

**HAMPSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL**

**Complaints Sub-Committee**

**Report – Complaint and Additional Comments**

**9 February 2022**

This report is not for publication as it contains exempt information within Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, being information relating to any individual and information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual. Further, it is considered that, in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing this information. While there may be a public interest in disclosing this information, it is felt that, on balance, this is outweighed by other factors in favour of maintaining the exemption, namely in favour of maintaining confidentiality.

## **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1. This report was prepared to inform Members of the Hampshire Police and Crime Panel Complaints Sub-Committee (the Sub-Committee) of two complaints received against the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (DPCC) for Hampshire.
- 1.2 The report also details the additional comments received from the complainants in support of their complaints, and the comments received from the DPCC in relation to the complaints.
- 1.3 The report requests that the Complaints Sub-Committee come to an agreement on the action to be taken in response to the complaints.

## **2. Contextual Information**

- 2.1. The original complaints were received from complainants the on 15 and 16 December 2021.
- 2.2 Both complainants requested that their identity be kept confidential. Within this report they are referred to as complainant A and complainant B. Any redactions requested by the complainants to ensure the confidentiality of their identity is maintained have been reflected within this report.
- 2.3 In accordance with the 'Protocol for the Informal Resolution Procedure Regarding Complaints made Against the PCC', the Democratic Support Officer has convened a meeting of the Complaints Sub-Committee.
- 2.4 The Chair of the Sub-Committee has written to the complainants and complained against, setting out the timescales and informal resolution procedure, and giving all parties the opportunity to comment upon the complaints. All parties were given at least 14 calendar days to provide this information.
- 2.5 Within their meeting the Sub-Committee will first consider whether the informal process should be applied, whether the complaints have been satisfactorily dealt with and, subject to any representations made may decide to treat the complaints as having been resolved. In such case, the Complaints Sub-Committee's reasons will be recorded and notified to the complainants and the DPCC. If, on considering the complaints, the Complaints Sub-Committee feel that the matter needs to be formally resolved, it will decide its course of action and set this out in writing.

## **3. Complaint**

- 3.1 The complaints to be considered by the Sub-Committee are worded below:

Complainant A:

At the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service Authority meeting this Tuesday, the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner Luke Stubbs made some wholly unacceptable, misguided comments that look to set back equality, diversity and inclusion in public services. Links below to articles for context:

<https://www.portsmouth.co.uk/news/politics/hampshires-deputy-police-and-crime-commissioner-luke-stubbs-says-fire-service-equality-goals-only-benefit-women-and-minorities-3494877>

<https://www.dailyecho.co.uk/news/19786190.man-women-hampshire-fire-service-says-deputy-commissioner/>

Painting white men as the victims is not only completely untrue but it will consequently increase distrust and diminish confidence in our office. Whilst the comments were made about HIWFRS, this will likely also have an impact on trust in policing due to his position. With recent shocking cases of women being murdered, one by a police officer, those in our office and Hampshire Constabulary are working tirelessly to reassure the public that this is unacceptable and does not represent policing. His comments look to alienate women and minorities even further.

For someone who is paid to represent the OPCC, his views go against those of an office working tirelessly to improve EDI training and make our work more inclusive.

This is not the first time he has made inappropriate and offensive comments about women, but it is whilst he has been in this role.

Ignoring the wider public consequences of this and the time that will likely be spent dealing with it rather than other valuable work, I personally find his comments offensive and am ashamed to work in an office where he represents me.

These views are very similar to those held by incels (involuntary celibates) and these extremist views have been held by those who have committed serious violence against women and girls. His views may act to encourage these opinions and that it is okay to be sexist, misogynistic and sexually harass or assault women and girls.

Complainant B:

Cllr Stubbs, in a public meeting espoused a personal and ill informed opinion about inclusion in the Fire and Rescue Service, his comments were

factually incorrect and misogynistic and significantly damaging.

[REDACTED] I am extremely annoyed and disappointed that someone in public office feels it is acceptable to make these comments and breach the Nolan Principles  
He has damaged the reputation of the office of PCC and damaged working relationships with the Fire and rescue Service

#### **4. Additional comments**

- 4.1 The original comments send from the complainant A are attached as Appendix 1, along with additional comments which were received from complainant A within the window for submissions.
- 4.2 The original comments send from the complainant B are attached as Appendix 2, along with additional comments which were received from complainant B within the window for submissions.
- 4.3 The Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire, has provided commentary on the complaints. This has been attached as Appendix 3.
- 4.4 A verbatim excerpt of Item 9 of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority Meeting held on 14 December 2021 has been attached as Appendix 4.

#### **Recommendations**

##### **5.1 That the Complaints Sub-Committee:**

- **Notes the content of this report and its appendices.**
- **Considers and agrees the appropriate course of action in response to the complaint and additional comments presented.**

## Appendix 1

**Details of your complaint (required):** 2.1.1 treat others with dignity and respect.

2.1.4 act in a manner which could not reasonably be regarded as bringing the office into disrepute.

At the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service Authority meeting this Tuesday, the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner Luke Stubbs made some wholly unacceptable, misguided comments that look to set back equality, diversity and inclusion in public services. Links below to articles for context:

<https://www.portsmouth.co.uk/news/politics/hampshires-deputy-police-and-crime-commissioner-luke-stubbs-says-fire-service-equality-goals-only-benefit-women-and-minorities-3494877>

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For someone who is paid to represent the OPCC, his views go against those of an office working tirelessly to improve EDI training and make our work more inclusive.

This is not the first time he has made inappropriate and offensive comments about women, but it is whilst he has been in this role.

Ignoring the wider public consequences of this and the time that will likely be spent dealing with it rather than other valuable work, I personally find his comments offensive and am ashamed to work in an office where he represents me.

These views are very similar to those held by incels (involuntary celibates) and these extremist views have been held by those who have committed serious violence against women and girls. His views may act to encourage these opinions and that it is okay to be sexist, misogynistic and sexually harass or assault women and girls.

**Date of alleged incident (required):** 14/12/2021

**What outcome you would like to see from this complaint (optional):**

Removed from office as Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner

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I think the only comments to add is that obviously the DPCC has now made a statement of apology, but to me this felt forced and therefore not entirely meaningful. The email that came to staff was also via the PCC so nothing has been heard from the DPCC himself. It seems unlikely that he will be removed from office but perhaps if that isn't the case he should be required to attend all the very informative and educational EDI training sessions by the Diversity Trust that the rest of the OPCC staff have been offered. This covers topics such as Race, Unconscious Bias and they may also offer one on Gender. Perhaps then he'll be able to consider the historical and current context of misogyny and other forms of discrimination before he makes inappropriate comments like those at the Fire Authority meeting.

## Appendix 2

Cllr Stubbs, in a public meeting espoused a personal and ill informed opinion about inclusion in the Fire and Rescue Service, his comments were factually incorrect and misogynistic and significantly damaging.

[REDACTED] I am extremely annoyed and disappointed that someone in public office feels it is acceptable to make these comments and breach the Nolan Principles  
He has damaged the reputation of the office of PCC and damaged working relationships with the Fire and rescue Service

**Date of alleged incident (required):** 15 December 2021

**What outcome you would like to see from this complaint (optional):** It is in my view an abuse of his position and at the very least he should issue a public retraction and apology, but ideally he should be removed from office

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I am sure the chair and panel members will be aware of the press coverage and damage that Mr Luke Stubbs ill informed and incorrect comments have done. I sight below the BBC coverage from the 15th December

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-hampshire-59661670>

I thought it would be helpful to also flag to the committee the National Fire Chiefs Council National Fire sector Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan to emphasise the sector position

[https://www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk/write/MediaUploads/committee%20documents/People%20Programme/NFCC Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Plan April 2020.pdf](https://www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk/write/MediaUploads/committee%20documents/People%20Programme/NFCC_Equality_Diversity_and_Inclusion_Strategy_and_Plan_April_2020.pdf)

As I said in my initial complaint, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] you will appreciate that when elected representatives in positions of authority make incorrect and ill researched comments it not only makes women angry....but also has inadvertently fuelled those with misogynistic attitudes to feel empowered to make comments and puts off other women from applying to do the job.

I do hope the panel will also consider the recent comments by the outgoing HMIFRS lead inspector ...Sir tom Winsor, who has said in his state of Fire Report 'that, despite some examples of outstanding culture in some services,

other services needed to do more to address 'toxic' environments for staff and improve the diversity of the workforce' ....

And that will require the right Political Leadership, who have the right attitude and are well briefed before the espouse their own views



### **Appendix 3**

Please note the apology I have offered for any offence caused. If you decide to progress the case, I will be happy to discuss this further then.

Luke

**Verbatim excerpt of Item 9, Annual Statement of Equality and Equality Objectives, at a meeting of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue held on 14 December 2021.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=928K-cLmq8o>

**Chairman (Cllr Rhydian Vaughan):** Thank you Molly. Members any questions? Luke Stubbs please.

**Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (DPCC) (Luke Stubbs):** First a question of fact, so you have explained already that in terms of advertising jobs, a lot of jobs are advertised through social media for example, you can target on demographics thus making it difficult for, let's be clear about this, white men to apply for roles. But even acknowledging all of that, what proportion of the applicants for full time roles were female.

**Director of People and Organisational Development (MR) (Molly Rowland):** What proportion of the applicants? I would have to find out that information, but we can, we can find that in terms

**DPCC:** Can you give me an approximate answer.

**MR:** An approximate was about 20%.

**DPCC:** Yeah, I mean so you know I look at this sort of thing and it's you see this right across the Government. I realise this isn't just a local thing I realise that Government, for reasons which I think are very wrong headed is bringing in quota programme, that's what we are talking about here across a public sector but only where it benefits women and minorities like that. No quota programme in the NHS no quota programme in Schools. Two thirds of Government employees are women, and yet all we are doing is areas where there is a majority of men it has to be 50/50, in areas where it is almost all women oh that is fine – no change. I don't that is acceptable, and I think the whole thing is wrong headed but if we are going to have 50/50 it has to mean everywhere. So, I note things like the Control Room which is largely women - 84% women. I would like assurance that steps are being taken to reduce that, and that when jobs are advertised, they are targeted at men, and that male applicants take priority. I would like assurance in areas like HR which is almost always all women in any organisation that I see, and yet we never hear about things being done about that. So can I have assurance that if we are going down this, I think a terribly misguided path, that it is applied equally and not just to the detriment of men. Can I suggest to members, because I don't think I have a vote on this, that if you are going to take these objectives that you amend objective two, to put that in there, to say that that's to all areas so that where there is a majority of females

working in an area then we use positive action to bring that to an end because otherwise it's just, it's you know, it is grossly unfair. I mean it is not true despite constant repetition that men earn more than women, alright, it is true but its you've got to look at it with context, men in their 20's and 30's earn less. It is women older than that, who would take child breaks and so forth who are then at a disadvantage, so you are talking about recruiting people, you know mostly in their 20's and 30's from a pool, where across the economy, men are paid less. So where is the justification then for having programmes to reduce a proportion of men where there are more men than women but not to have the reverse, so that is my point to you Chairman, and can I have assurance that positive action is in all areas of the organisation, including those are the majority are female.

**Chairman:** Molly

**MR:** Thank you for your comments. Absolutely, I can assure you that we advertise all of our jobs fairly and we actually haven't recruited in control for some time so I don't think we have encountered the problem of having to consider positive action from the other prospective, that we normally find ourselves addressing given the majority of our roles are in firefighters, but we can certainly look at that when next look to recruit into control.

**DPCC:** I would say it is essential, and that jobs adverts should only appear in social media fees for men and so forth because, you know, frankly if men are being pushed out of jobs where men are a majority – they're still going to need to work.

**Chairman:** Lets just hear from the Chief.

**Chief Fire Officer:** So, thanks Molly for your response. I would point to the Positive Action Statement, it is very clear about the under representative groups so your points heard and we do hear that in amongst the population of our communities too but as you can imagine a lot of the Fire Rescue Service pressure comes with the fact that made still many, many firefighters are male and they are male and white, and so we do not lose the point you are making, but equally the kind of high pressure and the high priority for us is to make sure our operational workforce, the bit that the public see on the fire engines is representative of communities, because at the moment it is not. So whilst I would accept the point you make, I would not want to stray away from the fact that our focus has to be on that issue there but not withstanding the fact that our Positive Action statement talks about under representative groups which includes men and women of all sorts.

**Chairman:** Gary Hughes please

**Councillor Gary Hughes:** Thank you Chair. The one that struck me Molly was you said you send that information in different languages in order to try and

encourage ethnic minorities and non-English speaking individuals to consider a career. There must be a language requirement to perform as a firefighter because I would hate to go into a roaring building, I have been into roaring buildings before, and the last thing I want is a communications breakdown caused by language.

**MR:** Yes, sorry, that might have been me not explaining that objective very well, but that objective back from 2018 was about ensuring the equality of access to our services, so not only to us as an employer but also that members of our community from all different backgrounds and with different protected characteristics are able to access the services we provide, so if they require information in respect of their safety at home, like, say, from well visits, can they access that in an alternative format. So, apologies if I didn't make that very clear.

**Chairman:** Derek Mellor

**Councillor Derek Mellor:** Thank you Chair. My question actually, I am a little bit thrown now following Mr Stubbs intervention. Can I just ask then Molly, has there been any official body under the, who's complained about any of our proportionality of representation, like the Equalities Act Commission, made any comment about our situation. I find our performance very, very satisfactory in this area.

**MR:** We haven't received any complaints. We know that when we were last inspected back in 2018 that they raised some challenges, not only to our organisation but, you know, across the sector, in terms of the sector needing to do more to diversify its workforce. So, we are responding to that challenge that has been given to us by the inspection but, certainly, not a complaint and I would agree, I think we are making positive progress in terms of our equality improvements, but I would reiterate that is still more we can do.

**Councillor Derek Mellor:** Thank you.

**Chairman:** Jonathan

**Councillor Jonathan Glen:** Thank you very much Chairman. Can I just say, in my opinion this, these recommendations are positive, progressive correct and fair and that we should get on with it, and as the officer said it is probably the tip of the iceberg and we will progress this beyond just gender in the future. My question, through the Chair, Chairman, is that the opinions brought just by Mr Stubbs here, are they his own personal opinions on the balance of men and women or is he a messenger bearing gifts from the Police and Crime Commissioner?

**DPCC:** In terms of in this body I am speaking as a someone invited to this body, and I can express whichever views I so wish, but you know, these are my

personal views and I have to say that I think they views shared by a majority of the public.

**Councillor Jonathan Glen:** The majority of the public did you say?

**DPCC:** Well, I believe so, I haven't seen any surveys on that, but that is my view.

**Councillor Jonathan Glen:** Exactly, Chairman

**Chairman:** Okay, David Fuller

**Councillor David Fuller:** Thank you Chairman. It was just some clarity really, something Mr Stubbs said that troubled me that we weren't advertising jobs at certain segments of the population on social media. Can I just have some clarity that we are advertising all of our jobs to everybody across the board and we are not excluding anyone or including anyone particularly beyond that.

**MR:** We are absolutely not excluding anybody, but what we are able to do is to look to, look for people that have expressed an interest in fitness, for example, because we know that the role requires a level of fitness so for people that are maybe members of a gym or follow fitness programmes on social media then we can target those. It's not about excluding men or women or anybody from applying for the role.

**Chairman:** Okay, Roger Price please

**Councillor Roger Price:** Thank you Chairman. From my prospective I think that the part which I do disagree with, with Government, and that is where they set specific percentages that you have to have. Now that, in certain areas, that is easy to properly, or easier to obtain and in other areas it is not because of the makeup of the population and that is where the whole thing started to go wrong. Now I think that the policies which are being put forward here gives every person who lives in Hampshire who wishes to apply for a job within the Fire Authority, Fire Service, full options to apply and it isn't sort of saying oh we won't accept anybody of such and such character, we will open it up to every single person who wants to apply, and providing that's there and that is what is here, then I have no problems with it because anybody can apply for any job which we advertise, providing we give the options in the different areas where we advertise and make sure that people come forward. When it comes to them having applied, there will be certain criteria that they have to comply with. Now that is to do with the job, the same as any person applying, if they are applying to be an accountant at any organisation, then their qualifications would be looked at and I think it is exactly the same here, one will look at their ability to do the job and where we are helping, certain people who would like to work with us, for us, is that we will help them to get because, as a fire fighter it's a physical job, we are

helping them to obtain the physical attributes and I think that's the right way forward so I think that, in general terms, I fully agree with this and support it. As I say, the only part where it's always gone wrong and that over a number of years, political parties of all colours have actually put forward percentages which I totally disagree with.

**Chairman:** Ok thank you, David Fuller

**Councillor David Fuller:** Yes, sorry it is just another point or a question of some clarity around a point Mr Stubbs said and that was around the percentage of applicants for full time posts and, I just, can we just get that figure sent round just because it seems to me if, I think we said around 20% of the applicants were female and yet 50% of the offers were to females. I'd like to think it is because those 20% were much better than the other 80%, but can we just have some clarity around that.

**MR:** Yes, I can, I am fairly confident that from my last recruitment intake what I would be able to get is who, the breakdown of who applied and how they dropped out at each stage of that process so I will find that and then share that with you afterwards.

**Chairman:** Okay thank you. David Harrison.

**Councillor David Harrison:** Yes, always an interesting discussion this isn't it and it's essentially about fairness and I think Mr Stubbs makes a really interesting point. Clearly there are people in society who feel that they're getting a rough deal, and that not enough attention is given to their needs. If anything, I have more of an issue with the way that society is structured in such a way in that such an establishment runs this country, you know the wealthy and the powerful seem to rule the roost at the expense of many other people. What I think is that this report speaks very clearly to inspectors who come in, they've looked at our organisation and they have made a set of recommendations that we are addressing, and for me I think you could spend a long time thinking about the inequities of society generally, which I think is what you are referring to, but we need to be concentrating on our remit which is this Authority and the service, and so for that reason I am more than happy to accept the recommendation on this paper.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Ian Stephens please.

**Councillor Ian Stephens:** Thank you. On reading the paper I was well satisfied with the content and the way it was projecting equality through this Fire Authority. Nationally, yes there is an inspection regime going through from HMICFRS and yes, they are picking up on diversity and inclusion etc etc, but I think this goes a long way to actually prove that Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire Authority is moving in the right direction to actually give opportunity to all, and I mean all,

whether it is gender or, indeed, culture, you need to work on things, of course we do, but I think this is the way forward. The demographics on the Isle of Wight, for instance, and I take Roger's point and, indeed other members points, that the demographics on the Isle of Wight would actually cause us problems to actually reach the percentages that would be agreeable with central government. But I what would say is, that every down we fall down on the percentage levels, as opposed to figures and fairness, opportunity, inclusiveness and that's where we need to be and if we're showing that, and this papers shows that, in my mind, we have all got our own opinions, that's fine, and I know down the road I can go and speak to two or three people who feel that they are in the majority and they are hard done by, about being included or not being included, but to be quite honest I think that we are doing, and I am not going to take the pat on the back and applaud us for this, but we are doing a fairly good job and actually bringing forward a paper that recognises we are different, we have got a differing society in the community and since 2018, 2017 and all that, times have moved on, times have moved on and they are continuing to move on and this is what makes this work in progress that is current, and I congratulate you on the paper. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Yes, nicely said Ian. I mean, listening to Luke's opinion it would seem that we have got our equality programme completely array, which I don't believe in. Many of you have expressed your point of view, so I think the best way to sort this is to go to the recommendation, and if you don't want to then please say so but I think Molly that was a very good paper and I applaud you for it. So let's go to the recommendations then – on page 71, firstly that the annual statement of equality workforce demographics be approved by Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority and secondly, that the new equality objectives and positive action statements be approved by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire Rescue Authority. Are you in agreement? **Agreed.** Anybody disagree? Done, thank you.