

# Wolverhampton LPU Stop and Search Scrutiny Panel Terms of Reference

## **Background**

In preventing and detecting crime, the way that police officers interact with the public can vary from stopping someone and asking them to account for their presence to conducting a physical search of a person, their vehicle, or anything they are in possession of at the time. WMP is committed to complying with the requirements of the Codes of Practice contained within the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE). WMP will use all the powers at its disposal to serve our communities and protect them from harm.

Interacting with the public is an essential facet of police work that helps us make our communities feel safer. However, in order to reduce crime and disorder, many of those interactions require the use of stop and account and stop and search powers. The way in which we exercise these powers has never been more highly scrutinised than in recent years by the media, focus groups and police forces themselves.

## **Terms of Reference**

The purpose of the Wolverhampton Stop and Search Scrutiny Panel is improving the trust and confidence of BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) communities in the way the police conduct stop and search by openly discussing the issues and where necessary to hold individual officers accountable for their actions.

The Stop and Search Scrutiny Panel will review a random sample of Stop and Search forms, identifying areas for learning and good practice. The panel is a voice to feedback to the local community, and influence police actions.

## **Meetings**

### **Members**

The panel of 15 members will consist of interested parties from the LPU and the Local Policing Chief Inspector as a “police lead”. There is active recruitment led by the partnership Inspector to represent the demographics of the LPU.

### **Chair**

The chair will be one of the interested parties 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 each month at Wolverhampton Police Station at 18.30 for 1 hour

### Method

The panel will be provided with a random sample of 50 Stop and Search forms on a monthly basis prior to the 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.

Additional information will be provided during the meeting on crime types within the areas where the stops have been conducted.

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.

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 Wolverhampton.

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