

BN Stop & Search Scrutiny

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 8th January 2015

Those in attendance:

Linda Hines (LH) – Chair
Tod Hale (TH)
Trudy Yates (TY)
Muhammed Sultan (MS)
Andy Jackson (AJ)
Sue Baily (SB)
Steve Whitehorn (SW)
Kamz Manku (KM)
Chief Inspector Paul Ditta (PD)
Inspector Andy Russell (AR)
Vicki Smith (VS)

1) Welcome, Introduction & Apologies

Meeting open at 18:30hrs by Chair and introductions completed.

Apologies;

Steve Clayton
Superintendent Ron Winch
Sam Miller
Henry Wattis
Heidi Bryan

Linda Hines welcomed Kamz Manku, from Sutton College and an Erdington resident, as a new member of the Stop & Search scrutiny panel.

2) Conflicts of interest

LH asked group to confirm if there was any conflict of interest – no conflict identified.

3) Matters arising from previous meeting

Previous Action: Inspector Russell to feedback changing the format of “time & day” graph

The presentation still includes the clock graph for the “time & date” as this is how the system produces this data. AR has received his training now so better understands this graph and can provide the group with more information and clarification over what it displays – **action discharged**

Previous Action: Inspector Russell to confirm what “conditional bail” refers to

AR explained that when an officer conducts a stop & search, one of their available options is a Street Bail which means they don't have to arrest the individual and take them to custody but to issue them bail conditions on the street. A “conditional bail” is when the officer has issued a street bail and has attached some conditionals on the bail. AR would not expect this to be used very often by officers – **action discharged**

Previous Action: Inspector Russell to request an additional line for “total arrested” so percentage is clearer

AR explained due to the way the system produces the data; we are currently unable to add another line – **action discharged**

Previous Action: Inspector Russell to review HGP6242 to check if meets standards

AR has looked into this form and had a conversation with the officer's sergeant. The sergeant has spoken to the officer to better understand what “acting suspiciously” meant. After this discussion, the sergeant was satisfied with the reasoning and signed it off as meeting the standard. AR now understands the reasoning and agrees that it meets the standard. AR has provided feedback to both the sergeant and officer about ensuring they record the reasoning on the system. AR showed the group he has added comments onto the form showing it had been discussed at the scrutiny panel and feedback was given to the officer - **action discharged**

Previous Group task: need to make group more diverse – need to look at other groups/associations engage with for potential new members from different ethnic backgrounds / younger age group

This is an on-going action for the group to continually review the make-up of the group and consider possible new panel members.

Previous Group task: view PCC website and come up with ideas/views on what they would like on the Birmingham North page

Discussed below under “AOB”

4) Provision of data & discussion to include arrest rates, type of searches conducted & race proportionality

Data discussed was from 1st November to 31st December 2014. There were 132 stop & searches in total across Birmingham North for this period with 51 in Sutton constituency and 81 in Erdington constituency. AR informed the group that these numbers are about average for Birmingham North.

The three hotspot areas were discussed with the group and CI Ditta explained the police tactics in looking at these areas;

- 1) Marsh Hill
- 2) Four Oaks / Mere Green
- 3) Wylde Green

The group asked about the “how many expected to stop & search” column and asked from where this figure is obtained. PD explained this was from Census data for the Birmingham North and the Force use this to produce a percentage. Obviously, there is a problem with this as the area is not a static population due to people coming in and leaving the area due to school, work, shopping etc. so this will affect the figures.

AR showed that the highest percentage regarding age range is 16 to 18 years olds. Nothing unexpected was seen on the time & date graph which could cause concern.

AR went through the tables of power used, object and outcome. Few examples;

- 30.8% used s.23 Misuse of Drugs as a power to conduct the stop & search
- 46% used s.1 of PACE as a power
- The object searched for was mainly drugs with a 48%
- Just over 30% were arrested – 22.6% related to the stop & search and 0.8% (1 person) not related to the stop & search (discovered to be wanted)
- 72.9% no further action was taken (NFA)

PD wanted to confirm with the group that an NFA outcome does not mean the stop was unlawful, it just means that the officer didn't find what they were looking for. AR confirmed that the Force is looking at 30% for positive outcome for stop & search and we are meeting this on Birmingham North.

Stop & Search helps build an intelligence picture in hotspot areas and around known offenders. It also helps prevent crime and reduces the offender's chance of committing an offence in that area.

LH commented it would be useful to see a slide comparing the data to previous months so the group can easily see if there has been more or less. AR informed group there is a section on the Stop & Search system which produces a graph and as it is “live time”, it will be a true reflection.

5) Review of a selection of actual stop & search forms

AR has been out to see all the sergeants on the LPU and provided training on using the system etc.

AR has also been out to the staff in the contact centre to ensure they understand what should be included. The free text box gives the officer 750 characters to explain their reasoning.

Form one:

Person & Vehicle

23:09 on 04.01.2015 on Streetly Lane

Section 1 of PACE was the power and they were looking for stolen items.
The grounds were acting suspiciously

The free text was very vague and there wasn't more information as to what was suspicious. AR believes the officer probably had previous knowledge of the individual and it was a burglary hotspot the person/vehicle was stopped in. PD agreed previous knowledge should have been expressed in the free text box and that more information is needed.

Form two:

Person

01:30am on 01.01.2015 on Robinson Way

Section 1 of PACE was the power and they were looking for stolen items.

The grounds were current intelligence

Officers stopped a male who had been named as an offender in a burglary other building and was arrested.

More information was included and it was clear as to why the person was stopped. AR did comment he would like to see the log number there also.

Form three:

Person & Vehicle

00:05 on 22.12.2014 on Hollydale Road

Section 23 of Misuse of Drugs and looking for drugs

The grounds were acting suspicious

Officers stopped a vehicle but the male locked himself in the vehicle and refused to provide details.

Clearer as to why the officer conducted a stop & search but group would like to see more information and include more grounds.

Form four:

Person

14:30 on 20.12.2014 on Chester Road

Section 1 of PACE and going equip

The grounds acting suspiciously

The officers stopped the male as members of the public had witnessed him and another male looking into car windows. Searched and nothing found but was arrested as wanted.

AR also showed the group that an Inspector had commented on the form due to changing the outcome – originally displayed "NFA" but the officer had arrested the male. Officers could also have included current intelligence under grounds as they were acting on calls from the public.

AR informed the group he will provide update to all officers on the forms the group had looked at today and remind officers to provide more grounds and include more in the free text. PD commented that the forms have improved greatly and the group agreed.

6) Force and national developments in stop & search

AR informed the group that the system has now been signed off. Supervisors can now search the system to look at data for their teams, i.e. see what powers have been used, outcomes etc.

The system also allows supervisors to look at the whole of Birmingham North to see what outcomes, powers, met the standard etc.

LH asked whether it would be possible to know how many people have complained about being stopped and searched. PD sees all the complaints for Birmingham North and very few are in relation to stop & search.

The group would like to know standards of satisfaction for stop & search as this is what they are asked for by their community contacts

Action: Inspector Russell to look at standards of satisfaction for next meeting

7) Forthcoming tactical use of stop & search powers

Nothing of note

8) Community impact through the local use of stop & search

No community impact of note.

9) Issues to be brought back to Gold Group

Nothing of note

10) AOB

- **Website:** AR showed the group the PCC website and the Birmingham North Scrutiny panel's page. The group also viewed a number of other LPU's pages and noticed there are pictures & videos from the group. The group agreed that having some photos on there would be a good idea.

Please note: for viewing the minutes, click on Birmingham North then scroll down to the date (it defaults to 2025) and change this to 2014 or 2015. The minutes will then appear.

To view the page, please click on link below:

<http://www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk/key-issues/stop-search/stop-and-search-scrutiny-panels/birmingham-north-stop-and-search-scrutiny-panel>

- **PCC consultation re 2015-16 budget:** An email went out to the group on 24th December 2014 re the PCC's consultation survey in relation to his budget. The Commissioner is keen to hear people's views on the proposals before making the final decision. The **consultation period is from 17th December to 9am Monday 2nd February.** Link for his consultation survey is: <http://westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk/consultation/police-budget-consultation-2015-16/>

- **Stop & Search patrols:** One element around the Scrutiny panels listed by the PCC was members of the panel going out to watch stop & search in action. This has been tried on other policing areas and has experienced some difficulties – e.g. public were out for three days and didn't see any stop & search encounters. West Midlands Police are currently looking at the risk assessment, insurance and practicability of doing this. It can be difficult as there are so many officers on duty; you cannot predict which officers will conduct the stop & search.

Future meetings:

12th March
14th May
16th July
17th September
19th November

All at 6pm at Sutton Coldfield Police Station