**ETHICS COMMITTEE – Interim Group Meeting**

**Tuesday 28th January 2025**

**9:00-10:00**

Meeting held virtually via Microsoft Teams

**Present**:

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| Marion Oswald |  | Chair of Ethics Committee |
| Malcolm Fowler |  | Ethics Committee |
| Tom Sorell |  | Ethics Committee |
| Jennifer Housego  Claire Paterson-Young  Anindya Banerjee  Simon Down |  | Ethics Committee  Ethics Committee  Ethics Committee  Head of Policy (OPCC) |
| Jack Tracey  Esther Whittock |  | Criminal Justice Policy Lead (OPCC)  Road Safety Lead (OPCC) |
| Edward Hunter |  | Policy Intern (OPCC) |

**Apologies:**

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| Kerry Reidy |  | University of Birmingham |

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| **1** | **09:00** | **Welcome**  The Chair opens the meeting and welcomes members. It is explained that this is only an interim meeting and, as such, only one project will be presented. | **Marion Oswald** |
| **2** | **09:05** | **AI Smart Safety Cameras**  The presenter explains that there is the intention to collect data on seat belt and mobile phone compliance whilst driving amongst demographics and in particular areas. The results would identify groups more likely to commit these offences and particular hotspot areas against which an out-of-home behaviour change campaign can be directed.  The data is to be collected by AI cameras which can automatically detect drivers not wearing seatbelts or using mobile phones and produce an infrared image of the offence. An image is only captured should an offence be detected. The image is subsequently reviewed twice by humans before being exported to UK secure cloud where it is stored for maximum 92 days.  The cameras can be mounted either on unmanned trailers or manned vans. Both have signs depicting the use of the cameras and the public are to be notified of the cameras prior to their use. Meanwhile, the locations are to be chosen by West Midlands Police as part of Op Triton.  The AI would estimate age, sex, car type and offence meaning there is no facial recognition. Number plate detection can also be disabled, ensuring no personal data is stored or captured. Additionally, being an infrared image, the race of the subject cannot be detected. This data would then be used to identify groups most likely to commit such offences. The location of the image is also recorded, allowing data to reflect hotspots but also, the road and junction types which correlate with increased offences.  The images are not going to be collected for law enforcement at this time and the only instance in which images will be shared with WMP is should another offence be detected within the image that constitutes a significant danger.  **Questions and Responses**  A member expresses concerns that mobile phone and seat belts are two different issues, suggesting the data should be disaggregated and the problems addressed separately.   * The presenter accepts this and explains that two different strands of data are able to be collected and thus, behaviour change campaigns can act separately.   The member continues by suggesting the signs on the vans and trailers are not sufficient in dissuading concerns about the transparency of the cameras’ use.   * The presenter suggests that they will endeavour to communicate with the partners providing the equipment as to the possibility of more signs. They continue by explaining that there will also be other sources of public awareness such as social media or the news.   A member emphasises that work needs to be done in order to create protocols around the use of the data collected and what will be shared with WMP.   * The presenter agrees and also emphasises the importance of protocols surrounding data and data sharing.   The member continues by expressing concerns around the fact that non-English speakers may be significantly disadvantaged by the out-of-home campaign, being unable to understand it.   * The presenter concedes this may be the case and emphasises the importance of imagery in the campaign as a consequence. The presenter also suggests that automatic translation capabilities on social media may relieve some of these issues.   A member questions how the camera locations are to be chosen, sharing concerns that, should they be placed in known hotspot areas they could simply serve as a tool for confirmation bias.   * The presenter suggests that it is for WMP to decide but concedes that a random placement may be preferred before explaining that the desire is for the cameras to be deployed across the whole of the West Midlands, not solely Birmingham.   The member clarifies that they need to be told the strict process of how locations are chosen for the sake of transparency.  A member suggests that there is enough data collected in order to identify people due to identifiable characteristics contained in the photos. Another member concurs with this and suggests images can contain images of faces, which constitutes as personal data. As a result, they inquire as to whether legal advice or data protection consultation has taken place.   * The presenter suggests no such consultation has taken place at present.   A member also raises a concern surrounding the accuracy of the AI’s ability to estimate age and sex, suggesting it can be very bias and inaccurate. Consequently, they worry about targeting groups on the basis of this data.  Another member inquires as to whether the placement of cameras could lead to a change in behaviour, such as people avoiding routes where they are placed and consequently skew results.   * The presenter suggests they will contact other forces where similar cameras are more widely used to gain an understanding of their experiences with them. | **Esther Whittock** |
| **3** | **09:55** | **Committee Comments**  **AI Smart Safety Cameras**  No formal recommendations to be given due to the project having yet to acquire the funding necessary to employ.  However, it is advised that the project should return to the committee should funding be received. | **Marion Oswald** |
| **4** | **10:00** | **Close**  The Chair closes the meeting by thanking participants for their attendance and contributions.  The Chair also explains that Jack Tracey will no longer be on the Committee and the thanks him for all his work towards the Committee before wishing him luck in his new role.  **Next Meeting: March 2025** | **Marion**  **Oswald** |