

SUFFOLK POLICE POWERS PUBLIC SCRUTINY (SPPPS) MINUTES

Date: September 11th 2025

Location: ISCRE Office

Number in attendance: 15

Chair - Phaniel Mutumburi

Minute Taker - Travis Dickerson

Welcome - All Welcomed by the Chair

Introductions - All members introduced themselves

Minutes from previous meeting - A comments from FC needs to be altered in the previous minutes.

Following the change previous 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)
- Andy Pearl (AP)
- David Brown (DB)
- Claire Hinit (CH)
- Ben Thossel (BT)
- Liz Casey (LC)
- Glen Chisholm (GC)
- Zara Behbehani (ZB)
- Hamil Clarke (HC)
- Lynn Tommy (LT)
- Chelsy Chidanika (CC)
- Chris Hinit (CH)

CASES FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY

Case 1: Stop and Search - 370759/090625/221324

Grounds: SEE: Seen the male running away from something or someone and had decamped from a traffic officer who was about to stop him KNOW: Know the male to be involved in criminality abd for drug supply SUSPECT: Suspect the make was running g from police as he had drugs on him to sell

ISCRE Comments:

It appears this person was stopped for running ... What was suspicious about this persons behaviour relating to criminality? The grounds for this search lack details, very vague. Can we review BWV to gain a better understanding of this stop/search.

Discussion:

BWV was reviewed by ISCRE

JC provides the supervisors comments:

Reviewed BWV showing the subject running across the road while the Traffic Unit remained seated. Unclear why PC Proctor completed the search form as PC Bardo conducted the search. GO WISELY completed; handcuffs used appropriately. Form lacks detail and would attract scrutiny. Good search overall, but admin issues noted.

SL: Questioned why this person was stopped and searched for drugs on his person and his vehicle after only being seen running?

JC: Responds by informing the group that the form lacks key details outlining the significant recent intelligence linking the subject and vehicle to drug-related activity. Officers recognised the vehicle based on this intelligence. The subject appeared to decamp from the car and run across the road, prompting intervention by local units. The form should clearly state that officers were aware of prior attempts to stop the vehicle and suspected the individual to be involved in criminal activity.

PM: The officer also stated in the BWV that he did not recognise the individual until the stop, which conflicts with claims of prior intelligence. The subject reported being stopped four times previously without result, raising concerns over the reliability of the intelligence and proportionality of repeated stops.

JC: Noted that while officers should focus on areas with a high likelihood of detecting criminality, intelligence must remain current and robust. In this case, the subject had recently been found with an item linked to Class A drug dealing, which added weight to the search. However, intelligence can become outdated, and repeated stops without new information risk losing proportionality. Officers should ensure searches remain intelligence-led and justified by recent, reliable information.

SL: The BWV we hear the officer mentioning a named third party to the suspect, saying "your dad's friend, he sends his regards." This appeared to be a fishing exercise and patronising. Concerns raised over the appropriateness of referencing third parties during a stop search.

JC: Shares that the officer's comment appeared sarcastic and potentially patronising toward the individual, suggesting the officer may have been making an unnecessary "dig." While it was not considered a fishing exercise, I felt his tone was deemed inappropriate. The matter will be addressed with the officer accordingly.

PM: PM raised a question about how officers provide receipts to individuals when using electronic devices, noting the individual did not have an email address.

CASES FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY

Case 1: Stop and Search - 370759/090625/221324

Continued...

Discussion:

BT: While email delivery is quicker, not all individuals have or use email just like in this situation. So reference numbers and physical cards are used to allow them to collect forms from the police station later. Officers should ensure the process is clear, check records where needed, and provide copies on request.

CASES FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY

Case 2: Stop and Search 370820/010625/211433

Grounds: SEE: I have seen the vehicle XXXX parked in a layby at the end of Church Lane, Sproughton, Suffolk. This is the vehicle that was reported to have occupants smoking cannabis inside by an off duty police officer. KNOW: The information from the off duty police officer was that this vehicle, in this location was pulled over with occupants smoking cannabis inside. SUSPECT: Due to seeing the same circumstances given, and being able to smell a faint smell of what I recognise to be the distinctive smell of cannabis I have explained this to the two occupants in the drivers seat and the passenger seat. I have explained this to both occupants and they have understood the grounds for the search.

ISCRE Comments:

What evidence/description did the off duty officer give to conclude it was actually cannabis being smoked?

Who pulled the vehicle over? How long a period was it from the time the off duty officer made observations, to the vehicle being pulled over. During that time, was the car stationery, had it continued to be monitored by the off duty officer?

Can we please view the BWV to better understand this stop search.

Discussion:

BWV was reviewed by ISCRE

JC: Provides a response from the officer:

An off-duty officer reported that the occupants of a vehicle appeared to be smoking cannabis, though it was unclear whether this was confirmed by sight, smell, or both. The vehicle, matching the description and partial index provided, was found parked in a nearby bay approximately 25 minutes after the call. The officer made brief observations while passing but did not continue to monitor the vehicle, as prolonged observation in the remote area may have drawn attention from the occupants.

JC: Queried whether the officers had directly seen the individual smoking cannabis or were they relying on sight and smell. The body-worn video showed the passenger suggesting it was him smoking, implying some corroboration. Noting that an intelligence check on both the vehicle and individuals should have been completed and referenced on the form to strengthen the grounds, which currently appear weak.

CH: Noted a possible systems issue with how the initial call was handled. The information passed to attending officers may have lacked clarity, creating pressure to act on incomplete details. Suggesting that improved training and guidance for call takers and dispatchers could prevent similar issues and ensure clearer communication in future incidents.

JC: States the form lacked sufficient detail and that the officer's observations could not be fully confirmed. Feedback will be provided to the officer to support learning. Also highlighting tactical safety concerns, as the officer searched a vehicle with his back to two individuals, stressing the need for continued vigilance even with compliant subjects.

PM: Raised a comparison between drink- and drug-related driving offences, noting that officers would breathalyse individuals seen drinking in a vehicle. Questioning why similar consideration was not given to conducting drug tests on individuals suspected of drug use while in charge of a vehicle.

JC: Noted that officers have powers to conduct drug or alcohol tests where traffic offences are suspected, though such tests are costly and should be proportionate. As the passenger admitted smoking cannabis and timing was unclear, the decision not to test the driver was considered reasonable. The importance of road safety and appropriate use of powers was emphasised.

CASES FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY

Case 3: Stop and Search - 375130/180625/065920

Grounds:

SEE: The male became agitated towards police and was suspected of drink drive. KNOW: A vehicle was found on a road close by to where this male was stopped which was left abandoned by the driver, the drunk male was believed to have been the driver so was searched looking for the keys or identification of the male. SUSPECT: A vehicle was found on a road close by to where this male was stopped which was left abandoned by the driver, the drunk male was believed to have been the driver so was searched looking for the keys or identification of the male.

ISCRE Comments:

What was it specifically that linked this suspect to the abandoned car as it was not very clear in the grounds? Was this suspect the driver? Did they have keys to the car on their person, was the car registered to them? Was there any intelligence on this suspect?

Discussion:

JC: officer's response:

My colleague and I have been dispatched to a crashed vehicle on Bury Rd, Newmarket, left abandoned. The male occupant was seen walking shirtless toward the A11. Officers located him later on B1506 attempting to solicit a lift. He was intoxicated and uncooperative, providing no details. A stop and search was conducted for identification and car keys, but none were found. The male disclosed historical offences and was later escorted to Newmarket train station. The stop-search form was completed and improved following sergeant feedback.

The supervisors comments are followed:

The stop and search was lawful, with reasonable grounds and proportionate conduct. GO WISELY was completed. No handcuffs or use-of-force form needed. BWV was captured and saved as evidence. Feedback was provided to the officer within 24 hours, including reflective practice on Section 1 grounds. The search form did not fully record that the vehicle was abandoned and the male's potential involvement, such as possibly driving without the owner's consent.

JC: Shared he will have a conversation with the officer and Sergeant to review the outcome and provide feedback regarding the unclear grounds.

SL: Noted that the original grounds provided did not mention the male was shirtless or that a car crash had occurred, only referencing an abandoned vehicle. Highlighting that this significantly changes the context of the incident.

JC: Observed that there appears to be some inexperience in documenting the rationale for the search. Although all necessary grounds to search and potentially detain the individual were present, they were not clearly recorded on the form.

CASES FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY

Case 4: Taser - SC-28062025-25

Reason for Taser: Refer to form - (Lengthy description)

ISCRE Comments:

How old with this young person? Where did the call come from to say she had a knife? It does not state that she was being threatening to anyone, sounds like she was outside in her pyjamas with friends. The alleged knife turns out to be plastic. We ask if Taser was the best use in this circumstance particularly as she dropped the item once she was asked to? It appears another young girl beside her was distressed by the incident.

Discussion:

JC: Highlighted that officers have the option to draw or not draw their taser, depending on the threat assessment, distance, and public safety considerations. In this case, the presence of a young female and a potentially armed individual made it a complex situation. PVPS submissions and parental notification for the 14-year-old were emphasised due to the associated risks. The officer involved and their supervisor have not yet provided an update. Once received, further review of the incident, including body-worn video, will inform any learning points and decision-making.

SL: Requested if ISCRE could see the body-worn video to assess the context, including the behaviour of the 14-year-old and the handling of the knife, to evaluate the proportionality of Taser use.

JC: Confirmed that he would also like to view the body-worn video. Highlighting the value of reviewing the body-worn video to assess the dynamics and proportionality, and to consider whether a conversation on decision-making could provide useful learning points. Following the review feedback can be provided to the group.

PM: Shared a conversation he had with a retired officer, suggesting that the increasing availability of equipment may reduce officers' use of dialogue during incidents. In this situation a simple conversation brought this person to drop the plastic knife.

JC emphasised the importance of using such reviews for constructive feedback and learning. JC also acknowledged the professionalism of many young officers and suggested it would be helpful to review the body-worn video to understand the scenario fully.

CASES FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY

Case 5: Use of Force: 44700537GY/774/25

Reason for UOF: Defendant was warned about his behaviour on several occasions and was asked to leave the area. Defendant refused to do so and started to swear and shout in public, whilst being arrested the defendant resisted. When trying to place the defendant in rear stack, the defendant resisted and only one cuff was applied. The defendant resisted further and was speared in the face when defendant was shouting and to be placed against the wall. Defendant resisted further and was pava'ed. Placed on the floor and ground pinned in order to conduct a safe search.

ISCRE Comments:

We can see mental health is noted for this suspect. Can we review the BWV to gain a full understanding of the forced used.

Discussion:

SL: Under the use of force used on the form we can see the term "SPEAR". Requesting an explanation.

JC: The term "SPEAR" refers to a spontaneous defensive hand tactic based on the body's natural flinch response. Explaining that such a move typically involves contact around the upper chest area, though in fast-moving situations it may appear as contact to the face. Clarification should be sought from the officer involved, as the wording was unclear and unconventional.

SL: Requested further clarification from the officer and supervising sergeant regarding the terminology and sequence of actions described in the use of force statement.

JC: Covered that the terminology used in the report was unclear and poorly worded. It appears the incident became disorderly when the individual resisted, leading officers to use defensive tactics rather than deliberate strikes. The "spear" technique was identified as a defensive manoeuvre, not an offensive action. Clearer articulation of the force used—particularly the "ground pin" technique and its purpose—should be provided in the report to ensure transparency and accuracy.

SL: The individual involved had self-declared mental health conditions. Given this, and the range of force types recorded in the incident was the use of force appropriate in these circumstances?

JC: Explained how mental health is considered within the National Decision Model (NDM), distinguishing between EMD (Emotional Mental Distress — long-term conditions) and EBI (Environmental Behavioural Influences — temporary factors such as drugs, alcohol, or language barriers). Both indicate potential vulnerability, which may affect how individuals react to police. Emphasising the need to balance vulnerability with risk, using time, distance, and communication before physical contact

SL: Queried the reported injury, specifically the cut to the head, and requested clarification on its significance and the circumstances surrounding it.

JC: Clarified that the reported "cut" was minor—a graze—and did not meet the threshold for referral. He noted that serious injuries, such as unconsciousness, would require referral. Acknowledging the panel's feedback and emphasised the importance of assessing injury severity when deciding on referrals.

CASES FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY

Case 6: Use of Force: SC-30062025-377

Reason for UOF: I was stood down stairs with the father. I heard banging and lowed voice upstairs. Went upstairs saw the suspect had been pava'ed but was not handcuffed. 1183 and 9547 had hands on his wrist. Other officers involved appeared to have been effected by the pava. I got control on suspects left wrist to have control and prevent him for lashing out. I assited 9457 with the left arm to get in to rear stack position.

ISCRE Comments:

We are wondering why PAVA was the choice used when this clearly had an impact on officers (being in such proximity) where they did not have control for it to be effective. What was the situation that led to PAVA being used, all we can see from here is raised voices and loud banging. Can we please view the BWV to gain a better understanding of the force used. Preferably BWV from one of the officers in the room.

Discussion:

JC: Reviewed the incident with the puppy, which had a severe heart condition and was in significant pain. The vets confirmed it needed to be put down immediately. The officers acted under Section 18 of the Dogs Welfare Act, showing compassion while managing the owner's reluctance. It was emotionally difficult, but the officers coordinated effectively to prioritise the puppy's welfare. I noted their professionalism, though there are minor procedural points to consider for future cases.

SL: Explained concerns about the use of PAVA in close proximity to other officers, noting the individual's distress and the small room increased the risk. Other officer are seen in distress due to the PAVA, along with the male individual involved.

JC: Stated that the use of force was low-level and non-contact, intended to de-escalate the situation. They noted limitations, including the risk of eye injury and the need for distance. In this environment, I personally would not have chosen PAVA, while the officers' actions were not wrong, it may not have been the most appropriate option.

JC: Provided further context to the escalation as an officer cited the wrong section of legislation, causing confusion for the individual involved, who believed the officers lacked the proper power. This was a simple mistake but worth noting.

PM: Shared the importance of accurately documenting actions at the time they are taken. Emphasising that members of the public and legal representatives will scrutinise these records, particularly if incidents progress to court or complaints are raised. Highlighting that completing documentation confidently and correctly helps everyone, ensuring officers can account for their actions and avoid justifying decisions after the fact. They noted that thinking carefully before acting is critical, especially when the grounds for action may be unclear.

Date of next: Wednesday November 26th 4-6pm Via Teams.