

SUFFOLK POLICE POWERS PUBLIC SCRUTINY (SPPPS) MINUTES

**Date: 25th September
2024**

**Location: Online via
Microsoft teams**

Number in attendance: 18

Chair - Phaniel Mutumburi

Minute Taker - Travis Dickerson

Attended:

Travis Dickerson (TD)
Sharon Lee (SL)
Claire Connick (CC)
Maria DeSousa (MD)
Phaniel Mutumburi (PM)
Savi-TB (STB)
Jason Thomas (JT)
Elizabeth Casey (EC)
Ben Throssell (BT)
Jenine Wratten (JW)
Simon De Labilière (SDL)
Stella Frangleton (SF)
Carlos Walker (CW)
Julie Baker (JB)
Amanda Houchen (AH)
Heidi Dix (HD)
Franstine Jones (FJ)
Flavia Calivangue (FC)

Welcome - All Welcomed by the Chair

Introductions - All members introduced themselves

Minutes from previous meeting - Minutes signed off

SPPPS - Former Actions

The group received updates regarding both forms from the previous meeting. Former actions signed off

CASES FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY

**Case 1: Stop and Search
371715/080624/164658**

ISCRE Comments:

Can we please review BWV. We are trying to understand the reasoning for this search as smell alone is not a reason to search. The officer states he has searched due to a solid area in suspects tracksuit bottoms. What was that solid area as nothing was found and no further action. At what point was the male put into handcuffs and for how long.

Grounds:

See - Male has been part of a group which were sitting on a picnic bench in Pakenham way park. As police have approached the group there has been a strong smell of cannabis and 3 members of the group have cycled off. Male was sitting on the bench and when engaged with by police complained of an injured left hip. Male declined to show police to ascertain if there was any visible injury or bruising to the area.

Know - Male is a member of a group who had previously caused criminal damage and anti-social behaviour in the park. Male kept complaining of the injury but would not let police help him.

Suspect - Male went to stand up and officer saw that his left hip area of his tracksuit was solid. Therefore, the officer suspected that the male was carrying an offensive or bladed article in his tracksuit bottoms and had deflected police away from this area by stating he was injured.

Discussion:

The BWV was not available to be reviewed by ISCRE

EC: The call reported a group showing anti-social behaviour with prior local damage. Officers smelled cannabis, but that alone isn't suitable grounds for a search. Whilst looking around they have seen some discarded cannabis on the floor. It appears they are trying to deflect from what they are potentially carrying. But the actual reason for the search is for an offensive weapon and not for cannabis.

Officer Response:

The solid area in the juvenile's tracksuit bottoms was keeping his leg straight. He stated it was to reduce pain from an injury at school. The Juvenile did not allow the police to see his injury and kept the leg furthest away from the police. The Juvenile has abruptly stood up without reasoning. I have now suspected he is attempting to leave the area to avoid the suspected weapon being detected. I visited the juvenile's home and spoke to his father, who confirmed his son hadn't attended school that day proving his alibi false. Officer has apologised in regards to BWV and has accepted failure of saving on his behalf

The panel were disappointed there was no BWV available for ISCRE to review.

CC: The officers are failing to use the new system in order to save BWV footage from stop and search's. Reminders have been sent out to officers.

The panel questioned what precautions were in place due to the juveniles age and what was the reasoning for the home visit.

CC: The officer had to authorise with a supervisor to search the juvenile which was done. The home visit would have been due to the juvenile stating he is injured.

SL: What was the solid item in his tracksuit bottoms if nothing was found?

JT: It was stated that it was the stiffening of the leg from his injury.

Actions:

CASES FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY

**Case 2: Stop and Search
371832/140624/192919**

ISCRE Comments:

Can we review BWV for this incident. What was the ethnicity of the group of 4? Were all in the group searched. Are persons being stopped and searched on the grounds of smell of cannabis? Was there any use of force in this stop/search? **translator was used**

Grounds:

At 22:00hr on Thursday the 13th of June 2024, four males were located at the basketball courts on Hawthorne Drive, Ipswich. A strong smell of cannabis was present. All males were denying being in possession of cannabis, stating it was other people who were in the area, however there was no one else present and the smell of cannabis was remaining. Herbal cannabis was located on the floor immediately next to the four males and it looked as though it had been purposely discarded.

I know that the basketball courts on Hawthorne Drive are a hotspot for antisocial behavior, specifically with youths smoking cannabis. I have attended the location many times previously and found drugs and drug paraphernalia present.

I suspect that the male may be in possession of drugs, specifically Class B cannabis.

Discussion:

BWV was not available for ISCRE to review.

Officer response to questions:

All four members of the group were searched. The original approach was due to the smell of cannabis. Once arriving at the area a substance was found on the floor less than a metre away from them. This raised suspicion as it seems they have discarded the substance as the police were walking over. No use of force was used as he was compliant

CC: The officer was unable to provide the ethnicity of the three other members in the group. I have contacted the other officers involved but they are yet to provide.

The panel were disappointed there was no BWV available for ISCRE to review in order to fully scrutinise this stop & search.

Actions:

Provide the ethnic breakdown of the others in the group who were searched.

CASES FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY

**Case 3: Taser
SC-15062024-302**

ISCRE Comments:

Could we please review BWV for this case. We wondered why Taser was deemed the best approach as it does not appear the man was making any threats to the public or the police on arrival. What was believed to be a metal pole was a wooden walking stick, the man was noted to be unsteady on his feet, was this because he needed the use of his stick? It was also noted that the man may appear to be intoxicated or under the influence, was this the case? Reviewing the BWV will help us gain a better understanding of this incident.

Reason for Use Of Force:

- Prevent Escape
- Prevent harm to subject
- Prevent offence
- Protect other officers
- Protect Public
- Protect Self
- Secure evidence

Discussion:

BWV was reviewed by ISCRE

CE: The initial call from the public stated a male was walking in and out of traffic being obstructive to road users. It was stated he was presenting himself in an aggressive way, he has been seen slapping the item which he is holding in his opposite hand in a agitated state. The item was described as a metal pole. The office was attending alone and would of processed the information provided from the call accordingly.

Officer Response:

A call was received regarding an individual carrying a metal object approximately 1.5 meters long. The object was described as being slapped in the individual's hands while walking in and out of traffic, which raised concerns about possible intent to cause harm or damage. The reporting person did not mention any threats made by the individual, but the behaviour was deemed potentially dangerous. Initial description did not suggest the individual was an elderly man with a walking stick. Upon arrival at the scene, the individual exited a residential building and approached my vehicle. I made my presence of a taser officer clear and identified the object in the individual's possession as a piece of wood, not metal pole as previously described. Despite the object not being as described I assumed that it could still be used with criminal intent, it was not yet identified as a walking stick. Taser was deemed the most appropriate approach as I considered parva and baton but due to distance these were not deemed appropriate. Taser was used to deescalate the situation, male did not comply and therefore I used my red dot. This resulted in full control with the male. As the male was walking to the vehicle I did not from the opinion that he was not steady on his feet. When the male was on the ground I noticed he was unsteady. Following I immediately holstered my taser and assisted the male back to his feet. The male did appear to be under the influence. Due to being alone I felt the taser was the most effective piece of my equipment to maximize my safety and the safety of the public.

The panel shared their view that the officer was far to quick to exit his vehicle and draw his taser. Other options would of been availed. Such as exiting the vehicle from a good distance away separated from the male and attempt to communicate with him.

Reviewing the BWV, ISCRE remains of the view that the taser was drawn very quickly when you could see on the ground what the object the suspect was carrying.

FJ: This was not an acceptable use of taser and I feel strongly that this officer should have his taser removed.

Actions:

- Feedback from the panel will be provided to the relevant individuals
- An update on the officers action following panel scrutiny to be reviewed, providing feedback at the next meeting.

CASES FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY

Case 4: Taser
UOF -SC30072024-255

ISCRE Comments:

How was this subject treated with his self-declared mental Health? What force was used, was it necessary - review the BWV to scrutinise force used.

Reasons for Use of Force:

- *Effect Arrest*
- *Prevent Harm to Subject*
- *Prevent Offence*
- *Prevent Other Officers*
- *Protect Public*
- *Protect Self*

Discussion:

BWV was reviewed by ISCRE

EC: This was a planned firearms operation in relation to an incident the day before. Individual has been identified as someone who was waving a bladed article. A stabbing took place in the same area this individual was seen. Individual was located the next day and firearm officers were deployed to locate this individual. He was located in the town centre and then stopped and detained, following a search officers found a blooded tissue and a pair of scissors. The outcome was that the individual was charged and remanded for the offence of waving a bladed article, this was filmed by a member of the public a day before. There was no further action in regards to the stabbing but they were interviewed due to the relation of the location.

PM: Can you provide some reasoning behind the amount of firearm officer present. This is something ISCRE picked up from the BWV.

EC: There were several officers present to ensure control of the situation until searches were completed. Officers kept watch over each other to maintain safety. It was also noted that moving the individual to a quieter location would have been more appropriate.

Actions:

CASES FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY

Case 5: Use of Force
370861/240624/200348

ISCRE Comments:

Could we please review this BWV to see how force was used due to the subject having a disability.

Subject has a paralysed right arm. The reason for that and the length of time that has affected the subject was not known. It was considered inappropriate to apply Handcuffs for fear of causing any further damage. Control was maintained of his left arm during the roadside search to prevent the disposal of any potential evidence and to effect the Stop Search. Escort position used between vehicle/Police vehicle and Police station.

Can we please review this BWV to view/understand the UOF

Reasons for Use of Force:

- *Effect Stop and Search*
- *Secure Evidence*

Discussion:

BWV was reviewed by ISCRE

SL: From the BWV we saw that the officer detained the individual due to the misuse of drugs act, the individual argues that the initial stop was for speeding but then turned into a drug search. The officer mentioned his nervousness was a suspicion for the search, ISCRE failed to see any nervousness from the individual on the BWV. The officer communicated and treated the individual with dignity and respect throughout the search while keeping his disability in mind.

EC: Strong communication from the officer as mentioned also moving them out of the public view when doing the search. Overall a well conducted stop and search.

Actions:

Provide positive feedback to the officer (EC)

AOB:

BWV's not available to be seen at the last SPPPS meeting

PM: John has made me aware that all officers involved in the BWV we are unable to view has been emailed on top of contacting each area command inspector to deliver the message to their respective teams.

Strip Searches

FJ and JB share "The racialised harm of police strip search's" published in June 2024 to the panel by Runnymede.

JB provide a run down on the report - A figure brought to the panels attention was that Suffolk & Ipswich are 5th worse county when it comes to strip searching black children.

EC provides an update from John Chapman regarding the report - A number of data sets have been scrutinised to better understand the Runnymede report. Following detailed reviews it appears the Runnymede report is referring to custody strip search's. The children's commission report will relates to strip searches within the confined legislation of stop and search. The two reports reference different data and powers

TJ: In reference to the data, I would like to make the group aware that within Suffolk and Norfolk the terminology of "Strip search" does not mean stripping a child naked and searching them. A strip search would be considered any search that's not overclothing. So, the numbers would jump up.

PM: From a look at the report, Suffolk and Norfolk being so high up would stand out to us in terms of disproportionality. We appreciate the possible effect on the data numbers. It would be good to clarify the discrepancies in the numbers from the home office website and from what we have got, if the numbers do differ, where are they getting these figures from?

JB: I think the 12% stat of being more likely to be strip searched as a black person need to be investigated, whether that's in custody or the street. Also if black children are being searched in custody are the correct procedures are being followed.

FJ: How many of the strip searches were positive?

JW: Last month we had two children strip searched. One male and One Female. Both had an appropriate adult. One was positive.

JB: What was the ethnicity of these two strip searches?

JW: Within the data pack for strip searches on children we do not state ethnicity. That information is unavailable.

Actions: Strip Searches

- Statistic - 12% more likely to be stripped searched if you are a black person. The panel would like this statistic be investigated with the findings reported back to the panel. (EC JC)
- The panel would like to know on numbers how many of those strip searches were positive.
- Why do strip searches on children not state their ethnicity. The panel would like to understand the police rational for that and can ethnicity be recorded for future strip searches on children?
- What was the ethnicity of the 2 children searched last month as informed by JW to the panel, is there some other way of gaining this information?

Section 60

EC: A section 60 was put in place on the 22nd of September following a stabbing incident. It was removed within 24 hours.

BT: I do not believe there were any section 60 searches but there might still be forms going through the system but I am currently not aware of any. To follow up with the community after the incident my team being the locality team are currently putting together a community impact assessment where elements of the community are being assessed to see if they have been affected by the incident. We are not currently seeing any specific community based fallout but are remaining vigilant as such violent crime in a public place is going to draw attention and have an impact within the community.

Date of next Meeting: November 27th 2024

Meeting ended at 17:55