



Dan Price
Cheshire
Police & Crime
Commissioner



**Cheshire
Constabulary**

MINUTES OF THE INDEPENDENT ETHICS PANEL HELD ON THURSDAY 3rd APRIL 2025 AT CONSTABULARY HEADQUARTERS, WINSFORD

Present: Robert Mee (Chair)
Jonathan Bamford
Maggie Chen (via Teams)
Kate Jury (via Teams)
Thomas Morris
Joe Onions (via Teams)

Also Present: Superintendent Jez Taylor, Head of Police Training
Damon Taylor, Chief Executive, OPCC
Liz Corfield, OPCC

Apologies: Emma Shillabeer

01/25 NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The notes of the previous meeting held on 14 November 2024, were NOTED.

02/25 USE OF TASER

Supt Jez Taylor gave an overview of the Tasers used by Cheshire Constabulary. It was stated that they had become important additions to officers' equipment given the increased number of assaults on police officers and PCSO's (594 in the period April to December 2024). The data suggests that the devices were used infrequently, with the mere presence of the device alone acting as a deterrent and even drawing the red dot on an individual will often result in compliance. Body worn video is increasingly helpful in providing useful context about their use.

Other 'use of force' such as handcuffs, spray, baton or firearm were likely to have a longer lasting detrimental effect on those it was used against but with a taser, no one is hurt with the lasting impact of being tasered being negligible and the incapacitation lasts for just a few seconds.

It was reported that no authority was needed to discharge the taser, officers carrying tasers were all appropriately trained and the justification for their use was in the context of the threat. The incapacitation caused by the taser being discharged was reduced if the offender was under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol or was wearing thick clothing.

The Taser currently used is licenced by the Home Office and there are currently 465 officers Taser trained in the Constabulary as well as the armed response officers. In addition, there are a number of Special Constables who are also Taser trained. The Home Office was in the process of relicensing a new Taser model, which would be a smaller, rechargeable model which can fire across a greater distance (45 ft instead of 25 ft). This would be introduced from the middle of 2025 onwards.

Carrying of tasers by officers was not mandatory, but was instead individual choice. Training of a number of officers was undertaken at any one time and there were often a number who didn't meet the standard required and could not progress to carrying the equipment. Training was refreshed annually.

The Panel asked a number of questions including if officers 'accepted' assaults and didn't report all cases (processes far more robust to identify and support officers); the length of time an offender would be incapacitated for (seconds) and whether the level of charge based on the size of the offender it was being aimed at (one size fits all); the number of complaints made; whether Tasers were used on animals (no) and whether there were any known deaths in the UK from Tasers being discharged (no).

03/25 POLICE & CRIME PLAN 2024-28

The Chief Executive gave a brief outline of the key elements of the Commissioner's Police & Crime Plan, and undertook to provide the Panel with a copy of the final Plan.

04/25 ITEMS FOR PANEL'S FUTURE CONSIDERATION

These were added to the action matrix below.

05/25 NEXT MEETING

The dates of the next meetings were NOTED

ACTIONS MATRIX

Ref.	Action	Action taken
1. [3-23]	To help inform the Panel's work, it would find it helpful to better understand how both organisations (PCC/Constabulary) gain the views of people in Cheshire on policing.	Feedback to be given at future meeting
2. [6-23] & [9-23]	Develop an induction programme for new members of the Panel	Agreed at meeting on 05/09/23 that CEO to provide list of relevant information to aid Panel's wider understanding of policing
3. [6-23]	Provide an update on other training events which the Panel may wish to consider attending in line with their work programme	
4. [9-23]	RCRP post implementation issues to be discussed at a future Panel meeting	
14.[01-24]	Future agenda items discussed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body Worn Video (BWV) • How officers deal with young people (including youth Commission work) • National Stop and Search S60 Report • New members to undertake training already given to RM and ES • Presentation from the Special Constabulary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MAY 2025 • CLOSED

16.[01-24]	A.I. as a future deployment tool for the Constabulary	
17.[01-24]	Facial Recognition review for new members	• CLOSED
18.[09-24]	<p>Possible future agenda items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of Ethics Panels as governance in NPCC Covenant. • Tasers – training of and the impact on the officers who use them • PCC's Police and Crime Plan – is there a piece of work for the EP to consult on this? • Future agenda item on Code of Ethics • Use of NICE (retail) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLOSED • CLOSED