

Lincolnshire Police

Policy Document



Community scrutiny panel policy PD283

Policy document information

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Policy sponsor:	DCC, Chris Davison, Force Executive
Policy owner:	Head of Strategic Development Department, Kelly Rodgers, Strategic Development Department
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Version history

Version	Date	Reason for issue
1.1	25/08/2026	Initial policy (after draft consultation updates)
1	25/08/2026	New Policy published

Code of Ethics

All staff involved in carrying out functions under this policy and associated procedures and appendices will do so in accordance with the principles of the Code of Ethics. The aim of the Code of Ethics is to support each member of the policing profession to deliver the highest professional standards in their service to the public.

Legislative Compliance

This document has been drafted to comply with the principles of the Human Rights Act. Proportionality has been identified as the key to Human Rights compliance, this means striking a fair balance between the rights of the staff and those of the rest of the community. There must be a reasonable relationship between the aim to be achieved and the means used.

Equality and Diversity issues have also been considered to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and meet our legal obligation in relation to the equality duty. In addition, Data Protection, Freedom of Information and Health and Safety Issues have been considered. Adherence to this policy or procedure will therefore ensure compliance with all relevant legislation and internal policies.

Other legislation/law which this policy has been drafted to comply with:

- [Human Rights Act 1998 \(in particular A.14 – Prohibition of discrimination\)](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#)
- [H&S legislation](#)
- [Data Protection Act 2018](#)

- [Freedom Of Information Act 2000](#)
- [Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 \(PACE\) – Code A \(sec 5.4\)](#)

Security Classification

Policy to be published on intranet: Yes

Policy to be published on Force website: Yes

Authorised Professional Practice (APP)

This Policy has been checked against APP. Lincolnshire Police has adopted the APP provisions (specific to stop and search), with supplementary information contained herein, which reflects local practice and the needs of the communities served by Lincolnshire Police.

*Those provisions are shown in the links below and can be accessed via the home page of the APP website: <https://www.college.police.uk/app/stop-and-search>

1. Policy Aims (Purpose)

- 1.1. The aim of this policy is to ensure that Lincolnshire Police undertake community scrutiny panel activity in a consistent, transparent, and structured manner across the organisation. It provides a clear framework through which scrutiny is conducted, enabling learning, insight, and challenge arising from panel activity to be systematically captured, assessed, and translated into meaningful organisational improvement.

This policy defines the purpose, governance, and operating principles of community scrutiny panels, ensuring that they contribute effectively to accountability, performance oversight, service enhancement and transparency. In doing so, it supports the organisation's commitment to continuous improvement, evidence-based decision-making and high-quality service delivery.

In addition, the policy sets out how community scrutiny panels should operate in conjunction with, and be informed by, public participation. It emphasises the importance of incorporating community perspectives, lived experience, and stakeholder input into the scrutiny process, ensuring that panels reflect the needs, concerns, and expectations of the public. This approach is intended to strengthen transparency, build public confidence, and support policing by consent. Community scrutiny panels form part of a wider assurance system for the force to understand how policing is delivered and received by member of the public.

2. Policy statement (Key information)

2.1. Community Scrutiny Panel Purpose

Community scrutiny panels review public interactions with police officers and staff within Lincolnshire Police, focusing on issues of community interest where independent feedback can support improvements in local policing.

The panel will:

- Review records of police interactions and provide feedback on the use of powers and interactions, identifying good practice and any concerns.
- Consider cases in the context of local crime and policing trends.
- Examine data and, where appropriate, Body Worn Video (BWV), CCTV and GoodSAM recordings to inform its assessments.
- Identify themes, including disproportionality, and highlight opportunities for learning and improvement.
- Contribute to wider discussions on how policing and communities can work more effectively together.
- Promote transparency, accountability, and public understanding to help strengthen trust and confidence.

Through this work, panels support continuous improvement and more effective, fair, and transparent use of police powers and interactions with the public.

2.2. Consistency and Governance Across Scrutiny Activity

The Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and Lincolnshire Police are jointly responsible for community scrutiny panel oversight with assignment of resourcing to panel activity residing with the DCC as the chair of the Legitimacy Board.

Panel Chairs will ensure that feedback, by means of a panel report, is provided to the OPCC through the Head of Strategic Development to the Police and Crime Strategic Board and to Lincolnshire Police through the Legitimacy Board. Learning and Development should, and other departments where necessary, receive a copy of the report and provide the Legitimacy Board with updates on how feedback has been incorporated into learning and development. In addition, the police representative will, when necessary, ensure that individual feedback (both good practise and areas for concern) is provided to those involved in the cases reviewed.

Post actions will be tracked through reporting from the scrutiny panel through to the Force Learning Board, including ensuring that learning has been captured and acted upon, whether individually or more broadly across the Force.

Each panel will have its own terms of reference setting out:

- Purpose
- Scope
- Governance
- Panel frequency and structure (including location/online)
- Panel membership
- Communicating with the public

The police representative should provide advice about operational policies and processes, and provide answers and explanations for clarity where required, and act as the conduit for learning.

New panels proposed for inception should be brought to the Legitimacy Board through the Head of Strategic Development and to the OPPC via the Police and Crime Strategic Board for consideration. The proposal should set out a draft term of reference, necessity to scrutinise the area in question and any themes or disproportionality linked to the area of scrutiny.

2.3. Panel Membership and Public Participation

Panels chairs should be elected by the panel, and the chair should be independent of the police and the OPCC. However, where necessary a member of the OPCC or police may chair a panel, with the agreement of the panel, to enable a panel meeting to continue.

Panel chairs should be elected every two years and serve no more than two consecutive tenures.

Panel membership should be reflective of the demographics of the local community. Panel members should be allowed to attend their first panel to help understand how the panel works and what is discussed but subsequently should be encouraged to commit to a year attendance and continue annually thereafter, if they are happy to proceed.

Panels should include, where possible and appropriate to the panel thematics:

- Statutory partners (involved in service delivery of area of scrutiny)
- OPCC representatives
- Independent Advisory Group members
- Experts relating to the specific area of scrutiny
- Community representatives with lived experience of police through; encounters, interactions and/or are disproportionately affected within the area of scrutiny
- Community organisations representatives
- Police representatives, particularly those with expertise in the area of scrutiny
- Young or other vulnerable people

Police officers or staff attending the panel who have had any involvement in specific cases being reviewed should withdraw from the session whilst that case is being reviewed, or join (where it has been identified in advance) or rejoin after the case has been reviewed.

The Volunteer Team is responsible for recruitment of community panel members and the community panel members once recruited are managed by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team. Police leads are responsible for recruiting and management of partner membership.

All panel members, whether attendance is regular or one off, should have an equal voice and opportunity to participate in the panel. There should be no differentiation between people or organisations. The only delineation is the Chair of the panel or a guest whose attendance is to just observe the community scrutiny panel.

2.4. Vetting of Panel Members

Lincolnshire Police may apply vetting protocols as appropriate, however, the community scrutiny panel must ensure that vetting protocols do not unfairly discriminate against individuals who would otherwise be able to participate in panel sessions, and where their participation would be valuable to the community scrutiny process. Alternative arrangements to assist with their involvement should be made. Arrangements such as, but not limited to, redaction of footage, documents or other material, partial attendance or remote attendance should be considered.

Panels may engage with partner agencies who work with people with lived experiences of the criminal justice system (e.g., custody, Youth Offending Teams, victim groups), to encourage/enable their clients, and/or other people with lived experiences, to participate in their panels.

2.5. Young people (16 to 17)

Sixteen- to seventeen-year-olds should form part of panels where appropriate, particularly if there are areas of policing that disproportionately affect them. However, participation should be agreed with a parent or guardian who also fully understands the material and discussion the young person may be exposed to.

2.6. Transparency and Legitimacy

The panel should ensure that meeting dates and formats are published well in advance (to enable are enabled public participation) on the Force's website. Details of the procedure to attend a community scrutiny panel or how to become a member should also be conveyed.

The panel should make available to the public, findings and actions taken after each panel meeting, through publication on the Force's website.

2.7. Communications with the public

The police representative should work with Corporate Communications to ensure that meetings panels are advertised sufficiently with the diverse community. The plan should also include how the public are updated in relation to outcomes of the panel activity.

3.0. Panel Scope

The scope of the panels will be determined by; performance data examined at the Legitimacy Board, themes of interest to the community, and local and national themes associated with police legitimacy.

The panel has no jurisdiction in law to determine if a case is unlawful or unsafe and has no involvement in the formal complaints or legal processes.

3.1. Systemic Themes, Disproportionality and Inequality

Each panel should use performance data and community experiences to inform its area of scrutiny activity. Data that identifies disproportionality should either be explained through legitimate reasoning that a member of the public would understand or result in reform of; policy and/or process and/ or the culture surrounding such activity. Scrutiny should continue until demonstratable changes have been embedded.

Panel members, including police representatives, will be provided with information and training on the scope of their scrutiny functions, including being made aware of official guidance standards to help with their scrutiny decisions.

Panels should adopt a decision model or matrix to aid panel review on whether a public interaction with the police and powers exercised were appropriate, or not appropriate, using the same gradings as HMICFRS PEEL inspections (Outstanding, Good, Adequate, Inadequate, Requires Improvement).

3.2. Scope of Panel Feedback

The panel's views and/or findings may identify issues which are wider than the scrutiny of police powers, tactics or interactions. Panel activity may prompt or require the escalation of a safeguarding referral or concern about criminal behaviour of officer or staff misconduct, The police representative should ensure that any such matters are dealt with appropriately.

Panels have no influence or power to change the outcome of a case. Panel feedback will not change the original decision unless the police force considers the decision to be unlawful and/or unsafe.

3.3. Immediate safeguarding or Conduct Issue

Where an immediate safeguarding concern or, police officer or staff conduct issue is identified the police representative will ensure that adequate safeguarding is put in place, and in relation to conduct issues PSD are notified immediately.

4. Case Selection

Panels should only scrutinise cases retrospectively and where all proceedings (including appeal routes) have been finalised or exhausted. GDPR legal requirements should be followed when identifying and preparing cases for community scrutiny panels.

4.1. Random Selection of Cases

The chair should randomly (using an appropriate method such as Excel) select cases for scrutiny, within an open and transparent process. Exceptions to this are where the panel decides it wants to review a particular case in the public interest or a particular theme within the scope of the panel. Alternatively, the panel could require a number of randomly

selected cases plus cases which have resulted in a complaint. The police representative and/or police administrative volunteer should ensure that cases are randomly selected from a cohort of cases within the thematic area of the panel.

4.2. Material Subject to Review

Where audio and/or visual footage exists relating to cases being reviewed, the panel Chair should decide whether or not, in advance of the meeting, if it is beneficial to review footage. The starting position should always be an intention of including this type of material where it is appropriate to do so.

4.3. Presentation and Preparation of Cases

The police representative is responsible for selecting, securing, sanitising (via pixelation or redaction) and presenting case records including BWV footage, CCTV or GoodSAM recordings to the panel. Where volunteer provision is in place then securing and sanitising will be carried out by them within their volunteer role.

To avoid conflicts of interest, panel members who are known personally to individuals who have been engaged in criminal investigations or had operational police contact should not review such cases or those which have occurred in localities in which their associations are known to have frequented.

4.4. Safeguarding of Panel Members

During the induction, individuals will be made aware of the type of cases and material that they could potentially be involved in reviewing, so that they can make an informed decision about participation.

Each potential panel member should understand what they may be exposed to when reviewing police activity and it is up to each individual as to whether or not they choose to participate. However, where there is an identified, or declared, vulnerability and/or involvement in a criminal activity the Head of EDI will be the final decision maker on participation (with the presumption from the outset that participation is assumed as the starting point).

The panel chair should ensure that panel members are willing to participate and are appropriately equipped to deal with potentially distressing cases or BWV, CCTV or GoodSAM footage. Advance notice, adequate information and support signposting should be provided by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team.

The panel will assess all matters and make the final decision to agree or decline an individual's attendance- including any contingency plans that may be applied (for example that the person is accompanied by a carer, friend or helper who can assist them to participate in the community scrutiny process). The panel, nor the police or the OPCC will be responsible for arranging this support and anyone providing support will fall within the requirements set out in this policy.

The police representative will decide the final outcome of those who may be involved in criminal activity and would like to participate in scrutiny activity, if mitigation cannot be reasonably achieved.

Any excluded individual should have a right of appeal through the panel's governance process.

4.5. Informed Consent and Redaction

All people specifically involved within a case, including those working or volunteering for Lincolnshire Police, where interaction between them and the police will be subject of review should be informed that their case has been selected and their consent obtained. Where consent is withheld or isn't categorically clear then that case should be disregarded or the material including any media and/or documentation should be redacted.

5. Other related documents and appendices

5.1. Home Office and College of Policing Best Use of Stop and Search Scheme

[Best use of stop and search scheme](#)

5.2. National Police Chiefs' Council and Ministry of Justice Guidance on Out of Court Resolution Scrutiny Panels

[Scrutiny Panel Guidance](#)

5.3. Appendix One; Current list of Scrutiny Panels

6. Monitoring and review

- 6.1. The Head of Strategic Development, working with community scrutiny panel police leads, will review the policy to ensure that it is meeting its purpose on a biennial basis and make recommendations for amendments to the Legitimacy Board for agreement.

7. Who to contact about this policy

- 7.1. This policy is owned by the Head of Strategic Development.

Appendix 1

Community Scrutiny Panel	Police Representative	Independent Chair	Frequency of Meetings	Strategic Board
Rape Scrutiny Panel	DI Fowler		Quarterly	Legitimacy
Out of Court Resolution Scrutiny Panel (OOCR)	Thomas Jewell	Wes Shelbourne (YMCA)	Quarterly	Legitimacy
Custody Scrutiny Panel	Annie Kennington	Georgina Gous	Quarterly	Legitimacy
Use of Force Scrutiny Panel	Inspector Baxter	TBC	Quarterly	Legitimacy
Stop and Search Scrutiny Panel	T/Chief Inspector Dickinson	TBC	Quarterly	Legitimacy
DA Scrutiny Panel	DS Brewster	TBC	Quarterly	Legitimacy
Remote Response Scrutiny Panel	T/Insp Boyce	TBC	TBC	Legitimacy
Stalking Review Panel	Insp Fairhurst	TBC	Quarterly	Legitimacy