

London Policing Ethics Panel

Secretariat: Private Office of Lord Carile CBE QC,
Ground Floor, 12 Gray's Inn Square, London, WC1R 5JP
EthicsPanel@mopac.london.gov.uk.

Chair: Lord Carlile of Berriew CBE, QC

Members: Baroness Berridge, Grace Ononiwu OBE, Meg Reiss & Professor Leif Wenar

18 February 2015

Assistant Commissioner Martin Hewitt
Metropolitan Police Service
New Scotland Yard
8-10 Broadway
London SW1H 0BG

Dear Mr Hewitt

Your meeting with the London Policing Ethics Panel

Thank you for meeting the London Policing Ethics Panel. We all enjoyed the very valuable discussion.

Having considered what was said, we would offer the following comments.

The Panel:

- Recognises the initiative by the Met and Assistant Commissioner Hewitt in providing significant resources for the understanding and application of ethics as part of their training in Professional Standards. The effort to train officers of the Met to reflect on the values of ethical policing is welcome.
- Agrees that in a training programme of this kind a focus on encouraging discussion, reflection and critical thinking about specific ethical dilemmas that arise in policing every day is especially appropriate. The efforts to organise discussions on ethics around scenarios involving, e.g., diversity, bullying, the use of social media and specific types of encounters with the public are welcome. Teaching by the use of role play in dramatised scenarios is effective.
- Encourages the Met to continue to reinforce the message that it is essential for officers to keep the value of ethical policing in mind at all times. The Panel also encourages the Met to make special efforts to promote a culture of discussion of ethical issues amongst officers with the shared understanding that (a) some ethical issues are difficult and need to be talked through; and (b) clearly unethical conduct will not be tolerated.
- Notes and approves the intention of the training programme to spread greater reflection and discussion of ethical issues through the ranks at all levels from senior leadership to officers just starting in the force.
- Asks the Met to be especially mindful of its strategies for disseminating the programme to the lower ranks of the organisation. The message coming from leadership is that the 'ethics piece' is not just a box to be checked off before going on

to do 'real' policing, but a set of values that must inform police work at all times. The ethical conduct of the leadership is crucial in getting these values to pervade the entire organisation. Training shared between senior officers and more junior ranks, in which all can test and appraise each other, is likely to be of great value.

- Encourages the Met to develop methodology for measuring the effectiveness of its ethics training at all levels, and to use what it learns from measuring effectiveness continually to improve the training itself.
- Commends the Met for linking ethics to career outcomes. It should be clear to all officers that understanding and adhering to the values of ethical policing will be a significant factor in promotions decisions—and that deviating from those values will bring swift corrective action or penalties. The panel also encourages the Met to consider innovative ways to recognise good practice ('ordinary ethical policing') as well as especially meritorious ethical conduct (through awards, etc.).
- Urges the Met to spread 360 degree evaluation through the ranks, with an explicit ethics component, as quickly as possible. This evaluation practice should be 'lean and light,' so that it can be done regularly without being too burdensome. Evaluations should encourage officers to share best practice and to reflect on mistakes and what might be done better in future. This form of evaluation should be on a different model from the 'complaint – investigation – sanction' model that targets unacceptable conduct.
- Challenges the Met to think of innovative ways to spur ethical reflection and discussion, including a 'culture' among all ranks in favour of ongoing and frequent informal peer review. For example, each week leadership could choose a particularly challenging 'ethical dilemma' that has been revealed on body-worn video. The video could be shown across the force to officers during their meetings within their boroughs, with officers encouraged to discuss 'what should have been done?' briefly in a meeting and then to continue as they go on with their shifts.
- Encourages the Met to see the measures discussed above as a constructive and effective basis for avoiding too early formal disciplinary intervention in cases where the wrong choice may have been made in a difficult situation.
- Encourages the Met to guide all of its ethical training by the values of honesty and integrity, transparency and accountability, and especially sensitivity to the great diversity amongst Londoners—the foundation of 'policing by consent'.

I trust that the above will be of assistance.

With kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alex Carlile', written in a cursive style.

Lord Carlile of Berriew CBE, QC