

## Home Office Best Use of Stop and Search Scheme 2014

Dorset Police consider Stop Search and other street encounters as a priority. The Police powers are to be used proportionally and in an intelligence led, professional manner in order to remove offensive weapons and drugs from the streets and prevent and bring to justice those persons involved in the crimes that affect our communities such as burglary and vehicle crime. We are committed to increasing the transparency of our stop search activity and gain trust within our communities regarding Police use of these powers. Dorset Police has signed up to the Home Office Best Use of Stop Search Scheme.

The principal aims of the Scheme are to achieve greater transparency and community involvement in the use of stop and search powers supporting a more intelligence-led approach, leading to better outcomes, for example, improving the stop and search to positive outcome ratio.

The features of the Scheme are:

**Data Recording** – forces will record the outcome of searches in more detail to show the link, or lack of, between the object of the search and its outcome e.g. arrests, cautions, penalty notices for disorder and all other disposal types.

**Lay observation policies** – providing the opportunity to members of the local community to accompany police officers on patrol using stop and search.

**Stop and search complaints 'community trigger'** – a local complaint policy requiring the police to explain to local community scrutiny groups how the powers are being used where there is a large volume of complaints.

**Reducing section 60 'no-suspicion' stop and searches by –**

- Raising the level of authorisation to senior officer when they reasonably believe that an incident involving serious violence will take place.
- ensuring that section 60 stop and search is applied in accordance with case law and only used if necessary – making this clear to the public
- limiting the duration of initial authorisations to 15 hours (from 24); and
- Communicating to local communities when there is a section 60 authorisation in advance (where practicable) and afterwards, so that the public is kept informed of the purpose and success of the operation.
- By adopting the Scheme, those forces will use stop and search strategically, which will improve public confidence and trust.

### **The Stop & Search Community Scrutiny Panel (SSCSP) and Community Complaints Trigger Mechanism**

There is a force wide Stop & Search Scrutiny Panel sitting at least quarterly made up of a diverse range of stakeholders this group will review examples of stop & search in practice through actual examination of stop search forms and Police performance data. Also Dorset have commenced writing to many

persons who have been subject to stop search and requesting feedback. This data will also be considered by the Panel. Further, each and every complaint against Police which concerns a stop search encounter will be considered by the Panel.

The Panel will be expected to convene when required on occasions out of the meetings schedule when a **Community Complaints Trigger Mechanism Threshold has been met**. The Trigger mechanism threshold for Dorset will be met if:

1. There is a rise in the amount of stop & search related complaints against Police.  
NB every complaint against Police in relation to stop search encounters will be considered as a standing agenda at every set Panel meeting.
2. There is a significant change in proportionality of those that are subject of stop & search BME likelihood to be subject of stop & search compared to white.
3. A single event or incident related to stop & search activity that is giving significant cause for concern amongst our communities regarding police use of this tactic.
4. Any other issue upon consultation with the Dorset Police Lead for stop & search.

The Stop & Search Community Scrutiny Panel will be chaired by the Dorset Police Stop Search lead.

The Police and Crime Commissioner or their delegate shall be invited to take part.

If a member of the public wishes to become involved in the Scrutiny Panel as a community representative, please contact Dorset Police Stop Search lead Chief Inspector 1107 Ashley Adams to arrange an initial communication.

Email: [Ashley.Adams@dorset.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Ashley.Adams@dorset.pnn.police.uk)

Dorset Police will deal properly and with integrity upon receipt of Complaint ~Against Police in relation to stop search activity.

Here is a link to the Professional Standards Department of Dorset Police:

<http://www.dorset.police.uk/default.aspx?page=1026>

## **Section 60 Stop & Search Authorisations in Anticipation of Violence**

The level of authorisation has been raised to senior officer ACPO rank where there is a belief that incidents of serious violence **WILL** take place under Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994.

The limit of the initial authorisation is 15 hours, reduced from 24hrs previously.

Communication over the authorisation of a S60 to local communities should be (where applicable) in advance and then outcome afterwards so that the public are informed of the purpose and the success of the operation or otherwise .Each Section 60 Authorisation should have its own specific communications plan and Community Impact Assessment completed.

Section 60 uses will be reviewed by the Dorset Police Stop Search Scrutiny Panel.

## **Observers Scheme – (Ride Along–Scheme)**

Members of the public across Dorset will be allowed and encouraged to accompany police officers on patrol through application to [Ashley.Adams@dorset.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Ashley.Adams@dorset.pnn.police.uk) or via contact with their local Neighbourhood Inspector.

Persons with a criminal record or caution may be excluded from the scheme. Cases will be reviewed on individual circumstances.

The person taking part in the scheme should be encouraged to provide feedback at the conclusion of the patrol.

All persons taking part in the scheme shall be provided with a Hi-Visibility vest.

In the event that a stop & search situation arises and that grounds are met, then the member of the public should be encouraged to witness this and provide specific feedback.

The Observers Scheme and Ride Along is not a stop & search specific matter, it is a general police duties matter during which time a stop & search opportunity could arise.