

# Birmingham North LPU Stop and Search Scrutiny Panel Terms of Reference

## **Background**

The use of stop and search powers is vital in preventing and detecting crime, however the use of these powers has recently come under a great deal of scrutiny by the media, focus groups, government and police forces themselves. There is a concern that officers do not use the powers correctly, proportionally or with the correct level of respect for the person subjected to the search. Interacting with the public is an essential facet of police work that helps us make our communities feel safer.

West Midlands Police is committed to complying with the requirements of the Codes of Practice contained within the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE). West Midlands Police will use all the powers at its disposal to serve our communities and protect them from harm.

## **Terms of Reference**

The purpose of the scrutiny panel is to overview the use of stop and search on the Birmingham North LPU. This will cover a number of areas of activity listed below, and will aim to improve the trust and confidence of our community in the way searches are conducted. The panel will, through the "police lead", be able to hold officers accountable for their actions. The panel is a voice to feedback to the local community, and influence police actions.

## **Meetings**

### **Members**

The panel will consist of the existing representatives from the Birmingham North Independent Advisory Group as well as other interested parties from the LPU, and the Local Policing Superintendent as a "police lead". Consideration will be given to how the panel will develop to include the general public and youth representation. The panel will represent the demographics of the LPU.

### **Chair**

The chair will be the existing chair of the Birmingham North Independent Advisory Group who will be supported by the "police lead" as this will improve transparency and accountability. The chair will be appointed for a period of one year and this will be reviewed annually.

### **Frequency**

The panel will meet bi-monthly at Sutton Coldfield Police Station at 18.00 for 1 hour

### **Method**

The panel will, at each meeting, be presented with the following data for discussion and scrutiny:-

1. The total number of stop and searches on the LPU for the last 3 month rolling period.

2. A breakdown of the locations for the searches to ward level to ascertain if this is reflective of policing activity.
3. The demographic of the data in terms of ethnicity of the persons stopped and searched, compared to the demographic of the LPU.
4. A breakdown of the age range of persons stopped and searched

The panel will select a random sample of 10 Stop and Search forms from the relevant period at each meeting. These forms will have the identity of the person stopped and officer conducting the stop redacted. These forms will then be reviewed to identify any concerns, issues and areas of good practice and learning.

The panel will feedback any concerns from local communities in the use of stop and search to the meeting and also feedback to the same communities on the outcomes of the discussions and issues raised at the meeting.

The “police lead” will ensure that panel members are provided with minutes from meetings and any actions. The minutes of the meetings will be published and available to the community on the Police and Crime Commissioner website.

Where issues are raised that fall outside the scope of the Stop and Search Scrutiny Panel, then the chair will bring this to the attention of the “police lead” who will ensure that the appropriate action is taken. The “police lead” will inform the panel of the result of any action taken.

### **Review**

A review of the panel and membership will be undertaken annually to ensure that it is representative of the communities of Birmingham North.

The terms of reference is a “living document” and will be subject to review at least every six months, to ensure that it takes account of any Force, Home Office/ACPO, legislative changes, and good practice (learning lessons) both locally and nationally.