

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Community Scrutiny Panel

Minutes of Use of Force Scrutiny Session

Date: 22 November 2022
Time: 18:30 – 20:30
Venue: Parkside Police Station, Cambridge

Attendees:

- 6 independent panel members
- Superintendent Robin Sissons - Cambridgeshire Constabulary via Teams (RS)
- Sergeant Ciaran Constable – Cambridgeshire Constabulary (CCo)
- Caitlin Bones – Ethics and Legitimacy Co-ordinator for Cambridgeshire Constabulary (CB)
- Matilda Henry, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (MH)
- Charmaine Christie, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (CCh)

Apologies received from: 4 independent panel members

1. Introduction and welcome

- 1.1 CCo 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.
- 1.2 CB provided an update on stop and search training sessions for officers and advised how panel members can get involved. KP shared his experiences of attending stop and search training sessions and the value he feels they add to his role as a scrutiny panel member. MH advised that both the OPCC and the force encourage and support engagement with these events as they are a great opportunity for panel members to enhance their knowledge in support of their role as a community scrutiny panel member. MH advised she would share the dates for upcoming training sessions with the panel.
- 1.3 MH showed the members the new community scrutiny panel log.
- 1.4 MH asked that the panel trail RAG rating incidents by colour only for this meeting. MH advised this is to streamline the sessions and bring them in line with stop and search sessions that do not use numbered RAG ratings. This will be reviewed.

2 Scrutiny of Use of Force incidents

2.1 Incident Reference – UF/2327763053/21

Brief circumstances: Officers are called to a large affray in the street, between group of males, against a male and female. Black female was arrested.

For the Panel and Chair’s comments see Appendix 1. The Panel rated it as Green.

2.2 Incident Reference – UF/0256078970/6

Brief circumstances: Officers called to home address after white child with autism had assaulted family members and was threatening further violence. Child left at home address.

RS provided insight into the type of hold officers were trying to put the child in, in order to safely control her so they could pick her up from the floor and take into the house.

For the Panel and Chair's comments see Appendix 2. The Panel rated it as Green.

There is some organisational learning for officers in dealing with children with autism.

ACTION: 22/11/22/2.2

2.3 Incident Reference – UF/3774504875/12

Brief circumstances: Call to police saying patient was in a mental health crisis and being aggressive towards ambulance crew. They are asked to attend to detain an elderly, white female without capacity. She has assaulted two of her family members. She is detained and taken to hospital in an ambulance.

CCo explained officers use of Sec136 when ambulance staff have stated that the subject does not have capacity.

For the Panel and Chair's comments see Appendix 3. The Panel rated it as Green.

2.4 Incident Reference – UF/2475490656/3

Brief circumstances: Following a mental health Sec136 detention, black female is assessed as free to leave. She refused and was swearing at staff. Officers are called to help remove her from the facility. Female is arrested.

CCo advised the Sec136 suite is at Fulbourn, where subject was taken for an assessment. Officers had been there for 2 hours talking to the subject before the BWV was turned on.

For the Panel and Chair's comments see Appendix 4. The Panel rated it as Green.

2.5 Incident Reference – UF/0263920190/24

Brief circumstances: Call received from white child in late teens saying she's been shouted at and she had cut her legs which won't stop bleeding. Would not provide her location. Officers completed a search and located child who was in possession of a knife. Child was hospitalised.

CCo provided background to the incident and advised there were two use of force forms completed, one by each officer present. Subject had told the call handler that they had cut themselves but would not say where they were, leading to a search by officers. BWV was initially pointing in the wrong direction so unable to view the initial use of force used but can hear. BWV captures the rest of the incident.

For the Panel and Chair's comments see Appendix 5. The Panel rated it as Green.

3 Minutes of previous Use of Force meeting (27th September 2022)

3.1 EW asked panel members whether they agreed with the minutes sent to them following the previous meeting or if they had any comments. The panel was happy with the minutes and had no objections. Minutes agreed.

4 Date of Next Meeting

4.1 The date of the next Community Scrutiny Panel meeting on Stop and Search is scheduled to take place on the 24th January 2022 at Cambridgeshire Constabulary Headquarters, Huntingdon.

ADDITIONAL NOTE: The Constabulary's response to the actions/feedback raised in the previous use of force meeting can be found in the Action and Decision Log below. A response has not yet been provided for the further requested information for actions 22/06/28/3.2.1 and 22/06/28/3.2.2 (seen in bold).

Action and Decision Log: Use of Force Community Scrutiny Panel

Action/Decision	Date	Information	Owner	Owner Update	Further Information Required
ACTION: 22/06/28/3.2.1	28/06/2022	<p>Constabulary to review Panel feedback on incident reference UF/0241441404/7. This assessment can be seen in 2 parts. The dealing by the initial officers and their interaction followed by the arrival of the supervising sergeant and his interaction. Initially then, with the subject having a complicated history of self-harm and running away, as well as a difficult family background, the female officer dealing with this teenage minor showed excellent rapport, empathy and a natural ability to de-escalate the</p>	Constabulary	<p><u>History</u> This incident was not the first time we have dealt with this female. She refuses to accept rules and boundaries set by parents, school etc and has been known to try and manipulate friends and professionals when things are not going her way. She has previously made allegations of abuse against her parents and convinced her friend's parents that she needed to live with them as a result. The allegations were investigated and it was deemed that no abuse had taken place. She admitted she had exaggerated incidents when</p>	<p>27/09/2022: The Panel understand the Sergeant's anticipation of a difficult encounter, but feel that in respect to the code of ethics, his reply fails to recognise that his experiences from the day before create a prejudice which is evident in his handling of the subject. Consequently, he demonstrated a lack of fairness, respect and objectivity. It is the Panel's understanding that each interaction is</p>

		<p>situation as peaks of heightened attitude arose. The male officer then called over his sergeant supervisor who quite clearly had very recent experience of dealing with the subject. The sergeant's initial immediate interaction was a forceful laying on of hands to sit the subject back down with a harsh tone, all accompanied with foul language and a reference to the previous day. This could be seen as approaching the situation with a degree of prejudice, which is unacceptable. His presence was provocative and his interaction similarly so. There were occasions where the</p>		<p>speaking to her friend and the police. She has also made threats to harm/kill herself but these threats are always made when parents or teachers attempt to enforce rules against her. The day before she was also reported missing and considerable time was spent negotiating with her to get her somewhere safe when found. She continually rejected all reasonable compromises.</p> <p><u>Incident</u></p> <p>Female made threats to kill herself after teachers at school took her phone off her and tried to put her into isolation due to her poor behaviour. She managed to leave the school site and was reported missing. She was</p>	<p>meant to be treated as an individual exclusive circumstance and from the officer's comments, this is clearly not the case. The general feeling of the Panel was that the female officer should have been allowed to continue dealing with the subject and that the Sergeant did not need to assert authority.</p> <p>Constabulary are requested to advise on this.</p>
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		<p>Sergeant calmed down and the situation improved but he appeared ready to engage in provocative discussion easily. The calm input of the female officer is worthy of commendation and her ability to remain resolute in calming the situation despite the brash approach by her more senior colleague is worthy of individual praise. Panel would be grateful for feedback on the Sgt's interaction and why he had approached the situation thus. Of equal value would be whether the Sgt noticed he had indeed tackled this situation in the manner in which the Panel perceived it.</p>		<p>spotted by officers in Ely and ran from police when seen.</p> <p>There was no traumatic incident prior to being found by police and her behaviour/demeanour was because she had been found by police. Having met her before this is a very similar reaction to her being found previously.</p> <p>A female officer at scene tried to negotiate with her but it became clear that she was not going to co-operate with us. Knowing her history and previous behaviour, I believed that it needed to be made clear to her that we were not going to walk away and that she would not be allowed to walk off. I recall her standing up at</p>	
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			<p>one point and being firm with her telling her to sit down. My concern was that if she tried to walk off we would need to restrain her which would risk injuring either her or an officer. We are more able to control her and reduce the risk when she is sitting. She was given the option of being taken home or to the police station under PP both of which she rejected.</p> <p>From the incident the previous day I knew that negotiation was unlikely to succeed and that she would continue to refuse to cooperate. I decided to try a firmer approach, making it very clear what her options were. From my experience sometimes this works</p>	
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				<p>and sometimes it doesn't. In this case the female was taken back to police vehicle and back to the police station promptly with a minimal use of force by any police officer. It is my view that we could have tried a softer approach for longer but we would still have ultimately needed to use force to get her away from the scene.</p> <p>It's worth mentioning that her demeanour completely changed once she was placed in a police vehicle. She spoke calmly and engaged well with all officers who had further interactions with her. It is my view that this is because she understood police were not going to back down or give in to any demands. Within 10 minutes</p>	
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				<p>of leaving the scene, I was sat at the police station having made her a cup of tea talking about her home life and future plans. She was laughing and joking and was in no way distressed or upset.</p> <p>While I appreciate that a very firm and direct approach may appear harsh when viewed in isolation, I hope that the previous police interactions with this female go some way to explain why this approach was tried in this case.</p>	
ACTION: 22/06/28/3.2.2	28/06/2022	<p>Constabulary to review Panel feedback on incident reference UF/3402262539/4 and UF/3379797349/11.</p> <p>The overall sense was that the Panel was disappointed with the Ethics and Professionalism</p>	Constabulary	<p><u>Update from Inspector.</u></p> <p>I have reviewed the body worn video footage available. On my review within the footage, I do not see the officers being unnecessarily aggressive but they do go straight into arresting a</p>	<p>27/09/2022: The Panel were pleased with the manner in which their comments were received and the response from the managing inspector.</p>

		<p>of this interaction. In recognising the severity of the charges against the individual and the unknown threats may have existed (compounded by the physical struggle), Panel were content that UoF was necessary.</p> <p>However, this individual was clearly overwhelmed with the situation and her reactions to some quite provocative statements and questioning should have been expected.</p> <p>This particular case was selected on the very basis that the individual was a minor and therefore a vulnerable person.</p> <p>There was no clear single lead officer in the interaction and lack of structure to the arrest.</p>		<p>suspect for an offence, which is only one option. In my opinion this opinion was formed early once it had been established that the female had previous offences and warning markers for assaulting police and there are no documented other options. I believe there is some individual learning that can come from this incident for all involved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The officers could have and had an option to better explain their reasons for being there and what their intentions were/how they were going to be dealing with the incident. One option for the officers was to fully explain to the mother that her daughter 	<p>In alignment with the Inspector's comments regarding suitable training to deal with complex Mental Health issues, panel would like to know what training is provided to officers in relation to dealing with children and young adults with mental health issues, both initially in training and subsequently during service?</p> <p>Feedback to Inspector to be provided and Constabulary to advise.</p>
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		<p>It was felt that a team discussion before entering the house and identification of a lead officer with an agreed communication strategy would have served these officers a lot better. Empathy and understanding of the complex needs and lack of mental maturity among teens requires a different interaction than mature adults. It is accepted that officers have little direct training in dealing with minors let alone those with mental health issues, it really is of paramount importance that the constabulary recognise the need for further training this area.</p>		<p>was going to be arrested and could have sought her help in remaining calm and explaining this to her daughter, in turn, keeping her calm too. I also note that a support worker was present who could have been utilised better to facilitate communication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The immediate arrest increased tensions and agitated/aggressive behaviour from the daughter. Due to the mother not understanding what was happening it also increases her agitations as both mother and daughter thought police were there to help them after an	
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				<p>allegation they made of assault, rather than attending to arrest her.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- One officer taking the lead. I note that one of the officers was a Special Constable who appeared to try this without success. One of the other officers should have taken control of the situation from the start- Continual assessment of required resources. I note that the female had a number of warning markers for assaulting police and being violent. Nothing was held on Police systems regarding her MH (mum	
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				<p>states PTSD). Had this been known prior this may have impacted resourcing decisions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The female officer and Special constable should have their training refreshed around communication styles <p>I deem the use of force to be proportionate, reasonable, and justifiable. Within the footage I do not see the officers being unnecessarily aggressive, although they are straight in and to the point, rather than using their tactical communication skills. Whilst the female is kicking out and shouting abuse at officers she manages to slip out of a</p>	
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				<p>cuff. This poses another risk to officer safety and is dealt with.</p> <p>This has been suitably de-briefed with the officers involved and learning has been taken onboard. I note that officers training around complex MH, behavioural and mental maturity of young persons is severely lacking within the Police service.</p>	
ACTION: 22/09/27/5.1	27/09/2022	Was it necessary for four tasers to be used in red dotting the subject?	Constabulary	<p><u>Inspector Rice:</u></p> <p>Yes it was.</p> <p>The use of the red dot is not only a means of communicating the threat of the use of Taser but is also how the device is aimed when it is turned on.</p> <p>If, at the point of an immediate threat being identified (eg the female using the knife on herself</p>	

				<p>or towards another (officer or member of the public), and as a result an officer firing, that were to be ineffective; if the other officers were not on aim (and red dotting) and in a position to fire then the threat would be carried out such as the individual using the knife on herself or another.</p> <p>It could also be that the other officers identify an immediate threat which another officer has not seen - if they were not on aim, red dotting, and in a position to fire then the threat would be carried out.</p> <p>Red dotting itself is a very low use of force and no more than an officer holding a can of PAVA and saying that they 'might' use it, but it does mean that the officer, who</p>	
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				is red dotting is in a position to use the device in the event of an immediate threat.	
ACTION: 22/09/27/5.1.1	27/09/2022	How long does the taser continue to work when discharged?	Constabulary	<u>Inspector Rice:</u> The initial firing lasts for 5 seconds automatically but can be reduced manually by the officer using the safety or indeed extended using the ARC switch if deemed necessary by the officer based on threat assessment.	
ACTION: 22/11/22/2.2	22/11/2022	The Panel are repeatedly seeing a need for training for officers on how to interact with people, specifically children, with autism and similar disabilities/mental health issues. This follows from the Panel's previous question in action 22/06/28/3.2.2	Constabulary		

		regarding what training is provided to officers in relation to dealing with children and young adults with mental health issues, which has not yet been answered.			
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