



ASSOCIATION OF
CHIEF POLICE OFFICERS



Child Sexual Abuse Review Panel

Terms of Reference, June 2013

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Child Sexual Abuse Review Panel looks again at cases where a person is concerned that they have made previous allegations of being a victim of a sexual offence when they were under the age of 18, and the police or CPS decided that no action should be taken at the time, but the person is not satisfied that the original allegations were dealt with appropriately.
- 1.2. The panel considers whether the approach taken in any case where the police or CPS previously advised against taking further action was wrong and advises whether the allegations should be reinvestigated by the police or the prosecution decision reviewed by the CPS. The case will be referred back to the police force (or CPS Area) from where the case originated for them to decide on the action to be taken.

2. CRITERIA

- 2.1. The panel will consider cases where these factors apply:
 - the complaint is in respect of an alleged sexual offence committed against the complainant;
 - the complaint of an allegation of a sexual offence has previously been made to the police;
 - a decision to take no further action was taken by the police or by the CPS;
 - the complainant has asked the police or the CPS to look again at that decision;
 - the alleged sexual offence was committed when the complainant was under 18 years of age; and
 - the alleged perpetrator/s may still pose a risk. (The threshold for risk is set very low and simply means that the perpetrator may currently or in the future have the opportunity to commit further offences).
- 2.2. There is no restriction on the context or setting of where the alleged offending behaviour took place for the purpose of the case being re-considered by the panel. However, the alleged offence must have been committed in England and Wales.
- 2.3. The panel will not consider cases if these factors apply:
 - the complainant has not previously reported the matter to the police as this will therefore be a new complaint that the police will need to investigate;
 - new evidence has come to light prompting a fresh investigation by the police;
 - the allegation is of child sexual abuse alleged to have occurred after 5 June 2013 (the date of introduction of the Victims' Right to Review in the CPS).

3. THE PANEL

- 3.1. The panel will consist of a Chief Crown Prosecutor, an ACPO rank police officer, a specialist prosecutor, and experienced child abuse police investigator, and an appropriate independent representative.
- 3.2. The panel will undertake a scoping exercise, based on the information requested of and provided by the relevant police force or CPS Area, to decide whether to advise that the original decision

was correct or if further action should be taken (e.g. reinvestigation) by the police force or CPS Area.

- 3.3. Sole responsibility for taking this decision in the panel rests with the police and CPS members. The independent representative in the panel will play an advisory role i.e. they will receive and consider the relevant information and provide views to the police and CPS members of the panel as to the decision they consider should be taken.

4. REFERRING A CASE TO THE PANEL

- 4.1. Cases can be referred to the panel by individual complainants directly through a dedicated email address - nationalpanel@acpo.pnn.police.uk - or by complainants bringing their previous complaint back to the attention of police forces or CPS Areas. Police forces and CPS Areas will refer cases to the review panel if they fit the panel criteria set out above.
- 4.2. However when a complainant goes straight to the panel, the panel secretariat will refer the complaint to the relevant police force or the relevant CPS Area for them to apply the panel criteria in the usual way.