

Hertfordshire Community Stop and Search Panel

29th January 2024 10am – 12.30pm

Microsoft Teams

Minutes

Attendance:

Demitrius Nurse (Chair)	DN	Paulette Reed	PR
Andrew Taylor	AT	Chris Kitchin	CK
Jerry Rudd	JR	Megan Holland	MH
Jeffrey Burke	JB	Linda Blake	LB
Jacqueline Gaffin	JGa	Tara Bullworthy	TB
Penny Buckman	PB	John Gillett	JGi
Valerie Shrimplin	VS	Supt Owen Pyle	OP
Mohammad Islam Ruman	MIR	Ch Insp Ricky Bartlett	RB
Eddie McCarroll	EMc	Insp Alexandra Bruzas	AB
Bukola Efunshile	BE	PS Paul Pickett	PP
Neil Fisher	NF	James Coady, OPCC	JC
Andrew Huggins	AH	Phoebe Allsopp, OPCC	PA
Phil Millard	PM	Sue McNeill, OPCC (minutes)	SMc

Also present: Jamie Graham (JGr), Keeley Smiley (KS), Nadine Paull-Jessup (all OPCC), Insp Gerald Harrison, PS Jo Drury, PS Craig Rogers, PS Richard Boot, PC Rochelle Staddon and Marian Mendez Da Costa (observing).

1	Welcome, Introductions and Apologies
1.1	The Chair (DN) welcomed panel members, officers from the Constabulary and observers. Apologies were noted from: Ch Supt Dean Patient, Alex Allen, Robert Lloyd, Ben Platt, David Reynolds and Dennis Elam.
1.2	DN advised that Thelma Callow had left the panel and he wished her well.
2	Minutes of the Previous Meeting, Actions and Matters Arising.
2.1	The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed (see pack item 1) and the action tracker was updated (pack item 2.)

2.2	<p>In respect of the outstanding action, there was considerable discussion regarding the wider communication and engagement plan, the Communications Manager’s role and capacity, and the general need to promote the panels. DN insisted that effective communication was paramount and reiterated the need to discuss this element with the Communications Manager. EMc reminded that the stop & search power is continually headline news. Publicity and increased public awareness of the panels would be more beneficial than reactive statements. The action remains open.</p>
2.3	<p>In respect of Constabulary feedback, detail was provided by presentation on the serious concerns flagged as ‘red’ (pack item 3).</p> <p><i>Post-meeting note: As the redacted feedback is circulated, the Constabulary Feedback tracker is no longer in use.</i></p>
2.4	<p>DN highlighted that where an incident was dynamic and fast-moving, but not noted as such in the record, this can unfairly impact on the grade given. Such an explanation in the note at the time could make a difference.</p> <p>In response to a direct question regarding contacting officers, PP assured that regardless of whether an officer had changed constabularies, if the matter was serious and a potential misconduct investigation, the officer would be traceable and contacted. Additionally, AB assured that if the reviewing sergeant had accepted a below standard record, this learning would also be fed back.</p>
3	Disproportionality Research Update
3.1	<p>JC reminded the panel of the background leading to the research and briefed on the suggested approach to progress the matter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The police and crime plan identifies a lack of adequate data as an impediment to our understanding of disproportionality and whether the Stop and Search power was being used in a discriminatory way. • PCC commissioned academic research to better understand the issue. Tender won via open competition by University of Hertfordshire. • Once the full report is circulated, time will be set aside to discuss it in detail, with two aims:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working with the Panel to understand how this research can improve knowledge of use of stop and search in Hertfordshire and to make the independent scrutiny of the use of that power even more robust. - Enabling the Constabulary to review the research and identify any areas for potential changes in policing practice at an operational level. • This approach enhances legitimacy by opening stop and search to oversight and challenge. • Once key areas of work have been identified, the report will be published on the OPCC website and actively promoted via press release, alongside a set of clearly defined actions. This will ensure full transparency and public awareness of what action is being taken in response to the report’s findings. These actions will be progressed through partnership-working with the Panel and Constabulary.
3.2	<p>JGr, senior analyst, briefed the panel on key findings which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed throughout 2023, analysis of stops data published between April 2020 and March 2023 was conducted. Additionally, operational police officers were interviewed to clarify the process and context behind data. • The research looked at the end-to-end process of stop and searches and assessed evidence for disproportionality and discrimination with regards to search subject ethnicity. • Two areas identified by the researchers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - where searches took place ("travels to setting") - the process where the officer "interacts with the setting" (how a search is motivated and if there is "undue suspicion" on (e.g.) minority ethnic groups.) • Disproportionality was found at both stages of the process. This was compared with data where available from the force's "Most Similar Force Group" as defined by HMICFRS (Essex, Hampshire, Leicestershire, Staffordshire, Sussex, Avon & Somerset and Thames Valley Police.) From that cohort, the disproportionality (stops of minority ethnicities compared to

	census population) for Hertfordshire was the lowest or joint lowest when compared to the search rate for the white ethnic group.
3.3	Data quality: Many searches (approx. 25%) did not have a listed location in the data published, limiting the effectiveness of the research. The first recommendation from the University is to improve the process around data capture and improve the capacity for scrutiny.
3.4	The panel agreed that a workshop style meeting would be beneficial in terms of progressing this report. JB added that having been on the panel since its inception, this is a long awaited and most welcomed report. <i>Post meeting note: the full report plus a one-page summary was circulated to the panel on 2nd February 2024.</i>
4	Quarterly Complaints Update
4.1	KS presented the quarterly complaints data (pack item 4.) Three complaints had been made and all were retained by the OPCC's Complaints Resolution Team (CRT). All matters were resolved by viewing the BWV footage. No staff development needs were identified.
4.2	To clarify the process, KS confirmed that all complaints made via either the OPCC or Constabulary websites are dealt with initially by CRT. If the complainant telephones 101, the matter is allocated to an officer of a rank higher than the subject of the complaint and an attempt to service recover is made. Complaints made via 101 may, however, be immediately redirected to OPCC if more appropriate. If the complainant is not happy with OPCC decision, the matter is then referred to Professional Standards (PSD.)
5	Chair and OPCC updates
5.1	Unconscious Bias Training: along with several panel members over the course of three sessions, DN observed the training as delivered to frontline officers. He offered a critique to assist with the development of the training package. PM and TB also attended, PM adding that the topic may have been too broad and would possibly benefit from being simplified and broken down for wider delivery. The panel questioned why the officer was apparently not supported in the development and delivery of this training programme.

	An overview of the training was circulated prior to the meeting. (See pack item 5)																																																					
6	Panel Feedback – Countywide																																																					
6.1	The scrutiny took place between 11.35am – 12.10pm The below grid represents the gradings as recorded by the panel. Due to technical difficulties no BWV footage was viewed this month. Where the panel was split in its decision, the lowest grade has been recorded.																																																					
6.2	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Group no.</th> <th>Checked</th> <th>Green 1 Excellent</th> <th>Green 2 Satisfactory</th> <th>Amber 3 Not confident</th> <th>Red 4 Serious concerns</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Grp 1 BWV</td> <td>3 (0)</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> <td>2</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grp 2 U18 strip search</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grp 2 standard searches</td> <td>7</td> <td>4</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grp 3 standard searches</td> <td>7</td> <td>5</td> <td>2</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grp 4 standard searches</td> <td>6</td> <td>2</td> <td>4</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grp 5 standard searches</td> <td>8</td> <td>7</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL</td> <td>31</td> <td>19</td> <td>7</td> <td>3</td> <td>2</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>						Group no.	Checked	Green 1 Excellent	Green 2 Satisfactory	Amber 3 Not confident	Red 4 Serious concerns	Grp 1 BWV	3 (0)	1	0	2	0	Grp 2 U18 strip search	0	0	0	0	0	Grp 2 standard searches	7	4	1	0	2	Grp 3 standard searches	7	5	2	0	0	Grp 4 standard searches	6	2	4	0	0	Grp 5 standard searches	8	7	0	1	0	TOTAL	31	19	7	3	2
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6.3	<p>General feedback:</p> <p>Panel observations included stops by association and smell of cannabis only. Context helpful but not grounds for the stop. Details were missing relating to why officers were present in the area and how individuals were identified. One stop was suitable for a strip search but not conducted. Discussion followed relating to outstanding warrants and breached orders. In the search reviewed, a marker showing weapons led to the search, however, OP confirmed the existence of a warrant was not sufficient. Appropriate and sufficient grounds still required.</p>																																																					
6.4	Where the order of events was confusing, the panel had difficulty in determining whether it was a poor report or a poor stop. Discussion followed regarding the written records and AB reiterated that reports were written for detainee's																																																					

	benefit. The person who was searched should be able to read and understand why they were stopped.
6.5	NF noted that for several records, grounds were given as Misuse of Drugs Act, adding that the suspicion should be recorded. He suggested a prompt for 'suspicion' could be added to the feedback form as a reminder to the panel to look for this element in the report.
7	Any Other Business
7.1	DN advised the panel that after the last meeting, at the Constabulary's request, he had conducted an extraordinary scrutiny, the results of which will be advised to the panel once the matter is closed. However, he suggested that the extra scrutiny function should be formally included in panel roles and processes. Once the matter is complete, he would make a development proposal.
7.2	No other items were raised and DN closed the meeting.
8	Date of next meeting: Wednesday 28 February, 2pm venue TBC. <i>Post meeting note: the meeting will be held in person at the University of Hertfordshire.</i>