

Public asked for views on use of 'body worn video cameras' by police officers in Scotland

Members of the public are being asked for their views on the use of body worn video cameras by police officers in Scotland.

This national consultation follows the positive findings from an online survey in February 2021 where we asked the public about their views on armed police officers using body worn video cameras to record certain incidents.



Almost 9000 people responded to the survey making it one of the largest ever carried out by Police Scotland. It found strong public support for the use of body worn video cameras by armed police officers when carrying out their duties.

Chief Constable Iain Livingstone has previously set out the

“pressing, critical, ethical and operational imperative” for providing armed officers with the technology and this will now happen in time for the United Nations COP26 climate change conference in Glasgow this year.

Police Scotland is now progressing its plans to introduce body worn video cameras to more police officers and staff across Scotland with the launch of a national three-month public consultation which goes live on 1 June 2021.

BWV has been shown to have a positive impact on the safety of the public and the officers wearing it, and all other armed police units in the UK are currently deployed with cameras.

The introduction of BWV will bring Police Scotland in line with these other services and ensure best practice and evidence as well as increased transparency and accountability at incidents.

Chief Superintendent Matt Richards, who is leading on the project, said: “We know there is already strong public support for the use of body worn video cameras by armed officers.

“A recent public survey showed a significant majority of people who participated thought that the use of body worn video cameras would increase trust and confidence in the police.

“With this positive response in mind, we are now progressing our plans to equip our armed officers with body worn video cameras, bringing Police Scotland into line with other police services in the UK.

“In regards to the rest of Scotland’s police officers and staff, we recognise the introduction of this technology to all appropriate frontline staff is a big step for Scottish policing. To this end, we have now begun a formal public consultation on the introduction of body worn video cameras to the majority of officers and appropriate staff across the

country.

“It is important to Police Scotland that we continue to engage with and involve communities whenever we consider new technology that impacts directly on the public, to ensure they have a voice that can inform our plans, address any ethical concerns where possible and to allow us continue to police with public support.

“The responses to our national consultation will help inform our protocols, code of practice and training to ensure that body worn video cameras are used in appropriate and proportionate way. In so doing, we will be better equipped to protect the public, our staff and provide best evidence at court.

“To enable us to develop and deploy body worn video most effectively, please take some time to take part in our national survey by visiting the body worn video pages on the Police Scotland website.”