



IAG

**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
INDEPENDENT ADVISORY GROUP**

Overview

What is the purpose of an Independent Advisory Group (IAG)?

IAGs have been a feature of policing in the UK since the end of the 1990s, the purpose of IAGs is to facilitate genuine partnerships with local communities to encourage more active involvement of and with people from the full range of diverse groups.

The role of an IAG is to help the police to build insight into the needs, wants and concerns of communities who are under-represented in 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 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 sole 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?

The IAG is convened by Northamptonshire 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 is not 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?

Independent advice is defined as opinion, guidance or constructive feedback given by someone who is not part of the Force.

IAG members represent themselves and not necessarily the view of any 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 because of consultation with any member or group within the IAG.

OPERATIONAL, LOCAL IAG

Northamptonshire Police will have four OPERATIONAL Local level IAG's, based on geographical locations.

- Northampton
- Wellingborough and East Northamptonshire
- Corby and Kettering
- Daventry and South Northamptonshire



Each one of these IAG's will have several standing members. The IAG chair will be drawn from the standing members.

Expectations

The Local Neighbourhood Policing Chief Inspector and the Chair of the IAG should work together to ensure that the IAG meets at least every quarter. The agenda should be agreed between the Chair and the Inspector providing an opportunity for the Inspector (or their representative) to provide an update on local crime and policing, and to seek and receive feedback.

A template agenda has been produced to enable some consistency and to support the operational IAGs.

At the discretion and agreement of the local Chief Inspector and the Chair, an IAG meeting may meet more regularly, or in response to a particular incident or event (including planned event). Police and individual IAG members may consider it necessary to contact one another other at any reasonable time to gauge community concerns and tensions, provide or receive feedback or for any other policing related matter.

Strategic IAG

The Strategic IAG will include the 4 community chairs representing the four Operational Local IAG's. Each operational IAG will be able to send two nominees to represent them at Strategic IAG level, the operational IAG chair and one other.

The Strategic IAG will primarily be about providing the same type of independent advice, opinion and guidance on countywide matters.

There will be an expectation that representatives of the Strategic IAG will seek the views of their IAG members on their Operational IAG area. Examples of this approach might be where the police require advice on a proposal for a change in its stop and search policy or OPFCC require advice on a public consultation exercise. Consequently, the police and OPFCC will provide a senior representative to Strategic IAG's. The strategic group will meet twice yearly, the chairs Primary contact for communication will be Chief Superintendent of the Local Policing Command. The Chief Superintendent will be responsible for the arrangement of these meetings as well as matters for discussion, alongside the chair. Administrative support for Strategic IAG's will be provided by the police.

Functions of the Strategic IAG will include:

- Contribution to the development and effectiveness of Force strategic priorities
- Oversight of the effectiveness and impact of the Operational IAGs
- Policy and proposals consultation

Who can become an IAG Member?

We welcome new members to join the different IAGs within Northamptonshire. We aim to have representation across the diverse communities. People from diverse communities who may hold one or more protected characteristics, which are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

People who want more of an insight into the way their local police can serve them.

Individuals who can commit to regular active discussions alongside other community representatives.

To learn more about the role of IAG members further details can be found in the IAG – roles and responsibilities document.

If you work or live within the Northamptonshire Police area you are eligible to apply to become a member of an IAG.

Previous court convictions or police contact is not a bar to membership; however, all members are police checked to a basic screening level.

If you are interested in shaping the way Northamptonshire policing please email: IAG@northants.police.uk