

Hertfordshire Community Stop and Search Panel

Monday 24th November, 10am – 1pm

Three Rivers District Council Offices

Minutes

Attendance:

Demitrius Nurse (Chair)	DN	Valerie Shrimplin	VS
Andy Taylor	AT	Paulette Reed	PR
Jerry Rudd	JR	Dennis Elam	DE
Jeffrey Burke	JB	Ch Supt Jon Simpson	JS
Jacqueline Gaffin	JG	Supt Ben Wright	BW
Eddie McCarroll	EMc	PS Adrian Pikett	AP
Linda Blake	LB	Noorie Haroon	NH
Godfrey Minsky	GM	Scott Hague	SH
John Gillett	JG	Eleanor Makoni	EM
Nigel Marshall	NM	Sue McNeill, OPCC (minutes)	SMc

Also present: Harvey Marshall, PS Saunders, PS Selby, PS Pickering and PC Wicks

1	Welcome, Introductions and Apologies
1.1	The Chair (DN) welcomed panel members, officers from the Constabulary and observers, particularly Nigel Harvey (new panel member) and Harvey Marshall (under 18 observer) who expressed interested in the scrutiny process in support of his studies.
1.2	Apologies were noted from: Ch Insp David Cooke, Insp Clare Cray, Amie Birkhamshaw, Mohammad Islam Ruman, Bukola Efunshile, David Reynolds, Robert Lloyd, Ben Platt, Jamal Pasha, Phil Millard and Tara Bullworthy.
1.3	DN advised the panel that Megan Holland had resigned from both the Stop & Search and Use of Force Panels as she had secured a new job. He asked for thanks to be formally recorded in the minutes and wished her well in her future career.

2	Minutes of the Previous Meeting, Actions and Matters Arising.
2.1	The minutes of the previous meeting held in September 2025 were agreed (see pack item 1) and the action tracker was updated (item 2.)
2.2	Prior to the meeting, the Constabulary feedback presentation on individual concerns raised was circulated to the panel. (Item 3). For one matter graded as a serious concern, AP reminded the panel of the record detail and panel's view of the lack of contextual link between reason given for stop/search and the individuals detained. The panel was confident in the Constabulary's response as circulated.
2.3	DN reminded the panel that two matters had been referred to the Use of Force Panel to review the application of handcuffs during the search. As the Use of Force Panel had not met by the time of this meeting, the findings will be shared at the next Stop & Search Panel meeting. No further issues were raised.
3	Abolition of Police and Crime Commissioners
3.1	SH advised the panel that on 13 th November 2025, the government announced that standalone PCCs will be abolished at the scheduled end of term of office in May 2028. This was outlined in the White Paper detailing the intention for elected mayors to hold the PCC functions as well as the fire and rescue functions and new powers relating to the economy, infrastructure, skills and transport.
3.2	Hertfordshire leaders had already written to the government requesting a mayor for the county from 2028 and work is underway to ensure the model works effectively for policing. For now, it is business as usual. The statutory responsibilities that the PCC holds and the OPCC supports have not changed. The Police & Crime Plan priorities are unaffected.
3.3	Panel concerns included potential office structure, transition and scrutiny lead. JS stated that, whilst unable to comment on Hertfordshire's future, a mayoral model existed and was best demonstrated in London with the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC.)
3.4	EMc asked if the panel chairs would be consulted in any change to scrutiny structure and transition. JS assured that, as Chair of Police Powers Board, his desire was for scrutiny to continue and reminded that much was mandated. The function

	was extremely valuable to the Constabulary in terms of both learning and public confidence.
3.5	DN added that, as the panel had been established for several years, the development and improvements in processes, recommendations, Constabulary relationships and learning outcomes could be detrimentally affected if the transition was not handled effectively.
4	Digitising the feedback form
4.1	With a view to increasing office efficiency and effectiveness, SH advised the panel that a digital feedback provision was in development. Briefly, a simplified version of the forms would be accessible via dedicated tablets and feedback, once submitted, would automatically populate a system accessible by both the OPCC and Constabulary. He added that it was likely to be trialled in the new year with the full support of the office throughout the process.
4.2	The panel acknowledged the need to develop efficient systems but expressed concern that a digital system may reduce options for full and frank feedback, particularly if 'drop-down menus' were used. SH assured that free text boxes will allow the same level of recording as currently provided on the paper feedback forms. EMc noted the positive development but added that replicating the paper feedback sheets was only the start and longer-term improvements should include digital analysis of the feedback provided.
5	Data Subgroup Update
5.1	Having considerable focus on disproportionality, the last panel review concentrated on outcomes, specifically 'no further action' where the detainee had been Black or Asian. EMc stated that the resulting panel feedback was aligned to that for searches of the general population. This was positive to note as it suggested the Constabulary was consistent in its use of the power irrespective of the detainee's ethnicity.
5.2	EMc added that the Data Subgroup had lost momentum due to several structural and personnel changes in both the OPCC and Constabulary. The group had started to explore the possibility of deprivation being a relevant factor, but the lack of data had halted further consideration. The panel acknowledged the action previously

	recorded relating to data provision and BW asked SH to liaise with AB regarding this topic with a view to BW assisting in reinvigorating the provision of data to the subgroup. Action: SH to liaise with AB to include BW in discussions with the Data Engineering Team.																																																
6	Panel Feedback – Countywide																																																
6.1	The scrutiny took place between 10.30am and 12.30pm. The below grid represents the gradings as recorded by the panel. A registration sheet is cross-referenced with the individual records for accuracy. The figures in brackets relate to scores given for the BWV footage as this is also fed back to the Constabulary but separated so as not to distort record review figures. Where the panel was split in its decision, the poorest grade has been recorded.																																																
6.2	As there were insufficient panel members for five subgroups, group four records were not scrutinised.																																																
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6.4	** One piece of footage was ungraded as the noise (windy weather) on the recording made it difficult for the panel to understand what was being said.																																																

6.5	<i>General feedback:</i> the panel noted a marked return to the use of copy and paste for several records. DN reminded that its use was acceptable if the records were individualised. Several poorly graded records lacked information but it was felt that, overall, the standard of reporting had improved, allowing the panel to review records more quickly. The panel highlighted grammar issues affecting the quality of the report, particularly where misspelt words could potentially change the meaning of a sentence. It was suggested that supervisors could include this in their review of records.
6.6	There was considerable discussion regarding one record where the grounds for the search was smell of cannabis only, but the detainee was alone in a wooded area. The subgroup had originally graded this as Amber 3, but after discussion with operational officers, accepted that the smell could only have come from her, making the grounds reasonable. This prompted the suggestion of further scenarios and there was some disagreement on whether the smell only in this instance was sufficient grounds for the search. <i>Post-meeting note: whilst the group regraded the engagement, the original concern graded as Amber 3 has been recorded above. This allows the Constabulary the opportunity to review the matter and provide a response.</i>
6.7	The panel sought clarity on removing a detainee's hat during a search. It was explained that according to PACE, a hat can be removed when in a "non-public area."
7	Chair's Update
7.1	Black History Month: Accompanied by Assistant Chief Constable and representatives of the Hertfordshire Black & Asian Police Association (HBAPA), DN attended an event in St Albans. Presentations were well-received, prompting discussion and good feedback.
7.2	Data Subgroup: DN suggested that members of the subgroups for both Stop & Search and Use of Force Panels should meet to discuss cross-panel matters including data provision, need and purpose. Action: OPCC to facilitate the invitation of a joint data subgroup meeting / call.

8	Any Other Business
8.1	Having been invited to comment, Harvey Marshall stated that he had enjoyed the experience and thanked the Chair for allowing him to observe the process.
8.2	AP advised the panel that, as he was changing roles within the Constabulary, this would be his last meeting. DN thanked him on behalf of the panel for the support provided for the last two years and wished him well for the future.
8.3	No other items were raised and DN closed the meeting.
9	Date of next meeting: Thursday 29th January 2026, 5.30pm – 8.30pm, Titan Court, Hatfield. <i>Please note that this meeting has been changed to an in-person only event.</i>

