

Gloucestershire Constabulary: Best Use of Stop and Search

Stop and Search Community Scrutiny Panel (S&SCSP)

Terms of Reference

This document is to be considered a live and organic document, subject to periodic review to ensure it best meets the aims and objectives of the Best Use of Stop and Search.

1. The purpose of the Gloucestershire Stop and Search Community Scrutiny Panel is:

- 1.1 To achieve greater transparency and community involvement in the use of Stop & Search powers across Gloucestershire.
- 1.2 To improve public confidence and trust in how this power is used by involving the community in the process.
- 1.3 To review and advise on policy, training and operational considerations.
- 1.4 To scrutinise the constabulary's use of Stop and Search and provide feedback to the constabulary and the OPCC.
- 1.5 To convene as a panel when a Community Complaints Trigger Threshold has been met.
- 1.6 To review all complaints received about Stop and Search.
- 1.7 To meet periodically, as required under these Terms of Reference, to undertake the above responsibilities.

2. Constabulary Support

- 2.1 The constabulary will provide full administrative support to the panel.
- 2.2 The constabulary will provide a responsible officer to attend panel meetings.

3. Membership

- 3.1 The members will be drawn from local community groups and organisations that operate in the county of Gloucestershire.
- 3.2 The members will be over the age of 16. Any members aged 16 or 17 will require written parental or guardian permission.
- 3.3 The members will be selected to aim for a representative balance of the different areas of the county, interests, ethnicities, experiences, ages and gender.

3.4. 'Members are expected during meetings to conduct themselves in a manner which shows respect for other panel members and which allows for efficiency in the work of the panel. Additionally, members should at all times act in a manner which does not undermine the work of the panel.'

4. Roles and Responsibilities of Members

4.1 By working together and bringing their voices, experience and perspectives to the group members of the panel will:

4.2 Appoint the chair and the Vice Chair of the Group – this will usually be either an independent and responsible member of the community or a representative of the Police Independent Advisory Group.

4.3 Identify issues connected to Stop and Search that are likely to impact, or have impacted, on the effectiveness of service delivery in relation to crime reduction, victim satisfaction or community cohesion within Gloucestershire and to consider and recommend ideas for mitigation or resolution.

4.4 To hold the police to account for their delivery of Stop and Search.

5. Roles & Responsibilities of the Chair & Vice Chair

5.1 The panel will have a Chair and Vice Chair. The role of the Chair is:

5.2 To liaise with the responsible officers of the constabulary to make appropriate arrangements for each meeting including: fixing the date and venue; circulating papers in advance; arranging for minutes and actions to be taken agreed and circulated: and production of management information reports.

5.3 To develop and manage the agenda of the meetings and to ensure meetings run to time and are effective.

5.4 To facilitate discussions at the meetings, particularly where there may be conflicting views between members.

5.5 To ensure persons at the meeting are engaged and empowered to contribute in a meaningful way and that an environment is created whereby they feel safe and enabled to do so and that attendees are “heard”.

5.6 To ensure that feedback is provided to the police in relation to Stop and Search matters and to hold the police to account for their use of Stop and Search and agreed actions.

5.7 The Vice Chair will support the chair and deputise for the chair when the chair is unable to attend meetings.

5.8 The Chair and/or Vice Chair will have informal meetings with the senior police lead as required and at least once a year to communicate issues suggestions and findings.

6. Meetings

6.1. The panel will meet on a quarterly basis with the ability to convene meetings more frequently should there be a clear operational or strategic need. A calendar of provisional dates will be set on an annual basis, to secure time in members’ diaries. In the event that

additional Scrutiny Panel groups are established to cover different areas of the county, each group will meet on dates to be agreed.

6.2. The chair and supporting officer will work to ensure that there are sufficient members and guests attending each meeting to make it effective.

6.3. The panel may meet outside of these scheduled meetings if a community complaint trigger is actioned.

6.4. 'The quorum of the panel required to make decisions valid at each meeting will be 60% of the membership at any given time;'

7. The Community Complaints Trigger Threshold:

7.1 The group may convene on occasions in addition to the pre-planned, regular meetings; in particular if a Trigger event occurs. In Gloucestershire a Community Complaints Trigger Threshold will be met if any single complaint relating to the use of Stop and Search is received by the constabulary.

Additional meetings may also be appropriate under the following circumstances:

7.2 There is a significant change in proportionality of the ethnicity or any other demographic of those subjected to Stop and Search

7.3 A single event or incident related to Stop and Search activity that is identified as giving significant cause for concern amongst our communities regarding police use of Stop and Search.

7.4 Any other issue related to Stop and Search upon consultation with the Gloucestershire Police Lead for Stop and Search or Panel Chair or Vice Chair.

7.5 Complaint triggers may be addressed at a panel convened expressly for that purpose or may be addressed at the scheduled quarterly meetings if deemed appropriate taking into consideration the wishes of the complainant, the timing of the complaint, or any police disciplinary process that may take primacy.

8. Communicating information from the panel.

A key aim of the panel is to enhance resident and community confidence in policing and the panel will act with transparency. It is recognised that some information will be confidential or sensitive.

8.1 The chair will agree with panel members what information will be communicated to a wider audience. To achieve this the S&SCSP will:

8.2 Work with the constabulary and the OPCC to disseminate information that can be used on their websites, social media accounts and any other media deemed appropriate.

9. Linking with the PCC.

The Police Crime commissioner has a statutory remit to represent all of Gloucestershire's communities and to hold the Chief Constable to account. The S&SCSP will therefore regularly link into the work of the PCC to ensure greater transparency and representation.

9.1. The PCC will be invited to each and every S&SCSP meeting as a guest. If the PCC is unable to attend he / she may send a deputy in their place.

9.2. The Chair and Vice Chair will offer to meet the PCC at least once a year to communicate issues suggestions and findings.

11. Protective marking

This panel is categorised as 'not protectively marked'.