

Introduction

Hello everyone, Welcome to my August 2024 blog, I'm Vince Leyenda. I am the Assurance Officer here at the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). Part of my role is helping to co-ordinate our scrutiny panels and independent schemes. These play a vital role in us holding Humberside Police and the Chief Constable to account on behalf of the public.



Police Powers Scrutiny Panel

The Police Powers Panel continues to investigate how Police officers use their powers, and ensure they are used proportionately, fairly, and respectfully. The last panel was well attended, including some new faces due to our recent recruitment drive. We have also developed a new handout which will not only be available at local police stations but will be given to every person who requests their stop and search records. This leaflet will not only look to highlight the work of the panel but be used as a potential tool to recruit those with lived experience. The panels chair Jon Webster believes the panel are making a real difference and that “The mere fact that our roles and presence are seen as productive allows us to have the freedom to explore and question in a manner that circumvents feelings and meet the target of ensuring that our police service delivers the communities expectations. The panel experience, covering a vast array of knowledge, has been instrumental in achieving this”.

The July panel showed some very positive outcomes in relation to Humberside Police and Use of Force. We at the OPCC hope that all our meetings follow the July outcomes

which showed a 100% rate in showing that the forces use of powers are Justified, Fair & used proportionately. We will look to praise when required and scrutinise when necessary to ensure the public feel reassured that the Police use their powers to keep us all safe.

Hate Crime Scrutiny Panel

The July meeting of the Hate Crime panel was very productive, with a further 10 real life crime reports scrutinised by our members. The panel are asking questions relating to how Humberside Police are dealing with Hate Crimes and treating victims of Hate Crime.

Our new Victim Survey has now been live for some time, with responses coming in that will allow us to monitor how victims of Hate Crime in Humberside are feeling towards their police interactions. Have you or someone you know been a victim of a hate crime? If so, please complete our survey. Your insights will be fed back to Humberside Police through our panel.

Click the following link to participate in the survey and together we can create a safer and more inclusive community.

<https://forms.office.com/e/rQWLqX9XZV?origin=IprLink>

The chair of the panel Tor Xander-Crabb recently stated “We have widened our scope to encompass discussions around "hot topics" from the national agenda and have begun to track geographical and thematic areas of concern at the local level. Following a successful recruitment campaign, we have been able to diversify our makeup, to ensure that the panel is truly representative of the demographic that we serve across Humberside. In short, this panel is making a huge difference to the people of Humberside and its officers, and it will be my privilege to be alongside our wonderful volunteers”.

Independent Custody Visitor Scheme (ICVs)

Between May and July our ICVs have conducted 28 visits to our custody suites and interacted with 208 detainees to ensure their needs and rights are met. It is important to remember that those in custody are innocent until proven guilty, and so it is vital they are treated with dignity and respect. Members of our ICV and ICSP teams attended Humberside Police Immersive Hydra Training. This training is all about creating dilemma and giving those involved a chance to make considered decisions, without any ‘real world’ consequences. It helped us gain an insight on some of the day-to-day risks and issues detention staff go through, and our volunteers found the day enjoyable and educational.



Independent Custody Scrutiny Panel (ICSP)

The ICSP has now ran for 4 meetings, completing its first full year. I spoke with the chair of the ICSP recently, Andy Evans, to ask how he feels the panel is doing. Andy told me that “To date the panel has focussed on use of force and strip searches within custody facilities, with panel members reviewing data, written reports and CCTV footage provided by the police authority. Although the panel has not been operating long, it has already provided some valuable feedback for the purposes of improving performance and practices. The panel also has an ongoing remit to review data with a view to examining disproportionality in the application of police powers in a custody setting, notably on grounds of race/protected characteristics”.

The July panel saw us scrutinise 4 cases where Force had been used in the custody suites and 6 examples of where a strip search was deemed required. The panel felt that with all 10 cases the Police actions were justified, respectful and in keeping with public expectations.

Meet the Team



Some of our volunteers have asked if I would take up the challenge and talk about myself for the 'Meet the Team' section, so I accept that challenge.

I have been part of the OPCC since 2022, and have previously worked for Humberside Police, Wandsworth Borough Council in London and Woolworths. I was born and raised in South London to an English Mother and Spanish Father. I have 8 siblings! We all grew up in a tiny flat close to the Thames. I moved to Hull in 2012 and never left (I came because I met a girl, I stayed for the chip spice).

In my spare time I have a 4-year-old daughter who keeps me on my toes. I am also a massive Fulham Football Club Fan and a super fan of Michael Jackson.

Finally...

A huge thank you once again to all our volunteers across the ICV scheme and our Scrutiny Panels. The commitments and sacrifices that you all make does not go un-noticed, I thank you from the office but also on a personal note.

“In a world filled with hate, we must still dare to hope. In a world filled with anger, we must still dare to comfort. In a world filled with despair, we must still dare to dream. And in a world filled with distrust, we must still dare to believe.”