



# **Independent Scrutiny of Police Powers Panel**



**Quarterly Report**

**Panel Meeting: 18<sup>th</sup> of September 2025**



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## Panel Overview

The Independent Scrutiny of Police Powers Panel (ISoPPP) has been appointed to scrutinise the use of police powers to ensure it is appropriate and proportionate. This includes reviewing the use of Taser, Stop and Search and other use of force, by reviewing Body Worn Video (BWV) footage and reading police records of each incident.

The Panel of trained members acts on behalf of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) as a '*critical friend*' to Avon and Somerset Police by communicating local people's views on how the police use their powers. The ISoPP Panel convenes quarterly to scrutinise files and footage related to the police's exercise of their powers. The meeting is attended by the Panel members, representatives from Avon and Somerset Police, and representatives from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC).

## Who are the Panel?



The Panel is composed of 13 local people from a diverse range of backgrounds. The Panel started their work in June 2017 and meet quarterly, reviewing and scrutinising a sample of files and footage on the use of police powers.

## What does the Panel do?

- Independently scrutinises Avon and Somerset Police (the police) use of their powers.
- Aims to enhance the public's confidence in the work of the police.
- Ensures police openness and transparency.
- Acts as a '*critical friend*' to the police.
- Provides feedback on drafted police policy documents.
- Offers feedback, from a local person's perspective to the police on their use of police powers, particularly the use of force.
- View BWC footage of police incidents, including Stop and Search, feeding back good practice and areas for improvement.
- Observe police training.

In addition to special case reviews\*, as standard, every four months (each quarter) the Panel chooses 35-50+ cases to scrutinise, reviewing the BWV on each case and preparing a report. Feedback is sent to the police with particular emphasis on identifying individual and organisational learning. The police response to learning is tracked by the Panel.

*\*A special case review is an incident/case that has gained a lot of media attention/public interest, causing public debate/questions around actions taken by the police.*

## Summary of September Scrutiny



More than **60**  
**hours** of BWV  
footage was  
viewed



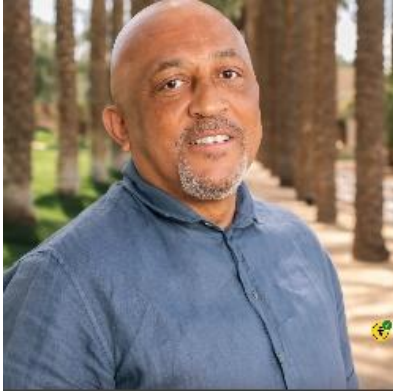
**26 Cases**  
were  
scrutinised  
by the Panel



**3 themes**  
were  
identified



## Message from the Chair



In total, the Panel reviewed 26 cases, identifying three key themes for ongoing scrutiny: use of force (handcuffing), lived experience and community context, and BWV usage, retention, and quality. In addition, the Panel ratified a new Terms of Reference (ToR) and adopted new ways of working, strengthening the framework for future oversight and engagement.

Use of Force (Handcuffing) also featured prominently this quarter. The Panel has been shared with the new definition for compliant handcuffing. Concerns were raised around officers not verbalising or properly justifying the use of handcuffing

on Body Worn Video (BWV), with suggestions that this undermines community trust. It is hoped that with the new definition now in place, the Panel will see fewer concerns over the use of compliant handcuffing going forward.

The session also focused on a Special Case Review following reports of anti-social behaviour involving children in Bristol city centre on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February 2025. The incident, captured on BWV, highlighted questions about decision making, proportionality, and the treatment of young people from minoritised communities.

Although the complaint outcome concluded that the officers' actions were lawful and within policy, the Panel identified significant learning points. The arrest decision appeared premature, interactions with the children and their parents lacked procedural fairness, and indicators of adultification were evident. Members questioned the cultural competency informing the complaint review, particularly given the failure to recognise adultification despite acknowledging safeguarding concerns.

The incident also exposed gaps in local knowledge, trauma-informed practice, and community engagement, with officers policing outside their usual area and limited appreciation of context. These findings underscore the importance of embedding empathy, cultural awareness, and proportionality in frontline policing.

This case, and the wider themes emerging from the Panel's review, represent both a challenge and opportunity. ISoPPP will continue to track learning and progress, particularly around:

- Section 50 powers under the Police Reform Act 2002.
- Arrest decision-making and proportionality.
- BWV quality, activation, and retention.
- Integration of trauma-informed and culturally competent practice into frontline policing.

ISoPPP's role is not only to assess compliance but to measure policing culture. This case serves as a reminder that public confidence is earned not through technical compliance alone, but through empathy, fairness, and respect in every interaction.



## Special Case Review

### ○ Background:

On the evening of the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February 2025, several calls were received within the Avon and Somerset Constabulary Communications Department regarding groups of children carrying out anti-social behaviour within the Bond Street/Cabot Circus area. Several police resources were directed to this area to deal with the incidents. 2 police officers initially attended the location. These officers were also on a policing operation dedicated to dealing with anti-social behaviour.

A complaint was made to the Professional Standards Department in relation to this incident. The outcome of the complaint was that *the officers provided a level of service that was reasonable in line with legislation, policies and procedures*. However, it was noted that the complaint raised a wider point for the organisation in respect of needing to consider a more trauma informed approach when dealing with members of diverse communities.

The conclusion of the complaint further commented: *it may be a chance for the organisation to reflect on how it can improve trust and reduce negative reactions during police interactions in the future*.

*Police officers and staff within Avon and Somerset Constabulary are currently undergoing training to enhance their Trauma Informed approach, which will improve future interactions with members of the public.*

Details of Section 50 of the Police Reform Act 2002 are provided on the following page for reference.

### ○ What the Panel examined:

- Summary of the incident: an outline brief was given as to the circumstances in which the police were called to the incident location and the fact that the incident had resulted in a complaint.
- Bodyworn Video: 2 pieces of footage that captured the arrival at Cabot Circus with the individuals involved, the de-arrest of both at different stages and conversations with the parents of the two children.

### ○ Panel Feedback:

Case Ref	Total Responses	Red	Amber	Green
Sep-25- Case Number 31	5	3	2	0

Before the meeting, five panel members reviewed the case and assigned the above gradings. During the meeting, the footage was shown to other members who had not yet seen it.

Feedback on the incident was mixed, but overall, there was a shared sense that the positive progress made in building better relationships with diverse communities suffered a significant setback. Panel members expressed that this outcome felt quite disheartening.

This case has been referred to the sister panel of the ISoPPP, the Independent Scrutiny of Police Complaints Panel (ISPCP), for a review of how the complaint was managed. The ISPCP will examine the case during their December 2025 meeting.

### ○ Key comments/observations made by the Panel and the PCC:

- ❖ *It felt as though that the decision to arrest was made very early on.*
- ❖ *This was a learning and engagement opportunity, and it felt as though the officers were going round in circles and not open to the bigger picture and lived experience of the children involved.*
- ❖ *Procedural justice wasn't there; the children were seen as wrongdoers, and I am shocked at the officer's behaviour. This could have been dealt with differently.*
- ❖ *The young person (child) involved as very articulate, but officers kept cutting him off each time he spoke and was spoke down to. The child's mum was also dismissed by officers, and it felt as though there was adultification against the 2 children. Rather than serve and protect, this felt very much like adultification.*
- ❖ *There appears to be a lack of cultural awareness and sensitivity with officers coming into Bristol, when it's not their 'everyday' policing location.*
- ❖ *Were ASB letters sent to the boys, was there any follow up giving that the children were contesting their involvement and was there further investigation to justify any letters being sent?*

### ○ Key comments/observations made by Police Representatives:

- ❖ *It is noted that the officers go to arrest quickly.*
- ❖ *This was challenging to view, BWV only gives a snippet, but I believe calls were made to police and the incident went on for an hour or so. There seems to be some confusion in the video around the individuals involved. The matter was not well articulated by the officer; more information could have been shared with the individuals involved (about what CCTV picked up for example).*
- ❖ *Disappointed in the incident and the officers involved. There was a legal use of the power, however officer interaction, escalation and interaction/attitude with parents was difficult to watch and there is some real learning to take away.*
- ❖ *We need to look at what we can do organisationally to look at things from different perspectives and angles. The interaction left behind from this incident was not a good one.*
- ❖ *This certainly needs to be looked into more and we need to be very clear with the process around sending out ASB letters, ensuring that the letter reflects the incident.*
- ❖ *There does need to be better awareness, such as posters in Cabot Circus explaining Section 50, to also assist with myth busting – this is something we will take away.*

## Section 50 – Police Reform Act 2002

50(1) If a constable in uniform has reason to believe that a person has been acting, or is acting, in an anti-social manner (within the meaning of section 1 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (anti-social behaviour orders)), he may require that person to give his name and address to the constable.

50(2) any person who -

- (a) Fails to give his name and address when required to do so under subsection (1), or
- (b) gives a false or inaccurate name or address in response to a requirement under that subsection,

Is guilty of an offence.

Any person who is arrested for failing to provide their true name and address may be arrested under the standard arrest provisions of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984.

Anti-Social is defined in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 as behaviour that is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress.

### Your obligation:

It is a criminal offence to refuse to give your details or to provide false or inaccurate information.

This is not a "stop and search" power for general reasons. The police officer must have a specific, reasonable belief that you have been engaged in anti-social behaviour, not just a general suspicion.

## Themes identified in September

1. Use of Force (Handcuffing)
2. Lived Experience/Community Context
3. BWV; Usage, Retention and Quality



**Use of Force (Handcuffing):**

The Panel has been shared with the new definition for compliant handcuffing.

Concerns were raised this quarter around officers not verbalising or properly justifying the use of handcuffing on Bodyworn Video (BWV). There was suggestion that this is an issue that affects community trust. It is hoped that with the new definition now in place, that the panel will see less concerns over the use of compliant handcuffing.

**Police Response:**

*The compliant handcuffing definition is covered in Public & Personal Safety Training (PPST). It is input to all PPST Instructors in their 2-Day PPST Instructor Continual Professional Development (CPD).*

*Police Use of Force should always consider the three core questions:*

- Was there a lawful objective/policing purpose?*
- Was there an alternative to using force?*
- Was the force used the minimum amount required?*

*Any use of force should meet the criteria of being:*

- Safe*
- Lawful*
- Effective*

*An individual's decision to use force will nearly always be based on their perception of what is happening and the perceived level of threat that they (or others) face. Such factors, in all circumstances, will depend upon several important and complex issues. All officers receive training in 'use of force' legislation and guidance on accountability for using any force. Legislation surrounding 'use of force' is covered in detail within PPST. There are many methods by which a person may be controlled using force whilst taking into account the type and level of injury that may be likely to occur to both the individual and officer. If officers use force, they must be able to account for their actions and show that any force used was reasonable in the circumstances.*

**Lived Experience/Community Context:**

During the meeting, a few cases prompted discussion around perceived lack of officer awareness regarding Bristol's diverse communities and cultural sensitivities, particularly when officers are deployed to areas outside their usual base.

The Panel emphasised the importance of involving lived experience practitioners, especially in relation to complaint reviews and organisational learning. It was noted that officers unfamiliar with the local context may not fully appreciate underlying community dynamics or tensions, which could inadvertently escalate situations.

**Police Response:**

*The panel's feedback has reinforced the critical role of Lived Experience Practitioners, a point previously highlighted in an earlier case review. The powerful discussion during this meeting emphasised the need to remind officers supporting operations from outside Bristol of their cultural intelligence training to ensure sensitivity and effectiveness. We are grateful for the panel's insights and remain committed to incorporating this feedback into our ongoing improvements.*

**BWV; Usage, Retention and Quality:**

This area of concern is consistently highlighted each quarter and has featured in the 2 previous reports.

The most mentioned concern from this quarter was around BWV not being turned on during key moments (e.g. arrest, stop, use of force). The Panel feel that this undermines confidence in the evidence and fairness of police conduct.

**Police Response:**

*In PPST Training, officers are reminded of BWV policy for Stop & Search but also reminded of capturing ABCDE of handcuffing on BWV and an explanation (evidential) as to why the person has been placed in handcuffs (to either prevent escape/prevent harm to others (officer/public)/ prevent harm to self. Officers are also reminded when to use in all circumstances.*

## September Case Categories

Each quarter, the Panel will identify several case categories for scrutiny focus at the meeting. A full list of cases that fall under each category type are then requested from the police.

### Use of Force

1. Compliant Handcuffing of members of the public during a stop and search by race and gender
2. The use of taser on Black, Asian or other racially minoritised members of the community
3. The use of baton or PAVA (Pelargonic Acid Vanillyl Amide) on members of the public over the age of 18, including race and gender overview
4. Any Section 136 powers used
5. Use of force in an \*EIP search
6. Complaints by a member of the public against police relating to use of force by police.

### Stop and Search

1. Effected because of a suspicion of use/smell of cannabis as the only ground
2. Complaints by a member of the public against police relating to Stop and Search
3. EIP searches for all ages of persons
4. Effected after a S163\*\* vehicle stop by officers with grounds
5. Ethnicity and grounds for moderate-high repeated searches (person stopped 3 times or more in a 12-month period)
6. BRAG\*\*\* Tool used in relation to a use of force incident or stop search

*\*EIP = Exposure of Intimate parts, formally Strip Search*

*\*\*[Road Traffic Act 1988 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)*

*\*\*\*[BRAG = Blue, Red, Amber Green risk assessment vulnerability tool.](#) A BRAG is required for each person or people that has/have a specific vulnerability or risk. It is used to guide officers to record the most relevant information to help safeguard vulnerable people.*

## September Individual Case Reviews

Each quarter, the Panel reviews a selection of cases against the categories outlined above. These cases are assessed using a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rating system, which highlights areas requiring improvement and identifies examples of good practice. Based on their RAG ratings, certain cases are chosen for discussion during the Panel meeting.

As part of the Panel's internal review process, this will be the final quarter in which cases are reviewed and discussed using the current approach. From December onwards, a reduced number of cases will be selected for review. This change is intended to enhance the robustness and effectiveness of the feedback provided by Panel members, leading to improved reporting under the new structure.

Case Num:	Incident Background	Panel Comments	Police Comment – individual/organisational learning?
1	SS Cannabis: Suspicion raised to police by CCTV that a man was in possession of bags of drugs and was dealing to others in the park. Officers were directed to the scene by CCTV, who observed the suspect to move location and change his outer clothing. He was detained by police after CCTV directed them to the man. He was stopped and searched and suspected cannabis in bags were located. He was arrested at the location	<p><b>Positive:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Thought the male officer was very professional and courteous throughout, keeping the suspect informed throughout. Exemplary GOWISELY.</li> <li>- Officer was extremely professional at all times and conscious throughout about maintaining DP's dignity; conscious of protecting him from prying eyes!</li> <li>- This case is a very good example. The lead officer was bent over backwards to offer suspect care and tell him his rights, protecting his dignity at all times and informing him of his rights as well as talking him through what to expect at custody. Great S&amp;S.</li> </ul> <p><b>Concerns:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not sure if female officer had her BWV on when she went to retrieve bag as she seems to turn it on when she returns to her police colleague.</li> </ul>	<p>We're pleased to hear that our officers acted professionally, maintained dignity, and followed correct procedures throughout the interaction. Your comments about the care shown to the individual and the clear communication of rights are greatly appreciated. We also note your concern regarding Body Worn Video (BWV) activation. BWV is an important part of our commitment to transparency and accountability, and we will review this to ensure compliance with our standards. Thank you for taking the time to share your observations.</p>
21	UoF – S.136: Assault against emergency worker - Officers called after a male had smashed a window. Description of the offender matched a male at the location. He was immediately hostile towards officers and when they tried to arrest him, he started to resist and assaulted two officers. he grabbed the female officer's head with both hands, tackled her to the ground causing her to hit her head on the pavement and caused her earpiece to fall out. Pava used and emergency activation on radio.  Suspect arrested but has seen been detained S3 MHA.	<p><b>Positive:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Male officer calm clear information and tone of voice.</li> <li>- As soon as the subject stopped struggling and resisting, officers were able to show care and consideration. One officer asked for medical wipes from the car so he could clean blood from the subject's head and check to make sure there were no serious injuries. He also explained clearly and carefully what would happen next and arranged for water to help the subject with eyes stinging from the PAVA spray. This helped to get calm communication going with the subject.</li> </ul> <p><b>Concerns:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- BWV did not show start of engagement, so I can't assess how the situation escalated straight to the officers attempting an arrest of a hostile subject. Subject matched description, but I don't know how the interaction started - from the videos available it appears the officers were intent on arrest rather than discussion, but I would like to see the whole incident to confirm this is or isn't the case.</li> </ul> <p><b>Other Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The UoF to bring the suspect under control was ineffective. This is not the first case reviewed where UoF has failed to</li> </ul>	<p>Thank you for taking the time to provide detailed feedback. we appreciate your recognition of the officers' calm communication and the care shown once the subject was under control. Actions such as explaining next steps, checking for injuries, and providing water demonstrate the professionalism and empathy we aim to uphold. Regarding your concerns, we acknowledge the limitation caused by the missing footage at the start of the engagement. Our officers have been reminded that switching BWV on and recording for the duration of the interaction provides accountability for actions and decisions.</p>

		control a suspect. Is this a weak area that needs more effective training, especially when dealing with more aggressive or larger male suspects?	
26	Vehicle SS: Officers stopped the car due to no headlights. Drugs wipe tested positive for cocaine. Vehicle searched and 1 wrap of cocaine found.	<p><b>Positive:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The whole situation was handled calmly to positive effect. All officers involved explained things well and took time to check the detainees understanding - for example ref drug swipe result and next steps. Not cuffed until arrest made and cuffs removed before transfer to station in recognition of detainees continued calm response.</li> <li>- Polite officers throughout and explained what was going on.</li> <li>- Officers were calm and courteous throughout the situation, explained what was happening to the subject at all points, answered the subject's questions in a clear and conversational manner.</li> </ul> <p><b>'Other Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not an issue but I would be interested to understand why the officers appeared to wait for back up before communicating drug swipe results - and then handed over to new officer on scene to conduct the arrest?</li> </ul>	<p>We are pleased to hear the officers' calm and courteous approach was noted and that communication throughout was clear and respectful. Regarding your observation about waiting for backup before sharing the drug swipe results, this may a tactical decision to ensure safety and maintain control of the situation if the subject reacted angrily to the result.</p>
2	SS – Cannabis: Informant has called police to report they are following a blue Audi and there is a strong smell of cannabis coming from it. The vehicle has now pulled into a retail park. Police attended and located the vehicle and driver. Detained and searched. The remains of a cannabis joint located. Driver dealt with by way of a Community Resolution.	<p><b>Positive:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Officers were polite and calm in their communications with detainee. Vehicle search appeared to be very thorough.</li> <li>- During the first 6 minutes when the audio was clear, the officers were courteous, clear in explanations of why the driver had been stopped, and of what would happen next.</li> <li>- Very police officers who explained the process well.</li> </ul> <p><b>Concerns:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Initial grounds for stop and search seem to be smell of cannabis only</li> <li>- Footage stopped before detainee advised of findings and next steps - not possible to say whether receipt given in practice etc.</li> <li>- I imagine that the officer was not aware that the audio on his bwv was faulty, but because of this, it's not possible to assess this case in any detail.</li> </ul> <p><b>'Other Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Footage included a period of about 10 minutes where nothing appeared to happen, view from inside police car with no sound and vehicle search not started until later so unclear what the delay was about- no sound for any dialogue with detainee.</li> </ul>	<p>We note the panel's concerns regarding reliance on the smell of cannabis as grounds. In this case, the stop was initiated following a third-party report, with the officer also noting glazed eyes in their account, though this was partially articulated on BWV. This highlights the need for clearer articulation of all grounds and supporting observations. Issues regarding incomplete BWV coverage and audio failure will be addressed with the officers involved. These points are being used to reinforce expectations around fully evidencing grounds, complete BWV recording, and equipment checks. We remain committed to improving practice and transparency in our use of stop and search powers.</p>
18	UoF – Baton/PAVA: Police were called to BSB following a report that a male potentially had a knife. Officers have attended and located male who was detained for a search. Whilst in handcuffs the male resisted and was taken to the floor. It was reported that the male had punched someone in the face causing an injury. Whilst officers were dealing with the male the DP- someone has stepped towards the male and swung with the ice pack he was holding for his injuries and hit male in the head. PC pulls out pava and warns 2nd male if he did	<p><b>Positive:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Towards end calmer and good communication.</li> </ul> <p><b>Concerns:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I have some concerns at how the police handled the male in the longer video who was on the ground. There is no BWV of his arrest nor of how he was handled by the police. By the time of the start of the BWV we have been provided with starts he is agitated as he says very clearly and on multiple times 'don't touch me'. It worries me that as a black man his request not to be touched, once he had been put in handcuffs appeared not to be respected. De-escalation with this male</li> </ul>	<p>We acknowledge the concerns around the lack of BWV at the point of arrest and opportunities for improved de-escalation and clearer, single-voiced communication. Although officers were dealing with a report of a weapon in a challenging night-time economy environment with intoxicated individuals present, we recognise that communication and coordination could have been more effective. This feedback will be shared with those involved and will be used to reinforce expectations around BWV compliance, controlled communication, and proportional use of force in dynamic situations. We appreciate the panel's continued role in supporting improvements to our policing approach.</p>

	not comply, he would be pava'd. Pava was not deployed.	<p>was poor. Multiple voices shouting at him to 'calm down' were so evidently not going to make him calm down and simply made the whole event more fractious.</p> <p><b>'Other Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Purely for learning appreciate very challenging situation but have viewed similar where communication has been clearer and led by one individual (per person being restrained) use of language - swearing appreciate emotive situation but not necessary.</li> <li>- The UoF by the female officers towards the second DP was ineffective, resulting in the need to escalate to possible use of PAVA. The reaction seemed panicked rather than controlled and risked further escalation.</li> </ul>	
11	<p>SS – BRAG: A male is located in a doorway, and a female is seen inside. The male states he has a lot going on and is stressed out. Officers explain that shouting was heard. The male advises he may have raised his voice as this happens when he is stressed. The male from outside tried to calm down the male. The male leaves his address and starts to walk downstairs and then comes back. Clearly heightened. Officer speaks to the female inside who advised that she was collecting her belongings. Officer explains again the reason Police were called and manages to calm the male down.</p>	<p><b>Positive:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All officers involved were impressive, dealing with a volatile situation well, remaining calm, handling interference from others present and were effective at preventing escalation. I liked the fact the male was detained without cuffs and was given time and space to calm down without physical intervention. The officer (Laurence) dealing with the female detained was great at revisiting events with her once calm, effectively building bridges and helping her understand the actions taken. He gave a summary of why stopped, why cuffed etc at the end, repeating aspects of GO WISELY which was very effective and could be used as an example of best practice. As part of the thorough approach shown throughout officers conferred (out of earshot) before deciding what the outcome would be.</li> <li>- All officers who engaged with the detained people were courteous and restrained and quiet, keeping the situation calm, explaining what was happening at each stage, and why. In particular, the officer first on the scene at the flat was excellent at de-escalating the situation and calming the young man who opened the door, and who was agitated and aggressive and shouting at first.</li> </ul> <p><b>Concerns:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I thought the new S&amp;S advises S&amp;S for at least 3 reasons, does this apply to everyone?</li> <li>- When the girl was shouting and an officer let go of her as she requested, another one went to grab her arm - I felt this was unnecessary and counterproductive re helping her calm down. Perhaps the handcuffing could have been avoided had she given a bit of space</li> <li>- she responded well to the officer who's WBV was on and who helped with the search.</li> </ul> <p><b>'Other Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Although there were at least 4 officers present it appeared none of them had DEP paperwork</li> </ul>	<p>Thank you for your positive and detailed feedback. We are pleased to note the panel's recognition of effective de-escalation, clear communication, and considered decision-making by the officers in what was clearly a volatile situation. The officers' use of space, restraint, and revisiting of explanations reflects good practice in managing emotionally charged encounters. Regarding the concerns raised, we acknowledge the feedback regarding the handling of the female's movements during the incident, and whether cuffing could have been avoided. This will be reflected upon with the officers involved to support decision-making that balances safety and proportionality. We also note the query about Search criteria and will ensure clarity is provided around the application of revised Stop and Search guidance for differing circumstances. Lastly, the observation on the absence of DEP paperwork is noted and will be fed back to supervisory teams for reinforcement of administrative compliance. We appreciate the panel's continued scrutiny in helping us maintain and improve policing standards across all stop and search encounters.</p>
4	<p>SS- EIP: Vehicle with drugs intel was stopped and occupants searched.</p> <p>Officers stopped the car and detained 4 occupants for a drugs search. Vehicle was in stationary on the motorway. 3 of the 4 found in possession of a small amount of controlled drug. All admitted</p>	<p><b>Positive:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- officer calm and polite throughout. He was also conscious of safety of other officers and being as speedy as possible to avoid more congestion on motorway.</li> <li>- Good stop.</li> </ul> <p><b>Concerns:</b></p>	<p>Thank you for your feedback. We acknowledge the positive observations regarding officer conduct and safety awareness during the motorway stop. In relation to the concerns raised, we note the panel's view on the immediate handcuffing and raised voices despite apparent compliance, and the lack of BWV audio during the EIP interaction. These issues will be reviewed with the officers involved to</p>



	possession for personal use. Drugs seized, no arrests made.	- A somewhat heavy approach all things considered, they were stuck on the motorway with nowhere to go so why the shouting and immediate cuffing when all in the vehicle seemed fairly compliant. - No BW audio of EIP.	ensure that control measures remain proportionate to subject behaviour and that BWV is fully and effectively utilised in line with policy. Your scrutiny continues to support learning and improvement in our approach to stop and search, particularly in dynamic environments like motorway stops.
17	UoF – Baton/PAVA: Public order incident between 2 suspects. 1 suspect then stole from a shop. Suspect 1 was arrested and handcuffed. Suspect 2 was threatening towards officers so PAVA was deployed. Suspect 2 assaulted officers after arrest.	<p><b>Positive:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Female officer communicated well in trying to calm individual, adjusting his trousers and working with one other officer to try and get him to a more comfortable position.</li> <li>- All officers appeared to be calm, firm and polite in this situation where the subject was abusive, shouting and swearing, physically struggling, and not listening to or responding to the officers.</li> </ul> <p>The officer with bwv managed to successfully engage the subject and calm him a little while in the back of the van for just long enough to check his head and see that the wound appeared to be superficial.</p> <p><b>Concerns:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Having been approached and verbally abused by 2 men separately, the officers told them to go away which they did. Left at that there may have been no need to take action, other than to perhaps disperse the group of individuals gathered in the centre who were being noisy and had been arguing with one another.</li> </ul> <p>Having followed the 2 men there was an immediate assumption that they would be stealing in the premier shop and one of them was arrested coming out of the store on suspicion of theft. Nothing was done to check if his repeated claim to have left the money on the floor of the shop was accurate. (Transpires it was). I felt the level of force used was excessive and believe some of what was taken as resisting arrest may have been the understandable need to move from a position of such discomfort, especially after PAVA used (use not covered on BWV), plus the frustration of trying to protest his innocence which was ignored.</p> <p>At one point officer said "I tried to persuade you to leave" - which felt a bit galling as he had left but they had chosen to follow him. The 2nd male was arrested for public disorder in response to treatment of another male. Again, use of PAVA was not captured on BWV - the male was more actively resisting but am not convinced the level of force used in response was warranted. (see 17.46 to 17.56 which included face down into van, pressure points and spit hood) - upwards of 8 officers on scene - 4 restraining him.</p> <p>Reasons for arrests given to another officer at 18.02 are not an accurate record of events. (were not fighting with others for 20 mins and had not stolen a couple of items) I was left with the impression multiple previous offences had coloured the officer's response on this day.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comprehensive feedback. We welcome the panel's positive reflections on officer communication, composure, and care shown in managing a volatile and abusive subject. We note the concerns regarding assumptions of criminality, the disproportionality of force, and the absence of BWV coverage during key moments of PAVA deployment and arrest. These issues highlight important learning points around evidencing reasonable suspicion, accurate recording of events, and ensuring all use of force and tactical options are captured on BWV for transparency and scrutiny. This feedback will be shared with the officers involved and will be used to reinforce expectations around proportionality, procedural accuracy, and BWV compliance. We remain committed to addressing these practice gaps to support fair, accountable, and professional policing. Thank you for your continued scrutiny and support.</p>
9	UoF – Compliant Handcuffing: Stop search of male and compliant handcuffing. after being located in the area in which a driver of a vehicle had run from police, and he matched the clothing.	<p><b>Concerns:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Other than the concerns about compliant handcuffing, no offer of receipt and BWV turned off early and does not record any search of a decision not to search - I was also concerned at how the male police officer took the DP's phone from him knowing there was someone on the end of the line and he started questioning that</li> </ul>	<p>We acknowledge the concerns raised regarding the decision to handcuff a compliant individual where the grounds for suspicion were limited. This incident will be used to reinforce guidance around the proportionality and necessity of restraint, particularly where cooperation is evident.</p>



		<p>person without identifying himself or why he was asking questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Other officers not identified to individual including officer who carried out the search officer who handcuffed individual did identify self.</li> <li>- Concern over necessity to handcuff a compliant person, who loosely met the requirements of someone who had run but with no strong evidence this was the person looked for.</li> </ul> <p><b>'Other Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I've marked this amber I don't think it rates a red notwithstanding that there are concerns about the stop search.</li> </ul>	<p>We also note the issues highlighted concerning BWV being stopped prematurely, lack of clear identification by some officers present, and the handling of the detainee's phone without explanation. These are important reminders of the need for full procedural transparency and adherence to stop and search requirements, including recording decisions and offering receipts. This feedback will be passed to the officers involved and will support ongoing efforts to promote consistent, lawful, and respectful practice across all interactions. Thank you for your continued scrutiny and support.</p>
15	<p>Taser – BME: Males have been seen in the street remonstrating. Officers pulled up alongside and 1 of the males walked off. This male was seen to potentially be holding a wooden item. There has also been a mention in the report of knives. Therefore, officers stopped the male for a S1 stop search. Upon the officer exiting the vehicle he stated he was armed Police had drawn his taser and when approaching the male, the taser was pointed at the male. PC instructed the male to show his hands. Once the male was detained PC holstered the taser.</p>	<p><b>Positive:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Officer calm good communication, deescalated quickly when risk reduced. Listened to individuals concerns and anxieties.</li> <li>- Yes, a second review but for good reasons. Excellent engagement between the officer and the DP. Trust was established to the extent that the DP unloaded concerns about his mothers welfare due to an undesirable acquaintance of hers, and the officers pivoted into safeguarding roles for the DP and potentially his mother.</li> <li>- The officers dealt with the DP in a respectful manner.</li> </ul> <p><b>Concerns:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The pressure put on the DP to give the police his home address. This appeared to have no lawful basis. Notwithstanding the police's wish to safeguard the DP he was very clear that once the s/s had ended he did not want to be taken home. The police however insisted on doing so under threat of having 'to go down another route' if he did not.</li> </ul> <p><b>'Other Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I have marked this as amber but is arguably red because of the problems around insisting that the DP tell him where he lived and insisting that they take him home. I understand the safeguarding concerns but would appreciate some guidance from ASP on whether this had any lawful basis.</li> <li>- A good example of a stop and search.</li> </ul>	<p>Thank you for your detailed feedback. We are pleased to note the panel's recognition of the officer's calm communication, de-escalation, and the positive shift into a safeguarding role once the initial risk was reduced. The respectful engagement and trust built with the subject are welcomed as examples of good practice. We acknowledge the concern regarding the pressure placed on the individual to provide his home address and accompany officer's post-search. While officers acted with safeguarding intentions, we recognise that this approach must remain grounded in lawful authority and respect for the individual's autonomy once the grounds for search have concluded. We will review this incident with the officers involved and provide guidance to ensure clarity on the limits of police powers in such circumstances, particularly where safeguarding is being balanced with individual rights. Thank you for raising this important point and for your continued support in helping us improve both practice and policy.</p>
12	<p>SS – BRAG: Officer attends a car park and locate a vehicle and an occupant. Officer makes the male aware that CCTV has alerted officers to seeing a driver drinking whilst in the vehicle. The male shows officers that he sleeps in his van and shows the bed inside and explains what he had been doing. Officers conducts a breath test procedure. Officers conduct checks on the driver's licence and vehicle. Officers advise that the CCTV also informed officers that they saw the male potentially sniff something from the dashboard and therefore officers suspected the male may have drugs on his person. GOWISLEY completed. Search completed.</p>	<p><b>Positive:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Both police officers dealt well with the circumstances. Good human response.</li> <li>- Situation appeared to be handled well.</li> <li>- Good engagement, proportionate and empathetic response from the officers to the subject.</li> </ul> <p><b>'Other Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It was apparent that the officers were unsure how to deal with the situation in which someone was living in a van (that could be driven) and was drinking in that van. Given the growth of van dwellers in Bristol area it might be helpful to brief officers on how to deal with this situation. There is clearly the potential for driving the van after drinking, in this case they accepted that he had no such intention but there seemed some doubt. It would be helpful to issue guidance on this.</li> </ul>	<p>We are encouraged by the positive observations regarding the officers proportionate, empathetic, and human approach in what was an unusual situation. We recognise the helpful observation about handling instances where individuals are living in vehicles and consuming alcohol in a stationary but roadworthy condition. As you note, this is an emerging issue locally and presents both operational and safeguarding considerations. We will review current guidance and ensure officers receive clearer direction on assessing risk, intent, and legal powers in such scenarios. Your feedback has informed this learning review, and we appreciate your continued support in helping us adapt to new and complex circumstances in frontline policing.</p>

# Organisational Learning Tracker

Date	Organisational Learning Identified	A&S Police Update	Status
Dec 21 - Sept 25	<p><b>BWV SWITCHED ON LATE, OBSCURED, INADEQUATE OR NOT SAVED AS EVIDENTIAL.</b></p> <p>This has been an area of concern for some time, highlighted by the Panel. Data from the last 2 quarters shows a decrease in the adequacy of footage. A new BWV policy has been developed, albeit the level of engagement with the new policy cannot be measured. This area will continue to be monitored, and feedback given to the police on improving the use.</p> <p><i><b>This matter is to be raised at the March Panel meeting in 2025</b></i></p>	<p><i>Ongoing work is happening within Officers Personal Safety Training whereby all officers across the force are reminded of the BWV Policy and to capture the reason why actions are taken (such as the use of handcuffs) buy ensuring that their cameras are turned on when attending incidents.</i></p>	KIV - Ongoing scrutiny
Dec 21 - Sept 25	<p><b>STANDARD PRACTICE HANDCUFFING A COMPLIANT PERSON AT A STOP AND SEARCH.</b></p> <p>This area has been kept in view since December 2021. It was established at the June 24 Panel meeting, that Nationally, there is no definition for the term compliant handcuffing. Work has been ongoing for some time around the use of handcuffs and a task and finish group was set up to look into this area of business, specifically in relation to Stop and Search.</p>	<p><i>July 2025 - a new definition within Avon and Somerset was published for Compliant Handcuffing. It is hoped that with the new definition now in place, that the panel will see less concerns over the use of compliant handcuffing.</i></p>	KIV - Ongoing scrutiny
Jun 24 - Sept 25	<p><b>THE PRACTICE OF SEIZING MOBILE PHONES, OR VIEWING THE CONTENT, UNDER SECTION 23(2)(c) MISUSE OF DRUGS ACT 1971.</b></p> <p>This matter was initially closed as being dealt with as ASP stated: <i>From August 2022 officers will cease to use Sec 23 to justify seizing phones at a Stop and Search. This applies until and if the search results in an arrest.</i> However, some recent case reviews have identified some officers searching mobile phones of detainees as part of a Stop Search, therefore the concern is being placed back onto the organisational tracker.</p>	<p><i>Section 7.18 of the new Stop and Search Procedure for the Avon and Somerset Constabulary states: Using s.23(c) Misuse of Drugs Act to look through phones:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>- ASP does not support the use of s.23(c) Misuse of Drugs Act to look through a person's phone under stop and search powers.</i></li> <li><i>- If officer suspects evidence of an offence is on a person's mobile phone or electronic device, they should consider seizure powers under s.19 PACE and complete the interrogation of the device using recognised and approved methods.</i></li> <li><i>- There is no ability to require a person to provide their password under Stop and search powers.</i></li> </ul>	KIV - Ongoing scrutiny
Jun-24	<p><b>THE SIGNIFICANCE OF LANGUAGE, VOLUME, TONE AND CONTENT WHEN SPEAKING TO A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC, PARTICULARLY IN ESCALATION/DE-ESCALATION SITUATIONS.</b></p> <p>This matter was closed off in 2023 after significant improvements and good practice was recognised by the Panel. Officers across the force recieved de-escalation training. ASP provided the following: <i>We have now fully incorporated situational based training for yearly refreshers in Public and Personal safety Training and we believe that this outcome is linked to the new training.</i> Over the last few quarters, the consistently used 'calm down' approached used by officers has aggravated and escalated a number of situations. Therefore, this matter has been re-added to the tracker.</p>	<p><i>At present, there is not any specific training on de-escalation per se as this is encompassed within the situational based PPST training. (This is also now offered to new recruits instead of the previous line drills).</i></p> <p><i>Having attended the situational training and observed other sessions, I can confirm that telling someone to 'calm down' repeatedly does not form part of the training and I wonder if this is part of an innate response by officers when faced with challenging or confrontational situations in the live environment. I will raise this issue with the Operational Training Team and ask that this is shared with the training staff to ensure that it is raised during training.</i></p>	KIV - Ongoing scrutiny

Dec 21 - Sept 25	<p><b>STOP AND SEARCH CONCERNS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of consistency explaining the availability of a S&amp;S receipt and how the person can access it.</li> <li>- The smell of cannabis alone does not provide the grounds for a S&amp;S.</li> <li>- At an EIP Search, BWV on audio only should be activated.</li> <li>- Lack of adequacy of grounds for a S&amp;S.</li> <li>- Officers persistence in asking detained person for their personal details after they declined to give them.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Throughout 2024, a new Stop and Search Policy was developed and implemented across Avon and Somerset.</i></p> <p><i>The majority of officers have had training on the new policy and from December 2024 onward, the Panel should start to see the impact of the training when they review their case selection.</i></p>	KIV - Ongoing scrutiny
2024- 2025	<p><b>FEEDBACK LOOP:</b></p> <p>Concerns were raised by the Panel around how feedback is shared internally with officers who have been scrutinised as part of the ISoPPP process. It was established that not all feedback was shared, dealt with effectively, therefore the Panel sought to address this by conducting an internal review of themselves and establishing improved ways of working/communication with Avon and Somerset Police.</p>	<p><i>From December 2025, there will be a more robust feedback loop in place which will make recognition of good practice and highlighting areas of improvement a lot more efficient.</i></p>	KIV - Ongoing scrutiny

## Further information about the Independent Scrutiny of Police Powers Panel (ISoPPP)

Further information about the ISoPPP can be viewed through the following link:

[Independent Scrutiny of Police Powers Panel | OPCC for Avon and Somerset \(avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/independent-scrutiny-of-police-powers-panel)

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