, followed by a bulleted list of topics: Updates on Code of Ethics work – principles review committee meeting April 25 -26; How to structure and theme behaviour guidance; Prioritisation of next key issues; Feedback on work packages 4 -6; Drafting text about the purpose of the guidance; Examples to be included in guidance; Agreement of Code of Practice and Terms of Reference. A copyright notice "© College of Policing Limited 2022" is at the bottom left.

The slide has a white background with the College of Policing logo and tagline in the top corners. The main title "Updates on Code of Ethics work" is centered in large blue text. Below it, a cluster of blue squares is positioned in the lower right quadrant. A copyright notice "© College of Policing Limited 2022" is at the bottom left.



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Draft introductory narrative to policing principles

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Existing principles

Nolan principles

- Accountability - You are answerable for your decisions, actions and omissions.
- Honesty - You are truthful and trustworthy.
- Integrity - You always do the right thing.
- Leadership - You lead by good example.
- Objectivity - You make choices on evidence and your best professional judgement.
- Openness - You are open and transparent in your actions and decisions.
- Selflessness - You act in the public interest

From procedural justice

- Fairness - You treat people fairly.
- Respect - You treat everyone with respect.

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Some findings from research asking front line staff

1. Principles were values used in every day life not just policing – people embody the principles rather than use them
2. Existing principles might need better descriptions to reduce ambiguity of meaning/ interpretation
3. Possible additions to the policing principles
4. Practical/ tangible examples considered important
5. Implementation vital for effective embedding and uptake
6. Leading by example and setting the expectations for everyone was considered important to maintain integrity and public perception

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Some people suggested additional principles

- Empathy and courage/bravery were the most frequently mentioned
 - Empathy linked to compassion

"I think remembering this isn't just a reference number, that sort of thing. Somebody's life just fell apart there." (Police Staff, South Wales Police).
 - Courage/bravery in its many forms
- Use the principles to form collective responsibility for policing as a profession

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How to structure and theme the revised behaviour guidance?

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Draft Ethical Principles aligned to behaviour guidance themes

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Action and inactions - upstanders rather than bystanders ▪ Challenging inappropriate behaviour ▪ Supervisors and tutors should role model standards of behaviour. ▪ Whistleblowing/ call out culture ▪ Leadership (traits of) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Right of the public to be treated respectfully and impartially ▪ Wellbeing and welfare support for officers and staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Legitimate use of powers ▪ On duty and off duty expectations ▪ Being ambassadors and representatives of the police service ▪ Higher expectations of those in policing ▪ Legal highs ▪ Business interests/ notifiable interests ▪ Inappropriate associations ▪ Abuse of authority ▪ Social media use ▪ Abuse of position for sexual purposes ▪ Confidentiality ▪ Misogyny and sexism ▪ Discrimination ▪ Diversity and inclusion ▪ Inappropriate jokes/ cultural changes (what was considered ok in the past may not be now) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Duty of candour - owning up quickly, mistakes provide an opportunity to learn ▪ Opportunities for development and performance management should be fair and transparent. ▪ Suboptimal behaviour - use of reflective practice

Midwifery model aligned to behaviour guidance themes			
Respect people	Protect people	Act professionally	Promote professionalism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Right of the public to be treated respectfully and impartially ▪ Wellbeing and welfare support for officers and staff ▪ Diversity and inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Legitimate use of powers ▪ Use of force 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On duty and off duty expectations ▪ Being ambassadors and representatives of the police service ▪ Higher expectations of those in policing ▪ Legal highs ▪ Business interests/ notifiable interests ▪ Inappropriate associations ▪ Inappropriate jokes/ cultural changes ▪ Abuse of authority ▪ Social media use ▪ Abuse of position for sexual purposes ▪ Confidentiality ▪ Misogyny and sexism ▪ Discrimination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Duty of candour - owning up quickly, mistakes provide an opportunity to learn ▪ Opportunities for development and performance management should be fair and transparent. ▪ Suboptimal behaviour - use of reflective practice ▪ Action and inactions - upstanders rather than bystanders ▪ Challenging inappropriate behaviour ▪ Supervisors and tutors should role model standards of behaviour. ▪ Whistleblowing/ call out culture ▪ Leadership (traits of)

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Using the existing themes as titles			
1. Diversity and inclusion/ discrimination	11. Legal highs	20. Culture – how society moves, what was ok then isn't now	
2. Misogyny and sexism	12. Performance culture	Candour / owning up and opportunity to learn	
3. Social media use	13. Impartiality (politically charged statements)	Sub optimal behaviour/ reflective practice	
4. Confidentiality	14. Abuse of authority	Upstanding + challenging inappropriate behaviour	
5. Digital ethics	15. Traits of leadership	Expectations of officers (higher than public)	
6. Setting standards of support/ welfare	16. Expectations of leaders	Abuse of position for a sexual purpose	
7. Whistleblowing	17. Role modelling standards	On/off duty expectations	
8. Legitimate use of powers	18. Right of public to be treated respectfully		
9. Business interests/ notifiable interests	19. Ambassadorialship		
10. Inappropriate associations			

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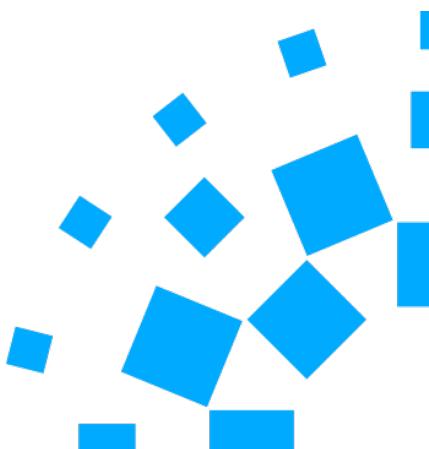
Language – instructions, statements or pledges - what are your thoughts on the language?		
Instructions	Impersonal statements	Personal pledges
<p>Treat people as individuals and uphold their dignity To achieve this, you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ treat people with kindness, respect and compassion ▪ avoid making assumptions and recognise diversity and individual choice ▪ respect and uphold people's human rights 	<p>People must be treated as individuals and their dignity upheld To achieve this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ people must be treated with kindness, respect and compassion ▪ assumptions must be avoided and diversity and individual choice recognised ▪ people's human rights must be respected and upheld 	<p>We will treat people as individuals and uphold their dignity To achieve this, I will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ treat people with kindness, respect and compassion ▪ avoid making assumptions and recognise diversity and individual choice ▪ respect and uphold people's human rights

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Lunch

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Recap of key issues identified

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1. Diversity and inclusion/ discrimination	11. Legal highs
2. Misogyny and sexism	12. Performance culture
3. Social media use	13. Impartiality (politically charged statements)
4. Confidentiality	14. Abuse of authority
5. Digital ethics	15. Traits of leadership
6. Setting standards of support/ welfare	16. Expectations of leaders
7. Whistleblowing	17. Role modelling standards
8. Legitimate use of powers	18. Right of public to be treated respectfully
9. Business interests/ notifiable interests	19. Ambassadorialship
10. Inappropriate associations	20. Culture – how society moves, what was ok then isn't now

Candour / owning up and opportunity to learn

Sub optimal behaviour/ reflective practice

Upstanding + challenging inappropriate behaviour

Expectations of officers (higher than public)

Abuse of position for a sexual purpose

On/off duty expectations

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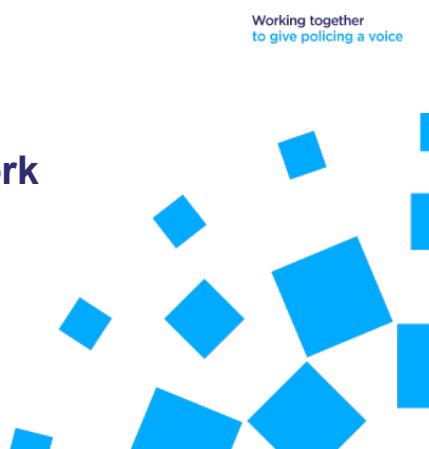
Feedback on content of work packages

4) Abuse of position for sexual purposes

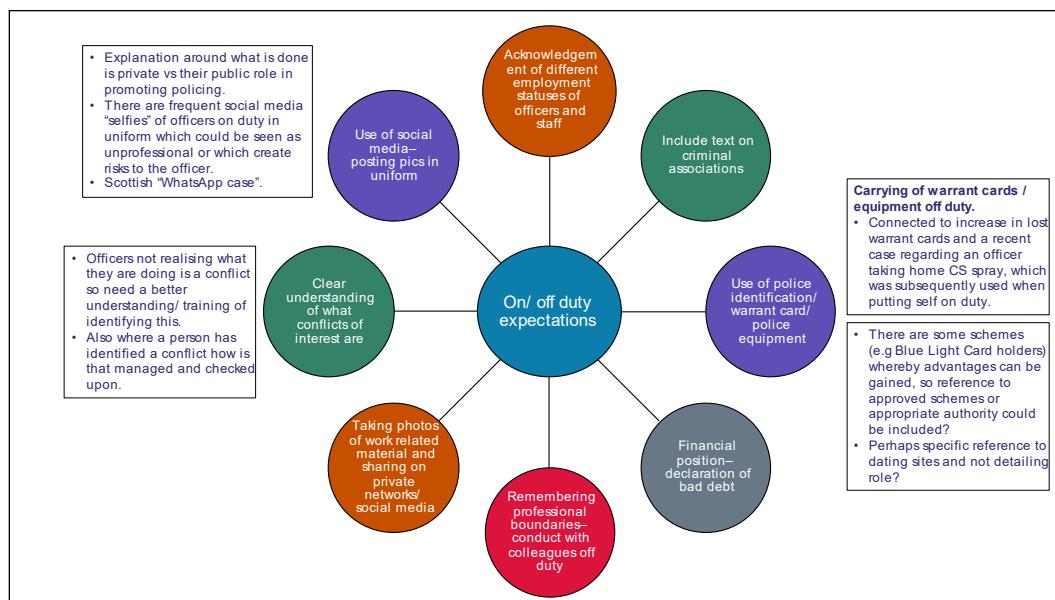
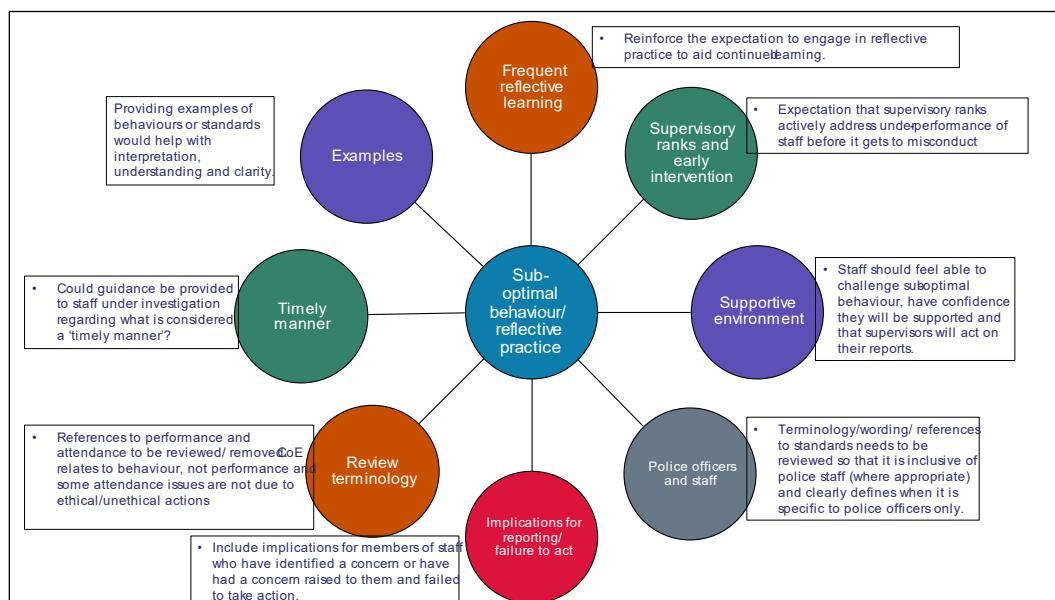
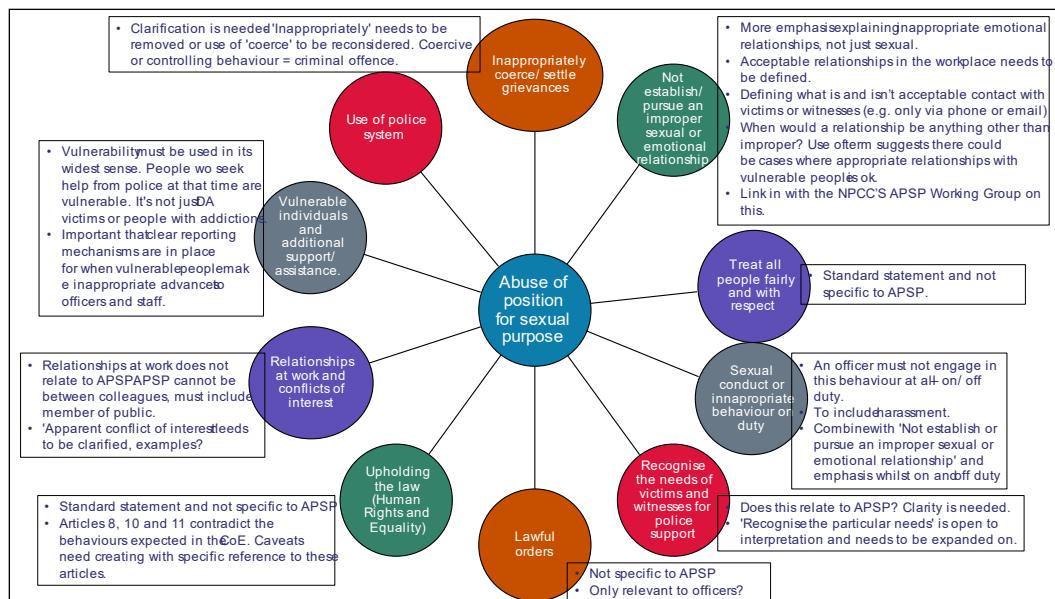
5) On/ off duty expectations

6) Sub-optimal behaviour/ reflective practice

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Meeting 5 for the Review of Guidance for Professional Behaviour





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What is the purpose of the guidance?

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What examples of behaviour might need to be included?

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Code of Practice & Terms of Reference

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Dates for next meetings

- **Meeting 6:** June 14th 2022 – virtual event (13:00-16:00)
- **Meeting 7:** July 13th 2022 – virtual event (13:00-16:00) calendar appointment to follow
- **Meeting 8:** August 10th 2022 – virtual event (13:00-16:00) calendar appointment to follow
- **Meeting 9:** September 13th – TBC

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Thank you

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