

MEETING	Decision Making Meeting
DATE	16 March 2021
TITLE OF REPORT	Responding to the College of Policing’s Guidance on Stop and Search
SUBMITTED BY	Sara Miles – CJ Policy & Research Manager
PURPOSE OF REPORT	To review strengths and gaps in current scrutiny of stop & Search in response to latest guidance from the College of Policing
DECISION(S) REQUIRED	To agree strategy for scrutiny of S&S
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	None identified
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	None identified
EQUALITIES IMPACTS	Considered in the report
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION EXEMPTION SECTION IF APPLICABLE	N/A

INTRODUCTION

- i. In July 2020 updated guidance was published by the College of Policing which identified principles for force scrutiny panels which can be applied to any independent scrutiny process introduced by forces and/or their PCCs or equivalents for stop and search (e.g., independent advisory groups).
- ii. The updated guidance covers the following ten headings:
 - Representative
 - Independent
 - Purposeful
 - Supported
 - Influential
 - Transparent
 - Confidential
 - Scrutiny of BWV camera footage
 - Lay observation
 - Complaints

- iii. There are many areas where the Hertfordshire Stop & Search Panel is already observing the guidance. However there are areas for improvement.

BACKGROUND

- iv. In April 2014, the Home Secretary announced her intention to address concerns that fewer than half of all police forces in England and Wales complied with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) Code of Practice A, which requires each police force to ensure that there are arrangements in place for their Stop and Search records to be scrutinised by the communities they serve. The Home Secretary outlined a package of reforms known as Best Use of Stop & Search.
- v. The Hertfordshire Independent Stop & Search Scrutiny Panel was introduced in 2015 in response to Best Use of Stop & Search legislation.
- vi. The Stop & Search Scrutiny Panel meet once a month and review data, complaints, Officer's records and body worn video footage. Since March 2020 these meetings have taken place virtually and it has not been possible to view body worn video footage.

3 PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION(S) AND RATIONALE

- vii. There are five areas in the College of Policing guidance where the Hertfordshire Stop & Search Panel could be enhanced:
 - A separate BWV panel
 - Mapping the hotspots for stop & search
 - Members of the public most affected by stop and search should be encouraged to sit on panels scrutinising its use
 - Members of the public to go out with the police and see stop & search in action
 - Understanding community concerns

4 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- viii. Please see attached paper.