

# **Tone from the Top - Leadership, ethics and accountability in policing**

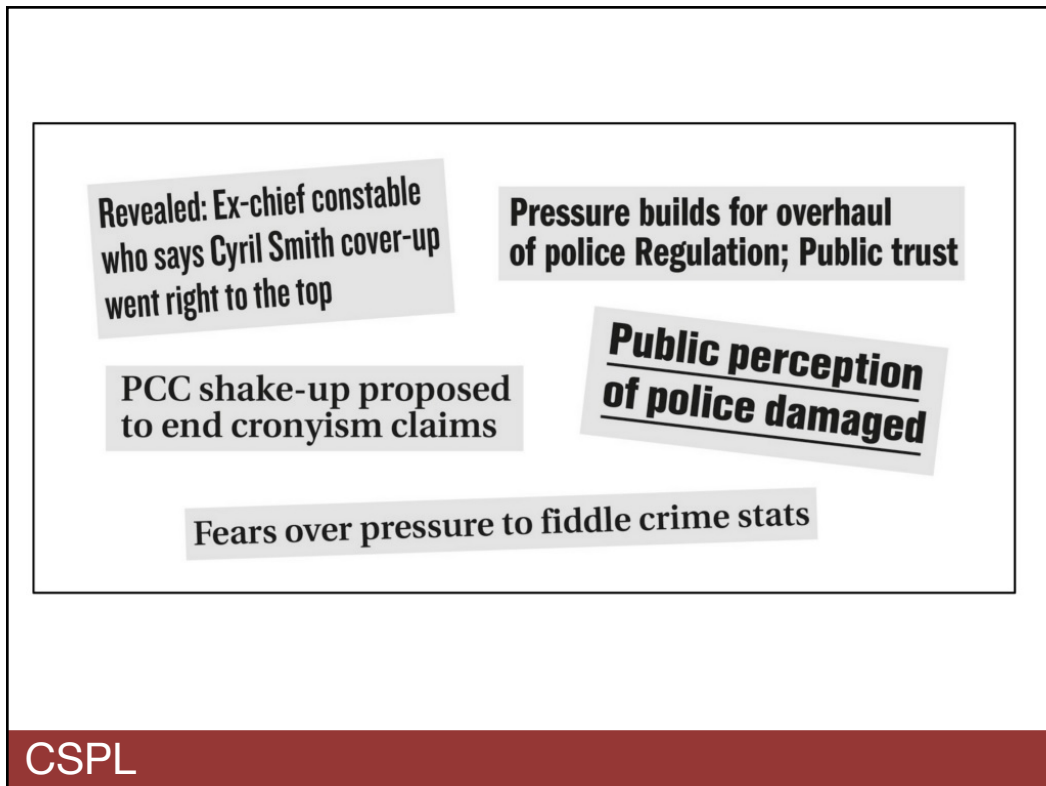
Committee on  
Standards in  
Public Life

29 June 2015

1

## **Introduction**

- Local policing accountability changed substantially under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. PCCs were intended to be the “voice of the public” replacing “bureaucratic accountability with democratic accountability”.
- PCCs control over £12bn.
- Local Police and Crime Panels are required to scrutinise and support the PCC.
- After two years of the new arrangements being in place, it was timely for the Committee to review the model’s operation and learn lessons.



- The Committee launched an inquiry in October 2014 about leadership, ethics and accountability in local policing. The police and PCCs were in the headlines during the inquiry.

# Inquiry aims

- Structures for ensuring high standards of behaviour
- Effectiveness of those structures
- What works well, what could be improved
- The role of leaders in promoting and sustaining high standards

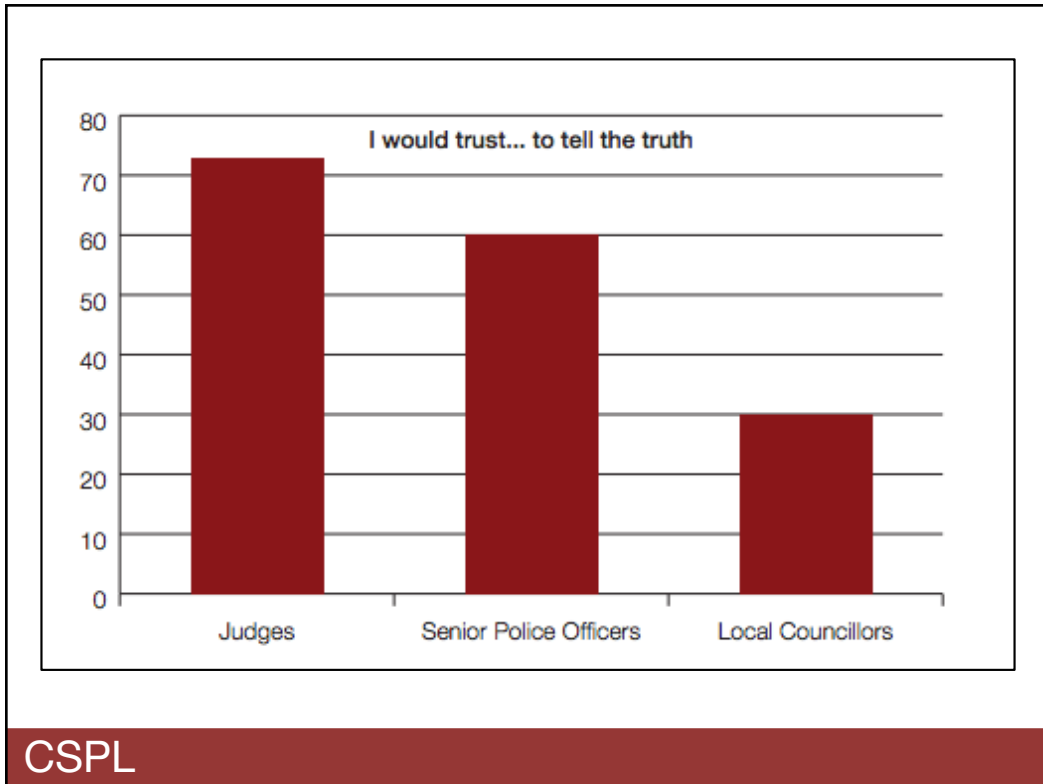
CSPL

## **Inquiry aims**

- Identify the structures in place for ensuring high standards of behaviour.
- Examine the effectiveness of those structures.
- Identify what works well and what could be improved.
- Considering the role of leaders in promoting and sustaining high standards.

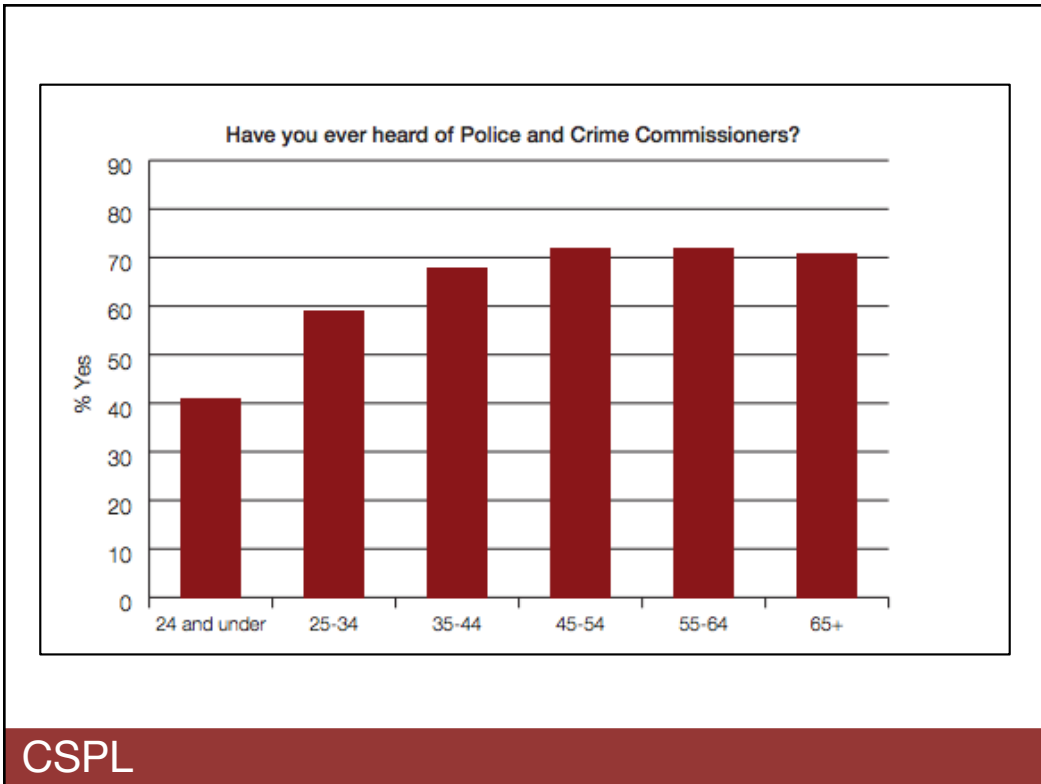
## **Inquiry methodology**

- A public consultation and an independent survey of public perceptions.
- Desk research, several roundtable discussions with stakeholders and academics, meetings with key local and national organisations and visits to local police areas to meet with PCCs, Chief Constables and PCPs.



## Survey findings

- The survey found out about levels of trust in police:
  - 59% would trust senior police officers to tell the truth.
  - 55% agree that the police are held to account for their actions.
  - 54% agree that police were dealing with the crime and anti-social behaviour issues that matter.
- Most respondents have a positive impression of the conduct and accountability of police.



### Survey findings

- The survey found out about levels of knowledge and interest in policing:
  - 68% have heard of PCCs.
  - 44% knew PCCs were elected by the public.
  - 10% knew the name of their local PCC.
  - 15% were aware of Police and Crime Panels.
  - 60% were not interested in finding out about policing in their local area.

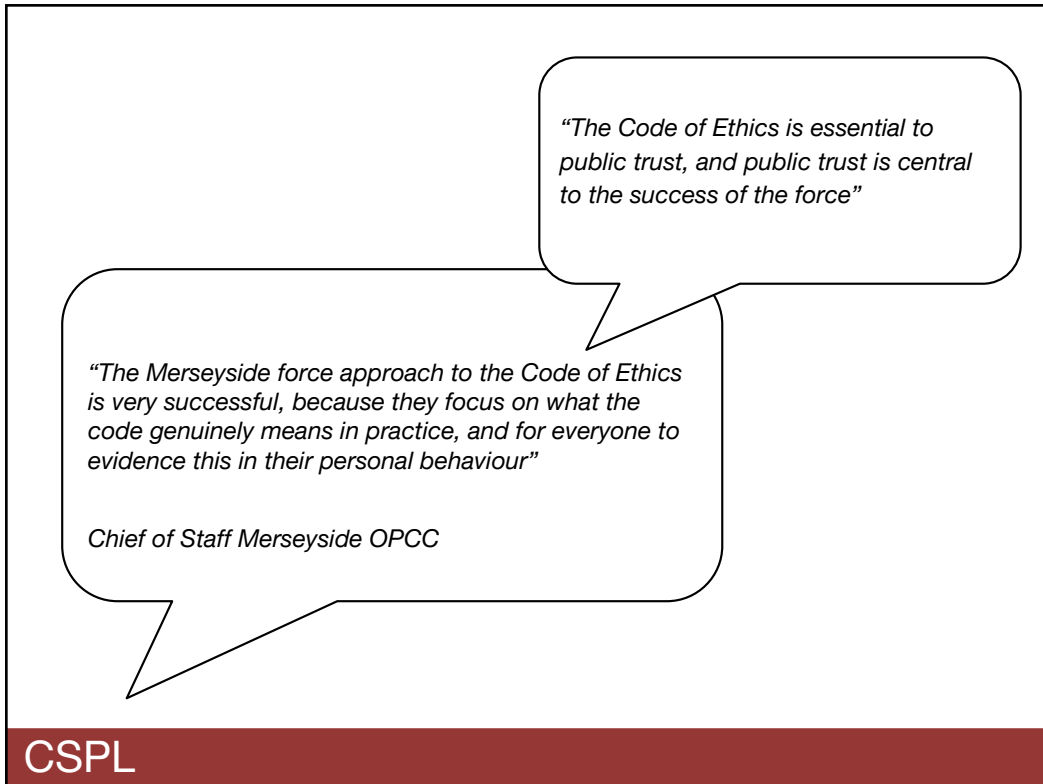
# Headline findings

- Policing - increasingly professionalised and ethically based
- Leadership key to supporting high standards
- Locally visible PCCs
- Many mechanisms supporting standards and propriety

CSPL

## **Inquiry findings related to ethical standards**

- Evidence of increased professionalism and interest in ethically based policing.
- Individual chief officers are championing ethical leadership and high standards of behaviour.
- PCCs are more visible to communities than the former Police Authorities. Yet the survey showed, awareness and interest amongst the public remains low.
- Many different mechanisms being used to embed and support high standards of behaviour.



### **Inquiry findings related to ethical standards**

- Widespread recognition of the importance of the College of Policing's Code of Ethics and the core policing values.
- Diverse good practice within police forces in implementing and embedding the Code.

# Significant ethical risks

- Confusion regarding operational and strategic
- Lack of process to address behaviour below standards expected
- Appointments process must be robust and transparent
- Insufficient challenge and support by Police and Crime Panels
- Risk posed by joint roles
- Public confusion of complaints handling

CSPL

## **Inquiry findings related to significant ethical risks**

- There's confusion amongst the public about the roles and responsibilities of PCCs and Chief Constable.
- There is no clear process to take action against a PCC whose conduct falls below the standards expected of a holder of public office.
- The robustness and transparency of current appointment processes for chief police officers and senior staff in PCC offices.
- Insufficient constructive challenge and active support by Police and Crime Panels.
- Inherent risks of joint appointments and insufficient safeguards for the Monitoring Officer role.
- Public confusion regarding complaints handling.



# Key recommendations

## For the Home Office

- Review whether sufficient powers are available to take action against a PCC

## For PCCs:

- Mandatory national minimum code of conduct
- Holding the Chief Constable - promotion of ethical behaviour and embedding the Code of Ethics
- Appointment procedures - open and transparent processes

CSPL

## Recommendations

- 20 evidence based designed to assist all the various players to develop and strengthen the ways ethical standards in policing are upheld and sustained.

## Key recommendations

- For the Home Office:
  - To review whether sufficient powers are available to take action against a PCC whose conduct falls below the standard expected.
- For PCCs:
  - Mandatory national minimum code of conduct.
  - Holding the Chief Constable to account should explicitly include the promotion of ethical behaviour and embedding the Code of Ethics.
  - Appointment procedures Chief Constables and top PCC support staff should comply with open and transparent processes that include the involvement of a named individual with appropriate expertise.

# Key recommendations

## For the Police and Crime Panel:

- A strategic approach - a forward plan of work

## For the Associations:

- A model memorandum of understanding, for PCCs and Chief Constables
- National guidance on 'significant public interest'

CSPL

## Key recommendations

- For the Police and Crime Panel:
  - A more strategic approach – including a forward plan of work drawn from the Police and Crime Plan and specifying information required from PCCs, who should make it accessible to assist scrutiny and gain the support and leverage of elected councillors.
- For the Associations:
  - Collaboration on a model memorandum of understanding, between the PCCs, Chief Constables and Chief executives so that respective roles and safeguards re hard wired and in place ahead of difficulties and controversies.
  - Provision of national guidance on the meaning of a decision of 'significant public interest' to assist the work of PCPs.

### **Ethical Checklist**

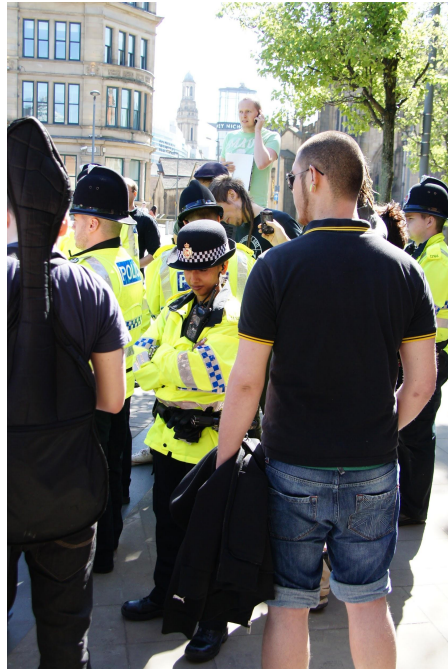
- Will your Police & Crime Plan for 2016-7 include a commitment to hold the Chief Constable explicitly to account for promoting ethical behaviour and embedding the College of Policing Code of Ethics?
- Will you publicly commit to abide by a Code of Conduct once that has been adopted by the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners?
- Will you require the same of any Deputy you appoint?
- When making appointments of Chief Constable, Deputy PCC or senior staff to your office will you ensure open and transparent appointment processes and include an independent external member on the appointing panel?
- Will you publish, in easily accessible format, details of your pay and rewards, gifts and hospitality received, your business interests and memberships?

**CSPL**

### **Key recommendations**

- The Committee has also proposed an Ethical Checklist for PCCs.

## Future-proofing policing accountability



CSPL

### Conclusion

- Current and future PCCs need to make a visible commitment to adopt the best practice at the heart of our recommendations.
- PCCs need to continue their focus at a local community level, but balance this with their regional and national roles too. PCCs need to embed governance structures that promote ethical behaviour, provide ethical accountability and sustain public confidence and trust.
- The Committee call for greater energy and consistency to be applied to promoting high ethical standards, this will be all the more critical as the nature of crime, along with how policing is delivered, is set to change:
  - With new and increasingly complex crime.
  - Reductions in police budgets.
  - Greater regional collaboration.
  - Further devolutionary changes such as Metro Mayors.
- The role of leaders will be increasingly crucial in upholding high ethical standards in policing.
- The tone and culture of policing is set by those at the top.
- The public are entitled to know that those they elect will promote, support and sustain high ethical standards.

**Tone from the Top -  
Leadership, ethics and  
accountability in policing**

Committee on  
Standards in  
Public Life

29 June 2015

13