

Meeting 8th June 2020 14:00 – 16:00

Members attending:

John Scott QC, Solicitor Advocate (Chair)

Bruce Adamson, CYPCS

Ephraim Borowski, Chair of the National Independent Strategic Advisory Group

Tressa Burke, CEO Glasgow Disability Alliance

Martyn Evans, Scottish Police Authority

Martin Hayward, Equality and Human Rights Commission

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

Dr Elizabeth Kelly, NHS Scotland and Associate Carnegie UK Trust

Susan Kemp, Scottish Human Rights Commission

DCC Will Kerr, Police Scotland

John Logue, Deputy Crown Agent Operational Support, COPFS

Professor Susan McVie, University of Edinburgh

Brian Scott, Glasgow Disability Alliance

Dr Catriona Stewart, Scottish Women's Autism Network

Apologies:

Aamer Anwar, Solicitor and Human Rights campaigner

Chief Superintendent David Duncan, Police Scotland

Maria Galli, CYPCS

Naomi McAuliffe, Programme Director Scotland, Amnesty International

Alistair Pringle, Equality and Human Rights Commission

Diego Quiroz, Scottish Human Rights Commission

ACC Gary Ritchie, Police Scotland

In attendance for Agenda item 2:

Chief Superintendent Alan Gibson, C Division Forth Valley

Chief Superintendent Linda Jones, V Division Dumfries & Galloway

Secretariat support:

Jennifer Blackwood, SPA Communications

Fiona Miller, SPA Community Accountability

John McCroskie, SPA Director of Communications and Relationships

1. Welcome and introductions

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and introduced Chief Superintendent Linda Jones and Chief Superintendent Alan Gibson who were joining the group for agenda item 2.

2. Update on local policing, easing of lockdown, and potential impacts of change to legislation and guidance

DCC Kerr introduced the discussion with his opening remarks focussing on the most challenging issues for local policing at present. He outlined how Police Scotland have maintained a common sense approach to policing, working with local authority partners particularly in relation to public space to maintain public support. He highlighted three specific areas

- **Regulations and Guidance**

Police Scotland's approach to the easing of lockdown restrictions has been to understand compliance realism with more emphasis on offering guidance and to trust officer's discretion and judgement when applying the 4E's approach. As was expected, more people are now using public spaces and understanding how different sections of the community act is important to maintain both public safety and confidence.

- **Quarantining**

Travel restrictions were introduced by the Scottish Government today, broadly similar to those in England and Wales but with a lesser fine for non-compliance. The Border Force is the primary enforcement agency with limited impact expected on Police Scotland. It's likely that the contact centres will receive calls from the public reporting individuals who they consider are not complying with the required isolation period.

- **Police Scotland's approach to Black Lives Matter protests**

Following on from the recent events in the USA, several protests were planned for this weekend in Scotland. The First Minister, and prominent community leaders had encouraged individuals not to attend large gatherings, rather to use other forms of protest however the largest events in Glasgow and Edinburgh went ahead with only a small number of issues. The tone and style of policing in Scotland ensured that supervising officers could use their judgement to manage the situation.

DCC Kerr introduced the local commanders who provided an overview of their command areas and outlined the challenges local policing teams have faced in recent weeks.

CS Jones provided an overview of V Division, Dumfries & Galloway which is mostly rural with the main town of Dumfries and the port at Stranraer. The area has to date had a very low Covid infection rate. Phase 1 of the easing of the lockdown coincided with a period of very warm weather which presented a number of challenges including: people travelling to second homes; an increase

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in hillwalkers; traffic from England; and camping and mobile homes arriving in the area. However, since this initial activity last weekend, calls and interventions have reduced by 30%. Call handling has been particularly strong with resolution at the first point of contact, often avoiding the need to deploy officers.

Regular meetings with key partners have proved to be beneficial during this period.

CS Gibson provided an overview of C Division, Forth Valley which comprises three local authority areas; Falkirk, Stirling and Clackmannanshire with a diverse mix of rural and urban communities.

The division experienced significant issues during the first weekend of the lockdown easing with an influx of visitors to the national park area. Closed car parks resulting in indiscriminate roadside parking along with a general lack of services meant officers were dealing with multiple situations over the weekend, much of which has now eased. The local policing team has had additional support from the road traffic division to manage the situation. Key to resolving issues has been positive engagement with both those travelling to the area and local communities who have concerns about people coming into the area.

In general, the crime rate is returning to what would be considered normal levels.

Both Commanders detailed the quality assurance measures they have in place to scrutinise interventions particularly in relation to Fixed Penalty Notices.

Members asked a number of questions relating to impact of the new quarantine legislation at the port of Stranraer and the definition of age in relation to children and young people in the quarantine regulations. Gaps in services for vulnerable members of the community had proved challenging for Police Scotland however partnership working with ongoing reviews is helping to resolve issues at an early stage. The statistical information relating to the issue of FPN's within areas was discussed and will require further consideration to ensure a balanced picture is presented.

On behalf of the group, the Chair thanked the Divisional Commanders for their contribution to this very useful discussion.

3. Note of the previous meeting and matters arising

1) Future Meetings/Agenda Planning

The impact of emergency police powers on the human rights of children and young people in Scotland during the Covid -19 pandemic. Report by the Children and Young People's Commissioner for Scotland.

The above report will be main item for the meeting on Friday 12th June with discussion continuing of the paper presented to the group by Maria Galli on 5th June. Members are requested to forward any comments/track changes to Maria prior to the meeting.

The paper by Claire Lightowler, referenced at the previous meeting has been circulated to members and offers useful reading prior to this Fridays discussion.

Dr Liz Aston, Director of the Scottish Institute for Policing Research will be joining the IAG meeting on Monday 15th June.

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2) Citizen Space/Portal

As requested the visibility of the portal has been increased on the website. Jennifer Blackwood will provide an update to members this Friday 12th June.

3) OpTICAL Group

An initial report of the Officer/Staff interviews carried out by HMICS is expected to be available shortly.

Professor McVie advised that she was meeting with Kirsty Louise Campbell of Police Scotland to discuss a variety of information/data that may assist the group in identifying pattern and trends in relation to enforcement.

Action:

Update to be included on the agenda for Monday 15th June meeting.

4) Justice Sub-Committee on Policing

Tuesday 9th June

The Chair advised that as he was giving evidence at the above sub-committee, he would be unavailable to attend the OpTICAL group. Professor McVie and Martyn Evans will both be in attendance.

5) Updated Letters

A revised suite of letters for members to contact their own professional and community networks will be available shortly.

6) A.O.B

Dr Kelly asked that at a future meeting the group take the opportunity to pause and reflect on the information that they have gathered to date and how this can best be used to inform future thinking.

The Chair will meet with David Crichton, SPA Interim Chair and board member Martyn Evans regarding the format for the group's next report to the board on 30th June. After discussion it was agreed that this item be placed on the agenda for Friday 12th June.

Action:

SPA Secretariat

Future Contributors

The Chair advised that he had been contacted by Marty Chamberlain Professor of Criminology at Teesside University who is currently leading a project examining the use of police powers in Cleveland during Covid-19 and who is keen to establish links with the IAG. Likewise, he has also had a preliminary discussion Karl Roberts a Forensic Psychologist Consultant to the World Health Organisation.

Professor McVie advised that she is meeting with ACC Ritchie tomorrow to discuss potential forces in England that the group may wish to establish contact with.

Date and time of next meeting

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Friday 12 June 12:00 – 14:00

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