

Panel Member Questions to the PCC

Question 1: from Dr Stephen Handsley

During a previous PCP meeting, I raised the issue of the way children, and in particular, the case of a young black 15-year-old female, had been strip searched, by female police officers from the Metropolitan Police. A recent report by The Children's Commissioner has found this was not, however, an isolated case. Indeed, more than six hundred children underwent "intrusive and traumatising" strip-searches by the Metropolitan Police over a two-year period, with black boys disproportionately targeted, figures show.

Could the Commissioner provide any such figures with regard to Derbyshire Police and, if so, can we as a panel, be reassured that such incidences have never occurred, nor do they form any part of current day to day police operations?

PCC Response:

This question was answered at the time. I stated that this specific case had been discussed with the Chief Constable at the time it became public. I had already asked for reassurance from the force that this is not how our force conducted themselves and that the Chief Constable had reviewed their practices and reassured me, accordingly, confirming that such incidents have not occurred in Derbyshire and this practice does not form part of day-to-day operations.

Following the incident in the Metropolitan Police a review of Derbyshire's position was undertaken in relation to stop and search and in particular where these led to the strip search of a juvenile. During 2021/22 there were 5 strip searches carried out on under 18's which was 3% of all strip searches during the same time period. The reason for all of the searches was to find controlled drugs and all U18 strip searches took place in the safety of the custody suite environment. Within Criminal Justice a custody Inspector monitors and reviews all searches. Each one is reviewed to ensure appropriateness and forms part of CJ oversight directly into the Superintendent and ACC.

Derbyshire have a stringent scrutiny process around stop and search in a bid to improving legitimacy which has been recognised as good practice by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue. Internally, all stop searches on BAME individuals are scrutinised by the respective local policing Inspector who covers the area where the search took place. This review covers a number of areas including the legitimacy and legality of the search, whether any force used was proportionate and whether the grounds for search were reasonable. In addition to this, there are 30 monthly randomly selected searches scrutinised including a review of Body Worn Video (BWV) by stop and search leads, where any identified learning is fed back to searching officers and their supervisors and any trends or themes help shape training.

Externally Derbyshire have 2 separate scrutiny groups (Independent Advisory Group and OPCC) who each sit monthly and review 10 randomly selected searches. These groups also have access to unedited BWV. In addition to this the force also run

external Youth Scrutiny panels in a similar manner. Any concerns raised are escalated and feedback is provided, and necessary training delivered.

Accountability for stop and search internally is through both the Stop and Search Steering group which sits quarterly and is chaired by the ACC and the Trust and Legitimacy Board, which sits above this and is chaired by the DCC. These boards review and understand disproportionality, outcome rates and strip search outcome rates along with providing accountability for compliance against HMICFRS/IOPC recommendations and the governments Best Use of Stop and Search Scheme (BUSS). Derbyshire have also commenced a trauma-informed approach to stop and search within their stop and search training to all staff which was a recommendation from the IOPC National stop and search learning report in April 2022.

Question 2: from Cllr Alan Barrow

Last week, the PCC announced through a press release and social media that Derbyshire Police had recruited 158 more Police Officers. Can the PCC clarify what 'more' means? How many of these were to replace existing vacancies and how many were additional posts related to the 'Uplift'. Can she also inform the PCP what was the gender and ethnicity make of these recruits, please?

PCC Response:

Through PUP the force is increasing its total number of officers by 283 over the three-year period, the force is now in the final year of this. Any numbers where increases are spoken about relates to new additional officers and not simply vacancies for those who have retired for example. In this current year the force are recruiting 125 new officers and are recruiting somewhere between 300 and 350 in total, which includes the 125 additional officers and replacing those who are retiring / leaving.

Derbyshire Constabulary is monitored nationally through the PUP Team in relation to numbers delivered, plans to deliver the Uplift and also the breakdown of officers by gender and ethnicity. Derbyshire is a leading force for the recruitment of female officers. From the start of Uplift counting to end of July 2022 the force have recruited 493 police officers, of which 237 (48%) are female officers and 18 (3.75%) have stated their ethnicity as B.A.M.E. There are significant plans in place to increase the number of black and minority applicants. The force monitors all of this closely to look at any adverse impact in the processes and utilise positive action officers to try to improve attraction recruitment in this area.

At the end of July 2022, the proportion of female officers was 39% and the proportion of black and minority officers was 3.2%

Question 3: from Cllr Alan Barrow

On the 11th August HMIC &FRS, Andy Cooke, published a report which he called the current low charge rate ‘unacceptable and unsustainable’. According to his inspection report (2020-2021) some Forces tackle this well – but many others do not. He gave examples of the poor performance:

- ***miss opportunities to identify and catch offenders, at all stages from when a crime is first reported***
- ***fail to give victims advice on crime-scene preservation during the initial call - in 71% of the cases examined***
- ***lack of investigative capacity and experience, made worse by a national detective shortage***
- ***fail to supervise investigations properly - in a third of cases***

The report comes soon after [the most recent Home Office figures](#) showed just 6.3% of robbery offences and 4.1% of thefts in England and Wales resulted in charges, in the year to March.

Can the PCC tell the PCP what is the performance of Derbyshire Police on these areas of concern highlighted by Andy Cooke?.

PCC Response:

The Force has improved the standards of investigation through the Achieving Excellence in Investigations Board and associated workstreams chaired by a Chief Superintendent lead. A performance framework is in place which is reported into to the Fighting Crime Board chaired by an ACC. This work is now being taken forward under the Investigation Standards strand of the new Serious Crime and Intelligence Directorate under the leadership of the Head of Crime, placing a greater focus on the management of offenders across all crime types and incorporating learning from other forces to improve standards further. A new crime allocation model will ensure that investigations are undertaken by suitably trained investigators depending on severity and type. Standards of investigation, alongside vulnerability continues to be a force training priority, including training call takers in crime prevention to allow them to provide relevant advice to the public at first point of contact.

In terms of the Forces performance with regards to these areas of concern, the Achieving Excellence in Investigations Board utilise a robust quality assurance approach, which seeks to review our investigative performance against a number of key performance indicators.

Approximately 150 investigations have been reviewed against the key elements expected within a high-quality investigation. This has resulted in a gradual improvement in the forces performance over the last two years and for July the average figures can be seen below:

- Overall Quality of Investigation – 93%
- THRiVE considered – 73%
- Investigation plan in place - 73%
- Evidence led prosecution considered – 96%
- Supervisor direction – 76%
- BWV used and considered - 90%

The national Criminal Justice Scorecard shows that for the first quarter of 2022 national successful outcomes were recorded at 8%, whereas Derbyshire's is 11%. The force has worked with the CPS and charging was authorised for 705 suspects, which is in line with the average in the region. This does not include suspects charged by the police without CPS review. During this quarter the force charged more suspects of Rape than the rest of the region.

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