



**Minutes:
Bedfordshire Community Stop Search Scrutiny Panel**

Day and Date	7 th December 2023
Time	18:00 – 21:00
Venue	Via Microsoft Teams
Attendees	<p>Panel Members: Phil Dickson-Earle (PD), Natasha Loftus (NL), Alicia Brown (AB), Olivia Houghton (OL), Peju Akintomide (PA), Bev Drummey (BD), Myrna Loy (ML), Stephen Quirke (SQ), Simon Cacioppo (SC), Elizabeth Ginns (EG)</p> <p>Bedfordshire Police: Superintendent Ian Taylor (Supt IT), PC Steven Beer (PC SB)</p> <p>OPCC Office: Anesu Banda (AB)</p>
Apologies	Samantha Denness (SD)
Abbreviation	<p>DP = Detained person CSP = Community Safety Partnership Area OP = Operation</p>

1	<p>Welcome, Introductions, apologies: PD greeted the panel and informed them how the panel will be conducted.</p>
2	<p>Confidentiality: All have been sent the document.</p>
3	<p>Minutes of last meeting with Matters arising and action points: All actions have been taken as complete. New feedback mechanism between the panel and Force will be implemented from January 2024.</p>
4	<p>Policing context:</p> <p><u>Serious violence across the county</u></p> <p>IT informed the panel serious youth violence across the county has reduced in the past 3 months.</p> <p>Serious violence has reduced across the last 3 months ,156 incidents in September, 127 incidents in October and 90 incidents in November.</p> <p>Breakdown: 41% - Luton Borough 34% - Central Bedfordshire 25% - Bedford</p> <p>Significant incidents in the last quarter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Murder of a young person on Nunnery Lane in Bedford - relates to Operation Roydon and the victim was under 25 years. ▪ Luton there were two individuals stabbed on Sundon Park Road - Operation Sydney, victims were under 25 years old, and the suspect was under 25 years old. ▪ Attempted murder of a young person in Chapel Street Luton, which is linked to a gang retaliation. ▪ Stabbing of a young person on Vestry Close, Luton which was a retaliation of an incident involving a stabbing of another young person on Malvern Road. ▪ Stabbing in Marsh Farm in October 2023. ▪ Two stabbings of a gang nominal in Luton in which there was an attempted murder retaliation on a rival gang member.

The decreasing level of serious youth violence is due to the policing effort working with partner agencies to reduce the risk of harm particularly in the Luton area.

Policing operations:

Operation Ionic: targeted the Flitwick area

Operation Elsworth: targeted operation in Luton linked to an escalation of violence and tensions between two gang members within Luton.

Outcomes:

- 8 stop searches, 4 led to arrests for possession with intent to supply and possession of class A offences, linked to OP IONIC.
- 6 persons arrested in total, arrested for attempted murder, 2 of those were charged and remanded in court, linked to OP Elsworth.

Operation sparkler is a dedicated high-visibility operation that delivers targeted patrols in areas identified as having high levels of serious youth violence, with the aim of reducing serious youth violence.

There were 600 patrol hours targeted in Luton due to a significant number of incidents, 187 hours in Central Bedfordshire as this was the second highest demand location and 133 in Bedford.

All patrol hours over the last 3 months were related to OP Sparkler.

The patrols accounted for 52 stop searches with the vast majority in Luton.

5 BW video 1:

Grounds:

Detainee and another have been sat in a vehicle at location. Detainee had the appearance of a drug user with a much younger male in the passenger seat with a man bag. On officers approaching the vehicle, the passenger made off leaving the bag in the car. There was what appeared to be drugs paraphernalia in the vehicle as well.

Discussion:

A discussion took place between the panel members.

Feedback:

- Officers tone and manner was excellent.
- The handcuffs were placed on the detainee for a significant amount of time.
- Search was conducted in the middle of the street which is not appropriate from a safety point of view.

Grading:

Green 3

6 BW video 2:

	<p>Grounds: We got a call for a break-in in progress. One male, IC3 wearing a black baseball cap and dark clothing was seen attempting to break into a window using an unknown implement at the location and then making off from the property in a vehicle XXXX. We were notified of the vehicle moving through different areas and had been picked up on ANPR. Officers have located the vehicle in a petrol station. We then attended the scene where the vehicle was stopped by our colleagues to help with a stop search. The grounds were that the vehicle was seen leaving the premises of the attempted break in and the male occupant matched the description of the offender at the scene. There was also a female occupant in the vehicle. Both people inside the vehicle were stop searched to look for anything in relation to a burglary e.g., screwdriver.</p> <p>Discussion: A discussion took place between the panel members.</p> <p>Grading: Green 2</p>
7	<p>BW Video 3:</p> <p>Grounds: Intelligence was passed over the radio that there was a group of young males at Flitwick skate park who had balaclavas and were in possession of a knife and potentially threatening people that had attended from Luton, and this is a common ASB issue in the area where multiple drug deals and violence occurs. We found the group matching the description walking down Brookes Road, Flitwick.</p> <p>Discussion: A discussion took place between the panel members.</p> <p>Feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Initial engagement could have contributed to it escalating but recovered quickly. ▪ Great rapport building ▪ Panel were concerned for the officer's safety as intel said the search was a potential knife. ▪ Clearer grounds required stating why that approach was made. <p>Grading: Green 2</p>
8	<p>BW Video 4:</p> <p>Grounds:</p>

We had been called to reports of a male tampering with cars on Chaucer Road and attempting to gain access to them and stumbling in the road. Having arrived, a member of the public has pointed us further up the road to where they believe the male was. We have spoken to a male matching the description of the male given and he has appeared to be intoxicated but has provided his detail. I have passed the details to control who have returned a male with previous for theft and burglary as well as possession of drugs and offensive weapons. I have therefore decided to search him under S.1 of PACE for items which may have been gained from the tampering with vehicles or items that may have been used in the commission of the offence.

Discussion:

A discussion took place between the panel members.

Feedback:

- Exceptional, caring, and professional stop and search.

Grading:

Green 1

9 Stop & Search data:

- 1042 searches within this three-month period (5th Sept – 5th Dec)
- 36% of searches have an improvement of 6% positive outcomes compared to the previous year.
- The majority of searches were for drug searches with a total of 73%.
- 95% were standard stop searches and 5% of the searches amounted to exposure of intimate body parts.
- There has been a reduction of searches in Bedford and Luton during this period and an increase in Central Bedfordshire due to Operation Ionic in Flitwick linked to serious youth violence.
- The average rate of arrest is increasing at 13.2% whereas 2/3 years ago Bedfordshire sat at around 6% therefore it has almost doubled.
- The black community are 2.9 times more likely to be stopped and searched which is the lowest it has been, although there is still work to be done.
- The Asian community is 1.6 times more likely to be stopped and searched, compared to 2018 where the figure was in excess of 2.24 times more likely, and Bedfordshire has been on a consistent downward journey.

Supt IT informed the panel, moving forward the Independent Community Data Panel will focus on why we still see disproportionality within our datasets. He added, we can sometimes answer the questions e.g., targeted operations in particular areas linked to particular gangs or organised crime groups that have a specific demographic, however if we do not have the answer, deep dives and analysis of stop searches including reviewing BWV will be completed to ensure stop searches have been used proportionately and ethically.

10	Any Stop and Search Issues in the Community: None
11	AOB & Date of next meeting to be advised: Next meeting is 28.02.2024.