

SUFFOLK POLICE POWERS PUBLIC SCRUTINY (SPPPS) MINUTES

Date: 28th May 2025

**Location: Online
via Microsoft Teams**

Number in attendance: 19

Chair - Phaniel Mutumburi

Minute Taker - Travis Dickerson

Welcome - All Welcomed by the Chair

Introductions - All members introduced themselves

Minutes from previous meeting - Minutes signed off

SPPPS - Former Actions Signed off

Review of Forms

Attended:

- Travis Dickerson (TD)
- Phaniel Mutumburi (PM)
- Sharon Lee (SL)
- Aleksandra Kasinska (AK)
- Jonathan Chapman (JC)
- Claire Hinitt (HC)
- Christine Laverock (CL)
- David Brown (DB)
- Cooper Fraser (FC)
- Andy Pearl (AP)
- Franstine Jones (FJ)
- Linda Cooper (LC)
- Georgia-Mae Chung (GMC)
- Louise Lockwood (LL)
- Ashley Meyer (AM)
- Elizabeth Casey (EC)
- Natalie McCarthy (MC)
- Flavia Cali (FC)
- Shawn Renyolds (SR)

CASES FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY

Case 1: Stop and Search - 371147/100325/150317

Grounds: SEE: Male sat on a small fence outside Cumberland Towers, Norwich Road, Ipswich. Male using his mobile phone. KNOW: Recent intelligence within the last few days that male is believed to be involved in the supply of CLASS A drugs in the Norwich Road area of Ipswich. SUSPECT: It is suspected that the male may be involved in the supply of Drugs and may have illegal drugs in his possession.

ISCRE Comments:

- Was this male known to the officer before the stop/search?
- Male using his phone, what suspicious circumstances were present for male to be stopped or was he stopped based on previous intelligence?
- Nothing found, NFA.
- Could we please review the BWV.

Discussion:

BWV was reviewed by ISCRE

PM: Raised concerns about the quality of the intelligence used to justify the stop. It was unclear where the information came from and that anyone could make a call and accuse someone falsely. How are innocent people being protected, especially since nothing was found on the individual. What is really meant when someone is described as 'known to the police,' as it can be misleading.

FJ: Questioned the grounds for the stop, especially since the form mentioned a black man using a phone, which is not valid justification. Did the officers actually know this individual? Was this form signed off by the supervisor?

SL: Confirmed that the stop had been reviewed and signed off by a supervisor. A case study discussed highlighting the personal and emotional impact of stop and search interventions, particularly those that result in nothing found and no further action is taken.

CL: Questioned if the police tracked whether black and large individuals were more likely to be handcuffed?

JC: Shared that the intelligence came from a few days before and was included in officer briefings. Admitted that the search grounds could have been stated more clearly on the form. The intelligence is not able to be shared.

Agreed that the individual seemed compliant and probably didn't need to be handcuffed. Suggested that, in such cases, the stop should be moved out of public view. Confirmed that we do monitor handcuffing data but not based on a person's build. Past issues have been acknowledged in our data recording and noted improvements to our digital system. Feedback will be provided to the officer.

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Case 2: Stop and Search 370796/160225/175803

Grounds: SEE: A report was made to police that distinctively described the suspect as wearing a red tracksuit, black and white trainer and that this person had been carrying a 15 inch knife. Officers located this male nearby to the area where the report was initially made. KNOW: The information received from the caller distinctively described the subject with the knife as mentioned above, as well as the weapon involved. Police have located the subject and detained for the search. SUSPECT: Due to the distinctive description of the subject as noted above. The suspect was able to be clearly identified and located near to the area where the incident was reported. There was reasonable suspicion to carry out the search on the subject looking for the knife described.

ISCRE Comments:

- This is a search on a 13 year old male with nothing found and NFA.
- Whilst a distinctive description of the male was given, it has not been made clear if there is intelligence on this person.
- What was the suspicion to justify the search? Was this person known to the person making the report?
- Whilst the supervisor has picked up on this point, we would like to know if the suspect had intelligence on him.
- Can we review this BWV.

Discussion:

FJ: Questioned whether the footage from stop and search incidents are kept for 30 days?

JC: The footage is automatically deleted after 28 days, if it isn't correctly saved under the appropriate category, such as stop and search. If it's saved to a stop and search it will be there for three months.

FJ: This being a stop and search why was this not saved for three months?

JC: That's a very good point, and I can definitely address it. It's a broader issue we're currently working on and can discuss further if needed.

AP: Questioned if there was an appropriate adult present when the search was conducted?

JC: While looking through the CAD. The response from the officer was shared:

The caller ID was unknown, but the male was clearly described, including distinctive clothing and being seen with a knife. The male was found near the reported location. No intelligence checks were done because the incident provided sufficient grounds for the search. Authorisation was obtained due to the report details and the male being a juvenile. I explained the process to the male, and PC B conducted the search, with PC E first locating him, assisted by myself and PC B.

EC: The CAD report detailed a large fight with someone threatening others with a knife. The report described a chaotic scene with violence, but the submitted form did not reflect this.

JC: If officers clearly explain their grounds initially, the form is much more detailed and understandable, which might prevent issues like this. I can't currently confirm if an appropriate adult was present, but I'll look into that.

JC: Authorisation was granted, but whether an appropriate adult was present depends on the circumstances. Regardless, a PVP (potentially vulnerable person) submission should be made in Athena to track the case and notify the parents. In some cases, like a juvenile in public with an knife, searching without an appropriate adult may be necessary to protect them or others from risk, but it must be done sensitively and proportionately.

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Case 3: Stop and Search – 375181/080225/205410

Grounds: SEE: Drugs paraphernalia including a bong and intense wave of smoke as you enter the property smelling of cannabis from the room the female was sat in. **KNOW:** Address is suspected to have drugs used at and known address of users. This female is not an occupant here. **SUSPECT:** Suspected that participant involved had cannabis on their person.

ISCRE Comments:

- The grounds for this search are lack detail. What led up to the search?
- Was this female the intended person the officer had gone to the property to search?
- Was the female known to the officer, was a background check completed on the female at the time, and was there recent intelligence on the female?
- Nothing found NFA

Discussion:

JC: Provides a response from the officer:

The officer explained they were granted consensual entry to a residence based on intelligence about suspected drug supply. Inside, they found drug paraphernalia, strong cannabis smell, and smoke. A female present acted anxiously, so they moved her to the bathroom to maintain her dignity during the stop search. She was unknown to the officer, handcuffed for safety, and a background check showed she didn't live there but had travelled from Colchester. Given the intelligence, her presence, and the environment, the officer suspected she possessed cannabis. Body-worn footage is available if needed.

FJ: Was this officer female or male?

JC: Confirmed the officer was female.

SL: Shares that the officer's response provides much more detail that was not written on the initial form. Questions the rationale for the use of force.

PM: Expressed concern that being unknown to police was used as a reason to handcuff a female individual. Most people are not known to police, so using unfamiliarity as justification for handcuffing is worrying.

JC: Confirmed that not knowing a person wasn't a sufficient reason to handcuff them. But in certain situations like being alone in an unfamiliar, confined environment with a large individual—officers might handcuff someone for safety until they felt more comfortable. Officers shouldn't handcuff people just because they're unknown, but sometimes less experienced officers might do so out of caution. I would like to review supervisor comments to better understand the circumstances.

EC: Explains the officer could be under the authority of a warrant. If so it should be clearly stated to provide context and explain the reason for entering.

FC: As this is a student officer does it change the need for supervisor comments or pre-authorisation?

JC: Confirmed supervisor comments are always needed, even with student officers who have tutors.

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Case 4: Taser - SC-01022025-274

Reason for Taser:

- Protect other officer from violence

ISCRE Comments:

- Officer believed colleague said suspect had a knife, where in fact the colleagues had said 'he has a bike'. This led to suspect tasered, falling to the floor and sustained broken bones. The officer states he was not wearing his BWV, was the other officer wearing theirs?
- On reviewing this form we are trying to understand how the word 'knife' becomes muddled with the word 'bike'. This misunderstanding then led to officer deeming verbal commands or de-escalation not viable and deployed his taser, twice as the first one missed the suspect.
- We really would like to review BWV footage of this incident as we question the appropriateness of this UOF.
- Did the other officer have their BWV on?

Discussion:

BWV was reviewed by ISCRE

PM: Shared that from the BWV review we learnt that the suspect was autistic and had learning difficulties. What information did the police have about the individual's condition and whether they were prepared for it, as it seemed to contribute to the escalation.

EC: Explained that from watching the body-worn footage, the officers at the door knew the individual well and had dealt with him before. Officers always research and prepare for pre-planned arrests to ensure safety and smooth interactions. I believe the situation escalated mainly due to the mother's intervention, as she opposed the arrest and interacted strongly with the police, while the officer was calmly trying to communicate with the individual.

GMC: There was mention of broken bones at the start of the form and I'm just trying to place where that's said to have happened in the description because I think that's been lost.

JC: Explained that the individual fell outside and was later X-rayed, revealing an old twisted ankle injury. This did not meet the DSI policy criteria. Initial concerns about a break were clarified after hospital checks. The injury likely occurred outside, though it was hard to see clearly on the BWV.

SL: Questions Taser training, noting the first shot missed and four barbs were fired, and wondered how training addresses situations when officers miss their target.

JC: Missing with a Taser is a common possibility despite thorough training and regular requalification. All Taser uses are closely reviewed for compliance, and repeated misses would trigger concern and further testing. The Taser X2 model fires two cartridges with two probes each; both probes must hit for effectiveness, so firing twice may be necessary, especially in dynamic situations.

JC: Explained that officers receive training on neurodiversity, including autism, focusing on factors like emotional distress and environmental influences that cause vulnerability, emphasising the importance of time, distance, and space when engaging with vulnerable individuals. However depending on the situation officers may need quick action to prevent risks. In this case, I feel officers should have restrained the 19-year-old sooner due to serious risks inside, including a dog bite and objects being thrown. Stress can cause officers to misinterpret events. The officer involved lacked bodycam footage, fired the Taser twice quickly, and had their Taser permit permanently revoked before due to misuse. Overall, there were concerns about this officer's fitness to carry a Taser.

PM: The situation seen on the body-worn video was distressing and could have been handled better early on to prevent escalation. Thanks to John for the context provided and the important feedback

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Case 5: Use of Force: 371811/310125/203836

Reason for UOF:

Handcuffing to prevent subject accessing his pockets during stop search to further conceal or destroy drugs.

ISCRE Comments:

- The officer mentions force was used to prevent accessing his pockets to 'further conceal or destroy drugs' what is meant by 'further conceal', was there drugs already found on suspect?
- It is noted that the suspect was compliant and the outcome was NFA.
- Could we please review the BWV to better understand the UOF with this suspect.

Discussion:

BWV Was reviewed by ISCRE

SL: Could you group please get some information on what a section 50 is?

JC: A Section 50 of the Police Reform Act allows officers to require a person's name and address in cases of antisocial or harassing behaviour. If the person refuses, police can then use powers under PACE, including force. The law has existed since around 2004 but is not used frequently.

SL: From the BWV review what initially seemed like minor situation escalated unnecessarily. The female involved was very intoxicated and had phoned the male to assist her. He was uncooperative in giving details, but the officer's remarks—such as "don't bring the race card into it" and comments about control of the female—were seen as aggravating and likely to escalate tensions rather than de-escalate the situation.

PM: Added that the woman had called the man to help her, but officers misread the situation as a domestic dispute. Despite no dispute taking place, the man was handcuffed, raising concerns the situation could have been handled better.

JC: Acknowledged the valuable feedback and agreed there was important learning to take back to the officer involved. The officers were patrolling due to concerns about violence against women and believed the woman was experiencing unwanted attention, which they felt justified asking for the man's details under Section 50. The situation escalated quickly and the officer's comment ("don't play the race card") was inappropriate and unprofessional. I would like to praise the female sergeant's calming approach but better communication was needed from the other officers.

There is some confusion due to repeated officer comments on my form so I have to be cautious about interpreting the officer's response. I can confirm the details and provide feedback to Sharon and Phaniel, as the update might be relevant to the case if it's the correct response.

AOB:

FJ: In my role on the Police Race Action Panel, we're now focusing on community engagement with the Black community through a new strategy. I've referred several complaints to the Deputy Chief Constable. What I have been hearing shapes my view on how Black victims of crime experience the police.

Having been involved from the start, I worry we may be regressing in how the Black community is treated. My main question to Suffolk Constabulary is: if you're Black and a crime victim, are you likely to get justice? This drives our work. I'm disappointed by some police responses because I feel obligated to act on serious community complaints, even though I'm not an officer or enforcer.

PM: Jon has shared data on disproportionality in stop and search, which I'd like to include in the meeting notes with his permission. Our goal is parity—equal outcomes for everyone regardless of background—but we are not there yet.

There have been significant improvements; for example, Black individuals are now nearly four times more likely to be stopped and searched in Suffolk, down from ten to fourteen times more likely before. While this progress is encouraging, it remains unacceptable, and we must keep working toward true parity. Continuing to highlight individual cases is key to driving further change.

LC: I am currently working on a Youth Endowment Fund proposal addressing the disproportionality of stop and search among young people. Fran and Javina Quagmina have kindly agreed to be part of this, and we plan to submit it next week. Norfolk and Suffolk Police, the PCC, and Kent Police are supporting the initiative.

If anyone would like to get involved, especially in developing recommendations based on the data, please contact myself on the email that will be sent into the chat.

Date of next Meeting: Wednesday July 30th Online via Microsoft Teams