

Stop and Search Scrutiny Report

1st July – 30th September 2017



Date: 03/12/2017
Unit: Local Policing Support Unit
Author: Dawn Woollcott



**ESSEX
POLICE**

Protecting and serving Essex

Introduction

This document reports on the period between the 1st January and 31st March 2017 and looks at three fundamental areas of scrutiny and public satisfaction relating to stop and search in Essex.

Complaints

During the period of the 1st July and 30th September 2017 there has been no complaints recorded in relation to Stop & Search.

The complaint recorded from the last quarter is still under investigation and at this stage cannot be reported on further.

Anonymous Public Survey

It is noted that participation in the anonymous public survey is low, with 0 additional responses being received during the reporting period.

The below tables focus on the survey responses relating to the legal requirements of stop and search and officer civility:

0 responses were provided during the period 1st July – 30th September 2017

Question 1 - When you were stopped and searched did the officer:

Question 2 - Why do you think the officer stopped and searched you?

Question 3 - Did the officer treat you with respect?

Question 4 – Was it the right decision to stop and search you?

Question 5- Have you been stopped and searched by the police before?

Question 6 – Please use the box below to indicate if you feel there is anything else that could have been done to improve the service, or if you have anything else to add.

Question 7 – To what extent do you believe that the police should conduct stop and search?

Question 8 - How confident are you that the police in your area use their Stop and Search powers fairly?

Question 9 – Should the police be able to search people for the following:

Question 10 – In which district were you stop and searched in?

Question 11 - If you are aware In which postcode were you stopped please write it in the box below.

Question 12 – Are you Male / Female / Prefer not to say

Question 13 - Which of the following age bands do you fall into?

Question 14 - How would you describe your race or ethnic origin? (please tick one)

Ride-Along Feedback

In July 2016, Essex Police implemented a Ride-Along Scheme. This enables members of the public to accompany police officers on patrol to get a real insight into police work and to hopefully encounter stop and search live action.

Feedback

Person 1: Date of Ride-Along – 06.09.17 – Tendring

No Stop & Searches were observed on this occasion however I was able to see what officers get up to on a daily basis. I had no idea how long some of the police processes took. Would definitely recommend the Ride Along to others.

Person 2: Date of Ride-Along – 26.09.17 – Tendring

No Stop & Searches were observed on this occasion however they stated that the Ride Along had been a brilliant experience. Enjoyed spending time with officers, they had an amazing amount of local knowledge. They would recommend this to others.

Person 3: Date of Ride-Along – 28.10.17 - Southend

No Stop & Searches were observed on this occasion however they stated that it was an amazing experience which increased their knowledge of the police. They would recommend this to others.

Reasonable Grounds

Reasonable grounds recorded by officers during each Stop & Search are now individually reviewed and analysed.

The results for the reporting period 1st July 2017 – 30th September 2017 are as follows:-

Of the 679 reviewed:

- **533 (78.50%)** had reasonable grounds recorded.
- **90 (13.25%)** did not have reasonable grounds recorded.
- **56 (8.25%)** were deemed borderline acceptable however feedback was required and provided.
- Of the 90 which did not have reasonable grounds, **17** were BME totalling 18.89%

All of those with reasonable grounds not recorded have received individual feedback via their supervisors.

Conclusion

The internal audit of Reasonable Grounds has produced a compliance rate of 68.27% which has decreased since the last quarter. Extensive work is being done to improve these figures and it is evident that further training and information is required for officers to ensure that reasonable grounds for suspicion are sufficiently articulated and communicated to the person being searched. A new training package is currently being created for all front line officers and supervisors in conjunction with the College of Policing. Training in “Best use of Stop and Search” is currently being completed by all front line police officers, PCSO’s and Specials and it is anticipated that all will have completed this by the summer of 2018.

The public survey results are an area of concern however there is a very small percentage of completions in relation to the number of searches actually carried out and therefore it is not anticipated that this gives an overly accurate review of searches completed by Essex Police.

Complaints are still very low in relation to Stop & Search which is very positive.