

# Police Accountability and Legitimacy Group (PALG)

Police Headquarters  
10 March 2020

## MINUTES

### Attendees

#### Police and Crime Commissioner's Team

Lee Jones - Chair (LJ)	Chief Executive (Interim)
Laura Armitt	Executive Advisor and Support Officer
Hannah Jenkins-Jones (HJJ)	Strategic Lead for Scrutiny, Assurance and Equality
Sarah Mahon (SM)	Engagement and Assurance Officer

#### South Wales Police

Phil Ashby	Chief Superintendent
Steve Jones	Superintendent
Andy Valentine	Temporary Assistant Chief Constable
Martyn Jones	Equality and Inclusion Manager

#### PALG Members

Alex Drummond (AD)	Independent Advisor
Steve Bartley (SB)	Older People's Commissioner for Wales
Jasmine Jones (JJ)	Gypsy Traveller Wales
Judith Major (JM)	Hafal
Reynette Reynolds (RR)	Oasis
Paula Wade (PW)	South Wales Victim Focus

### 1. Minutes and Actions

Minutes from the previous meeting were agreed as a true record. Action updates were discussed.

#### **Action.1 – South Wales Police to provide a breakdown of use of force data, including use of force categories and offence type.**

To be discussed as part of agenda item 3..

#### **Action 2 – South Wales Police to provide breakdown of the number of officers who were Taser trained and the comparison of number of Tasers drawn versus used.**

PA informed the group that 53% of officers in the force (752) were trained in Taser use. Currently, the force did not Taser-train officers in their probation period, however, this was currently being reviewed. PA also advised that the Home Office had approved additionally to increase Taser carriage, which was due to the evolving policing environment and for enhancing safety.

PA presented Taser usage data between 2017-20 and provided an explanation of the Taser tactics used. SB asked whether they anticipated the increase of Taser use once more officers were trained. PA advised that there was likely to be an increase once more officers were trained. PA advised that any data trends would be monitored at a dedicated board that had recently been established to review use of force and stop and search data. SB asked whether

the force would make this data more readily available for the public to see. PA informed the group that a data portal was currently being developed, which would provide transparency of police data and would be readily available to the public via the South Wales Police website. LJ suggested that it would be useful to include updates from this board at future PALG meetings.

SB asked whether the force had received many complaints relating to Taser. PA advised that the force received minimal complaints in relation to use of force, however could look to see what percentage of these complaints related to Taser use.

**ACTION – Include updates from the ‘Coercive Powers board’ at future PALG meetings.**

## **2. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team update**

MJ provided an overview of the functions for the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) team, which had recently been established in South Wales Police. MJ advised that there were 3 members of staff in the team and a lot of the initial work had involved reconnecting externally with partners and internally with staff, in absence of the Equality Unit over the last few years. MJ informed the group that they were also looking to re-establish Independent Advisors and connect these roles with community cohesion groups.

MJ advised that the representative workforce agenda was continuing, with a particular focus on BAME representation in South Wales Police.

MJ noted that the team were also exploring whether additional staff networks were required internally, such as those for neurodiversity and age. Interesting developments were emerging as a result of this work and MJ would keep the group informed.

SB asked whether the Joint Equality Plan had now been launched. HJJ and MJ advised that the launch was imminent and the plan would then be made available publically. The plan had also been translated into Easy Read. HJJ informed the group that 8 officer leads had been assigned to each equality objective, to ensure that progress against each objective was maintained. SB noted that the Older People’s Commissioner for Wales thought the Joint Equality Plan was an excellent document. The Older People’s Commissioner was interested in seeing other force plans and noted that others should replicate something similar to South Wales Police. HJJ thanked SB for his comments and added that PALG had genuinely influenced the objectives in the plan, which they were grateful to receive. LJ suggested that progress against the plan would be built into PALG agenda items going forward.

**ACTION – Include re-occurring agenda item on Joint Equality Plan objective updates.**

## **3. Use of force on children**

HJJ informed the group that following the use of force presentation at the PALG meeting in December 2019, the group had requested further information on the use of force used on children following the data presented.

PA noted that thanks to the scrutiny of the group on this topic, data inaccuracies had since been highlighted. PA explained that when the date of birth of an individual was missing on the use of force form, NICHE would automatically input the date of birth as the incident date. This would then populate their age as ‘0’. This explained why the data for force used against children under 10 would have seemed high and concerned PALG members. PA reassured members that the

true figures were lower than presented at the last meeting and that the data was now being reviewed thoroughly.

PA had also dip sampled use of force cases on children to help build an understanding of the circumstances of the individuals. After completing the exercise, PA noted that the majority of these cases involved vulnerable children and families and that a number of individuals were known to support services. PA suggested that it would be worthwhile discussing case studies in the future, alongside use of force data, to help understand the circumstances of the individuals involved. PW was interested to understand what support the parents were receiving and emphasised the importance of referring into Victim Focus. AD argued that by not getting appropriate service support, families were often going under the radar until reaching crisis point. AD noted that it was important for these experiences to be shared to help make sense of the data.

The group reviewed the data slides that PA had presented and discussed their concerns in relation use of force used on older people. JM raised her concerns in relation to the effects of dementia resulting in older people entering the criminal justice system. SB also noted that the early indicators of dementia were often missed and the police were called in at crisis point. PW asked whether the data could be broken down further into crime categories. PA confirmed this information would be available and would form part of the data tool that was currently being developed for the public domain.

PA thanked PALG members once again for their feedback.

#### **4. Stop and Search**

HJJ explained why stop and search featured as an agenda item at the meeting and referred back to the September 2019 meeting where an update on stop and search – Section 60 was presented. It was agreed that since the use of stop and search and Section 60 was increasing, it would be useful for PALG to regularly review the use and associated trends.

##### **Stop and Search Data**

SJ provided an overview of stop and search data from April 2019 – February 2020. SJ noted that the number of searches were increasing, however, SJ was content with these figures as this also reflected the increases in knife crime and violent crime incidents. SJ referred to 'Op Sceptre' and explained that there was a dedicated team in the force aimed at reducing knife crime and related offences.

LA referred to the data slides presented to the group and questioned what the 'unknown' category would include in the 'search reason'. SJ noted that this category represented forms that hadn't been assigned a 'search reason category' by officers. SJ advised that these admin errors were currently being addressed through officer training.

SJ provided an overview of the search outcomes and legal powers used and noted that 12% of searches had resulted in an arrest. A number of these arrests related to knife and drug related crimes. SJ was pleased to share that compliance with the requirement to use body worn video (BWV) for all stop and search encounters was currently at 89%. This was one of the highest in the country.

SJ provided an overview of Section 60 and advised that it was an impactful tool that aimed to deter and prevent incidents from escalating. SJ advised that an Inspector could authorise a Section 60 for a 24-hour period and this could be extended to a period of 48 hours by a Superintendent. SJ noted that once a Section 60 notice had been authorised, the force would communicate this to the public to encourage transparency and open communication. The Home

Office had advised that communication of Section 60 notices were no longer compulsory, however, the force remained committed to continuing this communication with the public.

SJ referred to two recent knife crime incidents in January and February 2020, which took place within a 24-hour period in Cardiff. Following these incidents, a Section 60 notice was issued by the force. SJ shared images of press releases that the force had communicated with the public once the Section 60 notice had been issued. Maps illustrating the geographical boundaries in which the Section 60 notice was applicable to and the duration in which the notice would be in place for, was also shared with the public. SJ noted that 70 searches and 2 arrests were made during this period.

SJ referred to the comments received from the public via social media and was pleased to see that the majority of comments were in support of the force's approach and use of stop and search powers. Questions raised by community members and the openness and transparency from the police had helped promote public reassurance. SJ hoped that these practical examples demonstrated the steps the force took when these processes applied.

### Disproportionality Report

LJ thanked SJ for the input on Section 60 and asked PALG members to refer to the stop and search disproportionality report that had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was felt that this was an appropriate report to share with PALG as it contained information about cases against BAME individuals and the circumstances behind the data.

SJ advised that a black person was 7 times more likely to be stopped than a white person in South Wales. However, this was based on population census data from 2011. It was important to note that the diversity of South Wales had since increased, along with a higher transient population, therefore the quoted figure may not be reflective.

SJ encouraged PALG members to feedback any queries or concerns in relation to the report. JJ asked when a stop and search was found to be disproportionate, what would be the outcome for the officer. SJ advised that in the first instance, a conversation with the officer's line manager would take place to further understand the circumstances. If it was found to be a deliberate action, it would be managed through performance management. However, if it was deemed ignorance, this would be managed via a 'learning route' and reviewed.

SJ noted that a reporting mechanism was currently being built into a 'data portal', which would enable members of the public to raise their concerns in relation to the data, and aimed to encourage public scrutiny.

JJ referred to the demographic data, in particular the ethnicity breakdown for Gypsy, Roma and travellers. JJ noted that the figures did not represent the true number of Gypsy, Roma and travellers searched, as they were most likely absorbed in the 'not recorded' and 'not stated' categories. JJ explained that the reason for this was likely to be that the Gypsy, Roma and traveller community would be hesitant to tell the police about their ethnicity. The group discussed the disproportionality of data based on this example and the consistency of data presented.

LJ thanked PALG members for their feedback and asked the group to reflect on the report and raise queries to the Commissioner's team.

### Commissioner Team Update

HJJ provided an overview of the qualitative work that the Commissioner's team had undertaken in order to understand public experiences and perceptions of stop and search. The

Commissioner's team had recently held 3 focus groups in Cardiff to further understand young people's experiences of stop and search and their encounters with the police. HJJ noted interesting outcomes arising from the workshops. Feedback indicated that officers tend to be following processes, however, the individuals being searched were not always clear on why they were being stopped as they didn't understand the legal jargon used by officers.

Body Worn Video was also discussed and there was much suspicion about its use. The majority of young people felt that they were being watched and that the footage would be used against them. Sessions have enabled the Commissioner's team to explain the requirements that officers need to adhere to for stop and search and that BWV is also in place for their protection.

The sessions also enabled the team to explain stop and search rights. HJJ advised that more workshops were due to be scheduled in Bridgend, Swansea and Merthyr/RCT with young people. The Commissioner's team would also be developing an online survey for wider circulation in order to capture a range of experiences of perceptions. Results of the survey and focus groups would be compiled into one report and discussed with the force in the coming months.

LJ thanked HJJ for her input and welcomed knowledge from PALG members of any events that the Commissioner's team could attend to help them with their research.

LJ informed the group about the Police and Crime Commissioner elections on the 7th May 2020 and that the Commissioner would be entering the purdah period at the end of March. Results from the election would be published on Monday 11th May.

LJ referred to the strategical changes that had come about as a result of the groups input and hoped that this reflected how valued their role was to the force and Commissioner's team. In order to maintain the momentum and continue to broaden the diversity and representation of the group, the Commissioner's team was looking to advertise for Independent Advisors to join the group. This would be open to members of the public to apply, who had an interest in policing and equality. HJJ was keen for these roles to be involved in dip sampling work and noted that these opportunities would also be available to all PALG members, however, HJJ was also conscious that it may not be possible for members representing organisations to be involved in these exercises, due to workload capacity. HJJ asked for the members support in sharing the advert, once it was live.

## **5. Partner Updates**

- JJ informed the group that Gypsy Traveller Wales was currently working on the unauthorised encampments policy.
- SB informed the group about the development of a national action plan for tackling abuse on older people and aimed to bring all key stakeholder together to tackle on national perspective. The Older People's Commissioner for Wales would be publishing actions on what steps would be taken to stop abuse against older people.
- RR noted that she would be interested in the force/Commissioner's team coming to speak to refugees about stop and search and Section 60.
- JM informed the group that Hafal had been successful in securing the first mental health sanctuary in Neath Port Talbot, which was due to open end of April.

## Action Table

Action	Description	Owner
1	Include updates from the 'Coercive Powers Group' at future PALG meetings	Sarah Mahon
2	Include regular Joint Equality Plan objective updates at future PALG meetings.	Sarah Mahon