

Meeting 26 February 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

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

CS Linda Jones, 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

Brian Scott, Glasgow Disability Alliance

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

Dr Catriona Stewart, SWAN Scotland

Attending for item 2

Professor Sarah Armstrong and Professor Michele Burman, University of Glasgow

Apologies:

Aamer Anwar, Solicitor and Human Rights campaigner

Tressa Burke, CEO Glasgow Disability Alliance

Maria Galli, CYPCS

Dr Elizabeth Kelly, Associate Carnegie UK Trust

DCC Will Kerr, Police Scotland

ACC Gary Ritchie, Police Scotland

Secretariat:

Jennifer Blackwood, SPA

Fiona Miller, SPA

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1. Welcome and introductions

On behalf of the Chair, who would be joining the meeting later (at 1310 hours), Professor McVie welcomed members of the group along with Professor Sarah Armstrong and Professor Michele Burman from the University of Glasgow attending for item 2 of today's meeting.

2. Professor Sarah Armstrong and Professor Michele Burman, University of Glasgow

Left Out and Locked Down Report

<https://scotlandinlockdown.co.uk/project-report/>

Professor Armstrong outlined the background to the rapid social research project which took place from June to December 2020. It looked at the impact of lockdown on already isolated/'vulnerable' groups.

Approximately twenty partner organisations were involved with one hundred participants in four groups. The work was undertaken by interviews, social media analysis and surveys and was weighted towards the Glasgow area.

A number of key points were highlighted:

- Existing inequalities were aggravated.
- Statutory services retreated and, in many instances, if support was offered it was undertaken remotely.
- Local community groups and Third sector organisations stepped in to provide support to communities; self-organising support within communities also increased.
- For participants, communication of lockdown rules and regulations happened in various ways with the digital divide and understanding of media messaging, particularly for individuals for whom English was not their first language, contributing to some confusion and mistrust.
- Venues where people would routinely meet, for example places of worship, were no longer available and reduced the wider network of extended family and friends.

On behalf of the IAG Professor McVie thanked Professor Armstrong and Professor Burman for their presentation of the report and invited members to comment or ask questions about its findings.

Members raised a number of points including how the themes of the report were consistent with the themes the IAG had raised in reports to the SPA. Care and support required by vulnerable individuals, which couldn't necessarily be replaced by others, highlighted structural issues that adversely affected certain communities more than others.

The ability of the Third sector to adapt services was in many ways similar to the agility shown by Police Scotland, maintaining local and national policing within the constraints of the pandemic.

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Issues relating to young people in relation to the loss of schooling and for those who were in the prison system were noted. The latter group having had additional restrictions placed upon their already restricted lives with reduced support and socialisation. Professor Armstrong and Ephraim Borowski agreed to arrange a meeting outwith the IAG to discuss the issue of white ethnic minority groups and hate crime.

Professor Burman has also prepared slides about the IMPRODOVA project work on the impact of COVID on frontline responses to domestic abuse which will be circulated to group members for information.

Action: Secretariat to circulate IMPRODOVA slides to IAG members

3. Note of the previous meeting and matters arising.

Letter to Cabinet Secretary for Justice

The Chair advised that the response to the recent correspondence sent to the Cabinet Secretary, which has been circulated to members will now be uploaded to the website as a public document.

Scottish Crime and Justice Survey

Professor McVie advised that results of the above are due to be published today.

4. SPA Board Meeting Update

The Chair updated members on his presentation of the IAG report to the most recent board meeting on 24 February. Overall it was well received with a number of insightful questions. It was agreed that a further webinar be organised to allow more in depth discussion on the issues highlighted by the IAG.

5. Co-ordination of media and communications

Members discussed a numbers of issues in relation to the media and the opportunities presented to publicise the work of the IAG. Members considered that, in line with the group reporting through the SPA, a more pro-active approach should be considered when information is being released into the public domain.

Professor McVie highlighted the Press Association article that had been circulated amongst publications which had resulted in duplicate press articles. Jennifer Blackwood advised members that Police Scotland proactively undertake media activity as papers are made public on the SPA website to draw attention to key issues within the papers.

Action: Secretariat - Further discussion at the next IAG meeting

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6. Data Update

OpTICAL

Professor McVie advised that there was no OpTICAL meeting during the week.

She informed members that her team were working on understanding the geographic patterns of interventions within Police Scotland sub divisions.

The weekly reports available on egress highlight the increasing number of interventions with attending officers facing violence and confrontation on a more regular basis. The Chair proposed that Divisional Commanders be invited back to the IAG soon to provide an update on local policing issues.

Citizen Space

Total number of responses to date remains at 103. Work has begun analysing the data and members will be kept up to date as it progresses.

Action – Secretariat to contact Police Scotland regarding Divisional Commanders attending the IAG

7. AOCB

Future Meeting Schedule Confirmed Contributors

5 March – Katrina Caldwell, Scottish Government Analytical Team

12 March – Eleanor Hourigan

19 March – John Wadham

19 April – ACC John Hawkins, Kirsty Louise Campbell and Davina Fereday, Police Scotland

Date of next meeting

Friday 5 March 2021 – 13:00 – 15:00