Chris Coghlan MP
Member of Parliament for Dorking and Horley
House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

Independent Office for Police Conduct
By email:

23 September 2026

Dear IOPC,

Re: Standards at Surrey Police

The Hillsborough Law now going through Parliament will require public authorities and public officials to perform their functions with candour, transparency, frankness and in the public interest at all times.

I am writing to ask you to review whether Surrey Police met these standards in their decisions to apparently tip off the alleged perpetrators of a police investigation and to close two separate investigations into officers at Surrey County Council on 17th August 2026. Both investigations were for Misconduct in Public Office and one of the investigations was for Perjury.

On 7th August 2026, a journalist submitted a press enquiry regarding a police investigation into a complaint of Misconduct in Public Office from July 2024 related to a 10-year-old child with special educational needs. Surrey Police confirmed this investigation to the journalist on 11th August and then informed the alleged perpetrators about the press enquiry on or before 17th August. Surrey Police then issued a statement to the journalist on 18th August that the investigation was closed (see Appendix).

Early on into this investigation, Surrey Police advised the complainant's parent that they "might not be the appropriate investigating force due to its close working relationship with Surrey County Council on child protection."

During the investigation Surrey Police advised the complainant not to make the alleged perpetrators aware of the investigation because of the risk that they might destroy evidence. This appears inconsistent with Surrey Police thinking that it was appropriate do so themselves in response to a press enquiry, especially as a press enquiry is not certain to result in published information.

The consequence of this is that the complainant's family now fear whether their identities have been leaked to the alleged perpetrators and the risk that evidence has been destroyed or witnesses intimidated. There are instances in case law where the police tipping off a suspect has been found to be a criminal offence.

In Autumn 2025, a second complaint of Misconduct in Public Office was registered with Surrey Police regarding obstruction of provision for a 12-year-old autistic child. Surrey Police explicitly instructed the family not to submit a Subject Access Request (SAR) for internal council records, assuring them that police would formally request these unredacted documents as the critical evidence required to progress the case.

Between March and June 2026, across both investigations, Surrey Police confirmed in writing that officers were actively preparing files to submit to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) for early consideration.

On 17th August, a newly appointed DCI called the second complainant to close their case (the same day as closing the first case) due to "insufficient evidence", admitting police had

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decided not to request the promised SCC records because it was not deemed "proportionate".

When challenged on why police had blocked the family from obtaining the evidence themselves, the DCI agreed to suspend the closure and scheduled a review meeting on 19th August. Just 10 minutes later, the DCI called back to cancel the meeting, admitting her senior officers had directly instructed her to close the file immediately and stating that it was an "uncomfortable conversation" for her. The case was officially closed that afternoon. Taken at face value, the stated parameters for investigation set by Surrey Police could appear to set it up to fail- not gathering evidence then closing the case due to “insufficient evidence”.

Independently of both these cases, I am also aware that Surrey Police received evidence that misconduct by some officers at Surrey County Council was deliberate, a key threshold for the criminal offence of Misconduct in Public Office.

I would be happy to provide evidence to you of the details in this letter once its security and confidentiality has been assured.

Professional independence requires both impartiality and the appearance of impartiality, to ensure public confidence. I am publishing this letter at the request of both complainants given their fears in the integrity of the police complaints process as a senior officer appears to have been involved in the decision to close these cases.

Yours sincerely,



Chris Coghlan

Liberal Democrat MP for Dorking and Horley

Appendix – Timeline of Surrey Police investigations into officers at the CFLL department at SCC.

Date	Timeline	
	Complainant 1	**Complainant 2**
July 2024	**Surrey Police** register a complaint of Misconduct in Public Office against named SCC officers.	
Autumn 2025		**A formal complaint of Misconduct in Public Office made against named SCC officers**

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		regarding deliberate obstruction of provision for a 12-year-old autistic child (March-Sept 2025) **A DCI is allocated** to the victim, and a full statement is taken over several days. The family is referred to a Victim's Support Unit. **Surrey Police** explicitly advise family not to submit an SAR for internal SCC documents, stating they will request these themselves.
6th March 2026	**A Surrey Police officer emailed** the complainant stating that they have been allocated the investigation and that they are preparing a file for the CPS to consider in relation to it.	
June 2026		**A Surrey Police officer emailed** the complainant to confirm they will be "submitting a file to the CPS for their early consideration".
7th August 2026	**A journalist** put in a press enquiry to Surrey Police, asking for confirmation that an investigation was ongoing into CFLL at SCC.	
11th August 2026	**Surrey Police** issued a statement to the journalist, confirming that "there have been no arrests or charges in relation to this investigation and our enquiries remain ongoing."	
17th August 2026	**The journalist** acknowledged receipt of this statement. Immediately, Surrey Police replied that an update was coming. We have seen evidence that Surrey Police alerted Surrey County Council of the press enquiry on or before this date. A DI calls the complainant at 11:32 am to tell them that the case is closed.	**A new DCI is appointed** to review the file. She rings the complainant to confirm the case would be dropped because of insufficient evidence. When asked if evidence had been requested from SCC, she said it hadn't been as it wasn't considered "proportionate". The DCI agreed this decision needed review and a meeting was scheduled for 19th August. The DCI rang back 10 minutes later to say her senior officer instructed her to close the case. At 16:32, the case was officially closed.
18th August 2026	**Surrey Police** issued an updated statement to a journalist saying that "a thorough review was carried out in relation to this report, following which it was determined that no crime had been committed."	

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