



Minutes

Hertfordshire Community Scrutiny Stop and Search Panel:

Tuesday 29th September, 2020

Panel Members Present: Jeffrey Burke (JB), Caroline Malcolm (CM), Ben Platt (BP), Mohammed Islam-Ruman (MI-R), Marian Langley (ML), Barbara Graham (BG)

Hertfordshire OPCC/Constabulary

- Chris Treadwell (Hertfordshire Constabulary, Chief Inspector Crime Reduction and Community Safety) (CT)
- Nicola Dean (Hertfordshire Constabulary, Inspector Crime Reduction and Community Safety) (ND)
- Sara Miles (OPCC CJ Policy and Research Manager) (SM)

Apologies: Roger Bosley, Marianne Murphy, Sharon Farquhar

The meeting was chaired by JB

1) Welcome, introductions and apologies

Welcome to CI Treadwell and Inspector Nicki Dean.

2) Approval of minutes and update on actions

The minutes of the meeting on the 27th August were agreed.

There were a couple of questions on the data at the last meeting which Chief Inspectors of those districts have provided responses for:

St Albans – Noted that whilst 25% of the stops that month (28 stops) were of Asian ethnicity – there wasn't that many "actual stops" as they were group searches supported via intelligence.

32% positive outcome rate demonstrates good intelligence led consistency. Spend a lot of time in our bright spot areas too – so actually this could be just a case of our district focusing in the right area on the right people

Stevenage - Figures fluctuate monthly, and currently there is nothing significant operationally that might affect stop and search figures. The Chief Inspector has looked further into the records and noted that in a 4 week period Intervention teams for instance did between 10 and 18 searches - this amounts to between one and two searches per officer per month.

North Herts - Local context is that we have an ever increasing threat from Beds/drugs supply and increase in ASB from those not in training, education or employment. Increase in proactive patrols. Experienced 2 stabbings across 2 weekends in the district so have enhanced intel focus/briefings around effective robust use of stop search.

Update on actions:

Action 2: SM to identify 3-4 meetings for the Panel to present at in 2020, as part of the Panel's efforts to engage with the public.

M I-R presented at the Community Liaison Group (part of the Hertfordshire Criminal Justice Board) last month. This action will be put on hold while there remain limited opportunities for public engagement.

Action 4: Deep dive into data to be held by the Constabulary with those panel members interested.

Action 6: Constabulary to provide response for why positive disposal rate has decreased

These actions now overlap each other and the Constabulary have agreed to run a session with the group to share the data and presentations shown at the coercive powers board. Chris Pratt (Head of Thinking & Analysis) has suggested the following dates:

22 October 1100-1200

22 October 1500-1600

26 October 1400-1500

26 October 1500-1600

SM will email the group after the meeting to get an understanding of who would like to join and most suitable option for the dates/times offered.

Action: Sara to circulate dates

3) HMIC document discussion - Reasons for assessing recorded grounds as not reasonable

Some discussions about the document including comments shared from panel members who were unable to attend this meeting.

It was noted that when HMIC complete an inspection they do not give feedback on individual stop & search records but instead give details of the themes they have identified and where improvements should be made. The document is what HMIC provided to Hertfordshire after the last inspection.

Discussion regarding the document included:

- This advice is very clear that the 'Grounds for Search' box on the S&S form must contain a considerable amount of text. Records should not be just one or two lines long.
- Records that are cut and paste should immediately be classed as 'not reasonable' unless there is further detailed information regarding each individual and the need to search them.
- Sections 1 & 2 in the guidance are probably the most relevant to the panel and the records reviewed.
- We also often see things in the grounds such as the vehicle had a marker on it or it came up on a PNC but this now needs further explanation to be included in the grounds. Guidance notes that markers needs to be current and relevant.
- Noted often see 'known area' or 'known drug dealer' as grounds. Guidance notes this isn't grounds on its own and more supporting grounds would be needed.
- It was noted that it could take quite a long time to be checking everything against the document; was it better to review a large number of records or a smaller number and review them more thoroughly. It was suggested that for those records that the panel was clear they were confident with they didn't need to do anything differently. For records where they were unsure they could do a deeper review and cross check with the HMIC guidance.
- It was discussed whether the feedback form should be added to and additional columns included to reflect the HMIC guidance. There are already numerous columns on the form so adding more could be confusing. Many of the columns already reflect the HMIC guidance, e.g., guidance notes that 'where recorded grounds make reference to the subject merely being found in company with a male who was arrested for a drugs offence, this is not reasonable unless other grounds exist about the person searched'. This is covered in the form by the heading 'Was the MoP subject to the Stop Search due to their Association with another (which is not enough)'.

It was agreed that the document should be sent out with the papers for each meeting to enable panel members to remind themselves about what they are looking for each time.

4) Review of August Summary Data

A few questions were received in advance:

Lower positive disposals in three Districts: Three rivers at 12%, East Herts at 15% and Dacorum at 16%. This will be discussed as part of the data session next month.

Ethnicity of stops:

Watford stopped 40% BAME – Response from the CSP is that this is roughly the same each month so is not of a concern to the CSP Chief Inspector and fits their own ongoing issues and offending.

Broxbourne stopped 37% BAME - Response from the CSP is that the data for Broxbourne reflects that they had a series of robberies in August where individuals were coming into the area from London using the trains and robbing youths. The CI notes that they would have expected therefore that there would be an increase in stop checks of males of that ethnicity in those hotspot areas.

Difference between percentage of objective property found and positive disposal rates was discussed. This will be because property is found but the officer takes no further action. In August the difference was largely relating to 29 Controlled Drugs stops, in which property was found relevant to the objective (e.g., a cannabis grinder) but did not amount to an offence so whilst related property was found it doesn't automatically lead to a positive outcome.

5) Dip-sampling of Stop and Search Records and 6) Feedback

7 records were reviewed as a group so the HMIC guidance could be considered together

Confident in 4 and not confident in 3

Group one reviewed 23 records

Confident in 9, not confident in 11 records and unsure in 3 records.

Group two reviewed 20 records

Confident in 13 and not confident in 7 records.

Summary:

Total records reviewed	50
Confident	26
Not confident	21
Not sure	3

29th September, 2020

These results show a marked falling off of reporting standards, which had been noticed in the last few months. The panel expressed concern. This is an issue which the police need to consider. This month's outcomes are , for the most part, not attributable to the new document

7) AOB:

Discussed challenges viewing body worn video footage and that it won't be possible at the next meeting but CI Treadwell noted that he is working to find a solution.

Date of next meeting:

Thursday 29th October 6 – 8.30pm

DRAFT