



Community Scrutiny Panel – Use of Force

Date:	21 st January 2026
Time:	17:30-20:00
Location:	Leamington Spa Justice Centre
Chair:	Vicky Hoppitt
Attendance:	Vicky Hoppitt (Equality and Engagement Officer), Wes Gladwin (Use of Force Lead) Community Scrutiny Panel members.
Clips viewed:	5 Use of Force Body Worn Video (BWV) reviewed
Next meeting:	12 th February 2026 – Rugby Police Station

This document provides a summary of feedback from the Community Scrutiny Panel. Panel members are independent members of the public. They are not employed or paid by Warwickshire Police to provide these views.

The content is taken from feedback forms completed by panel members following the session. Responses have been reviewed and summarised to highlight key themes and remove repetition. This document does not include full verbatim comments but aims to present an accurate and balanced overview of the feedback provided.

Feedback from the panel is shared with Warwickshire Police learning and development teams to support ongoing reflection and to help identify potential training and development needs.

Overview

This review looked at five incidents to understand how officers communicate, manage situations, and use force.

The main findings show that communication style, decision-making, and understanding of vulnerability had a strong impact on how situations developed. In several cases, opportunities to calm situations and avoid using force were missed.

There were also concerns about how well officers recognised and responded to people who were confused, distressed, or facing language barriers.



The findings highlight the importance of clear communication, proportional use of force, and treating people with respect and understanding throughout an incident.

Positives

Across the footage, panel members identified some areas of good practice:

- Officers showed confidence in taking control of situations where required
- There was some recognition of mental health concerns, with these being acknowledged in certain interactions
- In some cases, officers remained focused on resolving incidents and bringing them to a safe conclusion
- There were examples of teamwork between officers when managing challenging situations

Areas for Improvement

The review identified several consistent areas where practice needs to improve:

- **Communication**
 - Use calm, respectful language and avoid sarcasm or abrupt tone
 - Give clear explanations before taking action
 - Avoid officers speaking over one another
- **De-escalation**
 - Take more time to slow situations down
 - Use communication and reassurance before considering force
 - Make greater effort to understand individuals before acting
- **Use of force**
 - Ensure force is necessary, proportionate, and clearly justified
 - Provide warnings where possible before using force
 - Avoid using force on individuals who are already compliant or vulnerable
- **Understanding vulnerability**
 - Better recognise signs of distress, fear, or mental health concerns
 - Adapt communication and approach to meet individual needs
 - Treat confused or frightened individuals as vulnerable, not non-compliant
- **Cultural awareness and language barriers**
 - Show respect for cultural and religious needs
 - Use interpreters where needed and avoid assumptions about understanding
 - Respond patiently when communication barriers exist
- **Aftercare and welfare**
 - Carry out welfare checks after force is used
 - Provide reassurance once an incident has settled
 - Clearly explain what has happened and what will happen next