



Police and Crime Commissioner

for Dyfed Powys

Complaints Dip Sampling Report

Date Quarter 4 January- March 2025

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Introduction

A series of dip sampling of complaints cases was undertaken by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) between January and March 2025.

The OPCC reviewed a total of 18 randomly selected closed complaint cases that were handled by the Professional Standards Department (PSD) between October – December 2024. The main purpose of this scrutiny work is to independently review that the recording and handling of complaints complies with the guidance set out by the Independent Office of Police Complaints (IOPC) and that the service provided to the complainant is reasonable and proportionate.

The background and purpose of scrutiny dip sampling work, alongside how dip sampling is carried out is detailed within the [Complaints Scrutiny Framework](#) which is published on the OPCC website.

The Policing and Crime Act 2017 and supporting regulations made significant changes to the police complaints and disciplinary systems. They introduced a number of changes designed to achieve a more customer-focused complaints system in February 2020.

The complaints system has expanded to cover a broader range of matters. Formerly, the way that the term ‘complaint’ was defined meant that it needed to relate to the conduct of an individual officer. Now a complaint can be made about a much wider range of issues including the service provided by the police as an organisation. This is designed to increase access to the police complaints system.

The IOPC expects forces to consider the information they keep about complaints with the intent of the reforms in mind – a positive obligation to increase access and to collect information that enables forces and local policing bodies to learn from complaints and other matters.

IOPC Statistics

Each quarter, the IOPC collects data from Dyfed Powys Police about how they handle complaints. The IOPC uses this to produce information bulletins. These set out performance against a number of measures and compare each force's data with their most similar force average and the overall results for all forces.

The table below (reporting period: 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025) presents a breakdown of how allegations were handled. An allegation decision is logged for each allegation finalised. The allegation decision reflects how the complaint case has been handled, with different decisions available for the different means of handling. Both the allegation decisions and the subsequent actions available will depend on two things: firstly, whether the complaint case has been handled outside or under Schedule 3; and secondly, the means of handling where it has been dealt with under Schedule 3.

How allegations were handled (Year to date)	Force No.	Force %	MSF Average No.	MSF Average %	National No.	National %
Under Schedule 3 investigated (not subject to special procedures)	36	3 %	78	5 %	16,001	10 %
Under Schedule 3 investigated (subject to special procedures)	2	0 %	10	1 %	2,071	1 %
Under Schedule 3 - not investigated	552	51 %	879	58 %	73,237	45 %
Outside of Schedule 3	502	46 %	590	36 %	71,979	44 %
Total	1,092	100 %	1557	100 %	163,288	100 %

Complaints handled under Schedule 3 of the Police Reform Act 2002 are eligible for their complaint to be reviewed either by the Police and Crime Commissioner or the Independent Office for Police Conduct. However, complaints handled informally outside of schedule 3 are not entitled to a review of their complaint.

Complaints dealt with outside the requirements of Schedule 3 must be handled with a view to resolving them to the complainant's satisfaction. Handling a complaint outside the requirements of Schedule 3 provides an opportunity to address promptly the concerns a complainant has raised. Some complaints do not require detailed enquiries in order to address them. For example, the complainant may only

want an explanation, or for their concerns to be noted or passed on. Handling such complaints outside of Schedule 3, promptly, may be the most efficient, effective, and beneficial way to resolve the complaint. It can assure the complainant that their concerns have been listened to and addressed, while potentially providing a learning opportunity for the force (and, if appropriate, any individuals involved)

The table shows that 46% of complaints were dealt with Outside of Schedule 3. In the first and second quarter, the number of complaints handled Outside Schedule 3 were 51%. As a result, this round of dip sampling continued to assess the complaints handled outside of schedule 3.

Summary of findings

Positive

- Detailed outcomes were provided.
- Good practice of handling a complaint through OS3 was identified within one case. It was resolved within a day of receiving the complaint.
- Evidence of good communication between complaint handlers and complainants. In one case the complainant was provided with the complaint handlers contact details should they wanted to discuss their complaint any further.
- Victims Right for a review information was provided within one case.
- PSD routinely followed up any telephone conversations with detailed emails addressing what had been discussed and what the complainant could expect to happen next.

Area for Improvement

- Supervisors should provide PSD with an update of any action/outcome of a complaint which they have handled informally outside of schedule.
- In some cases it was difficult to identify what the outcome of the complaint was or if it had been concluded and whether the complainant was satisfied with the outcome.
- In one case the OPCC determined that the complainant could had been sign posted to the Anti-Social Behaviour case review.

Dip-Sample Findings

January

Case number	Complaint Summary	Handling Type	OPCC Observations
1	Complainant has expressed a general dissatisfaction with the police due to the lack of action to the incidents they have been reporting, as they are continuing to happen.	Outside schedule 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good response from the Police Sergeant who handled the complaint. • Very detailed and a good example of handling of OS3.
2	<p>1. Complainant is alleging that the Police are not dealing effectively with incidents they are reporting.</p> <p>2. The complainant believes there is a racial bias as they and their family are Irish travellers and the matters reported are hate crimes incidents.</p>	Outside schedule 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there further information associated with this case reference? From details observed complainant remains dissatisfied. • What was the rationale for this not being recorded under Schedule 3?
3	Over the last year the complainant and their partner have reported multiple complaints of bullying, harassment and	Outside schedule 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportionate response from the Complaint handler who provided an outcome to the complainant. • Another good example of handling of OS3.

	threats made to them and their family from the protesters at Stradey Park Hotel. They are dissatisfied that their reports are not taken seriously.		
4	The complainant reports that they are not getting updates to an incident they reported.	Outside schedule 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unknown why this has been recorded as a Hate Crime.

February

Case number	Complaint summary	Handling Type	OPCC observations
1	Complainant alleges that they have received no contact from the police /not being updated following a number of calls to them regarding their neighbours.	Outside schedule 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sent to the local Inspector to handle. PSD closed OS3 on 23/04/2024. Progress update from the Inspector on the 24/05/24. Should the OS3 be closed before allocating for Inspector to speak with complainant? No comment made from PSD advising of the process if they remain dissatisfied with discussion with Inspector. Would the complainant know how to progress further? Outcome from Neighbourhood Policing Team received on 24/07/24 which outlines the conclusion to the handling of this complaint. No reference to Antisocial Behaviour Case Review.

2	The complainant is unhappy with the lack of police action regarding their ex-partner whom they allege is mentally abusive.	Outside schedule 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No outcome to the complaint. Complaint has been closed prior to receiving an update from allocated Inspector? How do PSD monitor if complainant remains dissatisfied?
3	Complainant is dissatisfied with the lack of Police contact regarding an report of assault.	Outside schedule 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No details of an outcome. Need to request the final outcome of this complaint.
4	Complainant unhappy with the lack of action by police following their report of threatening behaviour.	Outside schedule 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaint cannot be handled whilst investigation is ongoing. Was this formally recorded? The complainant wanted this recorded 22/05/24, no transparency. Require clarification, why was this closed on the 13th May but was reopened, should it have another complaint reference with further correspondence in August?
5	Complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of a case and also how the Polices decision to close the matter as no further action required was decision was communicated.	Outside schedule 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good practice of handling OS3
6	Complainant is dissatisfied that they were informed that they could not raise a counter allegation whilst under investigation.	Outside schedule 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcome received from Police Sergeant previously advising that Complainant had been notified that the criteria to re-open an investigation has not been met. Complainant has been given contact details for further explanation with Police Sergeant, which is good practice.
7	Unhappy police officers are visiting their home to discuss a neighbour dispute.	Outside schedule 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No outcome received from Neighbourhood Policing Team once allocated.

8	Complainant is unhappy with the police response to their calls about problems with the neighbour's dog straying on to their property.	Outside schedule 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed on the 31/07 ; however, member of staff from PSD continued to make enquiries from 01/08 and establishes on the 14/08 that a Police Community Support Officer has visited. No report or information advising on what was discussed from Neighbourhood Policing Team; therefore, unable to establish if complainant is satisfied that her complaint has been handled.
9	Complaint against the manner of Police Officers driving.	Outside schedule 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good practice of handling OS3

March

Case number	Complaint summary	Handling Type	OPCC observations
1	Complainant is dissatisfied that police attempted to gain entry into their home without a warrant and accuses officers of inappropriately contacting them via their own personal mobiles.	Outside schedule 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11/10/24- PSD ask to clarify specific details of the complaint due to complainant requesting to have it formally recorded. Contact strategy in place to submit only via force website. This is seen to be good practice. Appropriate to handle OS3 and was handled timely.
2	Dispute of traffic incident and officer refusing to provide identification.	Outside schedule 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSD telephoned the complainant and followed up with an email. Email is clear and addresses all elements of the complaint.
3	Dissatisfied with lack of police response from Force Communications Centre and response to an incident.	Outside schedule 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allocated to Sergeant t to make contact. Sergeant contacted 26/10/2024 advising of the actions outstanding. Unknown whether complainant is satisfied after discussion- would complainant know how to progress further if dissatisfied?
4	Dissatisfied with contact from Domestic Abuse Officer	Outside schedule 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unknown outcome once allocated to supervisor. Supervisor was chased in December, as the complaint was still outstanding.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sup advised that due to sensitivity and risk, was not appropriate to discuss. This complaint was closed prior to receiving an outcome.
5	Lack of communication with officers	Outside schedule 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Passed to Inspector to handle. Victim Right for a Review signposted and letter provided as follow up to call.

PSD Comments

Area for Improvement

Supervisors should provide PSD with an update of any action/outcome of a complaint which they have handled informally outside of schedule.

Response - PSD have transitioned to utilising Microsoft Teams for allocating inside Sch3 complaints. Once this process has embedded, we will look to allocate outside Sch3 complaints this same way, which will enable better audit trails of outcomes.

In some cases it was difficult to identify what the outcome of the complaint was or if it had been concluded and whether the complainant was satisfied with the outcome.

Response – As above

In one case the OPCC determined that the complainant could had been sign posted to the Anti-Social Behaviour case review.

Response – The criteria for an Antisocial Behaviour (ASB) case review is:

- Three incidents of ASB in the last six months to the council, police or landlord where no effective action has been taken
- One hate crime or incident where no effective action has been taken

- A person of appropriate seniority within a responsible authority reviews the evidence presented from all parties and believes there is sufficient evidence to initiate a case review regardless of the role of the applicant of the ASB case review.

From a scan of the occurrence log, it appears that Neighbourhood Policing Team have worked hard to seek to resolve matters (prior to the complaint). The main issues identified were civil matters, rather than ASB perse. Indeed, the complainant could have been signposted to the ASB case review, however whether effective action has been taken is subjective and a case review may not have been within scope.

Dip Sample February

1. Feedback gratefully received. PSD are in the process of reviewing how we handle cases OS3.
2. Feedback gratefully received. In this case, the complainant was happy with the outcome, however indeed, the case was closed the day prior to knowing this. PSD are in the process of reviewing how we handle cases outside sch3.
3. Feedback gratefully received. The allocated complaint handler (CH) emailed PSD on 12/05/24 to advise that he had been in contact with the complainant and matters were being progressed. There is no “final” update, however given that the complainant has not re-contacted PSD, it would appear the CH resolved matters sufficiently. PSD are in the process of reviewing how we handle cases outside sch3 and we will endeavour to close loops.
4. Feedback gratefully received. The complaint was initially closed as the complaint had been negated through the scoping that was conducted. When the complainant requested the matter be recorded formally, it should have been at that point. This will be fed back to the team.
5. Feedback gratefully received
6. Feedback gratefully received
7. Feedback gratefully received. There is indeed no outcome from having allocated to neighbourhood policing team. PSD are in the process of reviewing how we handle cases outside sch3.
8. Feedback gratefully received. The CH had been engaging with complainant who is blind. Therefore, her preference was to be sent letters or phone call, rather than email. A letter was sent on 29/07/24 providing an explanation to matters surrounding her complaint,

and the complainant was advised in respect of a recent call she made, a PCSO would be in touch. This then happened. There was no further contact from the complainant.

9. Feedback gratefully received

Dip Sample March

1. Feedback gratefully received
2. Feedback gratefully received
3. Feedback gratefully received. Email was received from CH on 26/10/24 to report that he had spoken to the complainant and discussed outstanding actions with them. PSD had not advised complainant re what to do if not satisfied with handling outside Sch 3. PSD are in the process of reviewing how we handle cases outside sch3 and this will be factored in.
4. Feedback gratefully received. The CH had to approach the complainant in a sensitive and risk managed way. This caused a delay in progressing. Outcome was not updated to PSD. PSD are in the process of reviewing how we handle cases outside sch3.
5. Feedback gratefully received