

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 57-21

I write in connection with your request for information which was received by the Policing & Crime Department at West Yorkshire Combined Authority on 27 October 2021. You requested the following information:

Please disclose information concerning how you / your office deal with complaints made against the Chief Constable. The type of information which I would like is

1. Details of each step followed from the minute a complaint is received and up until a recording decision, letter is sent to the complainant

All complaints about the Chief Constable are handled in accordance with the Police Reform Act 2002 and various associated Regulations. The Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) has provided Statutory Guidance to assist complaint handlers in ensuring the legislation and Regulations are complied with. The Statutory Guidance can be found here:

https://www.policeconduct.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Documents/statutoryguidance/2020_statutory_guidance_english.pdf

2. Which internal forms / documents are used, completed during a complaints process

The Combined Authority's Policing & Crime Team does not have internal forms for handling complaints; all complaints about the Chief Constable are handled in a bespoke manner.

The Combined Authority's Policing & Crime Team maintain a document that shows the reports of dissatisfaction received which refer to the Chief Constable and those that have been formally recorded as complaints under the Police Reform Act. Information is published on our website about those complaints that are formally recorded.

The Combined Authority's Policing & Crime Team have produced a free-text form called Enquiries and Complaints and completing and returning this is one option available to anyone who wishes to submit a complaint, see link:

<https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/policing-and-crime/complaints-and-conduct/>

3. How are reasons, decisions and rationale recorded during above process. And which (if any) forms / documents and or reports are required to be completed (including when case is closed)

The Combined Authority's Policing & Crime Team does not use standard forms, documents or reports to record reasons, decisions and rationale; this information is produced in a freeform manner to reflect the requirements of the Regulations and the Statutory Guidance specific to each individual complaint.

Police Forces (and PCCs and Mayors) use a database to record information about complaints which the IOPC can access to extrapolate certain, limited information from in order to analyse performance.

4. If the Chief Constable is required to be (or is) contacted once a complaint is received. And, if so, if the Chief Constable is asked or is required to supply you (as PCC) / your office with comments or an account in reply to the allegations / complaint/s during the assessment stage (and in advance of recording decision being issued)

The Combined Authority's Policing & Crime Team does not seek an account from the named officer prior to making a recording decision, but we are allowed to scope information, which is very basic preliminary enquiries, to enable decisions to be taken about whether to record it and how it should then be dealt with.

Any complaints about the Chief Constable which are not recorded are not notified to the officer. They are, however, included in the document referred to in Q2.

If a Chief Constable complaint is recorded, The Policing & Crime Team would notify the officer and we may need to ask for an account from them depending upon how the complaint is handled.