

Minutes from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Community Scrutiny Panel

2nd Use of Force Community Scrutiny Panel Meeting

Date: 24th January 2022

Time: 18:30 – 20:30

Venue: Thorpe Wood Police Station, Longthorpe, Peterborough

Attendees:

- 9 independent panel members
- Supt Robin Sissons - Cambridgeshire Constabulary
- Sgt Ciaran Constable - Cambridgeshire Constabulary
- PC Julie McDougall-Waters - Cambridgeshire Constabulary
- Jim Haylett – Chief Executive, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC)
- Charmaine Christie – OPCC
- Fran Toovey - OPCC
- Neil Monk – Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)

Introduction and updates since last meeting

The Chair AG welcomed members of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Community Scrutiny Panel (the “Panel”) to the scrutiny meeting of Cambridgeshire Constabulary’s (the “Constabulary”) Use of Force (UoF) powers.

Panel members, and attendees from the Constabulary and OPCC, introduced themselves. HMICFRS representative NM introduced himself and provided an explanation as to his role observing the meeting.

AG explained the use of TuServ, how data is gathered from it and how he selects Body Worn Videos (BWV) for scrutiny by looking at those that include use of force, people with vulnerabilities, people of ethnic minority, and videos that also feature stop and search.

ACTION: There is a primary conduct column on TuServ that states 'Other'. If any 'other' column is used, it needs to be accompanied with a compulsory free text field to state what the 'other' is. (For the Constabulary).

Confidentiality Agreement

Panel members were asked to sign individual Confidentiality Agreements which were returned to the OPCC at the end of the meeting.

Use of Force Scrutiny

AG explained how the scrutiny meeting will work; the Constabulary will provide a background description of the BWV, the BWV is viewed, Panel members assess the BWV using the criteria included within their scrutiny packs, Panel members provide their comments and feedback, Panel members grade the officer's UoF within the BWV.

All Panel members had a scrutiny pack including information to aid their scrutiny of the BWVs. These included:

- Code of Ethics summary (from the College of Policing's website)

- UoF Assessment and Rating sheet (one for each BWV shown), including the 'PLANTER' assessment ('PLANTER' being the mnemonic used to assess the interaction between the police force and the person subject to the use of force)
- Use of Force legal powers
- Grounds for use of force (one for each BWV shown)
- Confidentiality Agreement

AG asked Panel members that if they are aware of any of the person(s) shown in the BWV and/or need to declare a conflict of interest, if they could raise their hand, however it would be their choice as to whether they excuse themselves from the room during the scrutiny of that BWV.

Following the viewing of each BWV, AG and EW asked each Panel member for their individual view on the UoF encounter, taking the following into consideration:

- If the person subject to the UoF was a family member, would the Panel member be content with what they had seen;
- Did the officer seek to de-escalate as soon as possible;
- Was the use of force proportionate for the risk faced by the officer;
- Was the length of time the force was used acceptable;
- Do the actions of the member of the public warrant force to be used;
- Was it necessary to use force to protect the officer(s) or member(s) of the public;
- Was the type of force used appropriate;
- Was it ethical to use force in the situation;
- Was it reasonable for the officer to use force; and
- Were professional standards met in terms of compliance with the Code of Ethics.

Body Worn Video 1 – Ref: 01/22

JM-W provided a description of the BWV and explained to Panel members what an impact factor is.

EW asked Panel members whether they would like to know if the officers were aware of additional information prior to the UoF being used. Panel members agreed.

JM-W explained that officers were aware of the subject's details and that someone was previously stabbed at the linked address.

This BWV featured armed response officers, the use of a baton gun (Attenuating Energy Projectiles (AEP)) and handcuffs.

Panel member's comments included:

- The subject didn't react immediately to officers' instruction; however, it is unknown as to how long the subject should have to comply. The officers acted appropriately.
- Unsure whether officers moved too quickly in taking action to shoot.
- Officers were not heard to give notice prior to shooting. Would not like that if the subject was a member of their family.
- Officers moved correctly, to disarm the subject as quickly as possible.
- A knife could be small or large and therefore sensible for the officers to not get close to the subject based on their prior knowledge of a stabbing.
- Believe the force used was appropriate given the risk involved.
- The subject was in lunging distance and therefore the force used was appropriate due to the risk of the subject having a knife.
- Officers used minimum force to disarm.

AG asked the Constabulary whether prior notice should be given by the officers to the subject, before shooting.

Constabulary advised that it is at the officer's discretion in the situation.

The Panel agreed that the overall rating was: **Green 2.**

Detailed comments and feedback can be seen at Appendix 1.

Body Worn Video 2 – Ref: 02/22

JM-W provided a description of the BWV. Ambulance has called police for assistance to gain entry to a property after subject has reportedly self-harmed and is possibly in possession of a knife.

The BWV featured a taser (drawn, not fired).

Panel member's comments included:

- Happy with the UoF.
- No issues identified.
- Officer dealt with the situation well.
- Officers took time to enter the property and time with the subject.
- Fantastic. Can't fault it.
- Handled well.

ACTION: The Panel commended the officer for their positive behaviour towards the subject who was clearly vulnerable. (For the Constabulary to feedback to officer).

The Panel agreed that the overall rating was **Green 1**.

Detailed comments and feedback can be seen at Appendix 2.

Body Worn Video 3 – Ref: 03/22

JM-W provided a description of the BWV. Staff of a betting shop had asked the subject to leave the premises. The subject had returned and threatened staff with a bottle.

The BWV featured a taser (drawn and red-dotted, not fired), ground restraint and handcuffs.

Panel member's comments included:

- Happy with officer's actions.
- Officer was very restrained in dealing with subject.
- Officer was valid in their actions.
- Officer was tolerant and acted very well.
- Could have been stricter with the subject.
- Force used was reasonable.
- Concerns for the officer's safety when they removed the subject's hand from their pocket.
- Used good communication to de-escalate the situations.
- Unsure if the officer put themselves at risk by putting their hand on the subject to remove their hand from their pocket.

JM-W provided the officer's rationale for removing the subject's hand from their pocket. The officer felt that it was safe to do so as the subject was looking in the opposite direction.

A second BWV was shown from the point of view of another officer attending the incident. This BWV confirmed the officer's rationale as it showed the subject looking at the other officer and clarified that there was less risk to the officer who grabbed the subject's hand.

ACTION: The Panel commended the officer for their restraint and professionalism in dealing with a volatile subject and for the way in which they de-escalated the situation. (For the Constabulary to feedback to officer).

ACTION: To see whether the other attending officer completed a UoF form due to them holding CS spray. (For the Constabulary).

ACTION: Add a section for notes on the actions of other attending officers that can be seen in the BWV. (For the OPCC).

The Panel agreed that the overall rating was **Green 1**.

Detailed comments and feedback can be seen at Appendix 3.

Appendices 1, 2 and 3 are attached.

Following discussion

AG discussed with Panel members as to whether the colour and number ratings used to grade the UoF shown within the BWVs are appropriate. This is to be reviewed and may change in future as more meetings are conducted.

AG advised Panel members of when and where future meetings will be held.

NM thanked Panel members for their scrutiny and highlighted that the meeting was well conducted and organised, and that there were no suggestions for improvement.

Panel members discussed the importance of making their local communities aware of the scrutiny meetings and that the police and communities are learning together.

BO described her work in Peterborough in relation to Black Lives Matter and Black History Month. BO explained how the community has been disgruntled with the police, however the scrutiny meeting has provided her with a more positive outlook.

JH expressed how he was impressed by the officers' actions shown within the BWVs and the Panel members subsequent discussion and scrutiny of their actions. JH thanked the Panel members for their involvement.

ACTION: The TuServ time is required to be included. (For the Constabulary).

ACTION: The Panel would like to see the bean bags used in a baton gun, as shown in the first BWV. Can one be brought to the next UoF meeting? (For the Constabulary).

ACTION: The minutes from the previous UoF meeting need completing and returning. (For the Constabulary).