



Panel date:	26 th Sept 2024
Number of panel members in attendance:	7
Constabulary attendees:	1
OPCC attendees:	2
	<p>HS explained that the Chair, Jonathan Peryer, was unable to chair the meeting. Another panel member kindly offered to chair the meeting.</p> <p>It was explained that prior to this meeting, the Chair had requested that we look at the use of Safe Suits (also referred to as anti-rip clothing or safe clothing).</p> <p>The Constabulary representative gave a brief introduction to the use of safe suits. He explained that there is a t-shirt and short option and a one-size fits all 'oodie'. It's heavy and difficult to fold, put down the toilet, and difficult to rip. However, they are not indestructible.</p> <p>Used for people with history of self-harm, threatening to self-harm and unknown risk detainees.</p> <p>Recently there has been communications across custody in the county around the use of Safe Suits. The advice is to avoid using them, where possible. It shouldn't be used in place of Level 4 observations.</p> <p>ICVA have been looking at the use of Safe Suits nationally. 7 forces have already withdrawn their use, including the Metropolitan Police.</p> <p>There have been 3 occasions where anti-rip clothing has been used</p>

	in the period between May 2024 and July 2024 across the county.
Date of next meeting	24th October – Custody Detention Scrutiny

Record 1

Background Information:

- Adult Female X 2 Assault Emergency Worker.
- Self-Risk Assessment not carried out as D/P described as violent/likely to become violent.
- Described as intoxicated.
- Handcuffs and leg restraints used.
- D/P had various markers for self-harm and concealing items. Markers included the concealment of blades and glass on person and had previously tied clothing around neck.
- D/P was given the opportunity to remove own clothes but appears to have refused
- A razor blade was found in her sock.
- Safe Suit Used – Full booking in not completed.
- Rationale – based around Detainee presentation, PNC markers and the blade located in sock (small blades can be secreted within clothing. Bra's often have metal wire)
- Level 3 Observations remained in place.
- The custody record doesn't appear to record when she ceased to be wearing the Safe Suit.

General questions, comments, concerns and/or compliments from panel members:

- Panel Question – Were they all female officers?
Constabulary response: Yes
- Panel Question – Do provide bras or crop tops in custody where clothing removed?
Constabulary response: No not at the moment. This suggestion will be fed back.
- Panel Question – What does Y/m w/m mean on the custody record?
Constabulary response: Yellow metal and white metal. Refers to jewellery.
- Panel Question – Should she have an appropriate adult?
Constabulary response - It would depend on the presentation later. Difficult to judge when they're intoxicated.
- Panel observation – A lot of officers were involved, is that normal? Does the number of people make the detainee more combative?
Constabulary response – Yes this is good practice to keep the situation under

control.

- Panel Question: Does she need a safe-suit or would have level 4 been more appropriate?

Constabulary response: Sometimes having officers at the door observing can sometimes aggravate the situation.

- The panel were content that this use of anti-rip clothing was proportionate.

OPCC Summary:

OPCC: The panel asked some very useful questions that helped in their understanding with this process. There were a number of questions asked that were not specifically around the use of the Safe Suit, but they were reminded of the need to stay on theme, whilst appreciating there will be a number of non-thematic questions while panel members are learning about the different aspects of custody. Based on the information provided by the Constabulary at the start of the meeting, the panel members were able to effectively scrutinise this record.

Actions arising:

Feedback:

Consideration to be given to the provision of bras/crop tops to detainees who have had their clothing removed.

Name: Helen Chesterfield

Date: 26/09/2024

Record 2

Background Information:

- Male Juvenile – Possession class A drugs and damage to a dwelling
- Self-Risk assessment not carried out as D/P described as violent/likely to become violent.
- Described as intoxicated and uncooperative.
- Level 2 Observations set with enhanced 30 min checks – Detainee to be roused as intoxicated.

- Intelligence/info around drugs
- Detainee later seen to have something in hand within cell – this appears to be a bag of drugs.
- Safety Suit Used

Rationale - Class A drugs located in underwear – again these can be secreted in and around clothing. Previous records indicate self-harm by means of ligature in cell. Level 4 Observations were considered by the Custody Officer, but D/P deemed too violent and volatile.

General questions, comments, concerns and/or compliments from panel members:

- Panel member was concerned that person got to the cell with drugs.
Constabulary response: The Custody Officer can only deal with information available at the time.
- Panel member observed that it would be useful to record on the record how long the D/P was in a safe suit.
- Panel were content that the use of the Safe Suit was justified in this instance.

OPCC Summary:

OPCC: Based on the information provided by the Constabulary at the start of the meeting, the panel members were able to effectively scrutinise this incident.

Actions arising:	Feedback:
Where a Safety Suit has been used, the time when it was put on and removed should be recorded on the Custody Log.	
Name: Helen Chesterfield	Date: 26/09/2024

Record 3

Background Information:

- Female Adult - Breach of ASB Order and spitting in police van
- Described as drunk
- Self-Risk assessment not carried out as D/P described as intoxicated.
- D/P is known to conceal and secrete items and is known to use underwear as ligatures.
- Safe Suit Used
- Rationale: Violent tendencies of D/P and she often needs constantly restraining which is a form of self-harm, Officer balances this with Level 3 observations (remote observations).
- Appears D/P given standard clothes back at 09.57 remains on Level 3 observations.

General questions, comments, concerns and/or compliments from panel members:

- No questions
- Panel observed that it seems like a reasonable use of safe suit if you can't have someone in the cell.

OPCC Summary:

OPCC: Based on the information provided by the Constabulary at the start of the meeting, the panel members were able to effectively scrutinise this incident.

Actions arising:

None

Feedback:

Name: Helen Chesterfield

Date: 26/09/2024