

SUFFOLK POLICE POWERS PUBLIC SCRUTINY (SPPPS) MINUTES

Date: 30th July 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)
- Julie Baker (JB)
- Jonathan Chapman (JC)
- John Lambert (JL)
- Andy Pearl (AP)
- Fraser Cooper (FC)
- David Brown (DB)
- Franstine Jones (FJ)
- Gulshan Kaur (GK)
- Claire Hinit (CH)
- Lenox Paul (LP)
- Louise Lockwood (LP)
- Nancy (N)
- Flavia Cali (FC)
- Stacey Runciman (SR)
- Thomas Jason (TJ)

CASES FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY

Case 1: Stop and Search - 371313/190525/200235

Grounds: SEE: Report from off duty police officer having seen persons approach the car, exchanges made and then leave. He often uses the train station and often sees the car with people approaching.
Having driven past the car, confirmed as XXXX, lime green in colour I have seen two males inside.
Called for a second unit to assist.

KNOW: I knew the two males, who were now outside of the car, were the two that were initially inside it.

SUSPECT: Following the information from an off duty I suspected drugs were being dealt.

ISCRE Comments:

The grounds for this search are not clear to us. Can we review this BWV to get a clearer understanding of what went on and why force was used.

Discussion:

BWV was not available for ISCRE to review.

JC: Response from the officer: An off-duty Met officer reported suspected drug dealing involving a lime green vehicle near the train station. Two occupants were located, the registered owner was found to have a history of assaulting police, and both were detained for a stop and search. Handcuffs applied for safety.

JC: Agreed that the officer's reply lacked full context on grounds. Further feedback to be given, noting more detail could be included from RO check and intelligence. Feedback also to address BWV not being saved.

SL: States that as this stop and search took place in May, the BWV should be available.

JC: Confirms BWV should have been available but it was not saved properly despite improvements in compliance; feedback to be given stressing proper saving is essential.

FJ: Questions if the form was signed off by a supervisor.

JC: Shares that the supervisor comments, due in May, are not yet confirmed as completed from what is seen on the form.

JB: Questions if the UOF form for the handcuffs was been completed.

JC: Confirms the UOF should have been completed but is uncertain. Several supervisor reviews are outstanding and will be followed up in feedback.

SL: Questions the use of force rationale—potential drug dealer might use violence to evade police—is this sufficient?

JC: Shares that the officer justified handcuffing based on the individual's history of resisting police and for safety reasons. However, scene dynamics and the person's behaviour may affect the necessity. Potential violence from a drug dealer alone isn't always enough reason to handcuff.

AP: Questions how cocaine was identified as the focus despite there being no discoveries on the form.

JC: Noted the grounds on the form seem like a reach. Due to the lack of context It's uncertain how the officer suspected the type of drug to be cocaine. Instead the form should read "possession of Class A" but I am unsure if the officers have that option when filling out a digital form.

AP: Raises a concern about investigations initiated by off-duty officers, questioning what checks exist to prevent misuse of their involvement.

JC: Acknowledged the issue, noting there should be verification such as a declaration and warrant card check. He agreed that suspicions based solely on off-duty officer input should not replace individual judgment. The need for officers to form their own grounds for action and recognized the importance of checks and balances supported by professional practice.

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Case 2: Stop and Search 375033/290425/182222

Grounds: SEE: The stopped male was seen walking down WOODBRIDGE ROAD, away from the Sainsburys. This male was a partial match to a report of shop lifting as he was an IC 3 male wearing a blue jacket with orange details

KNOW: I know a report has been made to police for a theft from shop where a IC 3 Males who was wearing a blue jacket with orange detailings had taken 4 cans of coke from Sainsburys on Woodbridge road.

SUSPECT: I suspected that this male may have been the same male due to the partial match in description, suspected he may have stolen goods on his person

ISCRE Comments:

What was the partial match, did suspect have the distinctive jacket on? How far away from the store was this male, how much time elapsed from the report to this male being stopped. Was this the male suspected as nothing was found, nfa?

Discussion:

JC: Provides a response from the officer: I attended Sainsbury's Ipswich following report of a male refusing to leave after stealing four cans of Coke. Two descriptions were provided. I located a male matching one description nearby and conducted a stop search, which was negative. Details were taken and the male was released with a stop search reference. Body-worn camera footage captured the interaction. Review of store CCTV confirmed the stopped male was not the suspect. The store requested only a ban, not police action. The case was recorded on Athena and closed due to evidential difficulties, no suspect identified.

PM: Emphasised the importance of having clear and reasonable grounds for suspicion before conducting stops, to avoid stopping innocent people based on vague descriptions. Highlighting the impact on individuals wrongly stopped.

TJ: Agrees with previous comments, adding that poor communication and vague descriptions from stores like Sainsbury's or Tesco make stop decisions difficult. The officer in this case could have included more detail on the form, a recurring issue of concern. The officer described a "partial match" and faced a dilemma—taking no action could risk neglect of duty if it was the suspect. More explanation on the form could have justified the stop.

AK: Questioned why officers don't review store CCTV first when a suspect is only a partial match.

TJ: Confirms that limited staffing often means officers work alone, making it difficult to check footage before searching the area.

JB: Raises that the search's justification was for a minor theft, noting no charges were pressed and highlighted the lasting harm to the wrongly stopped individual's trust in police.

JL: Noted that while retail outlets often give poor suspect descriptions, officers could improve them by requesting additional details such as height, weight, hair colour, or other distinguishing features, rather than accepting minimal information.

JC: Acknowledged shoplifting—even minor thefts like four cans of coke—needs addressing due to public expectations and national focus.

Agreed frustration arises when suspects are wrongly stopped and suggested better store communication and officer follow-up calls to maintain trust.

Confirming police try to review CCTV and push for clearer descriptions, supporting improved call taker training and officers requesting more info when needed.

TJ: Highlighted that shop staff often use shoplink radios, bypassing call takers, so officers receive direct, limited information. This pressures officers—especially younger ones—to make quick decisions without sufficient details.

Action:

JC: Confirms he will debrief the officer and Sergeant due to insufficient report detail, emphasising the need for more thorough review and follow-up.

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Case 3: Stop and Search - 379011/120425/225028

Grounds:

SEE: Two men staying outside a property, have a beer and cigarette

KNOW: Seen by camera operators appearing to do drugs

SUSPECT: Suspicion of using cocaine in a public place

ISCRE Comments:

The grounds for this search lack detail. How do we know it is the same men as seen by camera operators, no description given. Did the operator always have the suspects in their sight? How has the officer concluded their suspicion that the men may have been using cocaine? What behaviour or actions did they observe?

Was any drug paraphernalia found on the suspects during the search?

Discussion:

JC: Expressed concern with this stop & search form done by a special constable for lacking grounds, citing possible training issues.

PM: Questions if the officer was contacted prior to the meeting

JC: Reported no response from the special constable despite follow-up by Claire.

Action for JC to confirm identity, liaise with local command, and address a potential training issue.

PM: Queries if the lack of BWV is due to this being from special constable?

JC: Confirms he is uncertain as to why BWV was not available and what "2" is in reference to on the form and shares concern raised about the training and understanding of the special constable involved.

FJ: Requests if JC can find out and share with the group what is meant by "2" on the form for the reason that BWV was not being available.

Action: JC: Confirms this and will action to find out what was meant by "2" for the next meeting.

FJ: Questions if special constables have to do a certain amount of hours a month.

JC: States he is unsure and highlighted the need to review the case, ensure the special constable is supported, and provide appropriate feedback for future deployments.

FJ: Asks if this form was signed off by a supervisor

JC: Confirms no comments were provided by the supervisor on this matter. The issue has been noted, but it appears it may not have completed the full review process.

GK: Highlighted the low number of special constables and questioned whether their limited hours affect their ability to police.

JC: Noted special constables receive essential but not full training, highlighted recruitment challenges, and praised their commitment of special constables despite the voluntary nature of the role.

TJ: Added further context to special constables by explaining that special constables often look like regular officers and perform various duties, but many transition to full-time roles. Supervisors must support them, some need pairing for complex tasks, and while they have a minimum monthly commitment, personal circumstances are considered.

JB: Confirms that special constables should have the same powers and equipment as full time officers so the BWV should be available.

TJ: Confirms specials should have individual cameras.

The group noted several issues with the case under review: there was no body-worn video and no explanation for its absence, the Special Constable could not be located to provide a response, and there were no supervisor comments or sign-off. These deficiencies were considered significant concerns. It was acknowledged that Special Constables receive different training, but the potential impact on the public was emphasized, highlighting the need to weigh staffing challenges against public safety. The group agreed that action is required, with feedback to be addressed at the start of the next meeting.

Actions: As highlighted above

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Case 4: Taser - SC-xxxx

Reason for Taser:

- Protect other officer from violence
- Effect Arrest

ISCRE Comments:

Had the male assaulted the police officer? What was the male doing when the officer drove him back towards the wall and took him to the floor. Can we have BWV available please.

Discussion:

BWV was reviewed by ISCRE

JC: Clarifies that this Taser-related case was removed from the review process as it is subject to an Independent Police Complaints (IPC) investigation. Acknowledged the need to strengthen the process by adding a filter with the Professional Standards Department to ensure cases involving use of Taser or force—often linked to higher complaint risk—are screened before submission.

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Case 5: Use of Force: 375182/290425/121554

Reason for UOF:

- Effect Stop and Search
- Prevent Escape

Subject was verbally resistant to requests to step out of the vehicle involved, and I suspected he may try and escape if the opportunity presented itself.

ISCRE Comments:

Verbal resistance sighted for UOF. Can we please review the BWV to better understand uof.

Discussion:

BWV was reviewed by ISCRE

JC: Reported on an internal scrutiny panel review for this form. Overall, the officers' interaction was polite and positive. Also noting there was no clear verbal resistance and questioned the prolonged use of handcuffs, suggesting the rationale may need review. The search was based on previous intelligence so the recency of this intelligence needs to be also be questioned. Highlighted the good rapport from a female officer.

FC: Agreed with JC's points, noting concerns over prolonged handcuff use, praised the female officer's clear communication, and questioned whether officers knew how recent the intelligence was.

SL: Confirms that no verbal resistance was shown in the BWV review

FJ: Questioned whether repeated stop-and-search incidents, even if polite, create a perception of targeting, especially for a Black man repeatedly placed in handcuffs without resulting action. There may be gaps between police views of a "positive" interaction and the community's perception, calling for clarity on the intelligence behind the stops to determine if they are justified.

JC: Acknowledged FJ's concerns about the perception of fairness and agreed the points were valid. Confirming the stop was based on specific, current intelligence, though he felt officers disclosed too much detail, potentially revealing the source. JC stressed that repeated negative searches should prompt an intelligence report advising against further stops unless new information arises.

FJ: Questioned if officers are trained to use verbal resistance to justify handcuffing or searches. As it could be used to strengthen the case, adding that verbal resistance is common and shouldn't automatically justify such actions.

JC: Confirms officers are trained to assess levels of resistance—non-compliance, verbal, active, and aggressive—using the national decision-making model to determine proportionate responses. Verbal resistance alone is not a valid reason for handcuffing, though perceptions of it can be subjective.

FJ: Queries if an update could be provided by JC following updates from the officers.

JC: Affirms he will speak to the officers involved and has requested Liz to review the stop search form and relevant intelligence from the time of the incident.

Action:

JC to speak with the officers regarding the stop and search.

EC to review the stop search form and the intelligence available at the time.

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Case 6: Use of Force: SC-29032025-263

Reason for UOF:

Other – Improvised, push to ground, was it effective: YES

Handcuffing – Non-Compliant

Front Stack, Was it effective: YES

Suspect tried to push past PC 5103, force was used to effect arrest of suspect and to protect officers from harm, force was a push to the ground and then handcuffing which was.

ISCRE Comments:

Suspect try to push pass officers, force 'a push down to the ground' was used. Can we please review BWW to ascertain the actions of the suspect to the level of force used.

Discussion:

FJ: Highlighted from the unclear grounds the perception that the individual may have been the victim rather than the aggressor.

JC: Highlighted the complexity of the high-risk domestic incident, noting intoxication and the officers' familiarity with the individuals. Officers faced challenges in managing the situation, which took time, and additional units were deployed. Quicker removal of the individual might have aided de-escalation.

GK: Raises that despite the long history and possible issues with addiction, mental health and neurodiversity have the constabulary been able to turn them to social services or adult services to assist with these matters?

JC: Agreed with GK's point about likely multi-agency involvement, including domestic violence advisors and previous court action such as DVPOs, believing there had been significant effort to manage the situation, though unable confirm details.

JC: Confirms In the incident reviewed, the individual was detained after attempting to push past an officer. JC did not believe the officers punched the individual but felt they could have moved him into a more comfortable position sooner. Noting that the officers were unclear on the exact grounds for arrest, initially referring to a breach of the peace, and had not clearly communicated this. Also raising concerns about the timing and justification of the later search, suggesting it should have been done under Section 32 at the point of arrest if necessary.

SL: Questioned why officers, after being with the man for a considerable time, only decided to search him once he was on the floor.

JC: Suggested the search may have occurred because, after removing the handcuffs, officers realised they had not searched the man. Questioning why it was not done at the start, and emphasised the need to ask the officers under what power and for what reason it was conducted.

SL: Noted that during the incident, the man repeatedly accused the officer of punching him, which the officer denied. At one point, the officer remarked, "that's water under the bridge. Requesting clarification on the meaning of that comment.

Action: JC: Confirmed he will have a debrief with the officers to find out the meaning of that comment.

JB: Raised concerns about whether the male reported to have learning difficulties and had the capacity to understand the situation and whether an appropriate adult was offered. Along with if additional body-worn footage was available to get a better view of the "punch" that was mentioned.

JC: Shared that the situation was complex. The male was detained for a breach of the peace to keep the parties separate, but later de-arrested at the scene after the female was removed from the address.

Action: As highlighted above

Date of next Meeting: September 11th at the ISCRE Office