



Oxfordshire

Community Scrutiny Panel

Reporting period April 2025 – March 2026





Leadership messages

Message from the Chair Caroline Witton

It is a privilege to present this year's report for the Community Scrutiny Panel as its Chair. The year has brought change within the Panel itself. We have said goodbye to several members whose dedication has shaped the Panel's development, and we extend our sincere thanks for their service. Following a recruitment process, we are pleased to confirm three new members, who joined at the end of 2025. This renewal strengthens our diversity of perspective and reinforces our commitment to representing communities across Oxfordshire.

This has been a year of learning through reflection and professional dialogue, with clear recognition across all parties that scrutiny must be meaningful, rigorous, and rooted in public confidence. Through constructive challenge, the Panel feels that we have helped to ensure that Thames Valley Police better reflects principles of fairness, accountability, and community legitimacy. Our members have given their time, expertise, and lived experience to ensure that police powers are exercised lawfully proportionately, and with respect for the communities they serve.





Leadership messages

Message from the Chair Caroline Witton

Our emphasis has not only been on identifying learning, but on improving how feedback is received, embedded, and evidenced by Thames Valley Police. Independent oversight and scrutiny must lead to change and directly shape operational practice, otherwise it risks becoming symbolic.





A message from Chief Superintendent Ben Clark

Oxfordshire LCU has been fortunate with its Scrutiny panel's engagement made up of a very knowledgeable panel of individuals possessing a variety of skills. All the panel members have been enthusiastically involved in the scrutiny process, and have contributed in meaningful discussions that resulted in good feedback as well as developmental learning points for the officers involved. The feedback and themes identified have given us the opportunity to focus on disproportionality issues and update our S&S training package as well.

The panel's feedback when relayed to officers have always been well-received. Alongside the CSP, there has also been a significant improvement in the supervisory scrutiny of S&S. The CSP scrutiny and Supervisory scrutiny are both vital in the professional development of our largely young-in-service frontline as well as improving the trust and confidence that our communities have in TVP.





About the group

The Community Scrutiny Panel meets every month to scrutinise officers' use of Stop and Search and Use of Force. It is comprised of volunteer community members who live, work or study in Oxfordshire and are diverse s to age and gender but as of yet, not ethnicity.

While we are facilitated by Inspector Roni Koshi and Community & Diversity Officer, Dave Hession, (with frontline officer observers), the Panel is independently chaired, and members are encouraged to speak freely and honestly to ensure the genuine view of the citizen is considered.

We scrutinise police interaction with the public where officers have exercised Stop and Search and Use of Force powers. We help to ensure that these powers are being used appropriately and ethically, paying particular attention to interactions with communities who have the lowest trust in policing. As a member of the Community Scrutiny Panel, we are trained to ensure we can play an active role in monitoring and ensuring these powers are exercised correctly, proportionately and professionally.



Meetings & membership

- Number of meetings held: 10
- Average attendance: 4 per meeting
- Police representation: 3 per meeting

Member diversity summary: The panel includes members from different walks of life, both retired and currently in work. Efforts are ongoing to improve the diversity further.

Identified gaps: there is a recognition that youth and minority communities are not well-represented, and efforts are continuing to improve it.

Recruitment aims: To represent our communities better.





What we focused on



What we focused on

Date	BWV clips reviewed	Theme	Examples of good practise & discussion points
April 2025	4	Stop & Search	Good explanation of GOWISELY. Switched on BWV very early on providing a full content on the grounds of S&S. Good communication style and tone with young person.
May 2025	4	Stop & Search	Written grounds did not match fully with verbal grounds for 1 S&S. Good communication and professionalism exhibited by officers.
July 2025	4	Stop & Search supervisor reviews	Panel observations reflected supervisor comments and assessment.



What we focused on

Date	BWV clips reviewed	Theme	Examples of good practise & discussion points
Aug 2025	3	Stop & Search	Efficient S&S. Good examples of rapport building and reassurance by officers.
Oct 2025	4	Stop & Search	Overall, good S&Ss as reviewed by the panel.
Jan 2026	5	Stop & Search / S60	Majority assessed as appropriate, with some minor learning points.
Feb 2026	4	Stop & Search	Proportionate use of force observed in one case where the subject demonstrated aggressive behaviour during the encounter



What we focused on

Date	BWV clips reviewed	Theme	Examples of good practise & discussion points
Mar 2026	3	Use of Force (UoF)	3 incidents assessed as appropriate with some learning points. Further information requested to confirm officer welfare and completion of a structured debrief. TVP Use of Force trainer confirmed that the force used during the encounters appeared proportionate and in line with training and identified learning for incorporation in to officer safety training.



Issues Raised – Actions Taken

You said	We did
Recording of SDE	Training package has been updated and has been delivered to ICRT officers.
Complete safeguarding referrals for children	Training package has been updated. Planned changes to S&S recording processes will support improved supervisory oversight of searches involving children and secure efficiencies in safeguarding referral.
A S&S was conducted even when officer had already made the decision to arrest the subject.	The Panel queried the need for the S&S, as the subject could be searched more thoroughly upon arrest using other powers. Feedback given the officer's supervisor for monitoring and supervision of future S&Ss by officer.



Issues Raised – Actions Taken

You said	We did
A S&S was observed by the Panel, the optics of which made it look that S&S was disproportionate, and that there were insufficient grounds present for the S&S.	Feedback was relayed to the officer's supervisor, who conducted a debrief with the officer. There were learning points in terms of recording the written grounds and providing further context without giving away sensitive intelligence.
A Use of Force incident was observed by the Panel, where the officer was using unprofessional language repeatedly whilst using Force on the subject in order to gain compliance from them.	Use of unprofessional language by police officers under any circumstances can be perceived negatively by onlookers, and its repeated use could give an impression that the officer is losing control. Feedback to be given to the officer via their inspector and to ascertain what debriefing has been captured post-incident and welfare of involved officers.



Issues Raised – Actions Taken

You said	We did
Develop & maintain clear, timely, and transparent outward facing communication products relating to use of police powers and their scrutiny.	The panel has commenced publication of scrutiny panel meeting summaries to improve transparency and accountability.



Reflections on how the panel is working

What worked well:

- Having a monthly meeting on a fixed day and time i.e. last Thursday of the month.
- Having a frontline officer as part of the review process to offer a practitioner's perspective.
- The process of relaying feedback to the officers via their supervisors has worked well. Officers value the feedback. The reviews have also helped identify themes which are being incorporated into a new training package for the frontline.



Reflections on how the panel is working

What we want to improve:

- Demographic of the Panel.
- Maximise the different skills that the individual panel members possess in driving improvements for TVP.
- Panel understanding of Use of Force realities and complexities through member observation of officer safety and taser training.
- Analysis of the benefits and unintended consequences of the scrutiny Panel's reviews
 - How can we measure that CSP is adding value to the T&C strategy?
 - What actions has TVP taken in response to panel observations?
 - Disproportionality v/s Effectiveness – to understand whether higher S&S for some ethnic groups reflect bias or operational need.
- include the subject's perspective where possible.
- Compare lived experiences with the Panel's observations.



Areas for future focus

Cycle	Proposed area of focus
July 2026	Use of Force scrutiny – Limb restraints and/or spit hood.
Sept 2026	Use of Force scrutiny – Taser (used or drawn).
Nov 2026	S&S scrutiny – Stolen property S.1 PACE.
Jan 2027	S&S scrutiny – Offensive weapon/bladed article – S.1 PACE



How to get involved

Have you noticed any changes in how Thames Valley Police use their powers?

Your views and experiences are important to us.

For any enquiries relating to our Community Scrutiny Panel please contact:
scrutiny@thamesvalley.police.uk.

We are committed to supporting members' learning and development through training and informal learning sessions and seek your valuable input to help shape and improve what and how services are delivered to our communities.