

Custody Scrutiny Panel

Date: Wednesday 10th September 2025

Time: 18:00 - 20:30

Location: Perry Barr Custody Suite

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

Guests: N/A

WMP: Custody Lead Andy Edwards (AE), Custody Inspector Chris Doody, Custody Inspector Luke Loftus.

OPCC: Natalie Cox (NC)

Apologies: Mohammed Nadeem, Pauline White, Gary Williams, Rebecca Torr, Jacqui Peterkin, Supt Emma Spencer.

	Item Discussed	Actions
1.	<p>Welcome and introduction by NC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspector Luke Loftus will be taking over from Inspector Chris Doody from November 2025. The current Chair's tenure has ended. NC gave overview of role of Chair and invitation given for expressions of interest to be sent to NC. The role of Vice Chair is also open to expressions of interest. Recruitment drive for new Panel Members. <p>DD Minutes of the last meeting, update on any actions taken from last meeting.</p>	<p>NC to forward information about the role of DD for dissemination to Panel Members.</p>



	<p>Action 1 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 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>	<p>Authorization should be recorded on records. This is a training/staff performance issue. Once highlighted, there will be a more robust response.</p> <p>Rationale for Strip Search missing, to bring back to November Panel (CCTV)</p> <p>Submission of Use of Force (UoF) forms, electronic record not available. UoF forms include feedback from a number of officers. UoF detailed officers. All officers completed UoF forms.</p> <p>Detention Escort Officer (DEO) has had feedback regarding the type of language that they used during UoF.</p>
2.	<p>UPDATE: AE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update of recent death in custody and IOPC response. <p>Overview of National Police Equipment Guidance, supported by Health and Safety Executive regarding decision that only Police Officers who are equipped with stab vests should search Person in Custody</p>	



(PiC) when they first arrive in the Custody Block.

DEO and Police staff do not wear body armour but may support UoF/restraints if not involved with search.

If PiC has been searched by officers and placed into a cell, staff without stab vests may conduct an additional search if needed.

A long-term solution is needed, if all Police Officers are required to be issued with one.

Data

- Mondays are the busiest times when cells are in use, with Coventry being the busiest smaller Custody Block. Perry Barr still records highest footfall.
- Booking in time has reduced, meaning that Officers are in Custody for shorter periods of time.
- Wolverhampton Custody is undergoing refurbishment and Bloxwich has undergone increased safety measures.
- Total arrests are up by 4 ½%.

Arrest waiting times

- PiCs are being taken to different Custody blocks based on waiting times. Average waiting times circa 22 minutes. There has been an implementation of 'equal' volumes across custody suites to lower waiting times.
- 5pm/6pm arrest times of children are having an impact on them, as



they are more likely to have to stay overnight in custody block. This has led to agreed processes for children in custody, e.g., taking them to other accommodation/secure places.

CCTV

- Updating CCTV in Custody Blocks to increase quality of footage and to allow Officers to drag, drop and zoom in. The updates have been the reason why Panel have been unable to view CCTV footage of booking in process and authorization for SS. This should be resolved for the Panel in November.

Strip Searches (SS)

Slight increase of SS - 232 in July 2025 compared to 248 in August 2025.

Child SS

- There were five child SSs in August, with two positive finds and three negative outcomes. This is down from the previous month (July 2025) when there were 9.
- August Data records that there was no Appropriate Adult present for one SS, due to the urgency of the matter.
- 100% correct authorization (Chief Inspector) since February 2025, with completed rationales.

SS positive outcomes

29.1% of all SSs yielded a positive result.



Disproportionality

Number of SSs for Black PiCs spiked in July to 1.27%, up from 1.16%.

UoF (Use of Force)

- 7,679 UoF forms completed and of the ones which triggered a review, 93.8% have been reviewed. 2.36% of the reviewed UoF had indicated that some learning was required.
- UoF has increased in Custody, Criminal Justice Staff (CJS) only. Inspector Thomas has overview of UoF and is holding monthly meetings to look at UoF trigger reviews. There is also Dip Sampling of Body Worn Video (BWV).

Force Tactics

- Unarmed skills are still the most used method of UoF.
- UoF in Custody is below baseline in terms of disproportionality.
- 12.7% of Custody records have some UoF recorded. 15.2% of UoF records are related to Custody.
- BWV of UoF against children is very slightly (0.9) lower than BWV of UoF on adults. Out of 380 UoF incidents 80% of BWV was used for children.

QR codes

NC

QR codes provided for individual feedback on BWV for UoF and CCTV records of SS booking in and authorisations.



Dip sample of Use of Force records:

All Dip sampled records were selected at random by Chair at pre-meeting with NC, LL and CD.

- 8 BWV records selected
- BWV - records 1 & 2 viewed by all Panel Members

BWV data – records 1 and 2

From observing the BWV, Do you feel the Use of Force was necessary and proportionate?

Answers	Count	Percentage
Yes	7	50%
No	7	50%

After watching the BWV, Do you feel the rationale given on the paper record clearly justify' s why that Use of Force was used?

Answers	Count	Percentage
No	6	42.86%
Yes	5	35.71%
Not sure	3	21.43%

What is your overall feedback after watching the BWV?

Answers	Count	Percentage
Negative	7	50%
Positive	5	35.71%
Neutral	2	14.29%

Record 1 – Negative BWV SHOWN

Panel felt they was a lack and concern of lack of communication, the officers were not really explaining what they were doing, the detainee kept asking what you are doing, No narrative on the paper record.

Panel asked why discreet mode was being used on BWV, asked to look to this as action

Lack of empathy no voice of 'reason' to calm pic and focus on tactics rather than PiC. Lacked de-escalation attempts

Record 2 Positive BWV SHOWN

Panel felt written record was really confusing to read, needed to be written clearer, but BWV showed excellent communication. Positive explanation. Firm and clearly in control; made a determined appeal to get the PIC to comply. Made the decision to act and followed through with a degree of compassion.

Record 3 Positive

Panel felt UOF was justified, but noted lack of de-escalation and quick use of Pava from detail given and worried had added

to the levels of concern and behaviour that followed ending with PIC on cell watch.

Record 6 Positive

Panel felt Detailed write up explaining the situation fully.



	<p>For written records</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>13</td> <td>100%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Do you feel the rationale gives clear justification of 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>Yes</td> <td>13</td> <td>100%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Overall scrutiny panel feedback:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Answers</th> <th>Count</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Positive</td> <td>12</td> <td>92.31%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Neutral</td> <td>1</td> <td>7.69%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Answers	Count	Percentage	Yes	13	100%	Answers	Count	Percentage	Yes	13	100%	Answers	Count	Percentage	Positive	12	92.31%	Neutral	1	7.69%	<p>Seemed proportionate to environment and detailing aftercare.</p> <p>Record 7 – Positive</p> <p>Panel felt Use of spit guard is justified by the narrative and proportionate to circumstances.</p> <p>Officer notices that PIC was upset but no mention of aftercare</p>
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<p>4.</p>	<p>Dip sample record Strip Search - All dip sampled records where selected at random by Chair at pre-meet with NC, LL and CD.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 SS records selected • Record 2 CCTV viewed by all Panel Members <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>32</td> <td>91.43%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>3</td> <td>8.57%</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>26</td> <td>74.29%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Answers	Count	Percentage	Yes	32	91.43%	No	3	8.57%	Answers	Count	Percentage	Yes	26	74.29%	<p>Record 2 – Positive – watched BWV of Authorisation of SS</p> <p>Panel felt Not a lot of description in the narrative on record but enough to just justify strip search but felt needed more. Good communication from the arresting officer to the PIC. The officers were very good and explaining what was going to happen. Panel felt more culture awareness is needed in relation to seeing Vaseline and automatically being used for plugging and shouldn't be grounds alone.</p> <p>Record 3 Positive</p> <p>Strip search not unreasonable but not well justified in record more detail need, no mention of Wand used, panel questioned previous</p>						
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4.	Action noted from discussions for update at next panel	<p>Action 1</p> <p>Panel had requested Record 6 (SS) to come back to panel with further</p>												



		<p>information about the grounds for the decision to SS as understanding is that it was based on previous conviction. Information not available -CCTV to be provided for November 2025 Panel.</p> <p>Action 2 UOF record 1- panel asked for deep dive into use of discreet mode BWV within CJ.</p> <p>Action 3 Comment on the work WMP are doing to assurance panel members on concerns raised on the BBC Panorama program regarding conduct of officers.</p>
5.	Date and location of next panel	<p>Next panel to be held; Wednesday 5th November 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>