

Meeting Monday 22nd June 2020 15:00 – 17:00

Members attending:

John Scott QC, Solicitor Advocate (Chair)

Ephraim Borowski, Chair of the National Independent Strategic Advisory Group

Gill Imery, HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS)

Dr Elizabeth Kelly, NHS Scotland and Associate Carnegie UK Trust

Susan Kemp, SHRC

DCC Will Kerr, Police Scotland

John Logue, Deputy Crown Agent Operational Support, COPFS

Naomi McAuliffe, Programme Director Scotland, Amnesty International

Professor Susan McVie, University of Edinburgh

Diego Quiroz, SHRC

Brian Scott, Glasgow Disability Alliance

Apologies:

Bruce Adamson, CYPCS

Aamer Anwar, Solicitor and Human Rights campaigner

Tressa Burke, Glasgow Disability Alliance

Martyn Evans, Scottish Police Authority

Maria Galli, CYPCS

Martin Hayward, Equality and Human Rights Commission

ACC Gary Ritchie, Police Scotland

Dr Catriona Stewart, Scottish Women's Autism Network

Secretariat support:

Jennifer Blackwood, SPA Communications

Eleanor Gaw, Community Accountability

Fiona Miller, Community Accountability

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1. Welcome and introductions

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

2. Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

The Chair highlighted the LGIU Report on Covid-19 impacts on disabled people, shared with members for information.

Following on from the previous discussion on the role of NISAG, Ephraim Borowski asked if documents could be marked to signify whether members are able to share them or not. The Chair is keen to promote information sharing with NISAG whenever possible.

Action: If possible, members are asked to notify the Secretariat when sharing papers for the group, as to whether they can also be shared with NISAG Members.

Action: Secretariat will check with external partners and contributors to the work of the IAG, if supporting papers can be shared with NISAG.

It was noted that any public feedback requires specific permission to be sought and received, ahead of sharing more widely.

DCC Kerr updated members on policing and protests over the weekend period. These protests have recently been focused in the west and in particular Glasgow's George Square.

Participation of other groups unrelated to Black Lives Matter, including those with sectarian associations, was noted. On Saturday 20th, larger numbers from three distinct groups were present whilst on Sunday the numbers were lower. There was a significant uplift in resources to ensure public safety whilst ensuring the universality of the right to peaceful protest.

Police Scotland's priority has been to maintain public order and ensure public safety for those involved and impacted. Discussions with local and national government are taking place to liaise with groups involved and co-ordinate public safety approaches.

Members asked a number of questions in relation to the use of the temporary powers over this period. While these large gatherings are not permitted under COVID-19 regulations, DCC Kerr intimated that the policing of these events has been undertaken with public safety at the forefront of all decisions.

Some of the related press coverage was considered to be inaccurate.

DCC Kerr reported on the early impact of easing lockdown restrictions and moving into phase 2. He highlighted two specific points

- Demand on policing is now approaching business as usual levels, and very significant resource has been required to police events and demonstrations which is not sustainable. As each phase of the route

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map is implemented Police Scotland is likely to have reduced role with regard to lockdown.

- The importance of compliance realism with regard to public space. For the public there is a level of confusion as the four nations take differing approaches along with the complex mix of guidance and regulations.

The Chair noted that as we move through each of the phases of the route map there is likely to be less focus on the role of Police Scotland. This is one factor likely to impact the IAG's forward meeting schedule.

3. Data Update and Preparations for 30th June Report to the SPA Board

Professor McVie outlined her preliminary report using the agreed format. The report is based on the data ask of Police Scotland, and will be populated ahead of Friday's IAG meeting.

Information from the portal which at present has been partially analysed will be included in the report. There may also be an opportunity to include census information provided by Roger Halliday from the Scottish Government.

It was noted that the SPA is undertaking a third wave of its survey, the third since April which will provide additional evidence.

The group concluded that the IAG could provide substantial assurance to the SPA on Police Scotland's use of the temporary powers during Phase 1 and that they should be proportionate in gathering information for the forthcoming phases.

On behalf of the group the Chair thanked Professor McVie and Gill Imery for the high quality work that they had produced for the IAG.

Actions:

Members are asked to send Professor McVie any comments or suggestions this week.

Gill Imery confirmed that the HMICS report, with examples and illustrations will also be available ahead of Friday's IAG meeting.

The Chair confirmed that he will draft a section for the report, setting the scene and providing context.

Follow up:

The Chair proposed that the report for the SPA board meeting in August should take into account the commentary raised about inequalities by Dr Kelly.

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4. Future Meeting Schedule

After discussion it was agreed that the group would continue to meet twice weekly for a short time, most likely a further two week period, with a view to reducing the frequency of meetings thereafter to one per week.

5. AOCB

Brian Scott reported on a GDA survey of over 2,000 of its members on the impacts of COVID-19. A number of concerns were raised including access to social care, mental health, food poverty and isolation. There was no adverse feedback on policing. The report will be circulated to IAG members for information when finalised.

The Chair advised members that he had received email correspondence from an elected member at Glasgow City Council, and a discussion with the elected member concerned has now been offered.

Date and time of next meeting: Friday 26 June 12:00 – 14:00

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