

SUFFOLK POLICE POWERS PUBLIC SCRUTINY (SPPPS) MINUTES

Date: January 28th 2026

**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 - Previous meeting minutes signed off

SPPPS - Former Actions updates

Review of Forms

Attended:

- Travis Dickerson (TD)
- Phaniel Mutumburi (PM)
- Sharon Lee (SL)
- Aleksandra Kasinska (AK)
- Ahmed Idris (AI)
- Elizabeth Casey (EC)
- Fraser Cooper (FC)
- Darell Chipuru (DC)
- David Brown (DB)
- Efaz Amin Chowdhury (EAC)
- Franstine Jones (FJ)
- Christ Hinit (CH)
- Jay Wade (JW)
- Tamoya Williams (TW)
- Clare Whyfeels-Banham (CWB)
- Jack Shipley Smith (JS)
- Archie Stocks (AS)
- Sarina Hunter (SH)
- Abigail Ward (AW)

CASES FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY

SPPPS Former Actions - September & November 2025

Discussion:

For November 2025, Case 1 was referred to Professional Standards and is still under investigation.

Case 2 was a stop and search where a male ran off, and questions were raised about why the stop happened. Confirmed the incident (case 2) was reviewed and the stop was based on specific intelligence and repeated public reports of drug dealing in a defined location, supported by three addresses, and was considered justified. Sharing that the officer acknowledged improvements in recording detail and use of the language. Accepted a lack of courtesy following the male running off, and confirmed all officers involved had been dealt with.

FJ: Questioned whether police intelligence supported the public reports and whether the information was evidence-based rather than assumptions or bias.

CH: Explained that officers must initially rely on information provided by the public and assess credibility, noting that three separate reports carry more weight than a single report. CH confirmed officers engaged in conversation with the male to try to negate the grounds rather than immediately search, and that patrols and engagement are the only way to test intelligence. CH added that body-worn video showed officers attempting to clarify grounds before the male ran off, and highlighted the fine line between engagement and a search.

CH: Shared the feedback on the outer garment search, noting confusion among officers between a “just outer garments” search and a more thorough search exposing intimate parts. CH confirmed the policy has been updated, internal communications issued, and the scenario included in personal safety training from January to ensure compliance and improve officer practice.

SL: Commented that it was positive to see how public scrutiny had helped shape the policy changes and acknowledged the importance of considering the perceptions of both the public and the person being searched.

CH: Confirmed the use of force incident (case 3) resulting in injuries had been referred to the IOPC at the time and returned to the constabulary for investigation

CH: Advised they are having difficulty locating the body-worn video (case 5) and will follow up and provide an update at a later date.

CH: Confirmed feedback was provided to the officer regarding their handling of a taser incident where a male jumped from a window and ran. (case 6)

CH: Advised the three outstanding actions remain, which they will resolve as soon as possible.

Outstanding Actions:

September 2025 Case 3 & Case 4

November 2025 - Case 5 - Body Worn Video.

CASES FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY

Case 1: Stop and Search - 370911/031125/002548 BE14

Grounds: SEE: Vehicle parked up in the early hours of the morning with 4 people inside. On police arrival they have exited the car and tried to walk off. KNOW: Recent Intelligence on some of the males regarding drug supply and use. Recenet intelligence on location they were in for drug supply. SUSPECT: The above information combined with an admission of recent cocaine use by one the males resulted in my forming the suspicion they may have drugs on them.

ISCRE Comments:

How recent was the intelligence for drug supply on some of the males? Was there intelligence on this particular male?

The admission of cocaine use by one of the individuals, how recent was that?

Nothing found, NFA.

Discussion:

CH: Confirmed there were multiple intelligence reports from August 2025 and more recent protected reports relating to drug supply in the area. CH advised one male voluntarily disclosed cocaine use within 24 hours of the stop. Confirming intelligence supported involvement of the individuals stopped and the wider group, and subsequent warrants on their addresses resulted in multiple Class A drug arrests. No further action.

SL: Suggested that officers record the recency of intelligence when completing stop grounds, as this provides further context when providing scrutiny.

CH: Acknowledged the point and agreed to take it as an action, noting the need for officers to provide more detail in stop grounds.

Action: CH to explore having officers record the recency of intelligence in stop grounds.

CASES FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY

Case 2: Stop and Search 375344/121025/165723 BE55

Grounds: SEE: Group of youths seen on the road that connects to block of flats landing that I recently inspected that was recently used for cannabis use. Group of youths were travelling together and one youth was looking at the building in question. KNOW: Informant called about cannabis use and there was a strong smell of cannabis at location SUSPECT: Officers recently gone to a call from an informant saying that a group of youths approximately 16 years old were smoking drugs on the landing of a block of flats. When officers arrived and checked the area it was clear that there had recently been cannabis use due to smell and smoke. Searching the local area 3 youths seen matching the description by the informant found in the area. Due to these reasons I deemed this suspicion enough to perform the search.

ISCRE Comments:

Had the informant stated it was 3 youths in the group?
What was the description of the youths given by informant?
What was the description of the youths searched by police
At the time, was a parent informed of the search with it being a 14 year old?
Nothing found, NFA.

Discussion:

BWV was reviewed by ISCRE

CH: Explained the stop related to reports of antisocial behaviour by youths in a stairwell, with the informant providing a loose description of six youths; officers located three matching that description. CH confirmed the stop occurred 17 minutes after dispatch, officers acted promptly, and body-worn video showed they engaged openly and politely. One male declined to provide contact details, so a parent was not informed. CH noted a breach of policy as supervisor authority was not sought prior to the stop, and feedback has been given.

SL: Noted the body-worn video supported CH's account but queried how officers could be certain the three youths stopped 45 minutes after the call were the same individuals reported by the informant, given clothing similarities and time delay.

CH: Advised it could not be confirmed that the youths stopped were definitely those reported by the informant, but officers acted on reasonable suspicion based on available information. CH noted that if the intelligence had been 45 minutes old, a different approach may have been taken and indicated they would discuss the search location further with young people at the end of the meeting.

FJ: Asked which class cannabis falls under and whether there had been discussions about reclassifying it from Class B to Class C.

CH: Confirmed cannabis is a Class B drug, alongside substances such as ketamine, with Class A including cocaine and heroin. Advised that reclassification is a political decision, but police must take action while it remains Class B. FJ noted changes in the police use of force report emphasising controlled drugs over weapons and queried cannabis' position. CH confirmed police prioritise Class A drugs and weapons, but are still required to enforce the law on cannabis.

CASES FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY

Case 2: Stop and Search 375344/121025/165723 BE55

Discussion:

PM: Raised a question, noting that many young people may wear black clothing or hoodies. Highlighted that young people often ask how they can avoid being stopped and searched by police if they have done nothing wrong.

CH: Advised that police may stop and search individuals even if they have done nothing wrong, where reasonable suspicion exists. Emphasised that the goal is for young people to understand why they were stopped, that it is for public protection, and that they should not feel mistreated. Noting there is no guaranteed way to avoid being stopped, but engagement and explaining circumstances may sometimes negate the need for a search.

EC: Shared the positive engagement with young people at the High Schools regarding knowing their rights, and suggested more sessions like this to give young people confidence, understanding of police actions, and reassurance within the community.

CH: Explained that body-worn video had raised questions about searching young people in public view. Noting legislation allows searches at or near the stop location and, in some circumstances, to move the individual. Advising that officers discussed with an independent group and concluded best practice is to ask the young person whether they prefer to be searched in public view or moved to a more private location.

PM: Highlighted that conducting stop and searches in public can have lasting consequences, even when carried out respectfully and correctly, as other members of the public may assume wrongdoing. Cited an example of an individual who lost their job due to stigma despite the police apologising. Emphasised that public searches can affect trust in police and suggested giving individuals a choice about being searched in public versus private.

CH: Noted a previous stop and search near Civic Drive underpass where a young person requested to be moved for safety. Emphasised best practice is to offer individuals the choice to be searched in public or a more private location, balancing safety and dignity, and highlighted plans to include this approach in officer training.

DC: Queries whether there is a rule on the number of police officers required to be present when conducting a stop and search involving a young person.

CH: Confirmed no set rule on officer numbers for stop and search, though two are preferred for safety; intimate searches require two officers of the same sex.

FJ: Noted that, even without a set number of officers, stop and search should be conducted proportionately.

CH: Agreed that while there are no set rules on numbers, stop and search should be proportionate to the situation to avoid appearing overbearing. Noted that intimate or strip searches in custody have specific rules regarding officer numbers and gender.

EC: Recommended officers consider how stop and search interactions appear to young people and the public, and suggested this be included in training and development.

CASES FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY

Case 3: Stop and Search - 371862/251025/150115 WH12

Grounds:

SEE: DP was sat on a walk outside TacoBell. DP has been seen by me, the officer twice before during the day and had engaged with the officer speaking out to sat hello to me, the officer.

As I passed ther KNOW: DP is know to be linked to youths and ASB in the area including linked to criminal damage and drug offences.

DP is known to officer and is always confident and out spoken in front of police SUSPECT: When I (the officer) saw DP I said hello, he was looking at me and did not reply he looked shocked and concerned . I would describe his body language as furtive as if he had just been caught doing something. With the smell of cannabis i suspect he had cannabis on him which is why he did not want to engage.

ISCRE Comments:

Are these reasonable grounds to search? When I (the officer) saw DP I said hello, he was looking at me and did not reply he looked shocked and concerned . I would describe his body language as furtive as if he had just been caught doing something ... Officer states it's the 3rd time he has seen this individual that day, therefore, is it reasonable for him not to reply to the officer a 3rd time during the day.

Does the officer know where the smell of cannabis was coming from, were there other persons nearby?

How recent was the intelligence linking this individual to ASB in the area.

Nothing found, NFA.

Discussion:

BWV was requested but not available

CH: Explained that the stop and search related to Ops Spotlight, a targeted town centre patrol addressing antisocial behaviour. The 16-year-old involved was known to officers and part of a group linked to repeated ASB and prior drug convictions. Noted the officer observed a change in demeanour and detected the smell of cannabis, providing reasonable grounds for the search, and emphasised the importance of recording sufficient contextual information on the form.

SL: Acknowledged that the grounds recorded lacked detail, noting that additional context helped clarify the reasons for the stop and search.

CH: Confirmed he is satisfied the grounds were sufficient but reiterated the need for officers to provide fuller explanations. Noted the young person has a substantial history, with 77 community-based and minor drug-related investigations by age 16, and feedback will be given to improve form detail and clarity.

PM: Highlighted that incomplete grounds could create issues if responding to the IOPC or a court, and emphasised that many problems could be avoided by clearly recording reasonable grounds on the form.

CASES FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY

Case 4: Taser - SC-11102025-315

Reason for Taser: Refer to form -

- Effect Arrest
- Prevent Escape
- Protect Other Officers from Violence
- Protect Public from Violence
- Protect Self from Violence

ISCRE Comments:

We question why this officer is using their taser to see where they are going, ... *"I have utilised TASER due to this being a pitch black area of which I did not know the layout"* Is this a way in which officers are trained to use taser? Are there not risks to using taser in this way?

Discussion:

CH: Explained that officers are not trained to use taser as a torch and it should only be drawn in response to a threat, using the national decision making model. In this case, the officer drew taser due to intelligence about a violent, intoxicated male involved in a domestic incident and the risk of entering a dark area alone. The taser was not discharged, the situation was quickly de-escalated, and compliant handcuffing was used. CH confirmed the officer's actions were appropriate and in line with training and review processes.

FJ: Questioned whether if a taser has been used for the purpose of a torch does this still class as a taser being drawn?

CH: Explained that using the torch on a taser does not register as taser use; any use is recorded through the officer's use-of-force report.

EC: Reassured that officers do not use tasers as torches. They carry separate torches, and using the taser for light is not a quick or standard action. Any reference to using a taser as a torch reflects how the form was written or interpreted, not actual practice.

SL: Noted that the wording on the form—"I've utilised taser due to it being a pitch black area"—gives the impression it was used as a torch.

CH: Raises that the officer's taser was drawn in response to a perceived threat from a violent, intoxicated individual in a dark, isolated area, and that any use of the torch aspect was incidental, not as a primary tool. He confirmed training explicitly prohibits using a taser as a torch and said he would provide feedback to the officer to clarify this on the report.

PM: Adds that the issue was largely about how the officer's actions were articulated on the form. While it reads as though the taser torch was used simply because it was dark, the context of potential violence and the individual's behaviour in a dark, isolated area clarifies why the officer felt it was necessary. Highlighting that precise wording on reports can make these circumstances clearer.

CASES FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY

Case 5: Taser: SC-21112025-440 (2)

Reason for UOF:

- Effect Stop and Search
- Prevent Offence
- Protect Other Officers from Violence
- Protect Public from Violence
- Protect self from Violence

ISCRE Comments:

Male was red dotted due to information of a male with a machete. Male ran from police into a dark secluded area, due to the male going out of sight briefly I was concerned the weapon could have been pulled out, so I kept distance to achieve MNI should I need to deploy taser, I considered other options such as pava but this would not incapacitate the subject and prevent him swinging a machete.

Discussion:

BWV was reviewed by ISCRE

EC: Highlighted that the officers handled the situation well, establishing good rapport with the individual while maintaining control during the initial chase and assessing the potential threat. The interaction was professional and appropriate, though the panel felt more questions could have been asked to fully understand what had happened. A CCTV review could have been conducted immediately to clarify events before releasing the individual, but overall the engagement was positive.

SL: Shared with the panel that when the officer asked the individual why he ran, the response was that it was just a natural instinct upon seeing the police.

EC: Explained that the individual was open about previous convictions and recent release from prison. The interaction with police was positive, and the person said they ran instinctively to avoid getting caught with anything.

FJ: Questions if a machete was found not on this individual or the group he was seen with?

EC: Confirmed that no machete was found and noted that the officers likely didn't have the immediate resources to complete all the CCTV checks on the spot.

PM: Noted that after the initial chase and stop, the interaction quickly became positive, with the individual being open and cooperative. While some questions about who else was involved were beyond the scope of the panel, there might have been an opportunity to gather more information from the individual. Overall, the panel was satisfied with how the situation was handled.

CASES FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY

Case 6: Use of Force: 375225-061125-021727

Reason for UOF: I have never dealt with this female before and did not know what her behaviour would be like when detained for the purpose of a search, I applied the handcuffs in a front stack position to prevent any harm happening to myself and any other and to prevent higher levels of force if the detainee's behaviour escalated. They were also wearing a long and bug coat, which could easily hide weapons or other items that could harm myself, my colleagues or members of the public z

ISCRE Comments:

It appears the main reason for the use of force is because this person was not known to the officer. Does this officer use force on every individual they don't know? Review of BWV requested.

Discussion:

BWV was reviewed by ISCRE

CH: Expressed that the use of force was not simply because the individual was unknown. The officer observed the suspect on CCTV trying car door handles, which could involve tools or items that might pose a risk. Handcuffs were used as the lowest level of force necessary to protect the officer and others while detaining the individual for a stop search. The action was based on the circumstances and perceived risk, not just unfamiliarity with the person.

SL: Shared that the female being stopped was already compliant and effectively under arrest, raising the question of why the search continued. Six officers were present, and the visible show of force appeared excessive, particularly as the female had her arms raised in the air for a prolonged period. During BWV we felt this was uncomfortable for her and seemed unnecessary, giving the impression of disproportionate force, especially for someone cooperative. It was highlighted that bystanders or the individual herself might feel intimidated, and questioned whether unfamiliarity alone justified the level of force used.

PM: Commented that the officer's reason of not knowing the female was insufficient for using force; the justification should relate to actual risk, such as potential weapons which could have been a potential risk. Suggesting the stop-and-search could have occurred after arrest, since grounds existed from the start. Adding that with six officers present, leadership could have reduced numbers once the individual was compliant, avoiding an unnecessary show of force.

EC: Raises that the situation felt oppressive due to the number of officers and agreed that the stop-and-search could have been handled more efficiently. From observation it appeared a new officer was being tutored, which extended the interaction unnecessarily. The grounds for arrest already existed, so the female could have been taken to a more suitable location for the search, reducing the time her hands were up and the need for so many officers. The interaction itself was positive, but the process could have been simpler.

FJ: Expressed concern that the officer approached the stop-and-search with a bias, noting that the officer had never dealt with the individual before and framed that as a reason for caution, highlighting the stereotype of Black women as aggressive or intimidating. Believes the stop-and-search was unnecessary since the individual was compliant and already set for arrest, questioning why so many officers remained, and noted the visible distress at the number of officers, emphasising that the interaction appeared bias-driven rather than based on actual risk.

CASES FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY

Case 6: Use of Force: 375225-061125-021727

Discussion:

CH: Explained that only two officers were directly conducting the stop and search, while the other officers were at a distance and not surrounding the individual. Acknowledging that the search took place in a busy, public area and that the individual's hands were held up for longer than ideal, making it uncomfortable. Noting that while the handcuffing was justified given the circumstances, the form poorly articulated the reasoning, particularly the statement about not knowing the individual, which could give the wrong impression of bias.

Emphasising that there was no evidence of bias in the officer's record and suggested that inexperience may have influenced how the situation unfolded. Highlighting that a more experienced officer intervened to make the individual more comfortable during the search, demonstrating that the handling could have been better in terms of perception, even if the actions were lawful and justified.

SL: noted that the experienced officer only intervened after a long period of time, and from an outside view, seeing six officers and an older Black woman with her arms raised looked very concerning. Overall, the arrest could have been made immediately without going through the search.

SH: raised concerns about potential bias in policing, questioning whether the officer's apprehension was based on stereotypes about black women being aggressive or on genuine safety concerns. While acknowledging it was a new officer, they pointed out that experienced officers frequently act with bias, deploying excessive force or making unnecessary remarks, which reinforces distrust in the black community. This issue extends beyond new officers, reflecting a broader, systemic problem in policing.

PM: Questioned whether the review of the officer's past record—showing no evidence of bias—can reliably indicate the officer's behaviour in future incidents. Highlighting that just because there was no bias previously doesn't automatically mean there wouldn't be bias in the next encounter, and asked how future interactions would be assessed in light of this.

CH: Explained that previously, stop searches were treated as isolated incidents, without tracking patterns or potential disproportionality in searches. We have implemented a system to record officers involved in each stop search, track individuals, and review data monthly to identify any disproportionate activity or recurring issues. This allows long-term oversight, ensures feedback is monitored, and helps spot patterns that may require further action—something that hadn't been done before.

FJ: Expressed that this new tracking system, has a big importance in identifying patterns of bias. She emphasised that officers who are intrinsically biased tend to show it repeatedly, and reviewing past incidents can reveal these patterns.

CH: Added a final note inviting anyone, including young people, who hadn't felt comfortable asking questions during the session to submit them anonymously. Offering the potential to meet face-to-face for a discussion if preferred, emphasising that participants should feel free to raise questions in whatever way works best.

Date of next: Wednesday March 25th 4pm - 6pm Online Via Microsoft Teams