

Minutes of Stop and Search Scrutiny Panel Meeting 12th June 2014 at Brierley Hill Police Station

Attendees :

Chief Inspector Nick Rowe – Dudley Local Policing Unit

T/PS Ryan Gardener – Norton Neighbourhood Team

PC Marc Bullas – Dudley Offender Management Team

WPC Natalie Lees – Stourbridge Neighbourhood Team

Judy Foster – APCC

Alexander Kendall – (Chair person) King Edwards College

Heather Smith – King Edwards College

Eloise-Emily Farmer – King Edwards College

Rosie Millian – King Edwards College

Josh Gregg – King Edwards College

Leon Williams – DMBC Youth Service

Dominic Tipping – DMBC Youth Service

1. Meeting opened by the chairperson – **AK** and introductions of all persons present carried out.
2. Apologies – Rosina Ottewell – Community Cohesion Manager
3. Presentation by **JF**. **JF** stated that details of her presentation can be circulated to persons not present if required. **JF** explained to all the role of the PCC : 1. Setting Priorities for Policing, 2. Budget decisions for policing and 3. Holding the Chief Constable to account.

JF went on that there is a local Policing Plan for each borough each of which is put together with the help of the communities of the borough. Each borough has a Local Policing and Crime Panel

which is chaired by a member of the public / community. All of the funding given to the PCC by the government will be passed onto the chair person of each of these panels.

JF stated that our PCC has 3 persons that assist him with these priorities as it would be too much work for one person and all details are on the PCC website.

Q : How is the PCC engaging with young people ?

The PCC wants as many people as possible to get involved with the local policies and runs advice surgeries, web chats, blogs and sends out newsletters amongst other things. There are 14 youth commissioners in the West Midlands Force area, 2 of which are for the Dudley Borough. **JF** mentioned that the youth commissioners were unable to attend this meeting tonight but were invited. These youth commissioners work on a voluntary basis for the PCC and give the views of young people generally on points like crime and anti- social behaviour.

JF states that Stop and Search is a priority for the PCC (Bob Jones). As a result of a summit in 2013, a document was produced with guidelines and all of the points raised in the document have been implemented successfully namely :

1. Training for all officers
2. Scrutiny Panels
3. All records on line rather than paper
4. Supervisor control with records
5. Greater Accountability
6. Changes to the use of section 60 Policing powers.

CI Rowe explains what a section 60 power involves – a high ranking officer can authorise the search of any person within a specific area where no grounds for search is required. As a result of this document, limitations are now in place and it is only in exceptional circumstances that the power is used but that it is a vital tool in policing. The IPCC (Independent Police Complaints Commission) have done an investigation since this document and have found considerable improvement within the way this power is used.

JF went on to say that she has concerns that police encounters are not recorded anymore. An encounter being when the police speak to someone but do not search them.

JF reiterated that stop and search does have great value and keeps and makes people feel safe as long as it is used responsibly.

Presentation completed. No questions asked.

Power Point Presentation by **PC Marc Bullas** – Offender Management Team based at Brierley Hill Police Station.

Marc explained over 200 police officers – PC's, Sgts and Inspectors have been re trained in Stop and Search in recent months. This was not a local training package but something that was rolled out by the home office. The training package aimed to :

- Outline the relevant legislation for Stop & Search
- Understand the importance of 'Reasonable Grounds'
- Give examples of how to build 'Reasonable Grounds'
- Outline other tactical options available
- Summarise the journey of the form and understand how the data is used
- Summarise future scrutiny and landscape of Stop & Search

It was discussed that actually the perception of stop and search is dependent on whether you have actually been subject of a stop and search. **MB** went on that Civility was key and that remaining professional made most situations better. This said, officers may sometimes go into a situation 'like a bull' as they may well be concerned as officers do not know what the subject may have in their pockets. It was reinforced during this training of the importance of being polite and courteous.

MB showed a number of old stop and search forms and discussions were had around detail and the good and bad points on the forms.

All persons present were aware of the relevant legislation around stop and search but **MB** briefly went through it:

Before you stop anyone consider the following;

1. Is what I am about to do lawful?
2. Is what I am about to do necessary, justifiable and proportionate?
3. Am I being professional and accountable in my actions?

MB went through three scenarios and discussion was had as to whether there were sufficient grounds to stop and search.

MB also mentioned that as the new system is all electronic and details are recorded at the time of the search, there is no longer any issue with handwriting and not enough space on the form to go into detail about the grounds for search.

No questions asked.

Ryan Gardner then went through the data for March / April and May 2014. Discussion was had around this data which includes how many stop searches were conducted, the outcomes of each stop and ethnicity of the individual stopped.

6 forms from the new and live system were then scrutinised by the panel.

CI Rowe then explained that he attends the gold meetings for stop and search but none of the panel had anything to take to the next meeting apart from the fact that the new system appears to have improved.

Next meeting set as 15/09/14 at 1830 hours.