

20th April 2021

Police and Crime Commissioner for Dyfed-Powys

Response to: Disproportionate use of police powers - A spotlight on stop and search and the use of force

I welcome the report and its recommendations – many of which are already in progress here in Dyfed-Powys, which is reassuring.

The report highlights where forces are doing well, and where they can improve and I am assured that Dyfed-Powys Police, with the support of my office and volunteer members of the community, maintain robust oversight of all stop and search encounters with individuals from ethnic minorities and other than white backgrounds.

Investment into Body Worn Video cameras for all frontline officers was made a number of years ago, and we are seeing an ever-improving rate of these being used to demonstrate officers' rationale and behaviour in the exercise of their powers.

Whilst we have no cause for concern that officers are behaving unfairly, extensive work is ongoing to ensure this is evidenced and reviewed robustly and consistently.

Dyfed-Powys Police has established a stop and search improvement group to maintain oversight that officers' conduct and recording of stop and search is fully compliant with legislation and Approved Professional Practice. It also ensures processes are implemented to effectively identify and address any potential disproportionality in respect of diversity.

Following advice from the Inspectorate, the quarterly stop and search performance report has been broadened significantly to provide a greater depth of understanding of the data, which is scrutinised by my office and the Ethical Use of Police Powers group. The Force also has arrangements for thorough audits, which includes all ethnic minorities and other than white records being centrally reviewed. Action is already being taken to ensure these audits also include the consideration of corresponding Body Worn Video footage.

Both my Quality Assurance Panel and the joint Independent Advisory Group undertake dip-sampling scrutiny of stop and search, with the Quality Assurance Panel also periodically reviewing incidents involving the use of force. These reviews do involve the consideration of Body Worn Video footage alongside the electronic forms to allow the independent Members to make a fully informed judgement as to the proportionality of the use of these police powers.

Work is also ongoing within the Force to gain an understanding of any barriers linked to the fair and effective use of stop and search. The learning is being used to inform future stop and search and unconscious bias training for officers.

Dyfed-Powys Police and my office continue to work to engage with our communities to increase better representation within the organisation, as well as encourage more diverse participation in external scrutiny panels.