

BN Stop & Search Scrutiny

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 16th October 2014

Those in attendance:

Linda HINES (LH) – Chair
Tod Hale (TH)
Trudy Yates (TY)
Muhammed Sultan (MS)
Andy Jackson (AJ)
Sam Miller (SM) – plus observer (Ann-Marie)
Henry Wattis (HW)
Sue Baily (SB)
Heidi Bryan (HR)
DCI Phil Radbourne (PR)
Inspector Andy Russell (AR)
Vicki Smith (VS)

1) Welcome, Introduction & Apologies

Meeting open at 18:00 hrs by Chair and introductions completed.

Apologies;

Steve Whitehorn
Steve Clayton
Superintendent Ron Winch
Chief Superintendent Rachel Jones

Linda Hines wishes to welcome Heidi Bryan, from Arthur Terry School, as a new member of the IAG.

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/Sixsmith to breakdown population into wards: this was carried forward from last meeting. Currently the presentation does not provide a population breakdown – officers who complete the presentation (along with Insp. Russell) are awaiting their training input on the new system so they can extract the exact data requested by the group.

Previous Action: Members to ensure Terms of Reference is signed and brought to the next meeting:

Outstanding forms are Muhammed and Sue. Sam Miller who is a new member provided with Terms of Reference in the meeting. VS will provide Heidi terms of reference via Sue Bailey.

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

AR informed group with this new system, the data will be up to date and current, with no need to wait for the information to be inputted. The group will receive and be able to review two months' worth of data (as the group meets bi-monthly). Since the last meeting, there has been 68 stop & searches on the Birmingham North area – 52 on Erdington side and 16 on Sutton side. AR stated this is about average from Birmingham North and with Erdington having a number of 'priority' areas, it is expected to have more stop & search encounters.

LH enquired whether this is less or more since the new system came into effect? AR stated that before the new system, there was approximately 100 a month but after training/scrutiny this dropped to about 50-60 a month, so confident that this amount is accurate and officers are doing them correctly.

The group commented on how they liked the lay out of the presentation and liked the maps used.

AR looked the hotspot areas;

- 1) Brookvale – burglary hotspot area - there were three stops, 2 were NFA and 1 resulted in an arrest.
- 2) Pype Hayes – burglary hotspot area - there were three stops and all were NFA
- 3) Erdington high street – violence with injury hotspot area – this is a focus of police activity

4) No hotspot areas in Sutton

Birmingham North has a burglary trigger plan in place for when a car is stolen during the burglary. Officers will focus their attention in certain areas of Birmingham North (i.e. main routes in & out) and this could explain the higher number of stops in certain areas.

With the new system, you are able to compare the stop & search data to the Census data – AR presented the group with a table of the ethnicity of those stopped compared to the Census data. The table also showed proportionality of who we would expect to be stopped in proportion to the community make up. Both AR and the group were happy with the figures compared to community make up.

There was also a chart reflecting the time & day analysis, so we could see if there is 'peak' time for stop & search encounters. The group requested this data be reflected in a different graph as the current format was difficult to understand.

Action: Inspector Russell to feedback changing the format of "time & day" graph

AR went through the table of outcomes. Few examples;

- Arrested due to stop & search – 4 people
- Arrested unrelated to stop & search – 2 people (for example body check could have revealed the person was wanted).
- Cannabis warning – 4 people
- Conditional bail – 1 person
- NFA – 57 (which is 83.9% of people stopped)

The number of people arrested fits within the national average of 9-10% so AR and the group are happy with that figure. Group questioned what "conditional bail" means as would think this means the person was arrested.

Action: Inspector Russell to confirm what "conditional bail" refers to

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

The future aim of this document is to also include the year to date performance figures and an end of year report will be produced for April 2015.

LH and the group are much happier with this presentation as it much clearer and up to date.

SM wondered if it is recorded to see if those stopped have previous cautions/convictions – and this could be why officers have stopped them. AR said this isn't recorded on the stop & search data and would mean looking into each stop and doing a background check on each individual, which is not possible. AR confirmed that an officer can't just stop someone because they have previous cautions/convictions but this could be part of their reasoning/evidence gathering as to why they stopped someone.

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

Since the 1st September, there have been 105 records.

"Live record" means it was done then and there with the person standing in front of the officer

"Retrospective" means it was completed afterwards (e.g. done afterwards due to the officer arresting the person).

There are a number of retrospective records, which are being monitored and feedback provided to the officers. Home Office rules allow retrospective records to be done under certain circumstances but AR does agree with the group this number does need to be reduced and the Force are continually sending messages out to officers.

The group reviewed three random forms on the new system:

Form one:

Arrested due to stop & search

02/10/2014 at 23:24 on Reservoir Road.

The object was drugs and reasonable grounds were current intelligence. Notes the person was acting suspiciously and drugs suspected.

AR & PR agreed with the group that more information is needed especially around "current intell" and "acting suspiciously". Need to check if this meets the standards set. Also, along the top it notes it was done retrospective due to strip search but at the bottom of the form where it says "Strip Search?" it is noted "No".

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

Form two:

Arrested due to stop & search

28/09/2014 at 18.40 on Slade Road

There was a lot more drop down boxes chosen by the officers and details that the male ran & hid from officers and also he smelt of drugs.

There is more details and tells the story much clearer.

Form three:

NFA

15/10/2014 at 11.36 on Slade Road

This was due to a report from a local school about male smoking/dealing drugs on school premise. There was a note a strip search took place but nothing was found.

There was no "meet standard" box on form three – AR confirmed this meant the officer's supervision had not yet check the form to sign it off. AR and his team will be keeping an eye on this number.

Group inquired what "Record standard" meant – AR confirmed that the officer's sergeant needs to 'sign off' the form and to tick yes or no as to whether the stop meets Home Office standards. If the report doesn't meet the standard, then the sergeant needs to note what they have done to address the matter, i.e. discuss with the officer.

AR will be discussing with all supervisors to check they all have access to this section and are happy/understand this part of the form.

The element "strip searched" was discussed by the group and AR explained the circumstances as to when this can and cannot take place.

6) Force and national developments in stop & search

Nothing of note.

7) Forthcoming tactical use of stop & search powers

The tactical use will be Bonfire event at Pype Hayes Park. Officers will be briefed.

PR also noted on Operation Illuminate – this is a burglary / darker night's operation which will be taking place in priority areas. There will be rolling 'lock downs' for approximately 30 minutes at a time where there will be a number of officers in the area, stopping vehicles and people to carry out checks and to offer reassurance/crime prevention.

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

No community impact of note.

AR informed the group there has now been some feedback on the PCC website re stop & search but it did not take place on Birmingham North so AR unable of the details of feedback.

9) Issues to be brought back to Gold Group

Nothing of note.

10) AOB

Make-up of the group; We welcome Heidi as a new member of the group and she will 'representing' the younger element of the Birmingham North area. It would be useful to have another 'young person' in the group, so group asked to consider the people they engage for any potential new members. AR is happy with the size of the group as feels we can communicate and everyone has the chance to have their say.

AJ mentioned the ethnicity make-up of the group. It was agreed that we need a more diverse group, so again group members were asked to consider the people they engage for any potential new members.

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.

Website: The PCC website will be an agenda item for the next meeting. AR requested that group visit the PCC website to see what other groups have put on and to come up with ideas/views of what they would like on the Birmingham North page.

Link to the website is:

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

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

Future meetings:

8th January 2015

All at 6pm at Sutton Coldfield Police Station