



**Response to PSNI Body Worn Video
Service Instruction Consultation
September 2018**

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Include Youth

Include Youth is an independent non-governmental organisation that actively promotes the rights, best interests of and best practice with disadvantaged and vulnerable children and young people.

The young people we work with and for include those from socially disadvantaged areas, those who have had poor educational experiences, those from a care background, young people who have committed or are at risk of committing crime, misusing drugs and/or alcohol, engaging in unsafe or harmful sexual behaviour, or at risk of being harmed themselves. We provide a range of tailored employability programmes for these young people, including programmes in partnership with community based organisations.

Our Give & Take Scheme adopts a youth work approach to improving the employability and increasing the self-esteem and confidence of young people aged 16 to 24 who are not yet ready to participate in mainstream training.

Many of these young people have experienced social exclusion, poverty or have other complex challenges in their lives and therefore need additional support to overcome these barriers and positively progress their education, training or employment needs. Seventy-five per cent of young people on the Scheme are care experienced, while over a third have a background in offending. We offer a range of tailored programmes including

- Core - for young people referred to us through the Health Trusts
- Start Programme – a collaborative partnership programme with community based organisations, targeted at young people in the North Down, Ards and Belfast areas
- Outreach - for groups or organisations throughout Northern Ireland
- One to One - for young people at risk of child sexual exploitation
- Transitional support - for those moving on from our Scheme and into mainstream education, training or employment

Our main offices are in Belfast, Armagh, Ballymena, Derry, Enniskillen, Newtownards and Omagh.

Include Youth also delivers an Employability Service on behalf of two of the five Health Trusts for young people aged 16 + who have had experience of the care system. This service is designed to offer tangible and concrete opportunities to assist young people leaving care to prepare for, and engage in work. We also deliver a joint employability mentoring project with Business in the Community.

Include Youth also engages in policy advocacy work in the areas of employability, youth justice and policing. This work is informed by relevant international human rights and children's rights standards, is evidence based, including that provided by young people and practitioners and is based on high quality, critical analysis.

Comments

Include Youth welcome the opportunity to comment on the Service Instructions for Body Worn Videos (BWVs). We have engaged with PSNI previously on the issue of Body Worn Videos and welcome the commitment that PSNI staff have demonstrated in relation to hearing about young people's experiences of both Stop and Search and their views on the use of Body Worn Videos. We especially value the effort made to consult directly with young people from our Enniskillen programme and much of our response to the instructions is based on views expressed at that meeting.

While we acknowledge the need to develop general Service Instructions for the use of BWV we would also like some consideration being given to the need to develop Service Instructions for the use of BWV specifically in relation to their use with incidents involving children and young people. Failing that, we would welcome a section within the instructions which deals specifically with the use of BWV in relation to incidents involving children and young people.

Principles:

We welcome the inclusion of the seven key principles. Principle 4 is critical and is of particular significance in relation to the policing of children and young people. It is vital that young people believe that the use of BWV is proportionate, legitimate and necessary. Under Principle 5 in relation to the use of BWV being incident specific and relying on Officers using common sense and sound judgement, we would be concerned about the possible inconsistency of approach from Officer to Officer. How will consistency in approach be ensured? We would be interested to receive the associated documentation for Principle 7. Is consultation with 'their communities' something that the police will do on a regular basis or on a one off capacity? What is defined as a 'community' – is this by geographical location or interest group?

Diversity:

We welcome the statement that the use of BWV will be applied fairly to all members of the community and that its use should not be discriminatory or disproportionate to a particular group. How will this be monitored?

Consultation process:

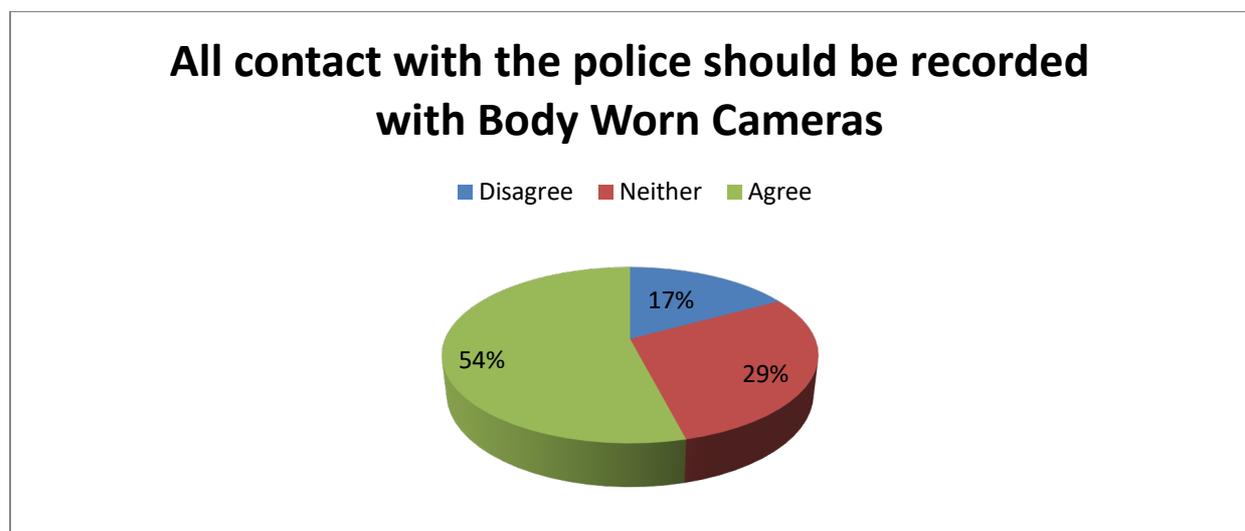
We were aware from previous conversations and correspondence with the Digital Criminal Justice Team that the PSNI were keen to hear about young people's general experiences with BWV.

In order to consult with our young people on the use of BWV within the PSNI, we facilitated 2 focus groups of young people from our programmes in Belfast and Newtownards. We also disseminated questionnaires to young people across all of our offices and received 24 responses. Through these measures, we aimed to ascertain the views of young people about the use of BWV in general, as well as gather their views on the experiences that they have had with the cameras.

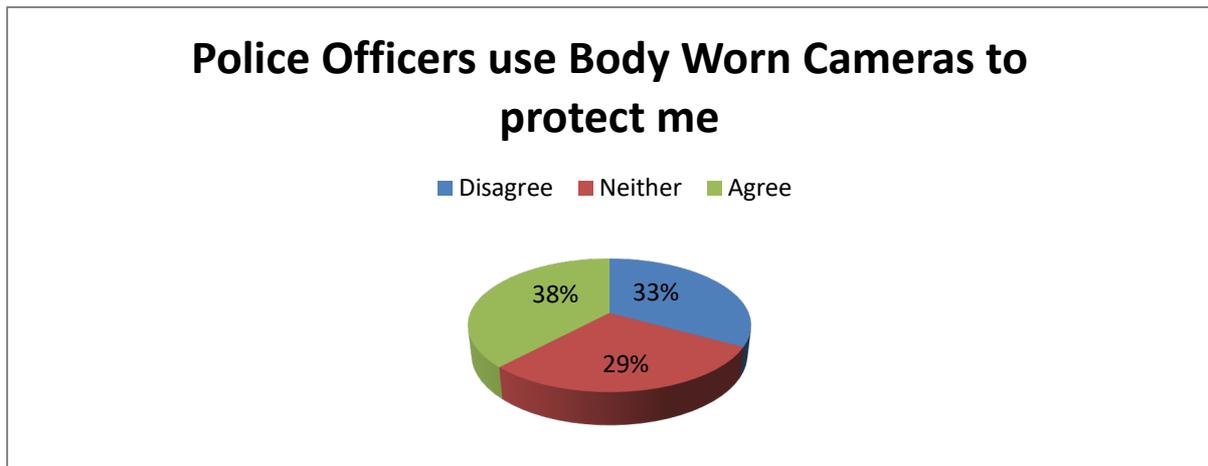
In terms of the general view towards the use of BWV, they generally thought they were a good thing, that all contact with the police should be recorded and that this is part of their duty as a police officer. The young people were mixed on the idea of why police officers wear cameras as question 2 demonstrates, and were divided in response to whether they feel safer when a police officer is wearing a camera. However, they were in agreement that BWV meant that there was less chance of a physical altercation with a police officer. The young people heavily agreed that police officers should have to notify the individual when the camera has been switched on and were also in agreement that the police officer should be allowed to view the footage from the camera before writing their reports.

General Views on Body Worn Cameras:

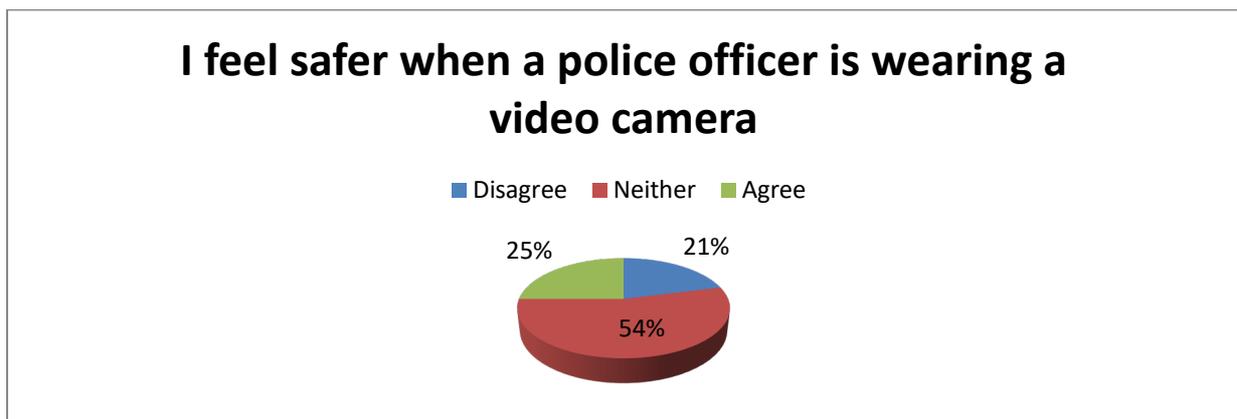
Question One:



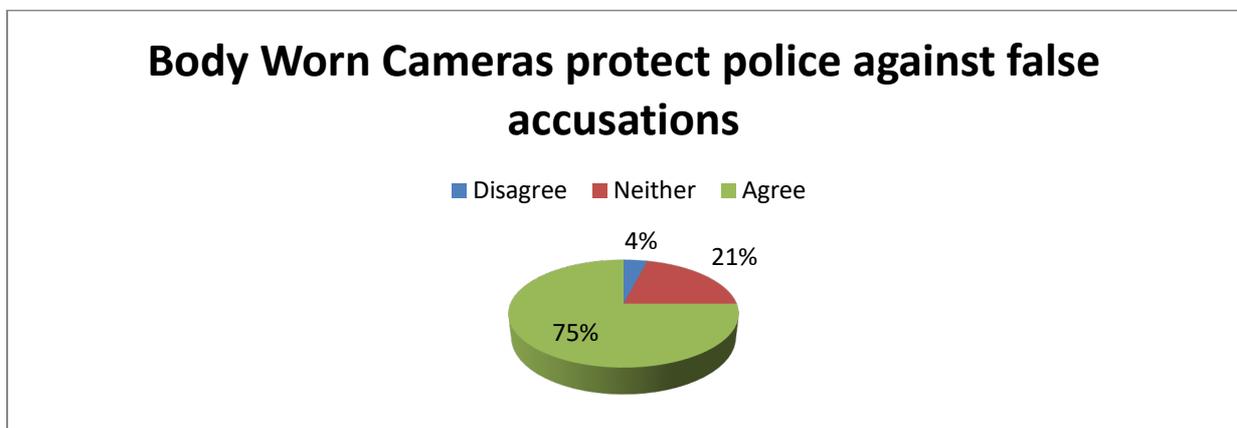
Question Two:



Question Three:

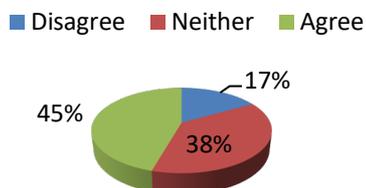


Question Four:



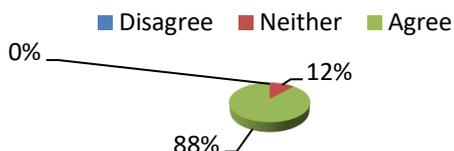
Question Five:

Police use of Body Worn Cameras is a positive thing



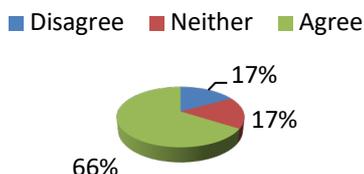
Question Six:

Police should be required to notify individuals when they are being recorded with Body Warn...



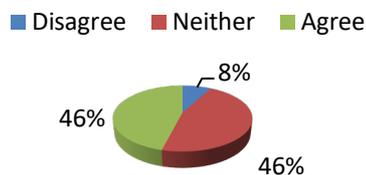
Question Seven:

An officer should be able to view (not edit) Body Worn Camera footage before writing a...



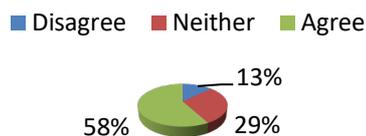
Question Eight:

It is acceptable for police to record Body Worn Camera footage as part of their official duties



Question Nine:

Using the Body Worn Camera means there is less likely to be a physical altercation



Experience with Body Worn Cameras:

Of the 24 participants, 20 young people had been stopped by the police and 10 of these young people reported that this stop involved the use of a Body Worn Camera, while 7 said that a camera was not used and 3 reported that they didn't know.

Of the 10 that had experience with a body worn camera being used, 70% said that they were made aware that the camera was being switched on. 50% of the 10 respondents said that they were happy for the interaction to be recorded, while the other 50% said that they were not happy. However, 70% reported that their experience with body worn cameras was not positive.

When the 24 respondents were asked if the use of Body Worn Cameras would prevent or encourage them to raise a complaint against an officer, 17% reported that it would prevent them, while 75% said it would encourage them and 8% were unsure.

Quotes:

“My experience resulted in a police officer found not telling the truth- viewed the camera and found that it was not what they said had happened”

“Police officer should make report from memory not using the footage- this way there are two forms of evidence and avoids them checking things if not true”

“The camera is a good idea but the police just turn them off when they want- this should be changed”

“I feel that people may have concerns that these cameras could be on at any time- running their privacy”

“It is better if they have cameras because then they know you are telling the truth, they can't say you are lying then.”

“It will keep you safer” (if they are on)

“Cos they have the power over you, if it's switched on they wouldn't have as much power over you.”

“I've no problem with the police, and fair play to the police for actually wanting to know what we think.”

“I didn't even know the police wore cameras, we need to have that information.”

“There's no point in this – nothing will change anyway.”

As the quotes demonstrate there is a mixed reaction to the use of BWV from young people. Many of the young people were supportive of the use of BWV but there remains a concern about the discretion that the officer has to either turn the camera on or not and also can decide at what point the camera is switched on. Several of the young people reported having a negative interaction with the police when they thought they were treated unfairly and shown a lack of respect, but that this type of incident was not recorded. It was also clear that young people were not fully aware of the guidelines around the use of BWV and would welcome more information on why and when police may use the BWV.

Closing Comment

We hope that this information is useful with regard to going forward on the development of Service Instructions and more generally on how young people perceive and experience the impact of BWV. Please do contact us if you require further clarification on any of the points raised.