

Custody Scrutiny Panel

Date: Wednesday 9th July 2025

Time: 18:00 - 20:35

Location: Perry Barr Custody Suite

Panel Members: Dawn Dance (DD - Chair), Alison Walker, Joanna Camille-St. Marie, Stassi Chilas, Shahida Raza

Guests: N/A

WMP: Custody Lead Andy Edwards (AE)

OPCC: Natalie Cox (NC)

Apologies: Mohammed Nadeem, Jane Edgington, Pauline White, Gary Williams, Rebecca Torr, Jacqui Peterkin, Adil Bashir, Supt Emma Spencer and Custody Inspector Chris Doody.

	Item Discussed	Actions
1.	<p>Welcome and introduction by NC.</p> <p>DD Minutes of the last meeting, update on any actions taken from last meeting.</p> <p>Action 1: Feedback around what is being put in place to address low UoF completion forms.</p>	<p>Arrests have increased, meaning that there are more UoF forms to complete. Oversight from Inspector Thomas and data sharing at Bronze UoF monthly force-wide meeting.</p> <p>Dip Sampling by AE and CD with other staff to add additional layer of scrutiny.</p> <p>Where staff are not completing forms, it becomes a performance</p>



	<p>Action 2: Feedback on why BWV use is lower for children and what force are doing to address this</p>	<p>issue and there is an expectation that compliance will increase.</p> <p>There have been some improvements in the use of BWV for children. The use of them is expected due to predictability of custody environment. Messages are being given around links between BWV and safety. Policy in place and there will be a record as to why UoF form not being completed.</p>
2.	<p>UPDATE: AE</p> <p>Total arrests are increasing as well as child arrests. 177 arrests per day. PiCs being remanded for court reduced by 1 or 2.</p> <p>Arrest waiting times PiCs are being taken to different Custody blocks based on waiting times. Average waiting times circa 22 minutes. Implementation of 'equal' volumes across custody suites to lower waiting times.</p> <p>5pm/6pm arrest times are having an impact on children, who are more likely to have to stay overnight in custody block. This has led to agreed processes for children in custody, e.g., accommodation/secure places.</p> <p>Strip Searches (SS) 4.7% of Custody records relate to Strip Search. There were 256 SS in June 2025, which is up by 20.</p> <p>In terms of disproportionality, Black and Asian SS have reduced.</p>	



<p>SS positive outcomes 33.3% May 33.7% June</p> <p>SS proportionality of children going through custody.</p> <p>2.7% March 1.4 % April 0.2% May 1.1% June</p> <p>Child SS CI authorization has been 100%, since March 2025.</p> <p>UoF</p> <p>There has been increase to 1.1% in disproportionality of UoF being used against Black PiCs (using Whites as a baseline). From 0.6 in May</p> <p>BWV of UoF against children is at 80.3%, which is slightly higher than for adults at 78.9%.</p> <p>Current completion of UoF forms is 81.1%. Criminal Justice Staff (CJS) are also improving their completion of UoF records which was slightly below at 77.9% in June.</p> <p>There have been 1103 trigger reviews. To date, 1005 have been completed.</p> <p>Perry Barr Custody Block has the highest levels of UoF.</p> <p>There has also been an increase in assaults on staff.</p> <p>BWV (Body Worn Video) 78.9% use of BWV</p>	
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	<p>Custody Blocks</p> <p>Wolverhampton currently closed for refurbishment</p>																									
	<p>Dip sample of Use of Force records:</p> <p>All Dip sampled records were selected at random by Chair at pre-meeting with NC and CD.</p> <p>8 Records selected. Record 1 only watched out of two selected for BWV. 5 records looked at. 2 not covered.</p> <p>BWV was observed</p> <p>From observing the BWV, do you feel the Use of Force was necessary and proportionate?</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Answers</th> <th>Count</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>5</td> <td>100%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>After watching the BWV, do you feel the rationale given on the paper record clearly justifies why that Use of Force was used?</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Answers</th> <th>Count</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>5</td> <td>100%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>What is your overall feedback after watching the BWV?</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Answers</th> <th>Count</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>5</td> <td>100%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>UoF records feedback</p> <p>Do the panel feel the Use of force was necessary and proportionate?</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Answers</th> <th>Count</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>22</td> <td>91.67%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Answers	Count	Percentage	No	5	100%	Answers	Count	Percentage	No	5	100%	Answers	Count	Percentage	No	5	100%	Answers	Count	Percentage	Yes	22	91.67%	<p>Record 1 BWV- Negative</p> <p>Panel felt that after reading record and watching the BWV, that UoF was not necessary. Whilst PiC displayed erratic behaviours, talking to them may have de-escalated the situation.</p> <p>Panel thought that the record of events appeared to exaggerate and that UoF was excessive as PiC seemed to be calm. His mild attempt to close his hand didn't match the description of the officers.</p> <p>Officers talking to each other but not communicating to PiC who had to ask what was happening.</p> <p>Record 2 – Positive</p> <p>Panel felt staff clearly made reasonable (lengthy) attempts to persuade PiC (child) to comply before resorting to the UoF and had given PiC time to make a choice instead of escalating to UoF immediately.</p> <p>St Giles worker was provided, which was positive. However, the Panel questioned by Custody staff were unable to provide a hairbrush to help to de-escalate the situation but but understood the potential difficulties with doing this.</p>
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No	2	8.33%	
Do you feel the rationale gives clear justification of why that Use of Force was used?			Question also asked around obtaining biometrics as this was mentioned as PiC left custody.
Answers	Count	Percentage	
Yes	20	83.33%	Record 3- Neutral
Unsure	4	16.67%	Panel felt that details around de-escalation was missing. Mixed responses resulting in neutral. General feeling was that UoF was proportionate.
No	0	0%	
Overall scrutiny panel feedback:			
Answers	Count	Percentage	
Positive	17	70.83%	Record 6 – Neutral
Neutral	7	29.17%	Panel felt lack of detail in what led to level of UoF being required to assist strip search. No additional information on the steps taken to promote compliance.
Negative	0	0%	Panel also felt that the level of search could be seen as aggressive, with no mention of Pic being allowed to put bottoms on before removal of top clothing.
			Record 7- Positive
			Panel felt detailed and clear as to why force was used. Force was justified and proportionate, as the use of the outdoor exercise yard was required and officers were left with no other options.
			Record 8- Positive
			Panel felt UoF was required and reasonable in order to get PiC back into her cell due non-compliance. Panel felt was justified and proportionate



4.	<p>Dip sample record Strip Search - All dip sampled records were selected at random by Chair at pre-meet with NC and CD.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 SS records selected <p>Do the panel feel the reason for the strip search was necessary and reasonable?</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Answers</th> <th>Count</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>30</td> <td>75%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>10</td> <td>25%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Do you feel the rationale gives clear justification of why a strip search was authorised?</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Answers</th> <th>Count</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>23</td> <td>57.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>11</td> <td>27.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Unsure</td> <td>6</td> <td>15%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>What is your overall feedback?</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Answers</th> <th>Count</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Positive</td> <td>22</td> <td>55%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Neutral</td> <td>11</td> <td>27.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Negative</td> <td>7</td> <td>17.5%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>6/8 positive searches</p>	Answers	Count	Percentage	Yes	30	75%	No	10	25%	Answers	Count	Percentage	Yes	23	57.5%	No	11	27.5%	Unsure	6	15%	Answers	Count	Percentage	Positive	22	55%	Neutral	11	27.5%	Negative	7	17.5%	<p>Record 1 Positive Panel felt SS was justified but felt a more detailed description would have been helpful.</p> <p>Record 2 Positive Panel felt that the explanation for SS were vague and lacked context around rationale but did suggest why a SS was required. However, overall, the Panel were but, overall, Panel were satisfied that the SS was justified</p> <p>Record 3 – Neutral Panel felt although item was found, rationale was unclear. No rationale given just reason for the arrest. More understanding on the grounds for the search was needed.</p> <p>Record 4 – Positive Panel feedback record was clear and concise, justification for strip search evidence in narrative. Good use of Wand evidence.</p> <p>Record 5 – Neutral Mixed response from Panel. Some felt that the SS was necessary for the safety of the PiC, but that the rationale lacked detail. Question also about why the SS wasn't conducted before taking PiC to hospital if risk was present.</p>
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		<p>Record 6 – Negative</p> <p>Panel felt explanation does not give a clear justification for SS. Panel felt that decision was made based on historical information, i.e., drug related offences</p> <p>Record 7 – Positive</p> <p>Panel felt that SS was justified and evidenced in the record seen, however, some confusion around the nature of the offence as the rationale didn't appear to match.</p> <p>Record 8 - Positive</p> <p>Panel found record provided reasonable justification for a SS, with strong rationale based on intelligence. PiC's presentation on arrival and finding item during wand search. Good use of wands evidenced.</p>
4.	Action noted from discussions for update at next panel	<p>Action 1</p> <p>Strip search records lacked evidence of authorization for SS, should this be seen on the records from Dip Sample? Require clarification that authorization was obtained for all the records that were selected?</p> <p>Action 2</p> <p>Panel have requested Record 6 (SS) to come back to panel with further information about the grounds for the decision to SS as understanding is that it was based on previous conviction.</p>



		<p>Action 3 Panel have requested that Record 1 (UoF) be internally reviewed and confirmation as to whether all officers who were present and involved had submitted UoF records.</p>
5.	Date and location of next panel	<p>Next panel to be held; Wednesday 10th September 2025 at Perry Barr Custody Suite.</p> <p>Please arrive on time - tea and coffee will be served at 5:45pm to allow us to start promptly.</p> <p>Perry Barr Custody Suite Holford Drive Birmingham B42 2TU</p>