DURHAM POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER’S OFFICE



**BUSS Panel Use of Force**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date:** | 28th April 2025 | **Time:** | 13:00-16:00 |
| **Venue:** | Police HQ |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Attendance:** | AB  JT  AP  Insp IB  Sgt WB  Sgt AC  PC SC  KI  CB  RP  JP  HD  FB  JW |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Apologies:** | Cllr SA  BW  DH  JR  KM  PT  PS  AAM |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Item** |  | **Owner** |
| 1. | Chairs Welcome | AB welcomed everyone to the meeting. |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Housekeeping | AB informed the panel of the general housekeeping rules of the meeting and provided a presentation which included more information. |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| 3 | Introduction and Apologies | Panel Members gave a brief introduction about themselves.  Apologies were noted. |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| 4 | Conflict of Interest/ Undertaking of Confidentiality | AB reminded members of the confidential nature of the meeting and how this was going to be monitored. Members of the group were requested to declare their interest in any cases that were being discussed as the meeting progresses. |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| 5 | Minutes from the previous meeting | The minutes were agreed as an accurate record.  Members of the panel were happy for the minutes to be added to the PCC website but would only like their initials to be included and not their full names. |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| 6 | Recommendation Updates | PC SC provided an update on the case from a few meetings ago, where the Panel didn’t think it was handled very well. The case underwent an internal scrutiny within the Force. The supervisors advised that communication needs to be improved. It was taken to the Professional Standards Department but they didn’t see any form of misconduct. The officers on this case should have dealt with it in a different way. Since this happened, the Force have checked on the wellbeing of the individual in the footage.  2. AB enquired about whether the body worn footages that are shown to the Panel can no longer be redacted. It has been escalated to the Deputy Chief Constable. He is looking at options to see how this can be fixed.  **Action- AP to pick this up.** | **AP** |
|  |  |  |  |
| 7 | Review of Terms of Reference | The Terms of Reference were updated to reflect the current process and the current topics. A copy was handed to panel members in the meeting. |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| 8 | Training Requirements | The only training requirement that the Panel noted was that police officers should not swear when arresting somebody. |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| 9 | Force Presentation | PC SC delivered a presentation regarding Use of Force to the Panel. The presentation highlighted the National Decision Model. The National Decision Model can be used individually by an officer to justify the force they have used. The model is used to gather information and intelligence and can be used to assess threat and risk and to develop a working strategy. There are 4 harm levels, unknown, low, medium and high. The taser is the best method to handling a high threat person, but there is a standard operating procedure for when an officer uses a taser. Before a police officer uses a taser, they will need to identify the options and contingencies of using one. An officer might have a contingency to use a taser but that could change if the threat level changes. A police officer can sometimes use a 5 step appeal process prior to them using any force, they will try and reason with the subject first.  PC SC also showed the Panel examples of power and policy i.e. PACE, Common Law, the Criminal Law Act 1967, Human Rights and the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008. |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| 10 | Scrutiny of Cases | **Case 1-**  PC SC firstly presented the relevant Use of Force report which gave an overview of the case and then he showed the body worn footage.  The subject was located in Chester-le-Street and when the Police arrived he was passively resistant. The Police has received information that the subject was violent towards their partner. When the Police arrived, the subject was hiding behind the bed. The police officers red dotted him with their tasers.  The Panel agreed that the Use of Force in the footage was reasonable under the circumstances, and they had also used the National Decision Model. The Panel noted that the subject was a fit young man, so when he was being passively resistant it would have been difficult for the officers to handcuff him. Overall, the Panel agreed that the case was handled well.  **Case 2-**  PC SC firstly presented the relevant Use of Force report which gave an overview of the case and then he showed the body worn footage.  The subject was compliant once the taser was drawn, the officer then withdrew their taser. The initial report was that the subject was responsible for a high risk domestic incident. The subject was searched and his pockets were emptied.  The Panel noticed that the police officer swore at the subject in the video. They didn’t like this as they thought it diminished the position of the Police and found it unprofessional. The general perception from the Panel was that the subject could have been arrested without foul language being used by the officer. Sgt AC informed the panel that in these circumstances, the officer would be spoken to and showed the footage to assess whether their language was acceptable. In the footage the subject told the police officers that he was scared, the panel argued that he was just using this as an excuse, so the police officers would be a little easier on him.  **Case 3-**  PC SC firstly presented the relevant Use of Force report which gave an overview of the case and then he showed the body worn footage.  The police officers received a report that the subject was in possession of weapons and drugs. The body worn footage showed a pre planned warrant with information and intelligence that the owner was in possession of a trained attack dog. The officers arced the taser and red dotted the subject. The Panel noted that the police officer had tension in his voice, but once the suspect was in handcuffs and complied the officer’s voice started to change to a calmer register.  The Panel agreed that this case was handled well and was dealt with quite quickly. The Panel agreed that the police officers used Use of Force appropriately and the National Decision Model was used.  **Case 4-**  PC SC firstly presented the relevant Use of Force report which gave an overview of the case and then he showed the body worn footage.  The police officers had received a report that the subject wanted to end his life and was threatening to drink bleach. When the Police arrived, Paramedics were already on the scene. The subject was highly intoxicated and was taken to hospital. The police officers used the taser on the subject in order to remove the bleach. The Panel liked how the police officers and the Paramedics didn’t jump on the subject when he was tasered, they just calmly removed the bleach. The Panel said that the police officer acted in the correct manner, they would like this positive feedback to be passed back to the officer.  **Action- AB to pass the positive feedback from the Panel to the officer.** | **AB** |
|  |  |  |  |
| 11 | Summary of recommendations | **Case 1-**   * there were no recommendations.   **Case 2-**   * police officers to ensure that inappropriate language i.e. swearing is not used.   **Case 3-**   * there were no recommendations.   **Case 4-**   * AB to pass the positive feedback from the Panel to the police officer as he handled the case well. | **AB** |
|  |  |  |  |
| 12 | Any other business | CB was elected as vice chair of the panel.  The panel agreed for meetings to be every 6 weeks. |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| 13 | Date of next meeting | **The next meeting will take place on Monday 16th June 13:00pm.** |  |