

Feedback Capture Document

Panel date:	25 March 2026
Panel theme:	Use of Police Powers with Cambs Deaf Association
Number of panel members in attendance:	
Constabulary attendees:	Inspector Colin Norden (CN) Caitlin Bones, Inclusion & Legitimacy Co-ordinator (CB)
OPCC attendees:	Heather Sheldon, Head of Governance and Compliance (HS), Charlotte Cramp, Communities Policies Officer (CC)

This session was arranged following a joint networking event between the OPCC and the Constabulary with Cambs Deaf Association. The Deaf Association expressed interest in undertaking scrutiny work, which led to this session being scheduled.

The session was opened at 17:30 with refreshments, and community members were welcomed by cadets and leaders, who assisted with parking and guiding attendees into Conference Rooms 1 & 2. PLOD officers were available in the hall for additional support.

CN gave an overview of Cambridgeshire Police and how to contact the police. Reflecting on earlier engagement sessions: feedback showed that while processes were thought to be working well, community experience demonstrated gaps.

The force then revisited “You Said, We Did” including:

- Clarification that deaf callers are not asked more questions during 999 calls; questions are standard for all.
- Issues with BSL app call drops have been fed back nationally.
- Discussion about poor phone signal and dropped calls.

Pegasus Scheme & Silent 999

Caitlin and Dinah explained the Pegasus Scheme and the benefits it provides.

Officers scan the QR code on Pegasus cards to access communication details.

One registration with Cambs Police should allow contact from other forces.

Silent 999 process explained; pressing 5 alone does not provide location.

Dinah explained RapidSOS: location can be detected if a number is registered, even if a call drops.

PLODs

Dinah, George and Kelly-Marie introduced themselves.

Outlined their role supporting communication between the Deaf community and police.

“I Am Deaf” Card

Jake introduced the new Deaf Communication Card.

Designed to help officers quickly identify communication needs.

Includes QR code linking to individual communication preferences.

Summary
The encounter shown was of a car collision
Comments: · Recognition that the officer did not assume the person knew lip-reading, which was appreciated. · Officer appeared anxious when realising the individual was deaf; this can discourage engagement. · Importance of asking “How would you like to communicate?” highlighted. · Additional communication challenges noted in dark environments. · A participant with dyslexia explained challenges with written communication. · Colin acknowledged limited deaf awareness training among officers and confirmed increased face-to-face training planned. · Officer volunteered footage to support learning.

Summary
This encounter was of the planned arrest of a known deaf suspect
Comments: • Sign language support should have been prepared earlier.

- Use of neighbour to interpret was inappropriate and breached confidentiality.
- Handcuffs limited ability to sign effectively.
- Officers were calm, patient and recognised difference between signing and aggression.
- Colin agreed the situation was not handled correctly and improvements are needed.

At the interview stage:

- Deaf person gained confidence when a signer was present.
- Interpreters must see the deaf person; officers do not need to be on camera.
- Colin confirmed laptop-based interpreters are not appropriate for formal interviews.

At the end of the session, information was shared by the Victim & Witness Hub to raise awareness of support services available. The Bobby Scheme was explained and CB outlined available home safety support.

CB also spoke about future work with the Deaf Community and the further engagement that is planned.