Terms of Reference for the

Hertfordshire Independent BWV Scrutiny Panel

1. Background

National and Local Use of Force Policies

1.1 The Hertfordshire Independent Body Worn Video Scrutiny Panel was established by the Police and Crime Commissioner in 2023. This was as a result of Action 102 in the Community Safety and Criminal Plan for Hertfordshire (Everybody's Business) 2022 – 2027, by using BWV for closer examination of police practices, and provide constructive oversight, discussion, and challenge[1].

1.2 Hertfordshire Constabulary follow national and local statutory frameworks including BCH Body Worn Video Policy and NPCC Body Worn Video Policy[2]. Although not included in legislation, the Constabulary are committed to being transparent and support the Panel through enabling access to BWV and Statements.

2. Terms of Reference

Purpose and remit

2.1 The purpose of the Panel is to support the PCC to discharge their statutory duty and hold the Chief Constable to account. They do this by providing independent scrutiny and feedback on the appropriate use of Body Worn Video and that Officer decision making is adhering to public service values of high standards and professional personal conduct. The Panel also make sensible and proportionate recommendations on the Constabulary's procedures and practices.

2.2 External scrutiny is an important part of police legitimacy. It opens police practices to communities for closer examination, with a view to them providing constructive oversight, discussion, and challenge. If done well, it can provide opportunities for the police to understand communities' concerns and take steps, where appropriate, to improve policies, procedures, and practices.

[1] Hertfordshire CSCJ Plan 2022-2027
[2] NPCC Body Worn Video Policy

Membership

2.3 The Panel meetings will consist of 15 members of the public who live, work or study in Hertfordshire. If the Panel becomes larger, a pool of 15 will be selected for meetings. As far as possible, the Panel should represent the demographics of the county[3].

2.4 The OPCC will lead on the recruitment of new members in line with the needs of the Panel. The OPCC will interview all prospective members to understand their motivations and intertest, whilst also ensuring their suitability for the role.

2.5 Mandatory training must be completed before any new member can partake in scrutiny exercises. All new members will be encouraged to go on a police Ride Along, to help them understand the context within which the police are responding to the public.

2.6 It is expected that members will attend at least three of the six bimonthly meetings per annum to ensure consistency in representation, assessment of records and maintain current knowledge. See also paragraph 2.15.

2.7 Members can serve on the Panel for up to two terms of three years, with a third three-year term by exception.

2.8 Members can be appointed to more than one of the OPCC's scrutiny panels at any given time. They can also undertake other volunteer work for the OPCC, for example as an Independent Custody Visitor. The OPCC will provide advice on any potential conflict of interest to individual members as appropriate.

2.9 All members will be required to sign an Information Sharing Agreement, which includes a confidentiality clause to protect detainees shown in body worn video footage.

2.10 Member's names will be published on the Panel's webpage on the Commissioner's website and will also appear in minutes of meetings which will also be published on the Panel's webpage.

2.11 Members are volunteers and as such are not renumerated for their work. Members can submit expense claim forms to the OPCC for any reasonable travel expenses incurred for their Panel work.

2.12 See also the Panel Member Role Profile for further details including key attributes and responsibilities.

Leadership roles

2.13 The Panel will be led by an Independent Chair. The appointment of the Chair will be for a two-year term; the Chair can be reappointed for a second term, with a third two-year term by exception. The Chair of the group will be appointed by the PCC but would be expected to be a member.

[3] Hertfordshire facts and figures - E10000015 - ONS

2.14 The Chair will be supported by the Vice Chair. The Vice Chairs will be appointed by the Chair and the OPCC but would be expected to be a panel member. The Vice Chair will be appointed for a two-year term, overlapping with the Chair and the Vice Chair two-year terms to ensure continuity throughout any election process. The Vice Chair can be reappointed for a second term, with a third two-year term by exception.

2.15 See also the Chair Role Profile and Vice Chair Role Profile for further details including key attributes and responsibilities.

Meetings and scrutiny

2.16 The Panel will meet bimonthly. Meetings will be for approximately 2.5 hours and held in person or online. Meetings can be held in public buildings as well as community venues as appropriate. Members will be given advance notice of venues.

2.17 During meetings, members will undertake dip sampling and scrutiny of body worn video footage of wide range of incidents including, but not limited to:

- Domestics
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Mental Health
- Traffic Stops

2.18 The Panel will highlight any concerns, issues and areas of good practice and learning to the Constabulary.

2.19 From their own scrutiny findings, as well as issues identified in the data, the Panel will conduct deep dives on a thematic basis or into specific Community Safety Partnership areas.

2.20 The Constabulary may request additional scrutiny from the Panel, for example to support a special operation. This could be raised by the Police Powers Board, or other existing boards/groups.

Governance

2.21 All Panel members are required to sign an annual Information Disclosure Agreement. This sets out their personal liability under the Data Protection Act 1998 for any wilful or reckless act regarding the misuse of information (See Panel Member's Role Profile for more information).

2.22 The Panel will produce an annual report, with support from the OPCC, covering the Panel's activity over the preceding 12 months. This will be presented by the Chair of the Scrutiny Panel to the Police and Crime Panel, usually in June. The annual report will be published on the Panel's webpage. See also paragraph 2.28.

Secretariat

2.23 The OPCC will manage the secretariat for the Panel. This includes providing support to the Chair on the management of meetings as well as the development of the panel.

2.24 The OPCC will manage the Panel's webpage which is hosted on the Commissioner's website.

Role of the Constabulary

2.25 The Local Operational Policing Command lead for Body Worn Video within Hertfordshire Constabulary or their representative will attend all Panel meetings. They will be accountable for any issues and concerns which may arise and answer questions by members. They are also responsible for progressing feedback provided by the Panel within the Force, including raising issues to supervisors and Professional Standards Department (PSD) as appropriate.

Review and monitoring arrangements

2.26 The Terms of Reference will be reviewed every two years to ensure that they consider any local or national recommendations or legislative changes.

2.27 The Constabulary will invite the Chair of the Panel to attend the quarterly Police Powers Board to report on recent findings by the Panel.

2.28 The Panel's annual report will be presented by the OPCC to the Hertfordshire Community Safety Board at their autumn meeting. See also paragraph 2.22.

Owner	Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
Next Review Date	November 2025