

**Meeting 26 March 2021 13:00**

**Members attending:**

John Scott QC, Solicitor Advocate (Chair)

Ephraim Borowski, Chair of the National Independent Strategic Advisory Group

Maria Galli, Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland

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

Dr Elizabeth Kelly, Associate Carnegie UK Trust

John Logue, COPFS

Naomi McAuliffe, Programme Director Scotland, Amnesty International

Professor Susan McVie, University of Edinburgh

Diego Quiroz, Scottish Human Rights Commission

Assistant Chief Constable Gary Ritchie, Police Scotland

Dr Catriona Stewart, Scottish Woman's Autism Network

**In attendance**

Jen Waterton, Consultant (IAG Impact Assessment process)

**In attendance for agenda item 2**

John Wadham, Human Rights Advisor, Northern Ireland Policing Board

**Apologies:**

Bruce Adamson, Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland

Tressa Burke, CEO Glasgow Disability Alliance

Deputy Chief Constable Will Kerr, Police Scotland

Brian Scott, Glasgow Disability Alliance

Barry Sillers, Deputy Chief Executive, Strategy and Performance, SPA

**Secretariat:**

Deborah Christie, SPA

Eleanor Gaw, SPA

## **1. Welcome and introductions**

The Chair welcomed members of the group and attendees to the meeting. Apologies were noted. The group heard that, as Catriona Stewart was to be appointed to the SPA Board from 1<sup>st</sup> April, this would be her last IAG meeting. The Chair thanked Catriona for her valuable contribution to the work of the IAG and wished her well in her new role.

Jen Waterton was introduced to the group. The Chair explained she would observe the meeting, as part of her work to assess the overall contribution of the IAG in understanding Police Scotland's use of temporary powers. Jen provided a summary of the work she will undertake, including meeting with key stakeholders, and attending a meeting of the IAG and OptICAL. The review work will be taken forward at pace, and Jen would welcome any suggestions as to those who should be interviewed.

The Chair indicated that an interview with Dr Liz Aston SIPR who attends OptICAL and has chaired the IAG webinars, would have value.

The participant information sheet will be circulated to IAG members for awareness and to assist in identifying potential contributors.

**Action:** Eleanor Gaw to circulate the participant information sheet to IAG members.

## **2. Policing of the pandemic, and the experience in Northern Ireland. Discussion with John Wadham, Human Rights Advisor, Northern Ireland Policing Board**

The Chair welcomed John Wadham to the meeting. John provided a summary of his work as Human Rights Advisor to the Northern Ireland Policing Board.

The group heard that the rights based approach to policing was a key part to building public confidence in the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). Mr Wadham outlined the accountability systems in place, with the board comprising of appointments made both by the Department of Justice, and appointees selected by political representatives. The Board has a responsibility to monitor PSNI human rights compliance.

John Wadham referenced the findings of the [NIPB Thematic Review of Policing Response to COVID-19](#) .

John indicated that he believed having a human rights advisor had been and remained of significant benefit to PSNI, in informing the decision making process. Some of the work he had been involved in included advising on the policing of marches and parades, and the use of spit hoods and tasers. Further work is underway on how PSNI deal with hate crime.

The group considered an overview of a number of scenarios in which John Wadham had provided advice to the board and PSNI on human rights and policing's compliance, and it was recognised that the challenges were significant in such a dynamic policing environment.

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ACC Ritchie highlighted that proactive engagement took place with members of the Scottish Police Authority, with Authority staff attending key Police Scotland internal meetings to support the exploration of possible human rights implications on specific matters.

The Chair thanked John Wadham for his attendance and John Wadham left the meeting.

### **3. Note of the previous meeting and matters arising.**

The Chair reviewed the note of the previous meeting.

### **4. Data Update - OpTICAL Update/ Citizen Space**

Susan McVie updated the group on the recent meeting of OpTICAL and provided the following specific updates from the previous week;

- 46% increase in interventions, but only 25% increase in FPNs and 42% reduction in arrests.
- Very large increase (almost 3 times) in public place activity, and 19% increase in private space – so evidence of an increasing challenge for policing.
- FPNs for private space incidents (parties) are up, but for public space incidents are down.
- Arrests for private space incidents are down, but for public place incidents are up (but very small numbers)
- House gatherings were up by 20% and related FPNs rose by 28%. Student parties had almost doubled. Parties attended involving a breach had increased by 40%; and number of parties involving 16+ people increased by 55%
- Forced entries increased from 1 to 6 but this was still at a low level and within expected numbers.
- Travel regulation interventions had doubled, but this was mostly an increase in dispersals; there was a reduction in enforcement.
- Online contact had increased by 70% over the last week

No additional Citizen Space responses had been received.

### **5. Police Officer interview update**

7 sub-divisions have been proposed for inclusion in the research, and a set of questions have been designed. The questions will be shared with IAG members for any comment and agreement by email.

**Action:** Police Scotland to share the questions with the Secretariat, for onward circulation.

### **6. AOCB**

Correspondents to the IAG flagging concerns about public gatherings and football celebrations, have received a response directing them to the Chair's letter to Martyn Evans, and the Authority's livestream discussions.

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**Date of next meeting**

Friday 09 April 2021 – 13:00 – 15:00

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