

# CHESHIRE INDEPENDENT ADVISORY GROUP

## ANNUAL REPORT 2008 -2009



Angie Marriott, Chair



Kwok Keung Yau, Vice-chair



Amarjit Grewal, Vice-chair



# Advising Cheshire Constabulary & Police Authority since 2004

## Foreword by Chief Constable David Whatton



I am committed to ensuring that the wide-ranging needs of the people and communities of Cheshire are met and that everyone the Constabulary comes into contact with expects and receives a quality service.

I am delighted to have the services of the Independent Advisory Group who continue to assist us in providing a constructive challenge to the manner in which we conduct our business and deliver our services. They have been a vital additional resource for us in a wide variety of critical incidents as you will read in this report as well as a valuable source of independent scrutiny.

They will hopefully feel able to reassure the community of our commitment to promoting equality and fairness in our policing of a society which changes more rapidly with ever year that passes.

The Independent Advisory Group helps us to provide a better service and to meet the challenge of policing professionally and fairly. I would like to thank all its members for the work they do and for the quality of advice they provide.

## Foreword by Assistant Chief Constable Phil Thompson

On taking up this role in June 2009, I became the Force lead for diversity.

I can bring much previous experience to this role as I spent six years as a Detective Sergeant in the Handsworth area of Birmingham, at the time the most diverse community in the UK outside East London.

Advisors can, and do, see things from a different perspective and they are often able to anticipate how police responses to policing problems may be interpreted by communities. This is an invaluable aid to community engagement and consultation, often with usually excluded groups.



IAGs are a visible demonstration, if effectively used, of a police force's willingness to consult and listen to diverse views and opinions. Cheshire's IAG continues to perform that function admirably and has my full support.

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### Foreword by Moira Chapman, Lead Member for Diversity the Police Authority

In 2008/2009, the Cheshire Independent Advisory Group continued to provide the Police Authority and Constabulary with informed and high quality advice on policy and on operational activity. The IAG has provided unique insight into the impact of policy on people from diverse groups, and equally importantly has provided specialist advice, from an operational standpoint, as to how a specific activity can have implications for a particular group in the community.



This report identifies all those areas where they have made a contribution, and demonstrates the range and impact of their work. I am delighted that it will be distributed with Catalyst and would recommend that all staff, officers and members

take the time to read about their considerable involvement with the work of the Authority and Constabulary

It has been a real pleasure to be involved with the IAG; I continue to be impressed with their commitment and professionalism. The Police Authority is proud that it played a part in establishing the IAG in 2004, and uses this opportunity to thank them for their on-going contribution towards ensuring that policing in Cheshire acknowledges the needs of minority groups and takes those needs into account when developing policy and in delivering an operational response.

### Foreword by Mark Watson, Head of the Diversity Advisory Unit

In its broadest sense, an IAG consists of people who are drawn from the local community with the aim of providing independent advice to the police. An IAG works best when it is made up of a diverse group of people who are entirely independent of the police service and who are representative of the many differing communities which make up the force area as a whole.



I myself have used the services of many of the group whilst an operational officer and I have been thankful on many occasions for their advice and guidance. Members of the group commit a large amount of their own time voluntarily to their IAG work, a fact for which I am again very grateful.

I look forward to working even more closely with the IAG in the future and helping them to help us in our job to build trust and confidence amongst all the people of Cheshire.

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## IAG Chair's Group Report 2008-09

### **The history of Cheshire's IAG**

Involving and engaging local communities is at the very heart of policing. Since the concept of IAGs was first introduced following the recommendation of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, police forces and authorities have realised the benefits that IAGs can bring to the business of local policing.

The inaugural exploratory meeting between the Constabulary, the Police Authority and potential IAG members took place at Cheshire Police Headquarters on the 8<sup>th</sup> of December 2003. The then Chief Constable Peter Fahy, the Chief Executive of the Police Authority Mark Sellwood and Diversity Manager Paul Matthews were present and addressed the invited group.



The group formally came into being in February 2004 and has gone from strength to strength since then. Some members have been present since the beginning whilst the most recent have been with the group for just a few months.

The group has made a real difference to the way the Force and Police Authority operate and have helped us increase the levels of trust and public confidence by advising on a wide range of issues and reporting on local tensions and concerns.

Cheshire's IAG is made up of representatives from ethnic minority communities, the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community and from the disabled community. As its name suggests it is run entirely independently from the police and is not political or representative of any other body. It is involved in a great deal of work behind the scenes, including liaising and advising on issues which might be sensitive and working with victims and families of victims to help stop misunderstandings or issues developing.

### **RECRUITMENT**

The Independent Advisory Group (IAG) undertook recruitment of new members this year. Our aim is to ensure that the group is representative of all communities and reflect its diverse needs. We would like to thank Moira Chapman, lead person on Equality and Diversity from the Police Authority, who assisted the chairs group and advised the IAG on specific requirements for recruitment.

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Joycelyn Gage, Joe Hurn, Jane-Ann Hurn and Trevor Newton all joined Cheshire Constabulary's IAG during 2009. Mary Lee, Robert Lee and Krystof Pazowski left the IAG and we would like to thank them all for their hard work, dedication and commitment.

The IAG will be undertaking a further recruitment drive and are seeking members from the Muslim community, representation from mental health and a young person. The posts will be advertised in line with the Nolan Principles of appointment.

### **FAREWELL TO CHIEF CONSTABLE PETER FAHY**

The IAG were extremely saddened at the loss of Chief Constable Peter Fahy, who left the constabulary to take up a new role as Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police.

Peter was instrumental in setting up and actively supporting Cheshire Constabulary's Independent Advisory Group to make it into what it has become today. At the time he held the ACPO portfolio for Race and Diversity and through his sheer dedication and commitment to this area, the IAG has gone from strength to strength. Peter showed his officers and staff the significance of contacting and using the IAG. By cascading the message from Chief Officer level it encouraged officers to use the IAG.

Good luck in your new role Peter and thank you for your efforts in making Cheshire's IAG a successful one.

### **FAREWELL TO ASSISTANT CHIEF CONSTABLE GARRY SHEWAN**

The IAG were also saddened to lose Garry Shewan, who has also moved to an ACC role in Greater Manchester. Garry worked very closely with the IAG and never failed to utilise the critical friend experience whenever the need arose.

Members worked on several cases with Garry including those in respect of Shafilea Ahmed, Victor Anichebe, Operation Amber and Operation Obsidian. Garry was always extremely professional to work with and made IAG members feel extremely valued. He played an instrumental role in placing the IAG as a high priority on the police force agenda within Cheshire.

Good luck in your new role Garry and thank you for affording the IAG all the valuable privileged opportunities to work alongside you. You will certainly be missed.

### **FAREWELL TO ASSISTANT CHIEF CONSTABLE DAVID BAINES**

The IAG were also saddened at the loss of David Baines who worked very closely with the IAG. David, along with Garry Shewan, ensured that the IAG were utilised throughout the force. Many IAG members worked with and advised David whilst he was at Cheshire Constabulary. He played a key role in ensuring that the force used the IAG as a critical friend. David retired from the force and secured the job of Police

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Commissioner in the Cayman Islands. Good luck David and enjoy your days in the sunshine. We all envy you!

### **WELCOME TO OUR NEW CHIEF CONSTABLE DAVID WHATTON**

The IAG welcomed the appointment of Mr. David Whatton as the new Chief Constable of Cheshire. The IAG look forward to working with the Constabulary's new Chief who took up his new post on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 2008.

The Chairs Group met Mr. Whatton in May 2009 to discuss the IAG's role and how we can work together to ensure that we remain a critical friend to the force. Mr. Whatton was extremely enthusiastic about the work already undertaken by the IAG and he provided an excellent opportunity to discuss working in partnership in the future. It was an excellent and extremely productive meeting.

Welcome David, and we look forward to working with you in the future.

### **WELCOME TO OUR NEW ASSISTANT CHIEF CONSTABLE PHIL THOMPSON**

The IAG would like to warmly welcome our new Assistant Chief Constable Phil Thompson who was appointed in June 2009.

We had the privilege of Phil joining us at our away day in June 2009. Phil gave an excellent presentation on the force's policing objectives to the IAG, who work towards implanting those objectives. Phil also gave an overview of the force's plans for the future.

Several IAG members have had the opportunity to work with Phil in Gold Groups and have been enthused by his engagement with the IAG and in particular the way he has encouraged SIOs and other officers to utilise the IAG as a critical friend.

We are delighted that Phil is leading on Equality and Diversity, the commitment already demonstrated by him shows he is following in Peter Fahy's footsteps.

### **WELCOME TO INSPECTOR MARK WATSON, HEAD OF DIVERSITY UNIT**

Inspector Mark Watson took his new post as Head of the Diversity unit in 2008. Mark has vast experience in Equality and Diversity issues, in particular Gypsy & Traveller issues. He is a member of the ACPO Gypsy & Traveller Working Group and a previous winner of the national Justice Award for "Outstanding Commitment to Diversity".

Mark has been a rock in ensuring that the IAG are well supported and remain high on the force's agenda. He actively engages in all equality and diversity issues and has been proactive in resurrecting the forces Black and Minority staff support group. His enthusiasm for mainstreaming equality throughout the force has been very noticeable from an IAG perspective.

Thank you Mark for supporting the IAG.

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The formation of the Chairs Group 2 years ago has enhanced the decision making process within the IAG structure. The Chairs work cohesively as a team & provide collective responsibility, leadership and a wider mechanism for the force to engage with. The force is engaging with the IAG extremely positively and a strong partnership of a critical friendship has grown. Following the meeting with our new Chief Constable David Whatton the Chairs were delighted to hear about the new vision which the Chief plans to implement within the force.

### Police Authority engagement

Moira Chapman, lead Police Authority member on Equality and Diversity, played a key role in ensuring these issues remain high on the force agenda. We would like to thank Moira for all her hard work, support and dedication not only for this, but for the guidance, assistance and support she gives to the IAG.

### Acknowledgement to all police officers

On behalf of the IAG the chairs group would like to acknowledge all officers within the force who have utilised the advice and challenging views of the IAG, in particular:

- Superintendent Richard Strachan, Head of FMIT
- Superintendent Phil Charlton
- DCI Simon Price
- DCI Nick Bailey
- DCI Brian Roberts
- DI Helen Spooner
- DI Jo Miller
- Inspector Jez Taylor
- Inspector David Price
- Sgt Brian Hughes
- Sgt Tom Jones
- Jacqui Hanson, Deputy Head of Corporate Communications

### National IAG

Throughout the year the IAG has attended meetings of the national IAG. The future role of the National IAG structure is being reviewed by Stephen Otter, Chief Constable of Devon and Cornwall who leads the ACPO Equality, Diversity and Human rights Business Area.

Kind Regards

Angie, Amarjit and KK



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### So what have the IAG been involved in during 2008 - 2009?

As a Senior Investigating Officer (SIO) within the Constabulary, I have once again been most grateful for the IAG perspective on a number of occasions during the year. The IAG continues to play a vital role as a critical friend to the Constabulary. This role will only gain in significance as a direct result of the drive to increase and maintain the confidence of all members of society in the Police Service and the work we do by means of the 40 Policing Principles, the Confidence Strategy and implementation of the Policing Pledge.



As someone who has called upon the advice of IAG on numerous occasions during Major Investigations, I am acutely aware of the positive effect that their involvement can have upon both the investigation team and the SIO. The IAG can offer advice, 24 hours a day, on many aspects of life, some of which may not immediately spring to mind. My advice to colleagues is to go ahead and seek the advice of the IAG, it could be one of the most important calls you make.

#### Operation Obsidian

The murder of Naomi Hill in 2007 has featured previously in IAG publications. This year, Angie Marriott and I were invited by the BBC to take part in a documentary concerning children with diagnosed disabilities and the potential effect upon the parents of such children in terms of their ability to manage their own lives and those of their children. The request from the BBC came about as a direct result of the national media coverage which the investigation had originally received and in May, together with Jacqui Hanson from HQ Corporate Communications, Angie and I were interviewed by the production team. The programme is due to be aired in the Spring of 2010.

#### Operation Amber

This case centred on the death of Joshua Jones (2 yrs) and at the time of writing, the case is not concluded. I will therefore simply say that as Mentor to the SIO, I was most appreciative of the time that the IAG have devoted to the investigation to date.

#### **Detective Chief Inspector Simon Price**

#### **CRITICAL INCIDENTS**

The IAG participated positively in a number of Gold and Silver Groups from 2008-2009.

They included:

- Operation Obsidian
- Operation Amber
- Denny Lee – Gypsy Male missing from home and sudden death
- Paul Hughes
- Victor Anichebe
- Operation Ark

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- Operation Vogue
- Operation Bermuda
- Shafelia Ahmed

The force sought independent advice throughout all of these Gold groups from the IAG. The IAG embraced the opportunity to participate as a critical friend, and work with the force.

The IAG have set up a mentorship programme to empower all IAG members to be able to participate in Gold and Silver Groups.

### *Operation Bermuda*

I admit to panicking when I received that initial call about advising on a murder inquiry, my first. My remit in the case was to provide advice to the officer who was trying to get a message out to appeal for witnesses to come forward, in an area that was a known public sex environment.

Sensitivity was required to create a message that conveyed genuine assurance that these men would be treated with respect if they were to come forward with any information, taking into account that they did not necessarily identify themselves as gay.

*Trevor Newton*

### **Other IAG activities during the year**

#### **Launch of the National IAG Guidelines, Home Office, October 2008**



National ACPO guidelines on the running of IAGs was launched at the Home Office. ACC David Collins from North Yorkshire was instrumental in launching the IAG national guidelines. David worked extremely hard travelling up and down the country and managed to fulfill a practically impossible task. David was a breath of fresh air to the words Equality and Diversity and he moved on to fresh pastures following this work.

The IAG Chair's Group have contributed considerably to this national piece of work and they should be congratulated for their efforts. It is fair to say that Cheshire is seen nationally as very advanced in terms of its IAG Development.

The photo shows (from left to right) ACC David Collins, Angie Marriott, Bob Purkiss, Chair of the Association of Police Authorities Race & Diversity Policy Group, Alison Taylor, DAU Diversity Manager, Inspector Mark Watson and DCI Simon Price.

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### **8th National IAG Conference, Middlesbrough, November 2008**

As a brand new member to the group, I was delighted to attend the conference. Sir Ronnie Flanagan opened with the message that we do not live in a single community, rather, there are many communities with different needs, backgrounds and origins, and this is certainly reflected in the membership of the Cheshire IAG. He also reflected on the fact that every contact made by the police leaves a trace, either good or bad, so the police need to be aware of this fact. Nazir Afzal went on to remind us that the first contact a victim of crime makes must be taken seriously and must be dealt with competently.

At the LGB&T workshop, we talked about how the different IAGs (and police forces) in neighbouring areas should work more closely together, recognising for example, that members of the LGB&T community in Cheshire use Manchester as a base for social activities: it could be a resident of Cheshire that is a victim of crime when in Manchester. I know I found it confusing when we discussed the many different systems of reporting hate crime. Why are there so many, and isn't this confusing for the public?

I also attended a workshop on Youth. I don't think that I was alone in being surprised and a bit overwhelmed by just how much work these people put into their local community. The key message that I took away was that there is a great, untapped resource out there in our young people.

In a plenary session, Nick Hunter praised Angie Marriott, our IAG chair, by name, enthusing about her involvement in the Birmingham Guns reduction programme, citing her "excellent work - as usual".

*Trevor Newton*

### **Preventing Violent Extremism Conference, Crewe, November 2008**

Cheshire Constabulary, together with Government Office for the North West organised the above conference at Crewe Alexandra football club on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2008. The conference was opened by Councillor Brian Silvester.

A national police perspective was provided by DCC Graeme Gerrard from Cheshire while the national perspective on behalf of the Department for Communities and Local Government was provided by Mark Lee, Prevent Manager for that department. After that the local perspective of the Prevent strategy was provided by Alan Ellis of Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service.

An interesting and informative question and answer session followed this in which the challenges facing the implementation of the Prevent strategy were widely discussed. There were two workshops. In the first there was discussion on Islamic awareness which was very informative and in the second workshop best practice examples of youth engagement were discussed.

The conference ended with a scenario session which was headed by DCI Paul Taylor of Cheshire police. The conference was very successful in bringing all the local agencies

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together to work out a joint strategy to implement the Prevent agenda. Overall the conference was well attended and very informative.

### **Frodsham Hate Crime, February 2009**

I was invited to attend a meeting at Frodsham Police Station to discuss problems with hate crime incidents in the public toilets in Frodsham. I found that the officers I met treated me and the whole subject matter with respect and I was impressed by their genuine interest in taking a balanced view on the problem. There is still a massive scepticism in the gay community about police, their policies, attitude and behaviour towards that community. With my involvement on the IAG, I understand the tolerance of the policies that are in place, and also aware of the instances when members of the police force do not follow these policies, and also that these instances are looked into vigorously when uncovered. As a direct result of my involvement in this incident and others, when I do speak to people in my community, I can do so with the conviction that the police force does indeed aim to treat us properly and fairly.

### **Prevent Training Day, Widnes, April 2009**

Cheshire Constabulary arranged a Prevent Training Day on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 at Halton Stadium, Widnes. Dr Naveed Siddiqui led the training. He started with giving a historical perspective of Islam, giving a detailed account of the birth of Islam and its traditions. He went on to explain about the Sunni and Shia traditions, their similarities and differences. He also explained about Sufi and Bahai traditions then went on to explain about the Wahabi movement. He also explained how the modern terrorist ideology is born out of mis-interpretation of some Islamic traditions and beliefs. He explained how Islam is a peaceful religion which has been hijacked by modern terrorist ideology. The training day was well attended and was very informative. The training day ended with some workshops on real life scenarios.

### **Tactical Training Centre Visit, June 2009**

The IAG were extremely privileged to be invited by Inspector Dave Price to visit the new Tactical Training Centre. The centre was still being built, however we were extremely impressed by the sheer magnitude of the training unit. The force will have a shooting range of 100 metres, one of only two in the country. The entire visit was very impressive, and the new building caters for a whole host of training needs. One key concept that the visit identified was the provision of opportunity to train police officers who are working whilst on night duty.

Currently there is no provision to test responses during these difficult working hours. This will be wholly beneficial to staff and the force, as it will test different levels of responses, at times that are unnatural, i.e. such as working during a night shift. The unit caters for public disorder training, including football matches etc. It is envisaged that in the foreseeable future the public will be invited to observe training, providing them with an opportunity to see how difficult situations can be for police officers.

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Overall the visit was educational and extremely beneficial. It provided us with a clear insight of how operational the tactical training unit will be. Thank you Dave for providing the IAG with a vital opportunity and a great learning curve.



### CONTEST 2 - Blackburn, May 2009

Following adverse publicity surrounding the refreshed counter terrorism strategy CONTEST 2, a number of community organisations, particularly in Lancashire, had voiced concern about its content and purpose. Also, the recent counter terrorist operations in the North West led to some concerns being expressed about the handling of the arrests and their impact on community tensions.

As a consequence a "Question & Answer" session was arranged at Blackburn on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2009 at which a number of senior officials from the Home Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office were present to allow the community to discuss some of the wider issues around counter terrorism and in particular CONTEST 2.

Muslim community members expressed grave concerns about the CONTEST 2 document being targeted at Muslims. They also expressed concerns about the Home Office funding certain organisations which the communities do not consider to be representative of them. Sgt Tom Jones and Ewa Labeda, Prevent co-ordinator both agreed with me that the question and answer session was very informative, which gave us an insight into the communities thinking about the governments strategies that are targeted at them.

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### **Gypsy / Traveller issues**

On Thursday the 13<sup>th</sup> of November 2008, an English Gypsy male was reported missing from his home address in Middlewich by his wife. During the afternoon of Sunday the 16<sup>th</sup> of November, his body was found hanging from a tree near to the Derby Road Industrial Estate in the Greater Manchester Police area. A full enquiry was commenced into the circumstances and investigation of the missing person report as community concerns were considerable at what had happened.

I was able to advise the force, liaise with the family and wider Gypsy community to ensure that the truth about what happened was communicated to the deceased's family and beyond. I was also able to communicate information to ensure that the large funeral which followed passed off peacefully without any issues.

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 2009, a male from the Travelling community fell from the Runcorn / Widnes Bridge in an apparent suicide. I attended the scene and stayed until into the early hours speaking with the large numbers of community members who had gathered there. There was concern for their safety in the dark at the side of the ship canal as well as concerns in respect of recovering the body. My intervention, along with neighbourhood officers, ensured that the body was recovered and the situation properly managed without further incident.

*Joe Hurn / Jane-Ann Hurn*

### **IAG Away Day, Oaklands Hotel, Northwich, June 2009**

I joined the IAG in November 2008 as a job share, and this was my first attendance at an Away Day. The purpose of the Away Day was for the entire IAG to meet, discuss and plan the activities for the coming year. We got to know each other over a cup of coffee while the hotel staff prepared the meeting room. By the time the meeting started we had already broken the ice and following a short introduction by Inspector Mark Watson, the Head of Diversity Unit, the meeting was off to a flying start.

The Assistant Chief Constable, Phil Thompson, gave us a very interesting talk on Policing in Cheshire over a five year period from 2009 - 2014. He started with the message that they didn't want another change programme but that some changes were needed. He described how the Constabulary was doing with regard to neighbourhood focus, leadership qualities, their support for Level 2 crime and seeing the Constabulary as a 'family'.

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His talk mirrored the document with the same title. It sets out why the police go to work, what they hope to achieve, the values they hold and how policing is done in Cheshire. He pointed out that the core role, in other words why the police are here, which is to make people safe. He spoke about the direction of the force and what they want to achieve, which is to understand and meet the expectations of the people of Cheshire.

He then discussed how they could perform better. Among the improvements he mentioned were better decision making, simplifying structures and clear language and messages, for example the use of fewer acronyms which will avoid misunderstandings and confusion. This was very pleasing to my ears as I was very unfamiliar with many of the acronyms being used at the meetings, and was constantly asking 'what does that mean', which interrupted the flow of the meetings.



After lunch we got down to discussing the training development required by the group and the need to be more visible to all areas of the force. An interesting debate then

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followed about promoting the IAG via Area Training days. Suggestions were made about leaflets and posters. It was also felt that the members should have some presentation training, which most of the members were keen to pursue. That brought a very busy and enjoyable day to an end, but I felt that much was accomplished setting the group up for a very busy year ahead.

### **Blacon Mosque**

Shamsuddin Ahmed has been a key member of the IAG, in particular following 7/7. He has played an active role in encouraging interaction of community engagement between the local Muslim community and the Constabulary. He has been instrumental in ensuring that Chief Officers have been provided with the opportunity to liaise with community leaders. This has contributed to reducing fear and anxiety to local communities following the increased attacks on mosques in the Blacon area, following the 7/7 bombings. Shamsuddin has continued to advise the force on religious issues and has worked closely with the Public Protection Unit assisting them in dealing with potentially dangerous people.

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### What the IAG members can offer you

**Angie Marriott** is the current Chair and has been a member of the group since 2005. Angie is from the African community and lives in Western Area.



**Amarjit Grewal** is one of the two Vice Chairs and has been a member since the group began in 2004. Amarjit is a Punjabi Indian Sikh by birth and British Sikh by nationality. Amarjit is from Northern Area.



**Kwok Keung Yau**, known as KK, is the other Vice Chair. KK is Chinese and from Eastern Area and has been a member of the group since it began in 2004.



**Marina Smith** lives in Northern Area and has also been a member of the group since 2004. Marina is Russian.



**Kamaljit Uppal** is Sikh and lives in Western Area. She has been a member of the group since 2004. (Photograph unavailable)

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**Halina Kelly** is Polish and from Northern Area. Halina was one of the initial members of the group. Halina has advised the Force on problems associated with the Polish culture.



**Dorothy Evans** joined the group in 2005 and lives in Western Area. Dorothy is from the Black Afro-Caribbean community.



**Shamsuddin Ahmed** is a Muslim, living in Western Area. He has been a member of the IAG since 2004.



**Bishop William Pwaisiho** is from the Solomon Islands and lives in Eastern Area. He has been a member of the group since 2004.



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**Joe and Jane-Ann Hurn** joined last year and are members of the Gypsy community living in the Western Area.



**Joycelyn Gage** joined the group last year and lives in the Northern Area



**Trevor Newton** joined the group in 2008. He is a member of the LGB&T community and lives in the Western Area.



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## Aims & Objectives for the IAG 2009/10

### AIMS & OBJECTIVES

Independent involvement and advice is the process which takes place when people independent of the police service monitor, observe or advise on aspects of policing, both in terms of the functions and policies of the service and the way in which the Constabulary and Police Authority interact with the broader community.

IAGs are not independent scrutinisers, as this function is carried out via existing, established mechanisms. Specific tasks might involve a critical assessment of an operation, policy or incident, but the aim is always to identify ways to add value to policing services.

The **aim of the group** remains to work as partners with the Constabulary and Police Authority to:

- Increase trust and confidence in policing amongst all communities
- Provide constructive advice to the organisation on ways to improve the quality of service delivery to all communities

The **objectives of the Group** are:

- To critically appraise organisational policies, practices and procedures
- To make significant contributions to both strategic and tactical considerations, particularly with reference to critical incidents
- To instil just and fair relations between the police and the communities they serve, as well as between communities

The above work is ongoing throughout this and other years and will continue as operational demands require. In addition, the following areas of activity are priorities for the IAG this year.

### ANNUAL PRIORITIES

1. The Cheshire Policing Plan sets increasing public confidence in policing as the main priority for the Constabulary. **The IAG will contribute fully to the developing Confidence Agenda** during this year. A representative of Strategic Partnerships will attend the November IAG meeting to give a presentation to the Group and take part in discussion with them regarding further ways in which the Group can help implement the Confidence Strategy.
2. The **IAG will fully participate in the new CONTEST Board** which had its inaugural meeting on 14 September 2009. Identified IAG members are already fully involved in this process. CONTEST is the Government's cross-departmental long term Counter Terrorism strategy and consists of four workstreams:
  - Pursue – the collection of information to detect, deter and disrupt those individuals involved in or supporting terrorism and extremism

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- Prevent – working with communities to protect those individuals who are vulnerable to external radicalisation and influence
- Protect – to protect the critical national infrastructure of the UK and potentially vulnerable locations such as the transport infrastructure and crowded places
- Prepare – where attacks can not be stopped having robust contingency plans in place to mitigate the affects and to ensure an expeditious return to normality

The aim of the CONTEST Board is to mitigate the risk from terrorism and violent extremism to the people and communities we police, and ensure all who live in, visit or travel through Cheshire are safe to go about their daily lives. The CONTEST Board will provide leadership and direction across the partnerships on Counter Terrorism issues, with particular regard to the delivery of the national CONTEST strategy and joint agency Action Plan.

3. The **IAG will seek to further raise awareness of their role and the services they can offer** among the Constabulary during this year. Many members have now been trained to give presentations about the IAG and the operational benefits that can ensue from seeking advice at the relevant times. IAG members are well known to Senior Investigating Officers due to the Critical Incident involvement and making them more visible to all staff in the organisation is now a priority. This will be achieved by giving presentations at Training Days and on other appropriate occasions. This process has already commenced.
4. The **IAG will look to support the force in its efforts to tackle hate crime**, particularly in light of the recently published Cross-Government Hate Crime Action Plan which requires local communities to be fully engaged to help effectively tackle such crimes and incidents. The IAG will assist in enhancing existing ways of reporting crimes and incidents to the police as well as developing new ones via third party reporting centres or other identified means.
5. The **IAG will look to provide assistance to and enhance staff support networks**, including (but not exclusively) the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender Network, the Christian Police Association, Disnet (Disability Support Network) and the Black & Minority Ethnic Support Group.
6. Finally the IAG currently comprises 13 individuals, four of whom share two positions due to other commitments, this giving 11 full time equivalent members. **A recruitment process will be held shortly to ensure the Group remains representative of all communities and reflects their diverse needs.** Any new appointments will be made in line with the 'Nolan Principles' of standards in public life.



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The IAG can be contacted via the Diversity Unit or via the Force Incident Manager on a 24 hour basis.

Further information can be found on the Police Authority website:

<http://www.cheshirepa.police.uk/equality/Independent%20Advisory%20Group>

or by contacting

*Inspector Mark Watson,  
Head of Diversity Advisory Unit,  
Cheshire Constabulary Headquarters,  
Clemonds Hey,  
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