Independent Advisory Group
Meeting Minutes

Berkshire East Local Command Unit

DATE **10th July 2025**

TIME: **18:00**

Attendees	**Initials**	**Position and Area**
Chief Superintendent Steve Raffield		LCU Commander
Superintendent Helen Kenny		
Superintendent Louise Warbrick		
Kulbir Brar		Community and Diversity Officer
Sergeant Christian Parker		
Sam Banfield		Admin Support Officer
Dr AJ		IAG Chair
CF		IAG member
SA		IAG member
MS		IAG member
JJ		IAG member
Apologies		
	RB	IAG member
	DL	IAG member
	MC	IAG member
	PD	IAG member
	AN	IAG member
	MB	IAG member

Chief Superintendent Steve Raffield introduced himself and explained the purpose of the IAG, and how useful it is especially when we have challenging times in policing. The meetings help us understand the feeling of the community, the direction of Policing in general and holding the police to account. The IAG can be brought together in exceptional circumstances, should this be needed, if there are particular incidents that need to be addressed.

Introduction from Dr AJ in his role as the chair, he explained he wants to channel the community mood to ensure the police can work more effectively for us all - better policing - safer communities. If there is an incident that needs urgent attention, we can bring the group together.

Criticality updates –
(These incidents can affect the confidence of the community in policing, either a certain group within the community or section of society.)

SR - We have had some serious crime within the LCU such as the stabbing at the mosque, although it was not identified as having criticality. It was dealt with quickly and no confidence issues seemed to have been raised. Positive communications from the media were posted in an effective time scale. TVP communication team are looking to improve on quick, effective messaging. There were events leading up to the incident, the criticality could have come from the build-up to the incident not being dealt with appropriately.

SA – there was concern from the mosque, but we agree that the full force of the law should take effect in those who were proactive in the incident. We have good relationships with the NHPT in Maidenhead, which was beneficial.

AJ – The way the crowds were handled during the incident was a success and the language the officers used by not mentioning the mosque directly and opening a path round the mosque for pedestrians and mosque goers was reassuring.

HK – we put out a social media update in relation to the incident to provide reassurance. One of the first comments was an official one from the Mosque; this was really encouraging and worked really well to show a joint up approach to the community.

S60 – Groundless stop and search

LW explained this power and when we would use it – i.e. if there had been a stabbing we would search anyone in the area who matched the description, we wouldn't need to have suspicion that they had been involved. This will be looked at more closely by the Scrutiny Panels.

There has been a significant reduction in the use in the last year (60% decrease). Processes are in place to ensure we are using the power correctly. This has an impact on young people so we need to check it is proportionate and ensure that communities understand why and when we use this power. TVP have authorised around eight since March - four in Buckinghamshire, three in Oxford and one in Newbury. We are using them far less than we ever have done.

If we have incidents in Slough with knife crime, SR happy to authorise a S60 to tackle the problem, this could be targeted and narrowed down to maybe a particular housing estate or small area. Education is important so that people know how and why we use these powers – knife crime is a big priority.

LCU updates

Previously we operated as three separate Local Policing Areas – Bracknell & Wokingham, Windsor & Maidenhead and Slough. Now we are Berkshire East, which has incorporated the previous LPA's. This allows us to share resources and reach the cost saving measures that we needed to achieve. Royal Ascot, Henley Regatta, Op Lancer (French State visit) and Reading Festival have depleted resources, but the structure should be in place to bounce back.

Operational response since the merge has been successful; we have had some big incidents that have been dealt with effectively. Critical incidents that happen may shine a light on how the new structure is working, in which case things can be altered. We have seen a vast cost increase from things like vehicle insurance, energy bills etc. Policing budget has decreased but demands have continued to grow, this can make it hard to deliver on everything we want to. Neighbourhood policing has had a big investment, more NH officers than ever before. NH Guarantee will start to reclaim town centres and tackle things like retail crime. This will give us the chance to bring back control to town centres that will improve trust and confidence with the public.

SR - Asylum hotels – Datchet has closed, but was starting to cause issues. We also have one in Bracknell (The Grange) that has been slightly contentious; there has been social media traction around this, which has escalated. Misinformation on social media can inflame a situation rapidly. As police, we very quickly need to squash any misinformation online before it leads to escalation and further incidents.

AJ - Grooming in Slough - 300-400 people turned up to show their distain towards the situation. Still some concerns as people are still expecting steps to be taken. Not necessarily police issues, more community issues. It could turn into a police issue down the line if the ill feeling keeps building. Community feeling is that it happens in a certain area (Northern towns), but the media describes the suspects as 'Asian' and then everyone feels targeted. AJ confirmed that the Mosque would stand with the police and send strong messages to their community. We do not want to stigmatise a whole community, many Pakistani communities feel that they are targeted.

AJ – It would be useful to get some data on grooming in TVP. LW – there is a group set up that looks at recommendations from national reporting. They would be able to see where we are against the national recommendation.

Action – note for the future to look into this.

LW to present EIP (exposure of intimate parts) slide show (strip search of a child). Our focus moving forward on use of force to children is our use of safeguarding. Body worn video is to be kept turned on but pointed in a different direction, so the interaction can be listened to, rather than seen. There must be a suspicion that we are going to find something, general suspicion that they may be concealing something for this to be carried out. Children should be over ten, appropriate adult outside / inside the room and same sex officer searching the child. It should never take place outside a home address or police station, i.e. at school.

(Slides to be circulated after the meeting).

Advisory and Scrutiny Governance update

LW - Two panels still to be organised - Custody/detention scrutiny panels and OOCR (out of court resolutions) panel. We are going to look at how we can drive the scrutiny, as we need to be doing a lot more than we currently are. Oxford Brooks students have been recruited to review BWV. Looking at BWV, the new equipment has translation capabilities and live streaming, this will help us understand what could be a chaotic scene. It would also provide us with a link straight into the Contact Management Centre. LW to see whether this is being launched straight away or if this is being introduced later. In addition, live facial recognition being looked at and we are speaking to the community about any fears or questions around this. This underpins trust and confidence we need

from the community. All agreed that the panels are an asset to policing; IAG members can advise on the communication format that will be most effective in their communities.

SR – Asian Star radio could be a good tool to reach the community.

Hate Crime

There have been some graffiti incidents relating to the Middle East. We will continue to monitor the situation, as well as the feelings around asylum seekers and grooming.

AJ – nothing significant has been picked up, which is positive in a town like Slough.

KB – it is about having strong links and getting the feelings of the community.

AJ - To feedback to the community after the meeting – S60.

Action - AJ and SR to discuss an insight for the next meeting around a certain theme like knife crime.

KF – Have their been any reports around the Traveller community and issues around unlawful encampments, Crown Farm and catapult incidents? As these come up a lot in local Council meetings.

SR - Unlawful encampments do not seem to be a big problem in Berkshire East. Crown Farm is a park home issue, less of an IAG issue and more of a council/NH issue. (Keep on agenda).

Hate Crime numbers seem to be on par with other areas; these numbers will change throughout the year and could look different in the next six months. Majority are race related; most recorded crime type is public order. Neighbour disputes, road rage etc. one area we are hoping to work on is recording ethnicity correctly. We can access the amount of hate crime that we solve; we can look at this in the next meeting. This will be easier once we have the new data on the Race Plan. We hope the IAG can help us with policy and process around this. We need to be aware that there is a fine line with freedom of speech and hate crimes.

Demographic changes will also have an impact on hate crime. Understanding data and getting the correct reporting will help shape the figures. Figures may seem low, as this may not reflect the number of incidents, just the number who have reported it.

Action – KB to look at some data around what hate crime we have solved.

Windsor pride – no intel to suggest any issues. Judicial process is underway regarding police being involved in Pride events that will likely impact national policing once the decision comes this week. We will have a NH engagement involvement but we won't be policing it.

Islamophobia definition is being reviewed. A working group has been set up by the Home Secretary to see if there is a need for a definition of Islamophobia. Once that is established, this will aid the hate crime reporting.

Community Scrutiny Panel - HK

CSP allow the community to scrutinise Thames Valley Police to identify any learning and improve the services we provide as well as recognising good work. Meetings are six weekly, Wednesday evenings. Three to five stop/searches are scrutinised and look at the BWV of each incident. Quarterly meetings look at a particular theme (Weapons, Drugs, S&S, EIP of children).

The panels have been organised by NH inspectors and attended by Inspectors or Sgt's going forward. The structure of all the meetings are in place, sub groups are place and any concerns with stop/searches will be brought up at these meetings. Considerations will be taken from these meetings and have tangible data to bring to IAG if needed. New BWV will be moved to a new supplier, which will help us identify some issues we have had previously.

CSP Quarter 1 25/26 April	CSP Quarter 1 25/26 April	CSP Quarter 1 25/26 April	CSP Quarter 1 25/26 April
• Drugs s&s where force used (NFA)	• Drugs supply – high discretion (NFA) • Weapons s&s (NFA) – low discretion • Cannabis possession – low discretion (NFA) • Cannabis possession – high discretion (NFA)	• EIP children & vulnerability (records only) • Adult EIPs and safeguarding referrals • Cannabis possession (adults) (NFA)	• Weapons s&s NFA (high discretion) • S163 RTA • Cannabis possession (16+) OOCR

LCU Community Scrutiny Sub Panel

- Meetings scheduled every 4-6 weeks to conduct scrutiny of key themes where disproportionality observed.
- BWV reviews to include 2 black and 2 white data subjects (4 per session) where possible of one of the thematic areas.
- 2 thematic areas have been identified for each period to support groups that meet on a 4 week cycle – 12 in total per year.
- EIP children searches will review documentary records only and focus on a recent EIP and previous encounters with police to build insight.
- Sanitised use of force and s&s records relating to subjects that are frequently detained/where focus is persistently used will build insight into use of powers.
- Monthly thematic areas may not be reviewed due to requirement for S.60 reviews or CSP area of interest following recent events/incident.

Dec/Jan 24/25	Feb/Mar 25	Apr/May 25	Jun/Jul 25
• Drugs s&s where force used (NFA)	• Weapons s&s (NFA)	• Drug supply NFA (high discretion) • Cannabis possession NFA (high discretion)	• Weapons s&s NFA (low discretion) • Cannabis possession NFA (low discretion)

Aug/Sep 25	Oct/Nov 25	Dec/Jan 25/26	Feb/Mar 26
• EIP children & vulnerability (records only)	• Adult EIPs & safeguarding referrals • Weapons s&s NFA (high discretion)	• S163 RTA • Cannabis possession (16+) OOCR	• Group searches (NFA) • Repeat s&s data subjects

AOB

AJ try to bring people from the business community to the IAG at some point. It would be worthwhile having representation from local business or local authorities.

LW – within the terms of reference to the IAG, there is scope to bring people in as guests, i.e. community safety partners, OPCC, PCC. We can invite people relevant to a specific issue that can be discussed at a future meeting.

Action - AJ and SR to discuss future plans/invites.

SR, LW and AJ to have a meeting in 6 weeks' time on Teams to discuss next month's agenda. End 20.13