

COMMISSIONER'S INDEPENDENT SCRUTINY REPORT

Use of Force Scrutiny

Wednesday 29 July 2026

Scrutiny Panel:	USE OF FORCE
Members:	John Buckle Vicki Gwynne Kevin Hallam Garry Hamblin Caroline Strike Also in attendance: Chief Inspector Cliff Goodwin Michelle Ryan – SCO Holly Sproston – SCO
Purpose:	That the Use of Force policy and procedure have been followed and the Body Worn Video reviewed are compliant with the law and are being used effectively. The panel will focus on: • Whether Body Worn Video policy was adhered to • Whether the Use of Force level used was necessary • Whether the Use of Force level used was proportional to the incident • Is the action/behaviour justified? • Has it been explained adequately? • Has it been recorded properly? The scrutiny does not include Use of Force occurrences in Custody.
Panel Findings:	The period selected for the Use of Force incidents was from 01 June 2026 to 30 June 2026. 995 UOF incidents were recorded in this period. The panel agreed to focus on the use of force used on children and young people. During the period there were 77 incidents where UOF was used on children and young people. At the pre meeting on 15 July 2026 the panel selected 10 incidents where use of force on children and young people had been used. The panel requested that for two incidents more than one excerpt of BWV footage should be viewed. These incidents were 21260090669 and 21260104801. Of the ten incidents selected, body worn video footage could be found for nine.

The remaining nine incidents all had body worn video footage and corresponding STORM logs.

The Incidents viewed are outlined in Appendix 1

STORM logs of the incidents were provided. Panel members were reminded that the STORM log is a live record of events as they happen and indicate calls and information being provided by officers as the incident unfolds. It is not the investigation record. The STORM logs are provided to give some context to the incident leading up to the use of force being deployed and enables panel members to be cognisant of the situation in determining whether the use of force was appropriate in a potentially quickly developing situation.

Observations and Recommendations:

Incident 21260105818 - One panel member did not think that use of force used was reasonable or proportionate. This was not raised during the scrutiny meeting to enable discussion. The Panel must raise any concerns during scrutiny meeting to enable robust discussion, scrutiny and clarification.

Incident 21260104801 – The incident appeared to be a targeted incident by officers on Trials Bikes. It was noted that BWV was only activated once the bikes had stopped. The panel felt that it would have been better for context to see the incident unfolding. The panel have asked what the Force Policy I on activating BWV for targeted operations and for officers on motorbikes.

Incident 21260087019 – no BWV footage could be found for this incident. The incident occurred on 08 June 2026 so may have been deleted if not required for evidential purposes.

The panel indicated that in several incidents viewed, the officers worked well to de-escalate the situation.

Recommendations

- The Force consider clearer policy on the activation of BWV for officers on motorbikes.

Force Lead Response:

UOF Tactical Lead Response

Thank you for the observations and recommendations arising from the scrutiny process.

With regard to Incident 21260104801, the panel queried the activation of Body Worn Video (BWV) by officers deployed on police motorcycles and requested clarification on force policy.

Current Staffordshire Police BWV policy requires officers to activate BWV at incidents they attend and during police encounters, including the use of police powers and use of force. However, there is currently no specific policy, guidance or

additional equipment provision relating to the activation of BWV whilst officers are actively riding police motorcycles.

Motorcycle officers do not currently have a hands-free solution for BWV activation and would be required to manually activate the device. Operationally, this presents challenges whilst safely controlling a motorcycle, particularly when responding on emergency equipment or undertaking dynamic enforcement activity. In this case, the officers activated their BWV at the earliest safe opportunity once the motorcycles had been stopped and they were able to safely engage with those involved.

The force has previously explored the use of motorcycle-mounted camera solutions and equipment has been purchased. However, implementation has not yet progressed due to information security considerations that remain under review. Work is ongoing with Motorola regarding alternative technological solutions that may provide a suitable capability for motorcycle officers in the future.

In relation to the wider circumstances of this incident, the deployment formed part of ongoing activity to address the risks posed by illegally ridden motorcycles and associated anti-social behaviour. Such activity is informed by community concerns and the significant risk of serious injury or death that unlawful motorcycle use can present to riders, passengers and other road users.

Road Crime Team management reviewed the footage following the panel, and whilst considering the operational context, there is no indication that the officers departed from force policy. The BWV appears to have been activated at the earliest practical and safe opportunity available to them. Nevertheless, the panel's recommendation regarding clearer guidance for motorcycle officers has been noted and will be considered as part of future policy and equipment reviews. Regarding Incident 21260105818, it is important that any differing views concerning the reasonableness or proportionality of force are raised during the scrutiny meeting itself. This allows for robust discussion, clarification of the circumstances, and consideration of the officer's decision-making within the full context of the incident, including the National Decision Model.

Finally, in respect of Incident 21260087019, enquiries were made to locate BWV footage; however, no footage was available. As the incident occurred on 8 June 2026 and was not identified as evidential material, the footage may have been deleted in line with retention processes.

We welcome the panel's positive observations regarding officers' use of de-escalation techniques and their recognition of the professionalism demonstrated across a number of the incidents reviewed.



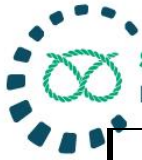
Appendix 1 Matrix of Use of Force Incidents.

Occurrence No.	Date	Tactic Type Used	UOF Necessary?	UOF Proportional?	Description / Comments
21260106259	30/06/2026	Ground Restraint	Yes	Yes	Grade 1 – Safeguarding issue as children are known to be in the house. Young female smashing furniture. Officers locate her in bedroom. Attempt to de-escalate. Young male also tries to calm young female. Female then lashes out at officers and resists arrest. Handcuffs used. Force was necessary to prevent harm to herself and others.
21260105818	29/06/2026	Non-compliant handcuffing	Yes	Yes	STORM Log indicates that male is aggressive and has been violent to mother. He has also smashed his bedroom. Male is known to NICHE for carrying knives. Majority of panel thought the UOF was proportional. One panel member did not and did not raise this during the scrutiny meeting to enable discussion.
21260104801	27/06/2026	Improvised	Yes	Yes	The STORM log was very brief, so it seems that this was a targeted operation on the minibikes and electric bikes. Panel were shown BWV available from 2 officers. The BWV cameras were not turned on until officers had dismounted their motorbikes. Panel discussed how the BWV footage could be better and whether it is feasible for officers to commence recording whilst in pursuit. Young male alleges that officer pushed his head against the fence, but this was not clear from BWV seen.
21260104689	27/06/2026	Non-compliant handcuffing	Yes	Yes	Several calls coming in about group of girls getting into an argument with security at shopping centre. Additional call from Primark indicating that group of girls had been asked to leave due to shoplifting. Group of girls have been very vocal, and one has been aggressive and failing to engage with officers. It appears she is known to officers. She is handcuffed. Panel



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					thought that officers attempted to de-escalate and were patient.
21260104375	27/06/2026	CED (Aimed)	Yes	Yes	Call indicates that young female has a knife. Young female is known to NICHE. Officers attempt to verbally de-escalate. Knife is found on female. Officers very patient with young female. UOF record indicates that Taser was aimed but this was not seen on BWV footage.
21260098737	18/06/2026	Ground restraint	Yes	Yes	Report of young male with a gun/ air rifle. Male is located by Armed Response Officers, but male has ditched the rifle. Male is verbally aggressive and is restrained with handcuffs and leg restraints. Rifle is located. Male is known to NICHE and has warning markers on his record. Panel thought Officers calmly brought the situation under control.
21260099029	19/06/2026	Non-compliant handcuffing	Yes	Yes	Looked after child had left house with alcohol against carers wishes. Now being reported as a missing person. Officers in town recognise her from description given and spend time calmly de-escalating the situation. Young female was compliant until they reached the police car and then attempted to run off. Young female was then handcuffed. Panel thought that officers handled this sensitively and well
21260087019	30/05/2026	PAVA	Yes	Yes	Report of missing person with suicidal thoughts. Missing young female located on the roof of an abandoned building. BWV footage was shown from arrest onwards. Young female was known to NICHE and had markers for previously assaulting an officer. 4 officers required to restrain female. Knife found on female. PAVA used and leg restraints due to aggressive and violent behaviour.
21260092254	08/06/2026	No BWV Found			No BWV found
21260090669	05/06/2026	PAVA	Yes	Yes	Reports of male attempting to abduct a baby from a pushchair. Male passerby has challenged male and he has walked away. Passerby has followed male and reported further suspicious behaviour looking at other groups of children. Officers locate male behind a row of houses. No information is known on who



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					the male is. Male becomes violent and aggressive as police attempt to restrain him. Male spits at officers. Unable to put spit hood on immediately due to two hands required to restrain male. PAVA is used but has little effect. A couple of different BWV excerpts were shown to the panel
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