

Independent Advisory Group Update – June 2010

The Independent Advisory Group continues to represent the range of different communities who make up the Cheshire force area. Its members monitor, observe and advise on aspects of policing and the service offered, all with the aim of ensuring a fair and equitable delivery of policing services to all communities within Cheshire.

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

In recent months group members have advised the force on a number of operational matters, including on issues relating to the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities.

Members of the group are regularly involved in the quarterly 'Diversity Monitoring Review Group' meetings which look at a wide range of data including 'stop and search' data. Input from the group remains invaluable in ensuring stop and search powers are exercised correctly and are not impacting upon the confidence of minority communities.

The recent Equality & Human Rights Commission report on this subject – 'Stop and Think' – published in March 2010 did not highlight any issues for Cheshire in this regard, which is welcome.

The IAG have also provided assistance and input to staff support networks, particularly (but not exclusively) the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender Network and the Black & Minority Ethnic Support Group.

The IAG have been briefed in respect of the change programmes that are ongoing within the force in respect of likely budget reductions the force (and all other forces) will have to absorb in the coming years. The briefings will help ensure that all Cheshire's communities understand the true facts around these issues and public confidence will not be affected.