

**Northamptonshire Police**  
**USE OF POWERS SCRUTINY PANEL**  
**08-09-2022**

Chief Inspector Pete Basham, Chief Inspector Gan Thayanithy and Chief Inspector James Willis were delighted to welcome members of the community to the meeting.

The Panel was shown video clips of six incidents recorded by officers using their body-worn video cameras, of three Stop & Search interactions, and three examples of Use of Force. The video clips were randomly selected by the Panel's Community Co-chair from incidents occurring in August 2022; whilst a pleasingly wide range of interactions was selected, unfortunately the quality of video six – Use of Force in a confined space - was poor.

CI Basham stressed the importance of the Panel's feedback – via the forms provided – in shaping the Force's use of these policing powers; he explained that whilst officers received annual refresher training on Use of Force, he was looking for a more "qualitative" response to the interactions shown. He also asked the Panel to put forward names of potential recruits, noting that he was particularly interested in assembling a diverse range of Panel members, including community leaders and influencers, young people, people from those communities who were disproportionately subject to Stop & Search, and people with lived experience of policing powers.

### Stop & Search

CASE 1: The subject was one of two young lads, following receipt of information that one was carrying a knife; no knife was found. The Panel scored the officer at 80%:

- *The officer was extremely polite despite having to initially give the subject a chase and the interaction was very professional*

CASE 2: Officers' observations in a known drugs hotspot led them to challenge a male who appeared to be nervous and was wearing two pairs of jogging bottoms. He was searched for Class A drugs but as his details could not be confirmed on Force systems, he was taken to a police station for a full strip search. The Panel scored the officer at 85%:

- *I like how the officer made the whole process less formal – this made the subject relaxed*
- *The officer's use of SnapChat to relay a photograph of the subject's identification documents to a colleague was challenged as being an insecure way to transfer personal data; Chief Inspector Basham has provided feedback to the officer on this point*

CASE 3: Officers respond to reports from members of the public that two young males are breaking into a boat and locate two boys matching the descriptions provided. Suspects are searched under s1, PACE and no stolen items located. Suspects delivered home to their

respective parents, and safeguarding reports submitted. The Panel scored the officer at 88%:

- *The officer did not wear protective gloves while conducting the search – this is a potential health & safety issue*
- *I can't remember hearing the officer giving the legislation used; could it be because of the age of the subject? It is really nice to see he was not cuffed*
- *Officer spoke too fast. Officer should have been more compassionate, as it was obvious that the kids were very afraid*

### Use of Force

CASE 4: A motorbike without registration plates is seen by PCSOs being wheeled through the back gate of an address linked by intelligence to motorbike theft. A crowd gathers and back-up is summoned; when the officer places his hand on the suspect's arm and tells him to stop moving the bike, the officer is pushed. The Panel scored the officer at 86%:

- *Maybe the officers could have explained why the motorbike had to be left alone*

CASE 5: Officers called to escort a detainee from the custody suite to a place of safety, as required by the mental health nurse in custody. Once in the ambulance, the patient refused to wear a seatbelt, and – after several warnings from both officers and paramedics - was handcuffed to keep her safely in her seat. The Panel scored the officer at 87%:

- *The officer respected the privacy of the subject by asking the on-lookers to move away – very good action*
- *Not sure that the subject has the capacity to understand her decision to refuse the use of the seatbelt; nevertheless, use of force is reasonable*
- *Mental health impacts understanding on risk – better understanding of subject's mental health would have improved the subject's experience*

CASE 6: Call for service from a female reporting a domestic assault. Upon arrival, suspect is identified, but is intoxicated, aggressive and resists arrest. Suspect is taken to the ground using a hip toss method, and additional force is used to apply handcuffs; PAVA (incapacitant spray) also used to gain control. The Panel scored the officer at 63% indicating that some remedial intervention is warranted; Chief Inspector Basham has provided feedback to the officer and his supervisor:

- *I think the use of PAVA spray could have been avoided – I don't think the resistance is that aggressive to warrant the use of spray*
- *Maybe the officers could have calmed the suspect down before handcuffing*