

Meeting 22nd May 2020 12:00 – 14:00

Members attending:

John Scott QC, Solicitor Advocate (Chair)

Aamer Anwar, Solicitor and Human Rights campaigner

Bruce Adamson, CYPCS

Ephraim Borowski, Chair of the National Independent Strategic Advisory Group

Chief Superintendent Davie Duncan, Police Scotland

Martyn Evans, Scottish Police Authority

Martin Hayward, Equality and Human Rights Commission

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

Susan Kemp, Scottish Human Rights Commission

John Logue, Deputy Crown Agent Operational Support, COPFS

Naomi McAuliffe, Programme Director Scotland, Amnesty International

Professor Susan McVie, University of Edinburgh

ACC Gary Ritchie, Police Scotland

Brian Scott, Glasgow Disability Alliance

Dr Catriona Stewart, Scottish Women's Autism Network

Apologies:

Tressa Burke, CEO Glasgow Disability Alliance

Dr Elizabeth Kelly, NHS Scotland and Associate Carnegie UK Trust

DCC Will Kerr, Police Scotland

Diego Quiroz, Scottish Human Rights Commission

In attendance:

Dr Megan O'Neill, University of Dundee and SIPR

Secretariat support:

Jennifer Blackwood, SPA Communications

Eleanor Gaw, SPA Community Accountability

John McCroskie, SPA Director of Communications and Relationships

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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 updated members that Gill Imery has offered HMICS support on the staff and officer survey.
- Fran Warren will attend the IAG meeting 29th May to discuss her work on international policing responses to Covid- 19, and her draft paper will be circulated to members ahead of the meeting.
- The Chair congratulated CYPCS members on their work in support of a successful amendment to the Coronavirus legislation in Scotland which ensures 16 and 17 year olds are treated as children. Bruce Adamson thanked Police Scotland for their support for this work.
- Notes from previous IAG meetings are agreed, will be published online week beginning 25th May 2020, and on a regular basis thereafter, 48 hours after distribution to members for checking.

3. Chair's update from report to the Scottish Police Authority Board 20th May 2020

The Chair indicated that a key role for IAG is to provide a trusted source of advice, guidance and early warning for Police Scotland within a complex accountability landscape. He thanked members for their contributions which had significantly enhanced and improved the report, with additional feedback on language from EHRC noted for future reference. The discussion is available to listen to on the SPA website.

Martyn Evans indicated that the report had been very well received by SPA members, and that it placed any concerns identified in fair context. There is an emerging theme from a range of sources of overall confidence in policing in Scotland. The Scottish approach with independent oversight from the IAG is leading from an international perspective, and there is significant interest from other jurisdictions and some looking to adopt a similar model.

4. Citizen Space Portal

This will go live 26th May.

Professor McVie introduced the draft text and requested any additional contributions. Members agreed that this should remain an easy to use, open point of access, rather than an additional survey. A small number of closed questions may be required for points of comparison with other data.

The portal will remain live as long as the emergency powers are in place.

The supporting Communications Plan was noted, and the Chair briefed members that the portal and work of the IAG may be referenced in media coverage over the weekend.

The Chair thanked S. McVie, J. Blackwood and J. McCroskie for their work to support the portal's development.

Actions:

J. Blackwood will explore

- Scope to utilise language translation facilities to improve access.
- Compatibility with access software e.g. text readers / magnification
- Any access issues will be reported back to the supplier

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These issues will continue to be progressed following launch and will not lead to any delay in “go-live”.

S.McVie will prepare a revised text for the portal, following members’ feedback and guidance, for agreement Monday 25th May.

5. Data and Evidence

OpTICAL Group Update

S. McVie briefed members on discussions at the OpTICAL Group. Quantitative data is beginning to flow into the group, and there is evidence of some regional variation in enforcement. Outputs from Police Scotland’s “Your Police” Survey which has so far had 18,000 responses, seem to indicate similar findings to the SPA survey.

Survey to gather police officer and staff perspectives

Options include

- Police Scotland lead and deliver this work
- HMICS lead discussions with police officers and staff
- External provision, which, while independent, would take longer to procure and deliver

It was noted that there is a need to move quickly to gather officer and police staff views; to support clarity among the public and officers that the process is suitably independent; and to enable frank and open feedback.

The very significant practical assistance, support and additional help for evidence gathering from a range of departments across Police Scotland was acknowledged by IAG members, and the group recorded their appreciation of Police Scotland’s support as this work progresses.

It was agreed -

- to accept the offer of assistance from HMICS as an independent body to take this forward
- that any data gathered will be solely for the Independent Advisory Group, and will align tightly with the IAG’s terms of reference

Actions:

S.McVie will provide a supporting paper and question set for members to consider next week.

The Chair will contact the Scottish Police Federation and ASPS President so they are informed and engaged.

6. Perspectives from Dr Megan O’Neill, University of Dundee, and Associate Director of the Scottish Institute for Policing Research (SIPR).

Dr O’Neill emphasised three important strands

- a) The role of context in policing, which must be taken into account at both the macro and micro level. Internationally, Scotland appears to be “ahead of the game” in responding to the Coronavirus Crisis, supported by policing by consent model. Other countries are often coming from a tradition of armed police enforcing restrictions. She referenced the work of

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the IAG as an approach other countries are looking to catch up with. At the micro level, people's own and vicarious interaction with policing impacts their confidence in the service's approach to the current crisis. She referenced the disproportionate impacts of the virus and lockdown on already disadvantaged communities.

- b) The role of community policing. Respect, neutrality, transparency and giving individuals a voice in encounters with police are key strengths in policing's community engagement. As lockdown restrictions ease and become more complex, clear messaging and building on core community policing skills will be key. The ultimate goal is to avoid spreading the virus – "police the goal, not the rule". This requires skilled communication and engagement, an acknowledgement that what worked in the early stages of lockdown may no longer be effective, and working with communities to establish the most appropriate response.
- c) The concept of organisational justice. The need to bring staff with the organisation was emphasised; this required two way communication between officers and the front line, and, if possible, face to face discussions with staff or focus groups to get the voice of the front line, so staff are confident decisions are reached fairly and any constraints are understood.

Discussion points included –

- The need to engage with "communities of interest" as well as "communities of place".
- Evidence that officers work better and are more responsive to human rights, if they are confident that the organisation supports them.
- Potential tensions between need for perceived equity and national messaging with more local approaches to what works best.
- Understanding emerging evidence that particular groups, particularly over 65s, are disproportionately supportive of much stricter enforcement.

The Chair thanked Megan for her input. She agreed to stay in touch with the group as needed, and the IAG will welcome input from other SIPR colleagues as its work progresses.

7. AOCB –

- **Equalities and Human Rights.** Paper on Human Rights from D.Quiroz to be circulated, for discussion 25th May 2020. **Action:** Secretariat
- Paper on Human Rights and Children and Young People is in preparation **Action:** Maria Galli/ CYPCS
- Further information for members on Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments is in the pipeline, for sharing across secure networks. **Action:** Secretariat to co-ordinate investigation of options for sharing securely
- **Data and Evidence.** EHRC expressed interest in any data available on FPNs with regard to protected characteristics. This and all data requests are being channelled through the OpTICAL Group.

Date of next meeting: Monday 25th May 15:00 – 17:00

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