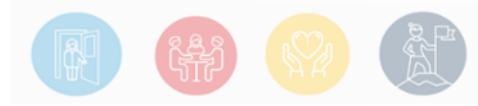


Independent Scrutiny of Police Complaints Panel

March 2026



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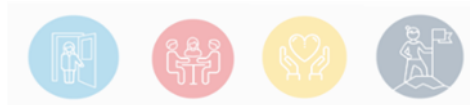
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Purpose of the Independent Scrutiny of Police Complaints Panel

The Independent Scrutiny of Police Complaints Panel (ISPCP) consists of 14 independent panel members, some of whom are pictured below, who are all volunteers representing the communities of Avon and Somerset. Their aim is:

'To act as a 'critical friend' to the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and to Avon and Somerset Constabulary (ASC) by providing feedback on completed complaint files to the office of the PCC and to the Constabulary's Professional Standards Department (PSD). The Independent Scrutiny of Police Complaints Panel (ISPCP) will review complaints against the police from a local citizen's viewpoint.'

Further information can be found [on our website](#).



STRUCTURE OF THE SESSION

Ahead of the meeting, the Panel conducted a detailed review of **24 completed complaint files**. During the session, they focused their thematic scrutiny on complaints relating to **Missing Persons and Social Media**, selecting these areas as they remain topical and of significant operational relevance at this time.

In addition, the Panel reviewed **4 Stop & Search complaint cases for Quarter 3 (July–September 2025)**, in line with its commitment to deliver a key recommendation from Desmond Brown's report *Identifying Disproportionality in the Avon and Somerset Criminal Justice System* - which was published on 23 February 2022. The report identifies the need to address disproportionality within the criminal justice system, particularly in police encounters with minoritised communities.



The Panel held an in-depth discussion on the cases scrutinised, supported by Head of PSD, Larisa Hunt, who attended the meeting to provide verbal insights and contextual information. The Panel also welcomed Inspector Matthew Reed, who has taken over from Inspector Louise Pressly following her recent retirement. The Panel extends its sincere thanks to Inspector Pressly for the significant contribution she has made over the years in strengthening the Panel’s effectiveness and for nurturing a constructive, “critical-friend” relationship between the Panel and PSD.

In addition, the Panel was pleased to have now firmly embedded four new members, all of whom attended, reviewed cases and actively participated in discussions. This brings total membership to 14, further strengthening the Panel’s capacity to deliver robust and independent police scrutiny. The new members performed extremely well in their first meeting and were warmly welcomed by existing colleagues.

Panel Attendees – KS, BK, PR, AD, LC, KF, JR, OH, JT, JSG, JB
Apologies – SB, EK, JFT

Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner, Kevin Slocombe - Update



Fig 1 Deputy PCC Kevin Slocombe

Deputy PCC Kevin Slocombe informed the Panel that Karl Parfitt has recently begun his role as the new Chief Executive Officer for the OPCC, taking up the post at the start of March. Karl brings over three decades of experience from the British Army, where he began his career in the Royal Engineers before later serving with Commando Forces on several operational deployments.

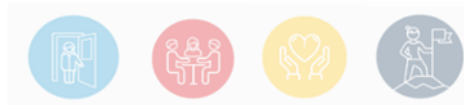
Much of Karl’s later military career focused on regional liaison and resilience planning, working closely with emergency services, local authorities, the NHS and other agencies across the Southwest. Karl’s background in strategic planning and multi-agency coordination will be highly valuable to the organisation. Karl intends to attend the June ISPCP meeting to introduce himself.

The *White Paper on Policing Reform, From local to national: a new model for policing*, was published on 26 January 2026 and outlines major changes to policing governance and the creation of a National Police Service. Further consultation phases are expected, although no

timetable for PCC-specific consultation has yet been announced. Kevin also updated the Panel on these developments, emphasising the scale of proposed reforms and reaffirming the OPCC’s focus on influencing the process, protecting local accountability, and ensuring continuity during the transition.

You can read more about the White Paper [here](#).

Kevin noted that a recent Tackling Disproportionality workshop had been held and confirmed that disproportionality remains an issue of focus for the Chief Constable.



Professional Standards Department Update, Head Of PSD Supt Larisa Hunt



HMICFRS Improvement Requirements - PSD continues to prioritise work arising from recent **HMICFRS requirements**, which remain the department's primary focus. Recent inspections identified required improvements in **vetting, complaints handling, and counter-corruption**, with PSD coordinating and evidencing progress on behalf of the organisation. Alongside this, PSD is progressing work to enhance **child-centred approaches** within policing processes.

Trauma-Informed Practice - A key development area is **embedding trauma-informed approaches across the organisation**. PSD acknowledged progress to date but **noted that full implementation** within a large, complex institution **will take time**. Positive examples are emerging, though the scale of required training remains challenging. Officers' own lived experiences of trauma can also shape their responses to traumatic incidents, adding complexity to this work. PSD also highlighted positive outcomes from **TRIM (Trauma Risk Management), which supports officers after traumatic incidents**. A trauma-tracking system flags exposure to high-impact events so supervisors can offer timely support. Engagement with TRIM is voluntary, and year-round psychological services are available. Cultural challenges remain, as some officers feel reluctant to show vulnerability or find that the demanding nature of the role does not allow the time needed for reflective practice, though PSD notes that professional culture has improved significantly in recent years.

Workforce Retention and Training - PSD continues to explore issues around **staff**

retention and its impact on recruitment. PSD also reported that improvements have been made in relation to **PCDA training**, with trauma-informed principles. Some programme elements remain set externally by the College of Policing, so influence over university-delivered components remains limited.

Body-Worn Video (BWV) Review - Inspectors have increased their review of BWV for **stop searches involving children from 25% to 65%** which is a significant increase, and compliance with BWV use remains extremely high at **99%**. PSD acknowledges that wider partnership engagement may be required as this work around the IOPC youth panel manifesto evolves, but efforts are being prioritised appropriately in line with available capacity.

Performance Data and Complaints Handling - PSD highlighted ongoing issues relating to the completeness and accuracy of information recorded on the **Centurion** system, particularly **regarding disproportionality data**. The underlying data quality is too inconsistent. Work is ongoing to improve this. The Panel expressed a desire to be updated on this area of work. Complaint volumes have remained broadly consistent with the previous year, though national events and internal awareness campaigns have contributed to periodic increases, such as the 275 complaints recorded in January.

The main categories of allegations remain similar to previous years. Many complaints are resolved promptly, with certain allegation types taking an average of eight days to conclude. Timeliness under Schedule 3 is improving, but ongoing work to finalise older



cases from **2022 and 2023** continues to influence current figures. Complex counter-corruption investigations remain time-intensive and can extend beyond anticipated timescales.

Centurion, with the **oldest outstanding complaint dating from 2023**. OTBI cases should not exceed one year, though some require longer due to complexity. Further changes to processes may arise from reforms expected under the forthcoming **White Paper**.

Monitoring Complaint Timeliness - PSD monitors complaint timeliness through

MONITORING AND OVERSIGHT LOG

This section records ongoing actions requested by the Panel and supports continued scrutiny of police complaint handling.

No	Date	Action (OPCC, ASC, Panel)	Progress update	Close/ Ongoing/ Keep In View
1	2022-09	PSD to provide the Panel with updates arising from learning activity, together with a briefing on any recent complaint statistics of interest. This should include relevant information from IOPC quarterly bulletins and the Annual Complaints Report (ASC).	<p>Learning meetings no longer take place. Instead, all organisational learning is now recorded centrally via Centurion and PSD's Organisational Learning Form, with each item owned and tracked by the Organisational Development Team to ensure follow-up.</p> <p>Key themes are escalated quarterly to the Confidence & Legitimacy Committee for oversight.</p> <p>Learning is shared locally through PSD newsletters, Federation vlogs, and internal communications and team briefings.</p>	● Keep in View (KIV)
2	2024-06	An Individual Learning Tracker has been created to ensure individual feedback is provided to complaint handlers. (ASC & OPCC)	System continues to work well with feedback being fed back directly to named individuals, including areas for improvement and work that can be positively praised. Panel would welcome continued feedback on how learning is embedded in practice, including evidence that	● Ongoing



			feedback is provided directly to named individuals.	
3	2024-09 & 2026-03	IOPC Youth Panel Manifesto 2030 . Sets out 10 major reforms to improve young people’s trust & confidence in the policing & police complaints system (ASC)	ISPCP agreed to keep this in view as an ongoing action, seeking updates from PSD on how elements of the manifesto could be implemented.	● Keep in View (KIV)
4	2024-09	Otherwise Than By Investigation Workshops (ASC)	Workshops ran in 2024/25. However, a mid-line leaders course has now been introduced which has OTBI input, although MR will provide focused input where needed.	● Keep in View (KIV)
5	2025-03	Police Integrity Inspection Feb 2025 (ASC)	Performance Data shared by LH to be circulated to panel. Progress against HMICFRS recommendations will be shared on a routine basis.	● Keep in View (KIV)
6	2025-12	ISoPPP Referral UoF/ASB – Special Case Review (Panel)	Supplementary BWV obtained & shared with sub-panel (DB, BK, KF) 25.03.26 - for feedback if deemed appropriate.	● Ongoing
7	2026-03	PSD Disproportionality Data (ASC)	Panel to be kept informed of any opportunities to improve this data-quality set.	● Ongoing

Panel Recommendations

Recommendation - Improve PSD file-saving structure

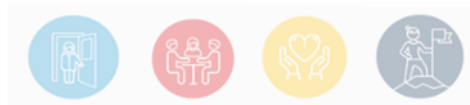
- The Panel identified variations in file naming and suggested improving the file-saving structure. This would support clearer organisation and consistency across complaint cases.

Recommendation - Explore call-recording options for ongoing complaints (Teams or other tools)

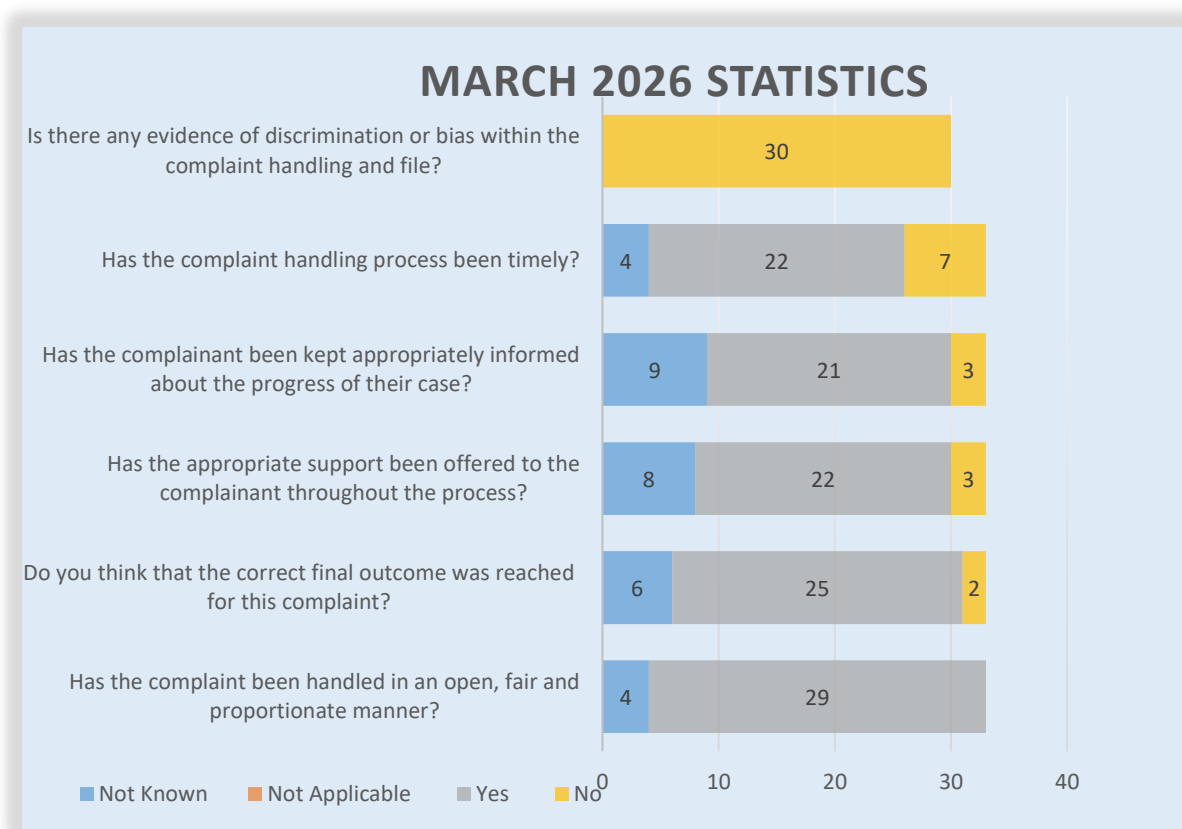
- The Panel recognised that discussions about complaints can be complex, sensitive, and detailed. Exploring the use of call-recording tools across the Force (e.g. for call handlers, PSD, and complaints supported by districts) would support clearer records of complaint-related conversations and benefit both officers and complainants.

Recommendation – Introduce a Single Point Of Contact (SPOC) for families in missing persons cases

- To provide consistent communication and dedicated support for families.



STATISTICAL ANALYSIS



This chart reflects responses to the six feedback questions, based on a sample of 24 cases. Panel members record 'not known' where the case file lacks enough detail for a clear yes or no.

Summary of Police Complaint-Handling Findings (March 2026)

✔ Handled Fairly & Proportionately:
Most cases (29) were judged to have been handled in an open, fair, and proportionate manner.

🗉 Complainants Kept Informed:
Overall, communication was viewed positively. In 21 cases, complainants confirmed that they were kept appropriately informed throughout the process, receiving timely and clear updates about the progress of their complaint.

🎯 Correct Outcome Reached:
A strong majority (25) agreed the correct final outcome was reached.

🤝 Support Offered to Complainants:
Most panellists (22) confirmed that appropriate support was provided throughout the process.

🕒 Timeliness:
Timeliness showed some room for improvement - 7 cases marked as not handled in a timely way.

🔍 Discrimination or Bias:
No evidence of discrimination or bias was identified in any of the 30 files reviewed.



HIGHLIGHTS OF CONCERNS, QUESTIONS OR ISSUES RAISED BY THE PANEL – THEMATIC - DISCRIMINATION

Panel Member Feedback

PSD Response

JT/LC 1 - Complaint Summary (Missing Persons)

Complainant alleges that no professional has physically seen her daughter since she went missing from a foster home, albeit they have been in touch by phone with the police and social services. Second allegation that she has received no communication regarding inform or actions taken to locate and safeguard her daughter.

Panel Member Feedback

Positive comments:

LC - Genuine apology email on missing out the vital resolution information from first email to complainant.

JT - The timeliness of responding to the complainant was good in terms of receiving the email from PSD.

The additional paragraph in the second email helped explain why initially the team were unable to share information with the complainant until they had verified her status.

Response author offered the opportunity to get in touch if further questions or required additional support which felt genuine.

Questions from panel members:

JT - When we advise complainants that we are going to provide a proportionate response, what does that really mean to a complainant, and could we describe that

Agree that is confusing to read and this can be fed back to the Assessor. It is correct in that Schedule 3 outlines when some complaints can be handled informally



Panel Member Feedback	PSD Response
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better to them? I know in this case we go on to outline what handling a complaint outside of Schedule 3 means, however in the paragraph above we talk about this approach being in line with Schedule 3.

outside of schedule 3, but this is probably too jargony and won't mean much to a member of the public. They are however required by the Regs governing police complaints to outline these legal references.

Proportionate means the level of 'investigation' should be in line with the complexity and seriousness of the matter reported. Proportionate is the term used in the Regs.

LC - In this instance, the complaint handler was trying to cover off introduction, complaint summary, legislation and resolution all in one email. Would it be better protocol to keep the resolution in a correspondence of its own to avoid too much noise in one email?

There was a lot of information in one email, unfortunately a lot of that information which probably doesn't mean a lot to a member of the public is a statutory requirement.

With a more complicated complaint that is being dealt with formally the information would be communicated in stages. However, this is an informal complaint, with an emphasis on a speedy response and resolution.

JT/LC 2 - Complaint Summary (Missing Persons)

The son of a deceased person (his mother) makes x4 allegations around ASC handling of the missing person case. x2 allegations upheld, x2 acceptable service level

Panel Member Feedback

Positive comments:

JT - Outcome letter excellent, empathetic and supportive. Transparent and open.

Letter very clear in its explanation of the responses to each of the complaints and whether the service levels had been acceptable or not.

Good examples of organisational learning given.

Complaint handler had given own email address for the complainant to contact her if he wanted (this may be part of standard



Panel Member Feedback

PSD Response

template letter however if not felt genuine and a nice touch)

LC - Very full, detailed explanations of initial risk level for the MP, how this impacts decision making and legality of actions available, and how other information (e.g. DV knowledge) impacted their decision making. Where the service was not acceptable, excellent details on organisational learning, and how this complaint has positively impacted changes to the strategy on missing persons.

Questions from panel members:

JT - Careful use of template letters - it looks as if one of the letters addressed to the complainant was addressed to Dear X (assuming it was sent to the complaint and not a draft)

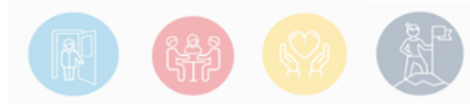
How do we know how often regular contact is kept with the complainant? Evidence? Are stats kept of how long complaints take to reach conclusion?

Do we know why the draft letter was concluded in October however it took until December to reach the complainant?

Yes, an error by Admin staff, this can be sent as a reminder to staff to take care when sending the templates.

Yes, they are, we have a data system Qlik which draws data from our complaint recording system.

The date on the letter was presumably set by the complaint handler who was a district Chief Inspector, probably at the time they started writing up the letter. However, it was not completed/returned to PSD until 07/11. This was after it had been chased, I suspect operational demand had probably caused the matter to be delayed or even forgotten until the reminder. It then took nearly a month for Admin to record, update and send out the final letter, this is an unusual length of time and normally would not take this long, however, in periods of heavy demand, sickness and leave, there can be delays in



Panel Member Feedback	PSD Response
<p>LC - The complaint handling up to the point of final letter dated 21/10 appears very thorough/detailed and proportionate. Is there a procedural reason why the letter was not issued until 6 weeks later?</p>	<p><i>Admin. This was an issue in 2024 due to staffing levels, but less so now.</i></p> <p><i>I can see no procedural reason for this delay, unfortunately it is likely to be down to level of demand and staff capacity.</i></p>
<p><u>JR/KS 1 - Complaint Summary (Missing Persons)</u></p> <p>A complaint about the closure of a case seeking a missing person, the complainant's son who is estranged in another country. The thrust of the complaint is that the ASC closed the case at some point and did not communicate this to the family causing distress and a delay in further action from the family to find their son.</p> <p>Correct use of legislation and complaint route – appropriate use of OTBI.</p> <p><u>Panel Member Feedback</u></p> <p><u>Positive comments:</u></p> <p><i>Good quality of initial complaint handling – prompt and thorough approach.</i></p> <p><i>OTBI handling – clear outcome of service as acceptable.</i></p> <p><i>Initial complaint handled promptly and with a thorough investigation of how the situation arose.</i></p> <p><i>Language in responses is clear and avoids excessive acronyms and unclear terminology.</i></p> <p><u>Questions from panel members:</u></p> <p><i>Not made aware of right to have complaint recorded until dissatisfaction was expressed with OTBI outcome.</i></p>	<p><i>This is agreed procedure, to avoid unnecessary recording of formal complaints.</i></p>



Panel Member Feedback

PSD Response

OTBI handling – No evidence of learning as complainant felt compelled to re-engage with complaint process.

No signposting for a family in obvious distress.

Plenty of jargon in the communications.

Recorded complaint did not receive meaningful update within 4 weeks (1/4/25 – 15/5/25)

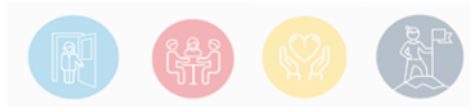
Apology for feeling of dissatisfaction but communications did not address the reasons for dissatisfaction – complainant is explicit in how the complaint can be resolved to his

There are charities in the UK to support families of missing people, but in this case their relative wasn't missing, his whereabouts was known. The issue was the family trying to manage a vulnerable adult with mental health issues living abroad and refusing to engage with them or the authorities. For long-term missing persons we allocate family liaison/support officers.

Agreed, this was not a well written final letter. In our OTBI workshops we stress the importance of not using police jargon and to always explain abbreviations and police terms.

This was the time between the recording of the complaint and the final letter. It was allocated on 22/04/25 and a letter sent to the complainant confirming this and included the following paragraph:

We would like to inform you that due to the current operational policing demand on Avon and Somerset Constabulary, there may be a delay in responding to your complaint. While we cannot provide a specific timescale at this moment, please rest assured that your complaint will be addressed as soon as possible.



Panel Member Feedback

PSD Response

satisfaction, but the response does not attempt to address these.

1 – The investigation to be continued with extra engagement from the family/complainant – There has been no explanation (at least than I can discern) about what is happening in the investigation, is it closed, open, not viable to proceed? Not providing a clear answer to this element prolongs the complainant’s distress.

2 – Acknowledgment of distress the lack of communication has produced – to respond to this would take 1 sentence in the final letter.

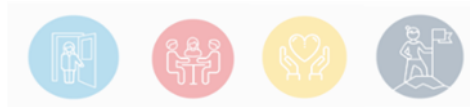
Is there a reason why the complainant could not receive a clear and unambiguous explanation of the status of the missing person’s investigation?

Agree the letter was unsatisfactory. The complaint handler does not routinely handle complaints and is not currently with the constabulary, so can’t provide feedback on this occasion.

Not a well-formed or explained final letter. Missing persons APP (Approved Professional Practice) states when a decision is made to no longer treat a person as missing the person reporting must be informed. In this case the person reporting and shown as next of kin was a different person and not the complainant. I can see from the niche report that this matter was complicated by various family members being involved and sending emails and submitting complaints. That said I can see no reason why the complainant could not have been provided with a clear explanation with regards the status of the investigation as part of the response to his complaint.

AD 1 - Complaint Summary (Missing Persons)

Complainant alleged an Inspector was unprofessional and discourteous during a call regarding a missing young person.



Panel Member Feedback

PSD Response

Panel Member Feedback

Positive comments:

The level of communication with the complainant was very good, and dealt with the complaint well, despite the lack of evidence.

Questions from panel member:

where a complaint is made via telephone, can these calls be marked as evidential, in a similar manner to BWV to ensure an audit trail is kept?

This is not the first case where a call to control room has not been found, is there a log kept of such similar incidents?

I don't think the issue was finding the call when the person phoned to lodge a complaint. The issue was around being able to listen to the calls subject of the complaint, which involved reporting a female missing from a care home. Calls into Comms are normally recorded and kept for the statutory time in line with data protection laws.

We are aware there are certain systems which will not record a call, so these are not errors. I am not aware there are plans to change the system.

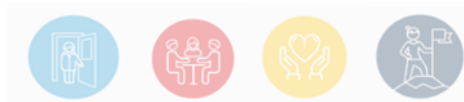
KF/BK 2 - Complaint Summary (Missing Persons)

The complainant, a mother, reported her son as missing after he ran off. Her son has a trigger plan in place due to repeated missing episodes and additional needs, which provides clear guidance on how police should respond and engage. The mother complained that the trigger plan was not followed, and she believes this failure contributed to an escalation of the incident.

Panel Member Feedback

Positive comments:

KF - The officer acknowledged the positive impact of the complaint being raised, which helped to improve the relationship between the parent and the officer. Time was taken to engage meaningfully with the parent and to explore solutions aimed at reducing delays in accessing much-needed



Panel Member Feedback

PSD Response

support. The response felt clear and personal, with clear evidence that the officer took the time to listen carefully to and understand the concerns raised within the complaint.

BK - The Final Letter demonstrated empathy and sensitivity, acknowledging both the child's vulnerability and the distress experienced by the family.

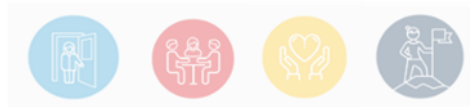
In the Final Letter, the Inspector highlighted subsequent positive engagement with the mother, including collaborative working that led to improved outcomes for the child, such as progress towards having an assessment completed. The value of partnership working was emphasised, and it was noted that these developments arose following the complaint.

'I think by working together, we have achieved a far better outcome than we could have hoped for, and this came about by you raising your concerns via this complaint.'

Questions from panel members:

KF - Consideration should be given to the language used when describing the child's behaviour. Rather than using terms such as "foul," it would be more appropriate to use age-appropriate and less inflammatory wording, such as "inappropriate language," particularly considering the child's neurodivergent needs. The use of such language can be a form of communication, reflecting distress or an attempt to create distance, rather than deliberate misconduct.

Consideration should be given to the possibility that the mother may have felt



Panel Member Feedback

PSD Response

dysregulated during the escalating incident and, as a result, may not have been able to fully hear or process questions or requests being made. This highlights the importance of adhering to the trigger plan, which is in place to guide responses during heightened situations and to support effective communication.

The response does not clearly demonstrate how the expected resolutions identified in the complaint have been considered or addressed.

Were there any learning needs identified?

Do officers have access to training around SEND?

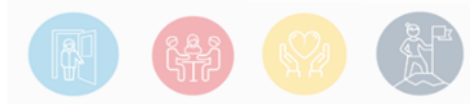
BK - 1. How was the trigger plan reviewed in assessing the reasonableness of officers' actions? How does PSD assess whether a trigger plan has been followed 'as far as reasonably practicable' following incidents?

There is a paragraph from the Inspector referring to a meeting he held with the complainant, the progress which had been made since the complaint and the fact that there was an assessment pending with the appropriate agencies. I think this was less about how the officers had dealt with the child and about ensuring the Police don't need to be involved in the future, accepting that we are not the most appropriate authority to deal with a child.

No learning was identified as the complaint handler felt having viewed the BWV that the officers had dealt with the incident well in the circumstances.

Officers don't receive training specifically around SEND, but they will receive training around dealing with vulnerability and diversity.

That was down to the individual complaint handler, a district inspector, having viewed all the available material he will decide whether actions reasonable. PSD would expect a complaint handler to view the trigger plan and the BWV and make an assessment.



Panel Member Feedback

PSD Response

2. How were discrepancies between the STORM logs and the narrative descriptions in the indication test identified and reconciled, particularly where the use of a drone is described as having been 'considered' rather than actively requested, and where drone deployment would have aligned with the child's trigger plan?

The STORM log records that a drone was actively requested due to darkness, with entries at 18:23 noting a request for drone availability and at 18:24 confirming agreement with that request because it was dark. The log further records that the drone unit was subsequently stood down at 19:10

By contrast, the narrative within the final response describes drone deployment as having been 'considered' as an alternative to uniformed officers, stating that due to it being dark, late at night, and cold, officers ultimately deployed.

3. Was the complainant asked whether she agreed with or understood the outcome, and how was this recorded?

4. What organisational learning, if any, was formally identified in relation to trigger plan use or engagement with neurodivergent children? How is such

The drone is requested but is stood down before it arrives at the scene, this is due to the changing circumstances, so it was considered as part of the initial response, but then as the situation changed it was stood down. The drone unit can take a long time to arrive at the scene due to logistics, it is often not best suited to fast paced operational demand, and better for prearranged or slow time searches. The drone was stood down when the missing person was spotted and the area contained.

We do not have capacity to follow-up individual reactions to Final letters. Complainants have the right to appeal, and we would respond to any further correspondence from them, either with regards to an appeal or requesting further explanation/clarification. There is no indication the complainant made further contact following the Final letter, however, it is clear from the last paragraph on the final letter that there was a positive meeting between the complainant and the Inspector.



Panel Member Feedback

PSD Response

learning captured, monitored, and disseminated beyond the individual case?

There was no learning in this case, the complaint handler found the officers' actions to be reasonable in the circumstances. If organisational learning had been identified that would have been dealt with by PSD, there is a prescribed procedure for recording and dealing with organisational learning.

5. What quality assurance checks were applied to ensure the final correspondence maintained appropriate professional boundaries while remaining empathetic?

The district OTBI letters are not quality assured, we do not have the capacity to do this in PSD. We do run workshops and guidance on OTBI handling to try and reach as a many line managers as we can. If the OTBI is handled by PSD (which will happen with the more complex and sensitive cases) then the OTBI report will be submitted for quality assurance to the team Inspector.

JB 2 - Complaint Summary (Stop & Search)

Complainant stated 'a female officer searched my 15-year-old son and his friend for no reason and without consent even though I was in the home and could of asked me for permission.

Panel Member Feedback

Positive comments:

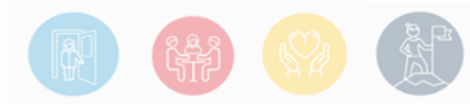
All contact was made in a timely fashion, via email as requested and swiftly concluded.

Emails were professional and informative as to how the complaint would be progressed and undertaken.

Final email provided the outcome of the complaint investigation.

Questions from panel member:

The final response to the complainant was poor, dismissive and impersonal. The final email outcome whilst stating the facts of



Panel Member Feedback

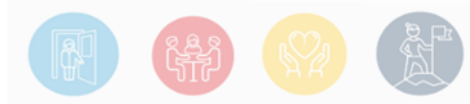
PSD Response

the investigation by repeating the explanation of the investigating office re viewing BWV and stating that the search was not a search per se, showed little regard to the complainant, how the 2 young males may have been affected. and the complainant's need to initially make a complaint.

This complaint was dealt with informally by one of the PSD Complaint Assessors. They work to strict criteria, set down by the Police Complaint and Conduct Regulations. Several thousand complaint and conduct matters are reviewed by the team of seven staff members, every year. Around 60% of complaints they assess are also responded to informally by them, without formally recording the complaint under 'Schedule 3'. This gives the rest of the department the capacity to deal with more serious complaints comprehensively. This case is an example of an informal resolution.

In an ideal world, I would like to have seen a conversation take place with the complainant to explain the circumstances of the police action. However, a conversation would take considerably longer and multiply this by the number of informal complaints that would benefit from a conversation, timeliness would be substantially affected. It is a difficult balance.

That said, I am about to take over the line management of the assessors. Ensuring that written responses are written with empathy is important to me and something I will work on with them.



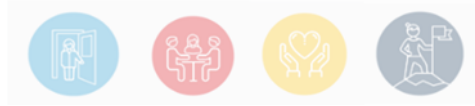
Comments Head of PSD Supt Larisa Hunt

“It was a pleasure to discuss the IOPC Youth Panel Manifesto with the Panel at the last meeting. This is because my history in policing is child protection and I have been working with the Constabulary to become a trauma informed organisation. My role is to lead on what this looks like for our communities. The Chief Constable supports this work and chairs our trauma informed steering group. In addition to this, we have a strategic imperative to be trauma informed. It’s a way of working that can be hugely beneficial to both staff and our communities by following the guiding principles of trust, choice, safety, collaboration, empowerment and inclusivity. When we really understand this, apply it and get it right, it should improve performance and reduce complaints against police. However, we know this is a really big piece of work for policing and will take some time. I am pleased to say that having completed a self-assessment recently, we have assessed ourselves as moving from trauma aware to trauma sensitive which is another step towards being trauma informed. It was great to be able to share some of the great work taking place and we will be able to work with our child centred policing officers with the recommendations from the manifesto.

We continue to focus on our response to the HMICFRS Areas for Improvement. We review our progress monthly and we are confident we will have a number completed by this summer and the remaining completed by the end of this year.

Our new Chief Inspector Joanna Hayward-Melen has now started with the team and you will all meet her soon.

I look forward to seeing you at the next panel meeting”.



Further information about the Independent Scrutiny of Police Complaints Panel (ISPCP)

Further information about the ISPCP can be viewed through the following link:
[Independent Scrutiny of Police Complaints Panel | OPCC for Avon and Somerset \(avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk)

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