

# SUFFOLK POLICE POWERS PUBLIC SCRUTINY (SPPPS) MINUTES

**Date: March 25<sup>th</sup> 2026**

**Location: Microsoft  
Teams**

**Number in attendance: 19**

**Chair - Sharon Lee**

**Welcome** - All Welcomed by the Chair

**Minutes from previous meeting** - Minutes from previous meeting signed off.

**SPPPS** - Former Actions:

**Review of Forms**

## **Attended:**

- Sharon Lee (SL) Chair
- Phaniel Mutumburi (PM) Made a declaration of interest in case 3.
- Elizabeth Casey (EC)
- David Brown (DB)
- Franstine Jones (FJ)
- Chris Hinitt (CH)
- John Lambert (JL)
- Julie Baker (JB)
- Stacey Runciman (SR)
- Tim Passmore (TP)
- Alice Scott (AS)
- Fraser Cooper (FC)
- John Lambert (JL)
- Louise Lockwood (LL)
- Andy Yacoub (AY)
- Aleks Kasinska (AK)
- Kaine Stormberg (KS)
- James Elliot (HMRC - Observer)

# CASES FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY

## Case 1: Stop and Search

### Grounds for stop/search:

**SEE:** I have seen a male matching the description provided to police walking away from the area the incident has occurred (3/4 minutes away) **KNOW:** I know that police have received a call from a member of public describing three males looking into houses and cars within the area and that they suspected they were going to commit theft.

I know the description of one of the males as being a black male wearing a black coat with a hood up, black bottoms and black jeans and that he was leaving the area heading towards Holton.

I know the male that I saw was within the same area, walking in the same direction and matched the same description. There were no other people walking along that stretch of rural road.

**SUSPECT:** I suspect that the male was one of the three men looking into cars and houses with the intent to commit theft therefore I suspected that he could have implements on him to help commit said theft or stolen items on him.

### ISCRE Comments:

- The stop is 15:45 and search 16:58. Why was there such a long time between the stop and search?
  - The clothing description could relate to a number of people.
- Could we review the BWV to get a better understanding of this stop search.

### Discussion:

Body Worn Video (BWV) was not available to review on this case.

(CH) stated there was an error in the recording of the times in the form.

The officers response was; 'Regarding the BWV I cannot seem to find it which is odd because I thought I have saved it. The search time was incorrect and should read 15:58hrs. I agree that the clothing description was somewhat generic however the style in which it was being worn (hood up) combined with that there was little to no one else in the area, in an area in which he was found and the direction he was walking. Combining all of that has led to the suspension as per my write up'.

The group discussed extreme disappointment on how BWV continue to not be available in cases that are chosen for scrutiny.

(FJ) Expressed her sadness at how this has continued to be an issue for many years with no improvement, and questions how can we have trust and confidence in the police when BWV is not available for review.

(TP) Would like to see 99% -ideally 100% compliance in BWV being available. He also mentions presumably the form was checked by a supervisor, in that case the timescales put in the form should have been picked up and rectified. Supervisors need to check all details carefully to make sure data and description is as accurate as possible.

(JB) shared the importance of having BWV footage to review for the officers and members of the public, it protects them both so we have to get it right.

# CASES FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY

## Case 2: Stop and Search

### Grounds for stop/search:

SEE: Officers witnessed the subject of the search immediately change direction on foot after becoming aware of a police presence. Subject's behaviour in terms of speech was very erratic when asked to justify changing directions  
KNOW: Intelligence to suggest that the area is high in drug use/drug dealing  
SUSPECT: Suspected to be in possession of drugs due to adverse behaviour and local intelligence detailed above

### ISCRE Comments:

It is not unusual for some people to change direction when they see the police, particularly if they have experienced being stopped on previous occasions. Is changing direction suspicion enough to stop someone?

•High drug area – does that mean if you live in, or visiting someone in an area classed as high in drug use you are likely to be stopped and searched? Nothing was found on this person and NFA. Could we review this BWV.

### Discussion:

(CH) Being in an area known for high drug use is not grounds for stop and search. In this case, there was an operation in progress within the area, two estates, drug dealing and using stop search as additional tactic.

Officer did not save his BWV as he did not see the necessity as nothing was found and nothing happened. The officer hasn't saved BWV properly in terms of policy). CH checked other stop/searches for this officer and all other BWV have been saved.

Officer response: This is absolutely not grounds for a stop and search however given it was the area of the operation and that the individual changed direction, general behaviour I wanted to speak to him. His eyes were dilated and with his general demeanor formed opinion possibly under the influence of drugs and has drugs in his possession.

(JB) Concerned he was stopped and in officer response he has not mentioned that suspect possibly using drugs because his eyes were dilated, yet on the form it says he was drunk, that's a bit of a contradiction why is there no mention that he was drunk in his response.

(CH) That's an autocorrect from drugs as you don't search someone who is drunk.

(JB) That's what I'm getting to, not searching when they are drunk – So another mistake on the form and now BWV.

(FJ) What safeguarding measures were taken in terms of his safety, being left on the street like that – Any safeguarding issues.

(CH) This depends on the level on how they are communicating but it would be on a case by case basis.

(SL) Considered this for the previous case where one of the rationales for handcuffs was because they were on a busy road and concerned for his safety. Once the search is finished, what happens?

(CJ) This would be on a case by case basis, if you were on the side of the A14 on foot you would be escorted off.

(AY) Is there any monitoring of court cases where outcomes that were sought and not secured partly because BWV was not available, is that monitored?

(CH) It may be a something that is done wider, we do have reporting on cases that aren't proceeded with, our criminal justice do track those.

(AY) Wondering if this might be something worth looking into because of the impact generally, as these are not isolated cases and may be worth looking into it from another perspective.

# CASES FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY

## Case 3: Stop and Search

### Grounds for stop/search:

Male has been noticed by off duty SGT 1975 inside of the tescos express. As he has walked past the male has smelt strongly of Cannabis and seemed quite spaced out with red eyes. As he has left the shop SGT has also noticed that the male has not parked

in the car park instead leaving it beached at the side of the road in a poor place indicating that the male may be driving under the influence of drugs. SGT has then followed the vehicle to Main road kesgrave where I have arrived. CAD 26012025-248 refers...

The vehicle in question was parked out front with the index provided to VL matching what the SGT was pointing out to me. When knocking on the door SGT agreed that the male that came out was the same male that was inside the store and driving the car.

Based on all that had been seen by the informant I believed this male to be under the influence of Cannabis and have Cannabis on him. Further adding to my justification was that the informant of this call was an off duty SGT who is a police witness and therefore more reliable information.

### ISCRE Comments:

How can the off duty officer be certain the smell had come from this individual when other shoppers present?

- Did the officers searching xxx smell cannabis on him and/or the vehicle? Why are their findings on this not reported in the investigation?
- If the officers did not smell cannabis on him or in the vehicle, how does Officer F explain the disappearing 'strong smell of cannabis' in a matter of minutes from both his person and the vehicle?
- did the officers searching xxxx check whether he had 'red eyes' as had been reported to them? If so, what was their finding on this and why is it not reported?
- did the officers searching xxxx check whether he was 'quite spaced out' as had been reported to them? If so, what was their finding on this and why is it not reported?

### Discussion:

Case from 2025 a case being tracked that was subject to a complaint that has only just been concluded and we are now able to bring to panel.

(SL) gave the panel information seen on the BWV. The off duty officer followed the suspect to an address, this turned out to be his work address. The off duty officer confirmed that is the same person he saw in the store.

They explain to the suspect why they are wanting to search him, the off duty officer says he walked past him in the store and smelt cannabis on him. The suspect says 'are you sure, because I don't smoke'. From watching the footage, his eyes were not red, and we saw no sign of him looking spaced out, he remained very calm and cooperative. The off duty officer said to him, it might not be you, I can't say it was you for definite. They began the search. At that time, it appeared there was an officer who needed to be signed off on carrying out a vehicle search, so they waited for them to arrive before searching the car, although officers did look into the car whilst searching the suspect.

By the time the other officers had arrived to search the vehicle, it was already established that this was not the person who the off duty officer had smelt the cannabis on by him saying to his colleague... "I reckon it was someone else in the shop. Clearly there were a lot of people in the shop, I can't smell anything on him". Whilst this was established, they have still searched the car. I had counted 5 police officers at one point.

**Discussion:**

Cont...

The grounds for this search and the sharing of content from the BWV evoked a lot of discussion and questions from the group to include;

**Community Concern:** Disappointment, upset and sadness, clear racial profiling, the police getting it wrong, the impact on the individual and his workplace will be immense, police inability to re-evaluate and make changes once they realised they got it wrong. Personal vendetta, off duty officers following people, no formal apology, the consistent narrative people still being racially profiled around cannabis just because they are black. The loss of trust and confidence in the police to treat black people fairly including investigating any wrongdoing. What upsets me, is the fact that it's the realisation that you've got the wrong person and he's been put through all of this in his workplace, in front of his colleagues. Officer acted on his prejudice. It makes me fearful if Suffolk Police thinks that this is the quality of officer they want representing their organisation and it's acceptable that no kinds of sanction has been taken. Heavy handed, 5 officers, 3 police cars in attendance for someone who has done nothing wrong.

**Professional Standards:** Further concerns were raised and discussed about the original complaint that went to the Professional Standards Department of Suffolk Constabulary. The response was basically, the officers hadn't done anything wrong, and that the grounds for the stop and search had been met.

**IOPC:** Outcome - The IOPC upheld the application for review, concluding that the outcome of Suffolk Constabulary's investigation into xxx's complaint was not reasonable and proportionate.

While the IOPC did not identify any additional organisational learning, the scrutiny group felt that there was need to look at how investigation officers are reviewing complaints and to draw some learning from this and other recent IOPC reviews that have been upheld.

**Impact on Individual:** (PM) My son said to me, how do I stop this from happening?

I said, the only way that we can stop this happening is if we take the opportunity to talk about this and to educate the police about the impact that it has had. The Impact.

My son has cut off his dreadlocks because he said this is the reason why I was stopped by the police. He has had dreadlocks for most of his adult life. He has cut his dreadlocks now. I can also report to this meeting that my son is now left his employment. I need to be honest, he didn't leave specifically because of this incident, but what he reported to me is that he was then called in by his managers and they said, can you please explain what is happening? He explained to them and he said the police have actually apologised.

He said relationships broke down after that and he was then moved from Kesgrave, where he used to work to Hadleigh. And then he found another job, so he's moved on. Part of the request to the police at the time was to say, can you please write a letter to the employers to say this was a mistake, as the police at the time said, we're sorry for what has happened. The police said we can't do that. That's not part of what we do. So the purpose of this exercise, as horrible as it sounds and as personal as it is, the purpose is this is why we come together like this. the fact that five officers need to draw individual learning.

For me, there is also something that I probably want to hear. It is the fact that you've got five officers who the IOPC have determined that they've done something wrong. But actually I think it's more than that in the sense that there was an investigation by Suffolk Constabulary which determined nothing wrong had happened. This is therefore about an organisation agreeing with those five individual officers. So this is not officers doing something wrong. This is an organisation saying this is what we do.

(JB) I'm having a lot of complaints that I have to refer to the IOPC and most of them are being upheld. It's such a waste of time and resources. It should be done properly at the first instance.

**Actions:**

- Suffolk Constabulary to report back on any action that has been taken since the outcome of the IOPC, Responsible CH.
- Suffolk Constabulary to provide an update of the outcomes of race related complaints reviewed by the IOPC, Responsible CH.

**AOB:****Facial Recognition:**

(AY) Is this (facial recognition tech) also being reviewed in Suffolk, as it is in Essex?

(PM) A while back, this group, did write to the police and we expressed our concern about the the challenges that come with with facial recognition. Particularly some of the mistakes that that happen and the disproportionality that has shown through various pieces of research. We did get a response from the police. They were aware of the research, but they were sure that their process was not going to be impacted by that, when nationally the facial recognition is is rolled out for Suffolk Constabulary.

I don't know if that is still the the position, but it's something that this group has expressed, concern about and if facial recognition is rolled out locally, I think it's something that we would want to keep a very close eye on, particularly in terms of if there is any disproportional or unfair targeting of people from certain communities.

(FJ)Essex Constabulary have paused facial recognition because it identified that there is bias when it comes to identifying black men and women.

(AS) We haven't got time to do it now, but we'll be able to give you an update on that next time. If you're happy for us to bring something back.

**Action:** AS to speak to the group in May about Facial Recognition in Suffolk.

**An extraordinary meeting:**

(JL) Could this group have an extraordinary meeting looking at particular ongoing issues around the use of body worn videos etc.

Twice today the constabulary policy is just smelling cannabis alone is not grounds for stop and search, but in spite of the policy, it's still taking place. The issue about facial recognition to be discussed, but the other issue that maybe coming is a move to a larger force, Norfolk and Suffolk, if we could start doing some early thinking how that might impact on the work of this group.

**Action:** SL to set up extraordinary meeting to discuss points raised.

**Disproportionality:**

(PM) According the latest report to be provided to the police and Crime Commissioner, a black person in Suffolk is five times more likely to be stopped and searched by the police than their white Counterpart. They are 5.6 times more likely to be searched for drugs than their white counterpart. A young black person under the age of 18 is 7.2 times more likely to be searched for drugs by Suffolk Constabulary.

We came together as a group way back in 2008 because we were uncomfortable with the disproportionate use of police powers on people from minoritised backgrounds, we're still talking about that. We need to look creatively on how we address disproportionality that keeps recurring.

There might be need for a meeting which is outside of our meetings, but which focuses on, disproportionality, what might be happening, what do we need to do?

Maybe n independent study as suggested by (CH) that of looks at that issue for Suffolk.

Cases not discussed at this meeting will reviewed, or carried forward to the next meeting.

Meeting closed at 6:03pm.