

Disproportionate use of police powers – A spotlight on stop and search and the use of force.

RESPONSE OF DAVID KEANE, POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR CHESHIRE

The report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) states that police forces must explain the disproportionate use of police powers such as stop and search and use of force on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people or risk losing the trust of the communities they serve. I welcome the report 'Disproportionate use of police powers – A spotlight on stop and search and the use of force' which was published on the 26th February 2021 and I raised it at my recent Public Scrutiny Board meeting with the Chief Constable.

Proportionate use of stop and search is a legitimate tool for preventing and tackling crime, however I recognise that stop and search must be intelligence led and if too many stops do not result in clear outcomes then we risk losing trust and confidence in our communities.

I have already raised my concerns around disproportionality with the Constabulary prior to the publication of the report at a recent Public Scrutiny Board. I am reassured that the Public Accountability meetings and the Ethics Advisory Panel are established forums which give an independent view of how the Constabulary is performing in this area as well as through Community Cohesion Groups (CCGs) where there is an improvement plan in place to widen the diversity of members.

Much of what has been recommended in the report has already been discussed with the Chief Constable and I am pleased to see that many of the recommendations are currently underway or completed and are being managed through an action plan. Work is ongoing to design and deliver training to ensure our staff and officers are communicating effectively, equipping control room staff with 'active listening' to acquire skills which will identify and challenge unconscious bias. The Constabulary is using its Body Worn Video equipment in both training and scrutiny which is reviewed via internal and external mechanisms and continued focus is being applied to ensure our data is accurate when recording ethnicity in stop and search/use of force incidents to ensure greater levels of transparency and accountability.

However, while there are more Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people being disproportionately affected, there is more still to be done to maintain legitimacy and trust within our communities. I will ensure the Chief Constable is held to account in ensuring the Constabulary fulfils its responsibility to deliver against the requirements held within the report.



David Keane
Police & Crime Commissioner
29th March 2021