

Dated: 3/5/2024

POLICY TITLE: Body Worn Video (BWV)

OWNING DIRECTORATE: Local Policing

AUTHOR: Superintendent (Northumberland Area Command)

CONTACT DETAILS: 101

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT: Complete

AUTHORISED PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE (APP) NATIONAL GUIDANCE:
Available

AIM OF POLICY: This policy outlines the operational circumstances in which Northumbria Police officers and staff are to utilise BWV and the relevant legislation and guidance that governs its use. It should be read in conjunction with the BWV procedure which outlines all details relating to the provision, maintenance and use of BWV.

BENEFIT OF POLICY: This policy will ensure:

- BWV is deployed in appropriate circumstances and in line with legislation
- The benefits of using BWV are maximised

REASON FOR POLICY: To outline the Force's position in relation to the use of BWV in support of its overall aims and objectives.

The College of Policing Guidance on the use of Body Worn Video (2014) outlines seven principles for the use of overt BWV which provide the strategic underpinning of Force policy and procedure on BWV. The seven principles are subject to continual review and updates can be found on the College of Policing Website.

These principles highlight that the use of BWV should be incident specific and not for general patrolling duties unless this is part of a specific operation.

There are a range of circumstances whereby officers may choose to activate their BWV for a policing purpose; however, BWV will always be used in the following circumstances unless it is impracticable to do so:

- When dealing with a domestic abuse/violence incident.
- When dealing with a hate crime incident.
- When performing a stop and search.
- When using force against an individual or property.

- When stopping a vehicle.
- When deployed to a Mental Health Institution in line with the Mental Health Unit (Use of Force) Act 2018.
- When used for negotiating purposes by trained Negotiators.

BWV should be used in the following circumstances where the victim consents and it is practical to do so. If BWV is not used a clear rationale must be recorded:

- First accounts obtained in the disclosure of a **sexual offence** where the victim consents and is comfortable with the use of BWV.
- DASH Risk Assessments conducted with domestic abuse victims if appropriate in the circumstances.

The National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) has announced that the Courts (Prescribed Recordings) Order 2023 now allows for BWV to be used by uniformed police officers only, but only in certain areas of the court, which includes:

- Holding cells.
- Custody cells.
- Vehicle dock areas.
- Courtrooms, including dock areas.
- Outside of the building but within the area of the court.

The legislation does not allow for the use of BWV within the public areas of a court.

The principal objective of BWV is to make best use of technology to help prevent and detect crime and anti-social behaviour; however, the use of BWV will also:

- Increase opportunities for evidence led prosecutions with improved outcomes for victims.
- Increase our legitimacy and enable effective scrutiny of our activities which will support in complaints and discipline matters, criminal investigations and civil claims.
- Support transparency, trust and confidence in Northumbria Police.
- Enhance officer safety and provide independent evidence in the eventuality of threats or assaults upon staff.
- Improve prosecution outcomes through the provision of independent evidence and increase in early guilty pleas.
- Improve the safety and wellbeing of subjects/detainees.

Northumbria Police will ensure:

- BWV is only used by officers who are trained

- Data is managed appropriately, in accordance with legislation, Force requirements and associated legislation including: Human Rights legislation, Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, Data Protection Act 1998, Freedom of Information Act 2000, Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice, Criminal Procedure and Investigation Act 1996
- Collateral intrusion is managed appropriately and material retained only for a legitimate policing purpose.

Application and Scope

Whilst BWV may be utilised in spontaneous public order situations, this policy does not replace the policy and procedures for other users of visual recording equipment, such as that used by staff deployed as public order trained evidence gatherers.

Underpinning Procedures

Northumbria Police will follow the national standards as outlined in the College of Policing Guidance on the use of Body Worn Video (2014).

SOURCE DOCUMENT: College of Policing Guidance on the use of Body Worn Video (2014).

GROUPS AFFECTED: All police officers and police staff, including relevant partner agency staff and those working voluntarily or under contract to Northumbria Police must be aware of, and are required to comply with, all relevant policy and associated procedures.

ACCESS AND DISCLOSURE RESTRICTIONS: None
