

LINCOLNSHIRE POLICE

Independent Advisory Group (IAG)

Member's Handbook





It is with great pleasure that I introduce the IAG (Independent Advisory Group) Handbook for Lincolnshire Police. This serves as a demonstration of our commitment to working together to make Lincolnshire the safest place to live, work and visit.

Police legitimacy, public trust and understanding are fundamental for the effectiveness of the police. By working together, we aim to build on our relationship and increase trust and confidence in policing. The IAG provide a vital link into the community and provide us with community views and perspectives which enable us to understand the wider implications of our decisions.

This handbook outlines the structure, role and responsibilities of the IAG. It offers guidance to IAG members and prospective members and emphasises the significance of meaningful engagement with the community.

I extend my gratitude to members of the IAG, whose invaluable contributions and expertise have shaped this handbook. Your commitment to enhancing police-community relations sets an inspiring example for others to follow.

By working together, we can make Lincolnshire the safest place to live, work and visit.



Julia Debenham

Deputy Chief Constable, Lincolnshire Police.



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The History of IAGs

The Macpherson Report into the Steven Lawrence murder created a challenge for the Police Service to start a process that created a genuine partnership with all sections of the community, encouraging the active involvement of people from diverse groups. Independent Advisory Groups, known as IAGs, have evolved to facilitate this engagement.

IAGs have been in existence in various guises since publication of the Report in 1999. While guidance documents have offered useful direction for their constitution and membership, the manner in which IAGs are supported and involved in policing differs considerably across the country. It is therefore incumbent on individual Forces to develop the IAG concept in a manner which best meets the needs of their particular areas while ensuring that the objectives of the Macpherson Report are being met.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide existing and prospective members of the Lincolnshire IAG with information about the Group, how it is structured, what it aims to achieve and how it contributes to the work of Lincolnshire Police.

The handbook will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it reflects the evolving nature of the work of the IAG as will the documents referenced within it, all of which are included on the IAG website and which should be read in conjunction with this document.

The role of an IAG

The role of an IAG is to help the police to build insight into the needs, wants and concerns of the groups who are under-represented in normal decision making processes. This insight is used to shape service delivery for the benefit of all our communities and engender trust and confidence. In performing this function the IAG acts as a 'critical friend' to the Police, challenging conventional thinking and providing an independent perspective on issues, working as a genuine partner with the Police to inform and promote improvements.

The role of IAG members is not to provide 'specialist advice' on policing issues. Rather, their function is to provide advice on how policing activities may be, or are perceived by communities and to contribute to thinking around the development of policies and practices, thereby assisting the Force in its process of continuous improvement and development as an effective and efficient organisation working on behalf of the community it serves.

Community input into the activities of the Police enables policing at both a strategic and tactical level to be more effective, focusing on community engagement and therefore responding to community needs. However, it is important to note that the IAG is not the voice of the community. It is a network of individuals independent of the Police drawn from across the county who offer a diversity of background, perceptions, ideas, knowledge and skills which form one part of the jigsaw of wider community consultation and engagement.

What is meant by independent?

Underpinned by a Memorandum of Understanding which can be viewed on the IAG website, the IAG is convened by Lincolnshire Police in partnership with communities and is supported and funded by the Force rather than existing as an external, self-sustaining entity. The term “independent” refers to the nature of the advisors and the advice provided, rather than the relationship with the Police. As such, it cannot be seen as being wholly independent from the police since it is sponsored, co-sustained and co-organised by both the police and IAG members.

However, members of the IAG network do offer independence of thought to their contribution to policing across the county. Moreover, they are not there simply to agree with the Police but are encouraged to constructively challenge in the interests of benefiting service delivery from a community perspective.

What is advice?

In this context, independent advice is defined as opinion, guidance or constructive feedback given by someone who is not part of the Force, reflecting a perspective from the point of view of a member of a community in its widest sense. Such a perspective may have its origin in a residential, business, or service provider context.

Advisors, although partners in a beneficial and positive relationship with the police service, are not answerable to the police and neither are the police responsible for IAG members’ actions. IAG members represent themselves and not necessarily the view of any particular group within the community, although this may be the case on occasions. They do not bear responsibility for the consequences of decisions based upon their advice. The autonomy of police decision-making is not affected and the Force may or may not choose to follow advice that is offered as a result of consultation with any member or group within the IAG.

OUR MISSION

The Lincolnshire Police IAG's mission is to be a positive influence in promoting the effectiveness of Lincolnshire Police by contributing insight and challenge through an enduring partnership between the Force and the community it serves.

Structure

The Lincolnshire IAG should be viewed as a network of volunteers drawn from communities across the Force area who offer a range of backgrounds, skills, knowledge and experience. As a group they are representative of the breadth and diversity of the people, businesses and agencies located throughout or who serve the county.

Dynamic global and local events affecting crime and policing are constantly changing. In order to help shape the Force's approach to policing, the structure of the Lincolnshire IAG will be continuously reviewed and evolve to respond to these changes. This includes the IAG membership since it is essential that the right people are available to be consulted, influence and inform decisions around emerging topics or themes as they impact on the police and the community.

The nature of the relationship between the IAG and Lincolnshire Police is described in a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by the Deputy Chief Constable and Chair of the IAG on behalf of the respective partners.

The Lincolnshire IAG structure provides a framework within which members may act individually by providing insight, information and perspective on a range of policies, proposals etc, and/or as part of a group contributing to discussions such as the development of neighbourhood policing or advising on scrutiny panels. The Group is structured around 4 principle functions with oversight provided through a central oversight group.



IAG member involvement in this structure may include attending forums such as Force Legitimacy Board, participating in Stop and Search, Use of Force and Complaints scrutiny panels, providing input into consultations on policies relating to issues such as Community Engagement, use of Tasers, the development of Personal Development Reports (PDR); or providing advice on critical incident response. Further information of the nature of these functions and the IAG's contribution to them can be found on the IAG website.

Recruitment and Training

Membership of the IAG is voluntary and unpaid. Recruitment may be undertaken through periodic campaigns advertised through local media and press, or by a direct approach to individual stakeholders who are able to represent particular aspects of communities across the County. Details of recruitment campaigns and how to apply can be found under the Membership tab on the IAG website.

On appointment as a new member, you will receive induction training appropriate to the roles you wish to undertake. This may include a familiarisation visit and meeting with the IAG Chair, members and Force representatives or receiving specific training in relation to a particular area of IAG work such as one of the scrutiny groups. In any event a programme of training and familiarisation opportunities with the work of the Force will be made available to you throughout the period of your membership.

IAG Member Role

The nature of the IAG's engagement with the Force will develop and evolve over time to meet the particular requirements, pressures and challenges of policing in the community as they emerge. However, the general requirements of the role, what is expected of members and the range of attributes they should be able to offer will remain broadly the same. A broad description of the role and person specification for IAG members is outlined at **appendix 1**.

Conditions of Membership

Membership of the IAG may be subject to security vetting, details of which can be found at **appendix 2**.

In any event, whether security vetted or not, as a member of the IAG you will be expected to adhere to the 'Seven Principles of Public Life' which are reflected in the ethical standards included in the Police code of ethics. Further information on these and other requirements are covered in **appendix 3**.

There is no contractual agreement between IAG members and the Force and members may leave the Group at any time. Where members are unable to meet their commitments or the code of ethics and conduct, their continuing membership may be subject to review. Further information about the conditions where a review may be instigated can be found at **appendix 4**.

In addition, as a member of the IAG there are a number of other aspects of membership which you will be expected to be aware of and comply with. These are detailed at appendices 5 to 11 as follows:

- Confidentiality **appendix 5**
- Declarations/conflict of Interest **appendix 6**
- Contact with the press, media and social media **appendix 7**
- Commitment to equality diversity **appendix 8**
- ID and access cards **appendix 9**
- Gifts and hospitality **appendix 10**
- Expenses **appendix 11**

Governance and Meetings

The effective operation of the IAG is coordinated by an elected independent Chair supported by a number of group leads who will coordinate the activities of the IAG community engagement and scrutiny groups.

The efficiency and effectiveness of the IAG will be monitored by an Oversight Group comprising:

- the Deputy/Assistant/ Chief Constable,
- the IAG Chair and up to 3 nominated representatives from the IAG,
- a Senior Point of Contact (SPOC) from within the Force,
- representation from the Police and Crime Commissioner's office.

The IAG Chair is elected by IAG members. There is no tenure restriction for the position although an election will normally be held at least bi-annually.

Volunteers to sit on the Oversight Group will be sought annually with nominations subject to agreement by the DCC, Chair and SPOC.

The appointment of group leads and board/committee advisors will be reviewed annually by the oversight group to ensure all members of the IAG network have opportunities to volunteer for and participate in the various roles and activities undertaken by the IAG.

Members of the IAG may be asked or volunteer to participate in one or more of the main functions, some of which may be undertaken individually, for example by acting as advisors to specific Force boards or committees, providing feedback or advice on policy proposals or critical incident reviews, or as part of a group such as the Community Engagement group or scrutiny panels.

The work of the IAG may be undertaken through meetings held at Force HQ in Nettleham or other Force establishments throughout the county, via video or telephone conferencing, or by correspondence as appropriate.

IAG Annual Report and Review

In addition to regular meetings and activities, beginning in 2021 an Annual Report summarising the work of the IAG throughout the year will be published. The Report will be presented at an Annual Review event to which all those who have been involved in supporting the activities and mission of the IAG will be invited.

Contact:

If you would like to know more about the Lincolnshire Police IAG, or if you have any questions about the content of this handbook, please contact:

Email:

IAG@lincs.pnn.police.uk

Post:

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Police HQ,
Deepdale Lane,
Nettleham, Lincoln,
LN2 2LT

1. IAG Member role, knowledge and experience

The role of the IAG member is to:

- Critically appraise police actions from the perspective of a receiver of police services and a member of the community.
- Have an appreciation of resources within communities that may assist to resolve particular incidents.
- Have the ability and willingness to give constructive criticism and advice to police.
- Give individual perception/advice on force policy (including policy development) and practices, particularly those which impact on diverse communities.
- Provide a view on how particular police activities are likely to be perceived by communities.
- Give a personal perspective as someone who is connected to a specific community or part of the wider Lincolnshire establishment (IAG members do not speak on behalf of that community or establishment).
- Advise the police on cultural and other issues relevant to the community involved.

An IAG Member will:

- Consider other people's views allowing them space to have their say.
- Question and challenge the views of the force and others in a constructive way.
- Consider and understand their own biases and prejudices.
- Work as part of a team and contribute to the success of group initiatives.
- Work with people from all areas of the locality.
- Work with people from different diverse backgrounds.
- Make a contribution to influence policing strategy, policy and training.
- Contribute the time, energy and commitment to attend regular meetings.
- Live or work in the area and have knowledge of, and commitment to, issues of equality and diversity.
- Have a good understanding of the meaning of 'independent' as it relates to the role/work of the IAG.

An IAG Member should have experience of:

- Working with other people on issues of mutual interest over a period of time (e.g. Voluntary work).
- Sharing their views and understanding of issues with others (e.g. In a family, community or work setting).
- Situations where they needed to compromise.
- Balancing commitments and time in an effective manner.
- Interacting or working with people of all ages.
- Interacting or working with people who have different view e.g. Political or religious faith or beliefs.
- Attending meetings and making positive and constructive contribution.
- Working with it including MS office, email and video conferencing.

An IAG Member should have an interest in:

- Policing issues and current affairs, specifically in respect of the ways in which they affect the people in the locality they live or work.
- Understanding the concept of institutional discrimination and challenging/combating it.
- How hate crime incidents should be handled.
- The issues associated with recruiting, promoting and retaining staff from under-represented and diverse groups.
- Developing training for police officers and police staff.
- Developing sensitive and effective policing.
- Challenging assumptions and mind-sets.
- Demonstrating openness and accountability.

- Providing an independent, community perspective building trust & confidence with families, individuals, communities and businesses who may experience disadvantage or feel marginalised.

2. Security Vetting

Depending on the role and responsibilities undertaken by IAG members, individuals may be required to undertake security vetting. Clearance may be reviewed at any stage as well as at the renewal/review date.

Where vetting has been undertaken, changes in personal circumstances may impact upon an individual's continued suitability to hold clearance. IAG members who are security cleared must, therefore, report any relevant changes, including spouses or partners, changes of address, criminal associations, or other matters relating to the risk factors outlined above in writing, to the Lincolnshire Police Security and Vetting Manager at the Headquarters in Nettleham. Failure to notify such changes could result in the withdrawal of vetting clearance and eligibility to continue as a member of the IAG.

3. Code of Ethics and Conduct

Members of the IAG are expected to conform to the College of Policing Code of Ethics published on the College website. Enshrined with the Code are the seven Nolan Principles of Public Life with two additional principles of 'fairness' and 'respect'. These principles are summarised as follows:

1. Selflessness

Members of an IAG should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

2. Integrity

Members of an IAG should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

3. Objectivity

In carrying out their role members of an IAG should make decisions, recommendations and choices based on evidence and informed judgement.

4. Accountability

Members of an IAG are accountable for their own decisions and actions.

5. Openness

Members of an IAG should be open about the decisions and actions taken. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

6. Honesty

Members of an IAG have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

7. Leadership

Members of an IAG should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

8. Fairness

Members of the IAG should treat everyone fairly, impartially and without discrimination in the way they behave and in the decisions and recommendations they make.

9. Respect

Members of the IAG should be respectful of everyone, behaving courteously towards others and respecting the rights of all individuals.

Membership of the IAG may be subject to review in the following circumstances:

- Failure to attend two consecutive meetings of the any IAG group or sub-group they have committed to without apology and acceptable reason.
- Persistent failure to fulfil agreed commitments such as participation in consultation and feedback or to prepare for meetings.
- The individual's continued membership would undermine the credibility and legitimacy of the group or fundamentally weaken aspects of its work.
- The member has broken the IAG code of Conduct or breached the Code of Ethics.

In the event that both the IAG Chair and Force SPOC consider a member accountable under these criteria then the member will be informed and invited to explain any extenuating circumstances. A recommendation will then be made to the DCC/ACC who will make a final decision regarding continued membership. There will be no right of appeal.

5. Confidentiality

As a member of an IAG you are likely to learn of and acquire information that has not yet been made public or which is confidential. You should never disclose or use confidential information arising from the work of the Group for personal advantage of you or of anyone known to you or to the disadvantage or discredit of the Group, Police Service or anyone else. Apart from the breach of trust there may be cause for prosecution under the Data Protection Act for the breach of confidential information.

For this reason you must also refrain from making comment about ongoing court cases, investigations or Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) investigation.

6. Declaration/Conflict of Interests

A 'conflict of interest' is considered to be any connection or association with a third party that is (or appears to be) against the interests of the Lincolnshire Police, or which could enable you reasonably to be suspected of using your association with the Lincolnshire Police to gain an unfair advantage for or from a third party.

A 'personal' conflict of interest may involve individuals known to you or your family, or by affiliation or 'pecuniary interest', such as benefiting from a programme or contract award, investment or grant. If there is any doubt, it is better to declare a conflict of interests (or a potential conflict) than ignore it or conceal it.

Conflicts of interest are best avoided altogether. However, Lincolnshire Police acknowledge that conflicts of interest (and potential conflicts) are sometimes unavoidable. In such circumstances the principles of openness and integrity apply and you must disclose any potential conflict to the Chair or Group/consultation lead as appropriate who will agree with you whether your continued participation in a particular activity is advisable.

7. Contact with Press, Media and via Social Media

Provided the conditions of confidentiality detailed at appendix 6 are met IAG members have the right to comment on issues from a personal perspective provided such comment is made in their individual personal capacity. Where a member wishes or is invited to make a public comment on behalf of the IAG or the Force this must be agreed in the first instance with the Chair who will consult the IAG membership and/or an appropriate officer within the Force.

There are other occasions when it would be inappropriate for IAG members to comment to or via the media, for example when such comment may jeopardise operational activity or during periods of purdah. If you are in any doubt as to whether comment would be appropriate you should consult the Chair in the first instance.

8. Commitment to Equality and Diversity

Promoting equality and respecting diversity are the foundations to creating greater community confidence in the police. IAGs have a pivotal role to play in the delivery of the Equality and Diversity Strategy for the police service, providing senior police officers with the opportunity to have open dialogue with members of the community who are from a range of backgrounds.

Lincolnshire Police has a number of structures in place to monitor and ensure our commitment to equality, diversity and human rights. Whilst specific responsibilities are given to designated people in the organisation, all staff, including members of the IAG, are personally responsible for observing and conforming to the aims of the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality and Diversity Strategy.

9. Identification and Access Cards

Depending on the nature of individual commitment, IAG members will usually be provided with Identification Cards. These remain the property of the Lincolnshire Police and must be returned when the IAG membership terminates. The identification should be worn and prominently displayed whenever you are attending police premises. The Identification Card may also be worn in public when attending meetings or activities where you are there in your role as an IAG member, either promoting the IAG, liaising with community groups or observing police operations.

Swipe cards enabling access to the Force HQ at Nettleham may also be issued where IAG members' responsibilities involve frequent visits to the building. These also remain the property of the Force and must be returned when the IAG membership terminates.

10. Gifts and Hospitality

You will need to treat with caution any offer of gift, favour or hospitality that is made to you personally, knowing you to be a member of the IAG. The person or organisation making the offer may be doing so to obtain information or trying to influence you for their own ends. Our advice would be not to accept any gifts or hospitality in connection with your role within the IAG.

In the event that an IAG member does accept a gift or hospitality, they will be considered personally responsible for any consequences connected with the acceptance or offer of those gifts or hospitality and for avoiding the risk of damage to public confidence in the IAG or Lincolnshire Police.

11. Expenses

While membership of the IAG is voluntary and unpaid, reasonable expenses incurred by IAG members for undertaking responsibilities directly related to their role within the group will be reimbursed e.g. travel, out-of-pocket expenses. To claim expenses you should complete a claim form and submit it, together with receipts where appropriate, to the Force IAG liaison officer. The form can be found on the IAG website.

The procedure for payment is audited so that all costs paid to IAG members are accountable and open to monitoring.

If you use your own transport to and from IAG meetings you must ensure your personal motor-car insurance policy provides cover for this purpose.



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