

Meeting 15 January 2021 13:00 – 15:00

Members attending:

John Scott QC, Solicitor Advocate (Chair)

Bruce Adamson, CYPCS

Ephraim Borowski, Chair of the National Independent Strategic Advisory Group

Chief Superintendent David Duncan, Police Scotland

Martyn Evans, SPA Board Member

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

Dr Elizabeth Kelly, Associate Carnegie UK Trust

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, Scottish Human Rights Commission

ACC Gary Ritchie, Police Scotland

Brian Scott, Glasgow Disability Alliance

ACC Alan Speirs, Police Scotland

Dr Catriona Stewart, SWAN Scotland

Apologies:

Aamer Anwar, Solicitor and Human Rights campaigner

Tressa Burke, CEO Glasgow Disability Alliance

Maria Galli, CYPCS

Susan Kemp, Scottish Human Rights Commission

Secretariat:

Jennifer Blackwood, SPA

Eleanor Gaw, SPA

Fiona Miller, SPA

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1. Welcome and introductions

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

2. Note of the previous meeting and matters arising.

John Logue proposed an accuracy amendment to the meeting note from 8 January. A revised form of wording for item 4 was outlined, and will be circulated to members for approval.

Action: J Logue/Secretariat

All other matters have been actioned, with relevant links to the various papers discussed included in the note.

3. Policing Update

DCC Kerr advised that he had attended the most recent OpTICAL meeting, which had discussed current lockdown regulations and the various issues they present for Police Scotland and forces across the UK. He highlighted the benefits of a single police service in Scotland, supporting consistent public messaging and a consistent approach nationally. It was noted that UK press coverage has highlighted some examples of variance across the UK, for example on the interpretation of 'local', particularly in relation to travelling for the purpose of exercise

DCC Kerr confirmed that Police Scotland will continue to maintain the tone and 4 E's approach that they have been using since the first lockdown.

He highlighted the recent comment piece by the Chief Constable in The Times, outlining the service's approach and community based model.

[Policing during the pandemic deserves extra scrutiny | Scotland | The Times](#)

DCC Kerr referenced the range of public services which have a role in the pandemic response, and in encouraging adherence to restrictions. A wide range of agencies also have a role in supporting many of the upcoming events and any associated protests this year, including marches and parades, the Euros, Scottish elections and COP26. 2021 is an event rich environment, with a range of events which may attract associated legitimate protest.

It was agreed that Chief Superintendent Alan Waddell, as Gold Commander, be invited to a future meeting, to discuss risk management and the policing of protests.

Action: Secretariat/ Police Scotland - Invite CS Waddell to future IAG meeting.

Discussion points included

- The scope to gather public perspectives on Police Scotland's management of protests, and identify opportunities for public consideration of Police Scotland's approach in balancing human rights requirements and public health.

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- Less than 10% of approximately 100,000 measured interventions by Police Scotland have resulted in enforcement.
 - The importance of ongoing consistency in style and tone.
 - The important role of the SPA in ensuring scrutiny of Police Scotland's approach, including the appropriate use of discretion.
 - Members agreed that effective communication over the next few months is particularly important, especially in relation to equalities groups, to ensure messages get to those who need them most. This issue is relevant well beyond policing.
 - The ongoing pressures and impact of constraints on young people, and the potential for confusion on what is or is not allowed as regulations change. DCC Kerr advised that CS David Duncan is reviewing policing's communications with young people.
 - ACC Alan Speirs, Assistant Chief Constable Professionalism and Assurance, has a lead role in operational response and Police Scotland's work on public confidence. He briefed members on the focus of Police Scotland's approach, its engagement with Government and with key stakeholders on the Covid-19 response, including the business community, focused on service delivery and the expectations on the service.
 - Public confidence in policing remains relatively high, although it was noted it had dipped slightly over the festive period as restrictions were tightened. This may be in response to a broader range of issues, and will be considered in more detail by the Authority at its next meeting.
 - Martyn Evans highlighted the important contribution of ongoing clarity of purpose as set out in the TOR; the use of a wide range of evidence in supporting the group's work; and the important role that effective and consistent communication has played, led by the Cabinet Secretary and the Chief Constable.
 - The importance of recommendations from the group to the Authority was noted, and these are likely to be included in a report to the Board February and/or March 2021.
 - DCC Kerr noted that the IAG and Police Scotland have now accumulated a wealth of information and evidence on how to police a public health crisis, which could inform a high level report of international interest and significance.
 - The Chair proposed a related future meeting focusing on Policing the Pandemic, with input from DCC Kerr, ACC Speirs, and Professor Cliff Stott.
- Action: Chair/ Police Scotland/ Secretariat**

4. Data Update

OpTICAL

Professor McVie reported on OpTICAL discussions, including use of the new online reporting form. ACC Ritchie agreed to investigate what information on the pattern of use and user profile could be made available.

Chief Superintendent Roddy Newbigging from C3 will attend a future OpTICAL meeting, to consider the impact of the pandemic on call handling and say more about how call handling processes have supported policing's pandemic response.

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Professor McVie outlined her progress on data analysis, for report to the IAG meeting.

Actions

- **ACC Ritchie/ OpTICAL** to consider any additional information available relating to use of the online reporting tool (including demographics).
- **CS Duncan** will check whether Public Health Scotland is continuing quarantine referrals to Police Scotland.

Citizen Space

One additional entry had been received in the past week.

It was agreed that updated letters promoting Citizen Space will be provided by the secretariat, for members to share across the own professional and community networks. In addition, Jennifer will brief media outlets to promote its use.

Members agreed to accept an offer of support from SIPR to provide additional qualitative analysis of Citizen Space data.

Actions

- **Secretariat (JB/ FM)** to draft updated letter to share with members, for onward circulation. (ALL)
- **Professor McVie/ Secretariat** to liaise with Dr Aston on Citizen Space analysis.

5. Report to the SPA Board 22 January

The Chair will circulate a draft report Monday 18 January, for members to feedback by close of business on Tuesday 19 January.

6. AOCB

Dr Kelly suggested that it would be helpful to schedule further consideration of best practice internationally on policing during the pandemic. This will be scheduled for discussion at a future meeting. The scope to re-engage with Scottish Government on this work was highlighted.

Action: Secretariat/ OpTICAL members

7. Date of next meeting

Friday 22 January 2021 – 13:00 – 15:00

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