

## **Terms of Reference**

### **Countywide Community Stop and Search Scrutiny Panel**

#### **1) Background**

In April 2014 the Home Secretary recommended that all police forces should introduce the Best Use of Stop and Search Scheme in order to achieve greater transparency, community involvement in the use of stop and search powers, and to support a more intelligence-led approach, leading to better outcomes, such as an increase in the stop and search to positive outcome ratio.

As part of the Best Use of Stop and Search, and in accordance with The Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) Code of Practice A, the Home Secretary advised that all police forces in England and Wales have the arrangements in place for their Stop and Search records to be scrutinised by the communities they serve.

#### **2) Terms of Reference**

The purpose of the Countywide Community Stop and Search Scrutiny Panel is to provide independent scrutiny of the use of Stop and Search across Hertfordshire, to provide feedback on Stop and Search practices, to provide a voice for community concerns, and to influence police actions. It is hoped that the Scrutiny Panel will improve public confidence and trust in the way in which Stop and Search is conducted and in the correct and proportionate exercise of Stop and Search powers.

##### *2.1) Membership*

The Countywide panel will consist of approximately 10 members who come from the various districts and boroughs of Hertfordshire, who, as far as possible, represent the demographics of the County. Membership of the panel will be reviewed yearly to ensure that the panel continues to reflect that demographic. The members who have initially agreed to serve on the panel are:-

- Jeffrey Burke (Chair) - Retired Judge, Resident of Flamstead
- Stuart Nagler - Chair of Audit Committee and Magistrate
- Jagtar Singh Dhindsa - Instructional Officer Prison Service
- Muna Sabbagh - Law Lecturer, University of Hertfordshire
- Brenda Griffiths - Associate Member of College of Policing and Non-executive Director of Herts
- Sara Bedford - Hertfordshire County Councillor and Three Rivers District Councillor for Abbots Langley
- Tina Faraji - Law Student, University of Hertfordshire
- Curtis Sage-passant - Law Student, University of Hertfordshire
- Rosie Alphonse – Senior Housing Officer and part time Law Student

The Operational Local Policing Command lead for Stop and Search within Hertfordshire Constabulary will be available to the panel meetings in order to enable questions to be asked directly by members and will be accountable for any issues and concerns which may arise.

## *2.2) Chair of the Stop and Search Scrutiny Panel*

The chair of the group will be a member of the panel and will be appointed by the group and by no one else in order to demonstrate transparency and accountability. The Chair will be appointed for a period of one year initially; the appointment will be reviewed on an annual basis.

## *2.3) Meetings and frequency*

The Countywide Community Scrutiny Panel will meet bi-monthly for two hours at one of the Fire Stations in Hertfordshire or at other appropriate locations within the County to undertake dip sampling of Stop and Search forms conducted across the County to ensure they are PACE Code A compliant. If concerns indicate an issue in certain districts or boroughs, the group may consider undertaking a deep dive of the forms and hold the respective Superintendent or Chief inspector to account on the evidence presented.

The Stop and Search Community Scrutiny Panel will review a random sample of Stop and Search forms, identifying any concerns, issues and areas of good practice and learning. The forms will be anonymised with the identity of the person stopped and officer conducting the stop redacted. The panel will, at each meeting, be presented with the following data for discussion and scrutiny:

- Number of Stop Searches per month (including S60)
- Number of Stop Searches per month by Object of Search
- District/borough data, Stop Searches per month, Arrests per month and arrest rate
- Ethnicity, age and gender of those who are subject to Stop and Search
- Ethnicity data showing percentage of Stop Searches for each ethnic group. Monthly data
- Ethnicity data shown as Disproportionality Ratio (Ratio of Disproportionality of the Person searched compared with White people) Monthly data
- Number of S60 Stop Searches
- Reason for Search and Subsequent arrest. One month's data

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner secretariat, together with the Chair will ensure that panel members are provided with minutes and actions from the meetings. All minutes and supporting documentation for the Panel will also be made publically available on the Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner's website.

## **3) Review and Monitoring arrangements**

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed after 6 months and annually thereafter to ensure that they take into account any Force, Home Office/National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) recommendations or legislative changes.

Reports from the Scrutiny Panel regarding performance and compliance with Code of Practice A will be reviewed at the quarterly Community Safety Board, chaired by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire and attended by Community Safety Partners.

The Scrutiny Panel shall produce an Annual Report of upon the work which it has carried out in the preceding year; the first such report shall be produced and provided to the Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner by 31 March 2016.