

27th January, 2020



Minutes

Hertfordshire Community Scrutiny Stop and Search Panel:

Monday 27th January, 2020

Panel Members Present: Chris Cowdrey (CC), Caroline Malcolm (CM), Jeffrey Burke (JB), Mohammed Islam-Ruman (MR), Barbara Graham (BG)

Hertfordshire OPCC/Constabulary

- Chris Treadwell (Hertfordshire Constabulary, Chief Inspector Crime Reduction and Community Safety) (CT)
- Matthew Pugh (OPCC, Policy and Project Officer) (MP)

Apologies: Sharon Farquhar (SF), Marianne Murphy (MM), Marian Langley (ML), Roger Bosley (RB), Michael Reeve (MR), Ben Platt (BP), Danielle Turner (DT), Raeis Mer (RM), Nelson Agbor (NA)

Resignation: Nicholas Olanrewaju and Gavin Prime

The meeting was chaired by CC

1) Welcome, introductions and apologies

2) Approval of minutes and update on actions

The minutes of the meeting on the 17th December were agreed.

Update on actions:

Action one: MP updated on his conversation with the Chair of the Stop and Search Panel in Bedfordshire. The Bedfordshire Panel operate on a two tier system, with a core group of 15 members and an extended membership of 50. The core group meet every month, with a 'public meeting' held every quarter for the extended non-vetted membership. The Hertfordshire Panel confirmed that they were happy with the current arrangement and would not look to introduce a two tier system.

Action two: MP updated on his review of last year's feedback forms, with a focus on the correlation between individual's ethnicity and cases where the Panel do not feel confident in an officers record. In the period January 19 to December 1 there had been 32 instances where the Panel did not feel confident in the officer's record. Of these 32 instances, 53% involved individuals who self-identified as white, 28% involved individuals who self-identified as black and 9% who self-identified as Asian.

No clear pattern or trend emerged, but this would continue to be monitored to see if any learning can be identified.

Action three: There had been an apparent discrepancy in two separate data sets focusing on disproportionality for the last meeting. CT updated that he had spoken with the analysts working on stop and search in the constabulary and they were confident in the accuracy of the data. Any discrepancy may be attributed to the fact that past data can change depending upon future outcomes and any searches that are not recorded when the report is pulled from Athena.

Action four: CT informed the Panel that the data received each month is a snap-shot in time, and is susceptible to change based on a variety of factors. To ensure the Panel are informed of these changes, it was recommended that the constabulary provide a report covering the previous six months at two meetings every year.

Action one: MP to speak with Christian Birch and ask that the constabulary provide a stop and search report covering the previous six months to account for any changes in the data set.

3) Review of December CSP Summary Data

North Herts had seen a significant rise in stop and search in previous months. This is closely linked to a rise in gang violence in the area, however the constabulary are monitoring this cohort of offenders closely and it is likely that the number of stops will reduce in the coming months.

There had been a slight increase in the number of women who had been searched. It was questioned whether male officers could search females, and CT informed the Panel, that although legally officers had the power to do so, Hertfordshire guidance stipulates that females should be searched by an officer of the same gender wherever possible.

CC commented on the high arrest rate in Three Rivers (25%). It was believed that this was linked to a specific operation undertaken with the metropolitan police service to tackle burglary and other related issues.

4) Dip-sampling of Stop and Search Records and 5) Feedback

Group one reviewed 13 records: The group felt confident in 11 records reviewed. The group did not feel confident in two records. In one instance, the officer did not make clear within their grounds why the original vehicle search escalated to become a stop and search on the individual and in the second case, the officer did not provide sufficient grounds to justify why the subject was searched.

Group two reviewed 23 records: The group felt confident in 21 records reviewed. The group did not feel confident in two records which were linked to the same incident. In this instance, both officers did not provide information on how the individuals searched, matched the description provided to them.

Summary:

Total records reviewed	36
Confident	32

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Not confident	4
Unsure	0

6) AOB:

Date of next meeting:

Thursday 27th February (1000 – 1230), St. Albans District Council Offices, Civic Centre, St Peters Street, St Albans, Herts, AL1 3JE

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