



Stop and Search, Use of Force and Continuous Improvement Panel

Wednesday, 16th April, 2025, 6pm

Connolly Room, Police Headquarters

PRESENT

Mark Hindle (MH) (Chair)
Stephen Donnell (SD)
Paul Entwistle (PE)
Glenn Ireland (GI)
Keith Kirby (KK)
Marcus Naylor (MN)
Debbie Storr (DS)
Amanda Wooldridge (AW)

IN ATTENDANCE

Chief Supt Chris Hardy (CH)
Jon Campbell-Smith (JCS)
Richard Harrison (RH)
Amy Robertson (AR)

Lancashire Constabulary
Lancashire Constabulary
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

1. Appointment of Chairperson/Vice-Chairperson

MH was formally selected for the role of Chair for the Stop and Search, Use of Force and Continuous Improvement Panel.

2. Welcome and introduction from the Chair

The Chair welcomed all in attendance and reminded members to be concise when providing feedback, to support the Panel's ability to receive as many cases as possible within the time allocated for the meeting.

Additionally, mindful of their role on the Internal Panel, the Chair assured the Panel that he would provide feedback once all members had shared their input. The Chair was confident in their ability to remain impartial at the meeting, despite having observed Lancashire Constabulary's internal panel, recognising that their role was to provide feedback on cases from a public perspective.

3. Apologies for Absence

No apologies were noted for the meeting.

4. Declaration of Interest

Panel members were reminded of the need to consider and disclose any declarations of interest relating to any individuals, officers or matters under consideration.

No declarations of interest were disclosed.

5. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 15th January 2025

The minutes were agreed to be a true and accurate record.

6. Actions from the previous meeting

An action log was shared with members for discussion and updated accordingly.

ACTION 1: With the Chair now formally selected, AR to arrange for the Chair to feature in a video highlighting the role of the Panel.

ACTION 2, 13, 19: It was noted that an update in relation to the ride-a-long scheme would be requested from CH during the meeting.

ACTION 12: It was felt that the benefits of Members observing DEI training would be minimal, as scrutiny of DEI did not fall within the remit of the Panel Members. Consequently, the Panel agreed that observing DEI training was not necessary for the purposes of their role.

Furthermore, it was proposed that an extraordinary session be arranged for Members to observe the following:

- Officer Personal Safety Training
- Layout of a police van
- The application of handcuffs

ACTION 17, 23: Members were informed that feedback from the Internal and External Panel was automatically fed back to the BCU and Officers involved in the cases. Officers at the meeting were asked to report feedback to the Panel by exception.

ACTION 18: The Chair had agreed that force complaints data was to be presented to Members of the data sub-group in future. Members had provided no feedback regarding the presentation of data and were content to follow the Constabulary's lead on this matter in the first instance.

ACTION 19: CH expressed concern that introducing the Right Care, Right Person scheme to the Panel for consideration may lead Members into areas beyond their remit as Panel Members of the Stop and Search, Use of Force, and Continuous Improvement Panel. The Chair acknowledged CH's comments and agreed on the importance of avoiding involvement in areas outside the Panel's remit.

ACTION 21, 22: It was noted that Members would be given the opportunity to view the layout of a police van and application of handcuffs at the extraordinary personal safety training session.

ACTION 24: AR/CH to arrange extra-ordinary personal safety training session, providing Members with the opportunity to observe officer personal safety training, view the layout of a police van and application of handcuffs.

7. Review of 4 Stop and Search/Use of Force Incidents and associated Body Worn Video

The Panel considered 4 Stop and Search Cases and 5 Use of Force cases. In each case, the Panel were shown an incident log, stop and search form(s) and BWV where available.

*The Panel reviewed **Stop and Search** Incident 1 with the following outcomes:*

It was noted that incident 1 was a Stop and Search under Section 1 of PACE.

What went well?

Members felt the Officer had interacted well with the suspect, maintained control of the situation, had good movement and situational awareness, was very assertive and had reached a good outcome.

A Member suggested that the Stop and Search could serve as a valuable training resource for officers.

What did not go well?

Members felt that the Officers BWV was activated too late.

Additionally, one Member observed that the officer appeared quite aggressive during the initial stages of the stop and search. It was noted that the suspect was rather passive, prompting the Panel to discuss whether the officer's approach was proportionate. Several Members felt that the officer's demeanour could have been perceived as intimidating by the suspect, while others commended the officer for effectively controlling the situation.

Comments

The internal stop and search and use of force panel felt the officer controlled the situation well and was assertive. However, a number of Members felt that some of the officers' actions could be perceived as patronising. Overall, there was mixed views around whether the officers demeanour was reasonable and proportionate.

The Internal Panel acknowledged that the officer successfully completed the stop and search form for the suspect and had followed GOWISELY. However, learning was identified for the officer as it was agreed that they should not have had their phone in hand whilst conducting the search due to the associated risks.

*The Panel reviewed **Use of Force** Incident 1 with the following outcomes:*

Use of Force Incident 1 involved the arrest of a female suspect for a domestic incident. It was noted that during the arrest, handcuffs had been applied and tactical communication utilised by officers.

What went well?

The Panel felt that officers had handled the situation well considering the suspect's behaviour towards officers.

What did not go well?

It was noted that officers had told the female suspect to 'shut up' and was felt that this could have escalated the situation further.

Comments

In relation to the use of BWV, it was noted that the Constabulary had been working towards automating the activation of BWV. It was estimated that within 6-8 weeks, the force would have 3600 cameras with this functionality to be used by uniformed officers.

It was noted that the female was searched under Section 32 of PACE and as such, there was no requirement to follow GOWISELY.

It was noted that the Internal Panel had found the use of force to be reasonable and proportionate. However, the Internal Panel also felt that the officer should not have told the suspect to 'shut up'.

The Panel reviewed **Stop and Search** Incident 2 with the following outcomes:

It was noted that incident 2 was a Stop and Search under Section 23 of PACE.

What went well?

SD commended the tactics utilised by officers to check inside the suspect's mouth.

What did not go well?

Whilst the tactics deployed to check inside of the suspect's mouth were commended, it was felt that the search could have been more thorough, for example, officer could have asked the suspect to stick out their tongue.

Comments

PE queried whether officers should have removed handcuffs whilst conducting the search, to ensure the search was conducted thoroughly. JCS noted that the removal of handcuffs did not seem appropriate under the circumstances and that this would be to the judgement of the officer conducting the search.

Whilst the Internal Panel were satisfied with the search conducted, they noted that the officer did not have on BWV and as such, breached BWV Policy. However, it was argued that the officer was unable to attach a body worn camera due to the clothing worn and as such, CH informed the Panel that he intended to raise this issue with clothing stores.

The Panel reviewed **Use of Force** Incident 2 with the following outcomes:

Use of Force Incident 2 involved the arrest of a female under the suspicion of stealing.

What went well?

The Panel felt that the use of force utilised was reasonable and proportionate and that BWV was activated in good time.

Comments

It was recognised that the incident may have been captured by CCTV. Due to the delays often experienced by the force when requesting a copy of CCTV footage, Members queried whether officers were permitted to record CCTV footage on their mobile devices. Officers noted that this was not commonly advised as the CPS did not consider this to be an accurate method of capturing evidence. However, it was noted that if the suspect had recorded the incident on their personal mobile, officers had the powers to seize the device under Section 19 of PACE.

The Internal Panel felt that the officer had placed the suspect under arrest too quickly; it was noted that the officer had only asked the name of the suspect on one occasion before conducting the arrest. It was felt that the officer should have given the suspect the opportunity to cooperate or awaited the arrival of additional officers. However, the Internal Panel felt the use of force was reasonable and proportionate.

In consideration of the demand faced in custody and issues associated with the criminalisation of children, MH highlighted the importance of not placing individuals under arrest if avoidable. JCS noted that officers do adopt a child first approach when conducting arrests, attempting where possible to handle child criminality outside of the criminal justice environment.

The Panel reviewed *Stop and Search* Incident 3 with the following outcomes:

It was noted that incident 3 was a stop and search under Section 23 of PACE.

What went well?

The Panel felt that some elements of the search were conducted well.

What did not go well?

The Panel noted a number of concerns regarding the search as follows:

- Officer did not ask whether the suspect had any sharp/dangerous objects on their person before searching
- Officer did not wear gloves to conduct the search
- The scene seemed a little chaotic, with officers conducting the search both inside and outside the suspect's premises.

Comments

It was noted that under Section 23 of PACE, officers were permitted to conduct a search both inside and outside premises.

Members asked whether the officer conducting the search had been granted a warrant for entering the suspect's address. Officers were uncertain as to whether a warrant was granted and as such, further exploration was required.

The Internal Panel felt that the officer had conducted the search too hastily. In addition, the Internal Panel raised concerns in relation to the female officer going upstairs into the property on her own, due to the health and safety risks presented.

The Panel reviewed *Use of Force* Incident 3 with the following outcomes:

It was noted that the suspect involved in use of force incident 3 was under arrest on the suspicion of being in possession of a dangerous weapon.

What did not go well?

Panel Members felt that the search conducted as part of this incident was not conducted well in beginning stages, however noted improvement towards the end. The Panel noted the following issues:

- One of the officers had been wearing glasses during the arrest which posed a health and safety risk
- Some of the officers had been laughing/joking which was perceived as unprofessional
- Some of the officers were not wearing gloves
- Officers did not seem to follow protocol when handling the suspect
- One of the officers was seen to have pushed the suspect which seemed unnecessary and could have escalated the situation
- Lack of awareness of personal safety
- Public perception

Comments

The Internal Panel noted that the officer had activated BWV in good time. However, the Internal Panel also highlighted a number of issues/learning points, as follows:

- It did not seem necessary to take the suspect to the floor in the initial stages of the arrest; the officer had a taser in his possession and could have deployed if necessary
- Officers could have conducted the search much slower
- Officer wearing glasses was a health and safety risk

Overall, the External Panel noted most of the concerns voiced by the Internal Panel.

The Panel reviewed **Stop and Search** Incident 4 with the following outcomes:

It was noted that incident 2 was a Stop and Search under Section 23 of PACE.

It was noted that officers were now required to complete an additional form when conducting vehicle searches to allow the force to monitor compliance and demographics.

What went well?

The Panel felt that overall, the search was conducted well.

What did not go well?

The Panel noted that the officer had not completed a use of force form despite having handcuffed the suspect.

Comments

The Internal Panel felt the officers did not have the scene well controlled; it was noted that there were a lot of people walking around the scene and that the searching officer had been on the phone whilst talking to the suspect. In addition, due to the reasons identified for conducting the search, the Panel felt that both individuals should have been subjected to a search.

The Panel reviewed Use of Force Incident 4 with the following outcomes:

Use of force incident 4 involved a male who was under arrest on suspicion of being drunk and disorderly. It was noted that officers had applied handcuffs in order to gain compliance.

What went well?

The Panel felt that overall, officers had conducted the search and interacted with the suspect well.

The officer had warned the suspect that he would be arrested should he continue to be uncooperative and followed through with this action, which Members commended.

What did not go well?

The Panel noted that the officer was not assertive with the suspect until he walked away. In addition, Members raised concerns regarding personal safety as the officer was very close to the suspect.

Comments

The Internal Panel noted that the officer had remained calm which was commended. However, it was noted that the officer should have handed the bag to the PCSO in attendance as this was deemed obstructive.

The Panel reviewed Use of Force Incident 5 with the following outcomes:

What went well?

The Panel commended officers for activating BWV in good time.

Comments

The Panel was informed that the drawing of a firearm constituted use of force, regardless of whether or not the firearm was used.

8. Case Feedback from Previous meeting

This item was addressed as part of the action log update.

9. Stop and Search, Use of Force and Continuous Improvement Panel Sub-Group Update

It was noted that stop and search and use of force data would be considered at a separate sub-group meeting going forward. The meeting took place one week before the formal External Panel meeting and members of the group were comprised of Panel Members of the Stop and Search, Use of Force and Continuous Improvement Panel.

It was noted that whilst the meeting was to report by exception on the data presented, all stop and use of force data would be circulated to Members prior to the meeting.

Moreover, the Panel was informed that Lancashire Constabulary had commissioned UCLan to undertake a piece of research around vehicle searches, due the ongoing concerns around disproportionality. The force were to receive monthly updates and agreed to keep Members informed on progress.

In addition, it was noted that the Constabulary were currently in the process of developing a new stop and search form which would contain some new features. The Panel were informed that the form would now include a QR code which, once scanned, would lead individuals to the Constabulary's complaints page, in the hope of making the complaints process more accessible.

In relation to the data presented, MH requested additional data to be included at the next sub-group meeting in respect of the amount of stop and searches that lead to arrests.

10. Ride Along Scheme Update

Whilst acknowledging the difficulties and risks in developing a ride along scheme, the Chair highlighted the importance of Members being provided with the opportunity to attend a ride along with officers as an additional means of conducting scrutiny of stop and search and use of force powers and increasing public trust and confidence.

Following a discussion in regard to the difficulties presented and risk mitigations, CH agreed to provide AR with dates of operations whereby Member attendance would be deemed appropriate.

ACTION 25: AR to arrange Member attendance to a ride along once dates have been provided by CH.

11. Section 60 Authorities Since Last Reported to the Panel

There were no Section 60 Authorities to review in the period since the last Panel meeting.

12. Annual Review

A report outlining the Panel's activities during the 2024/25 period had been circulated to Members, who were invited to submit comments should they wish to do so.

13. Any Other Business

No other business was noted.

14. Date of next meeting (to be held at 18:00 hours)

Wednesday, 16th July 2025.