

## SCRUTINY REVIEW REPORT 2019

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| <b>Safer Neighbourhood Panel Stafford</b> | <p>The following panel members undertook the scrutiny:</p> <p>Carolyn Trowbridge (lead)</p> <p>Pat Alker</p> <p>Tim Handley</p> <p>They were observed by Jenny Webb.</p>   |
| <b>Working Title:</b>                     | Use of Force core review 2019  |
| <b>Reason for enquiry:</b>                | To meet the requirement of the Staffordshire Commissioner that Use of Force is reviewed annually by each SNP.  |
| <b>Background:</b>                        | <p>We were asked to make scrutiny of body cams a priority, to assist the police in rectifying anything that may be preserved as unlawful, untrustworthy, or misguided we are also checking to see if the paperwork matches the action which in all cases it did.</p>   |
| <b>Review details:</b>                    | <p>The following incident numbers were reviewed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20190419-0716</li> <li>• 20190603-0296</li> <li>• 20190610-0026</li> <li>• 20190609-0688</li> <li>• 20190413-0083</li> </ul> <p><b>0716:</b> No footage - UOF Handcuffs 2 officers in attendance. Lawful – Hospitalised.</p> <p>Use of force type handcuffs, no body worn video footage - deleted due to time factor and non evidential case. A record of restraint in ambulance, not compliant aggressive resistance, wriggling/thrashing. Alcohol and drug impact where factors for UOF.</p> <p><b>0296:</b> No footage - UOF handcuffs - 5 officers in attendance. Lawful no record of arrest or hospitalised.</p> <p>PCSO should not be in attendance when probable danger, officer should have waited for back up as assailant has harmed police officers in the</p> |



past, but given that the person was cuffed without any trouble and taken to St Georges the officers call may be justified.

No footage, same as above, time factor and non-evidential case.

Handcuffs only used, in house unarmed skills used including pressure points, strikes, restraints and take downs. Mental health was a factor for UOF.

**0688:** Handcuffs used/restraints in ambulance on legs and held by police officer/ambulance staff - lawful - handled with compassion and professionalism. Long footage. Hospitalised.

This was unusual footage, someone (residing in mental institution) while allowed out of complex, had taken too much alcohol and was self harming.

The lady had too much to drink, police lady quite comforting at all stages, the assailant was already hurt and police was called by another inpatient to assist.

The report states Ground Restraint Used, but I witness two officers assisting the assailant off the ground quite gently as the assailant was at this point compliant but as they reached the ambulance the assailant became aggressive. One of the three male officers could have kept the public out of the way better while the lady officer dealt with the situation. Cuffed in ambulance.

Much calmer once relaxing in ambulance, but still very frightened individual who needed reassurance and restraining. The lady police officer attending acknowledged this and acted in accordance with it.

Once at the Mental Health facility, the reaction from staff was very dismissal of the police officers, no official pass over, as the inpatients and the staff mingle it would be difficult for a police officer to know who to listen to.

The patient became more aggressive, agitated and angry once inside the hospital, we could see that the police officers also looked a little concerned about the way the staff at the hospital had wanted the cuffs off before listening to or understanding the situation. Maybe some



system should be in place so that the police officers when assisting know who is the chief officer, or who to take their orders from.

Handled well, especially by the lady police officer in attendance.

The form could have been filled out without referencing someone as mixed race, this would not look professional and non-biased if used in a court case. We also couldn't find on the form where restraint was used, it should have read ambulance at least. Alcohol and drugs was a factor for UOF.

**0026:** Leg-straps used - lawful - no footage – Hospitalised.

No footage again, non-evidential case and time frame.

The patient was taken to hospital and was sedated so leg-straps use was very much needed, as no footage, not sure why handcuffs were not used also. Use of force only in ambulance, unarmed skills used (including pressure points, strikes, restraints and take down).

Alcohol and mental health was the factors for UOF.

The form stated soft shield used.

**Number 70 - 0083:** Handcuffs - lawful - handled well, by unknown young lady and Special Police Constable. No footage in police car. Arrested.

Mother wanted to press charges, son going down same route as father, his reaction to ladies was very different to gentlemen. Was kept calm by young lady and specials, just with talk. He was handcuffed swiftly and calmly once they knew there was to be an arrest, it was only after the arrest he got aggressive and agitated. Admitted to having drugs on him, handled with professionalism and care for the individual, handcuffed once needed, care for police officer and specials may have been better handled in the car, as no footage due to on the drivers chest still.

If the young lady, who came out in her nightwear was a member of the police in any position, she should get a special thank you for caring even in the middle of the night when off duty and her handling of assailant.

Ground restraint used in custody block PNC warnings.



Alcohol, drugs and mental health where factors leading to UOF.

Arrested.

### **Review of Findings:**

The form received to select videos from was missing vital information to make this a viable task.

Some use of force reference numbers had no information on it regards, footage available, location, equipment used etc. This made it impossible to assess whether the forms had been completed correctly, whether the forms corresponded to the footage (if any) or in some cases whether the incident had been conducted professionally and to the best ability of the police officer. Gemma Ward asked for hidden information and on receipt I can confirm paperwork was in order.

Paperwork, vast but in order bar 0688 we couldn't find where (position, Ambulance/home etc.) UOF was recorded.

Cameras not always in best position.

PCSO should not be attending where the assailant may be of danger to officer.

Handling of public may have been more forceful to keep them away from assailants.

### **Conclusions:**

All legal, perceived as executed well.

### **Recommendations:**

The main recommendation is that after choosing a date for the meeting the footage for scrutiny is from individual cases chosen within the previous 28 days. This would save officers time and would mean we do observe footage on all.

Other recommendations:

- Specials have video cameras.
- Any camera being used are mounted on dash for journey to police station.
- PCSO's do not attend dangerous situations.
- Non-biased descriptions are used when describing people.
- There is a system in place at mental health hospitals so that officers understand who to take their orders from once arriving.
- More women are trained in this field as their gentle approach works



well with drug and alcohol related cases. It looked like that this is the majority of cases.

**LPT Commander  
Report Feedback:**

I am extremely grateful for the SNP Volunteers who gave up their time to complete this scrutiny. The points they raise are extremely valid – highlighting good work and professional behaviour as well as some area for marginal improvement. We have discussed that it would be helpful for all future records selected to have bodyworn video footage to review, to make the review as in-depth and beneficial as possible.

My sincere thanks to all involved – challenging, but all in support of continuous improvement and transparency.

Chief Inspector Gemma Ward

**SCO Response:**

A thorough scrutiny undertaken. The recommendation regarding scrutiny data being within 28 days for BWV footage retention has been noted and will be considered as part of the review process by the SCO.