Independent Advisory Group
Meeting Minutes

Buckinghamshire Local Command Unit

DATE **Wednesday 13th May 2026**

TIME: **16:30-18:30**

LOCATION: **Microsoft Teams**

Trust and Confidence Document: TVP Trust and Confidence 2025

Attendees	**Initials**	**Position and Area**
C/Supt Simon Mason	SM	LCU Commander
	AA	Neighbourhood Chief Inspector
	MS	IAG Chair
	KA	Community & Diversity Officer
	SJ	IAG Member
	SA	IAG Member
	MF	IAG Member
	PD	IAG Member
	PB	IAG Member
	MK	IAG Member
	G	IAG Member
	AV	IAG Member
	HP	IAG Member
Apologies		
	JE	IAG Member
	HA	IAG Member

1. Welcome, Apologies and Chair's Opening Remarks – (MS)

• MS opened the meeting and requested it be placed on record that C/Supt Emma Burroughs had done a "sterling job" and had been a "great friend to the IAG", highlighting her contribution to engagement, continuity, and community representation.

• MS advised that since the last meeting there had been two resignations: JD and SCR, due to ill health and work commitments, noting the impact of these changes on group composition.

• MS welcomed new members MF (present) and confirmed JE as a new member who would join future meetings.

• MS reflected on attending the Buckinghamshire Commendation Ceremony in Princes Risborough, describing it as an excellent evening with strong attendance and recognition of policing and community contributions.

• MS advised that the Annual IAG Report had been completed with Emma Burroughs and submitted at the beginning of April; feedback confirmed the report was of a good standard with minor amendments only. Draft to be circulated once available.

2. Minutes and Actions from Previous Meeting – (MS)

• MS invited matters arising; none raised by members.

• MS asked for confirmation of accuracy; members agreed.

• RESOLVED: Minutes approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

3–7. Operational Overview, Crime Data and Discussion Highlights – (SM)

• SM provided an overview in response to IAG scrutiny regarding policing effectiveness, resource use and public impact.

• SM acknowledged responses may have generated "more unanswered questions" but confirmed he aimed to be as candid as possible within operational limits.

• SM outlined burglary reductions: approx. 300 → 280 → 250 offences, equating to around 30 fewer victims.

• SM emphasised this should be viewed as reduced harm and fewer victims, not just statistical improvement.

• SM explained reductions driven by earlier patrol deployment, increased visibility, intelligence-led activity, and partnership engagement.

• SM highlighted wider benefits of deployment: officers identify additional offences including drink driving, fail-to-stop incidents and locating wanted persons.

• SM stated that being in the “right place at the right time” allows officers to maximise operational impact beyond initial tasking.

• SM noted prevention is difficult to evidence but is a core policing outcome linked to visibility and proactive engagement.

• SM confirmed openness to further discussion recognising ongoing IAG challenge.

• MS observed that the input provided useful context and insight into operational decision-making.

New and Emerging Issues – (SM)

• SM referenced ongoing challenges in policing demand and the evolving nature of crime, noting increasing complexity in incidents attended by officers.

• SM indicated that emerging issues often require balancing resource allocation against competing priorities, particularly where policing extends into non-crime demand areas such as mental health.

• SM highlighted that operational responses must remain flexible to adapt to changes in crime patterns, seasonal trends and intelligence-led priorities.

• SM acknowledged that some areas remain under development and subject to further organisational direction, contributing to the fact that not all questions can be definitively answered at this stage.

Use of Police Powers – Drugs Query and Stop & Search – (AA)

• A member of the IAG raised a question in relation to drug-related stop and search activity, seeking clarification on:

- How individuals are selected for searches
- The basis on which officers form suspicion
- Whether searches are primarily intelligence-led or officer-generated

The question reflected wider IAG scrutiny regarding:

- Fairness and proportionality in the use of stop and search powers
- Transparency in decision-making
- Public confidence in policing

• AA responded by outlining that stop and search for drugs (e.g. under s23 Misuse of Drugs Act 1971) is based on reasonable suspicion, which may arise from:

- Officer-led observations, including:
    - Behaviour
    - Location
    - Known patterns of offending
    - Specific indicators associated with drug possession
- Intelligence-led information, including:
    - Local intelligence
    - Information from ongoing investigations

- Identified hotspots or operational priorities

• AA emphasised that officers must be able to clearly articulate:
  - The grounds for the search
  - The link between the individual and suspected drug possession
  - Grounds must be specific, objective, and justifiable, not based on generalisation or assumption

• AA further highlighted that there is ongoing focus within the organisation on ensuring officers understand the “why” behind their actions and improving the quality and clarity of recorded grounds
• AA linked this to scrutiny processes, confirming that stop and search activity is regularly reviewed through scrutiny panels, Body Worn Video (BWV) review, analysis of outcomes and recorded grounds
• It was acknowledged that continued work is required to ensure consistency in application, clear justification and communication by officers, compliance with legal and procedural requirements
• This exchange demonstrated the IAG’s ongoing role in challenging and scrutinising police powers and the organisation’s focus on legitimacy, proportionality and transparency in the use of stop and search

Community Cohesion & Trust and Confidence Update – (KA)

• KA provided an update in relation to community cohesion, ongoing engagement activity, and delivery of the Trust and Confidence Strategy.
• It was outlined that work continues to focus on building and maintaining trust and confidence in policing services, particularly with communities who may be less likely to engage or who present with lower levels of confidence.
• KA highlighted the importance of sustained and proactive engagement activity, including reassurance work where there may be heightened community tensions, ensuring that communities feel informed, supported, and able to engage with policing services.
• The Trust and Confidence Strategy was described as a long-term approach centred on fairness, transparency, representation, and meaningful engagement.
• KA emphasised that effective engagement must be consistent rather than reactive, with a focus on building relationships over time and working collaboratively with partners to better understand and address community needs. This update was provided within the context of wider discussions regarding community perceptions of policing and the importance of maintaining confidence during periods of local, national, or international tension, demonstrating continued alignment with force priorities around legitimacy, public trust, and

community-focused policing.

Neighbourhood Policing Activity Update – (AA)

• AA provided an overview of neighbourhood policing activity across Buckinghamshire, outlining the continued focus on visible, community-based policing supported by targeted operational deployments.
• It was highlighted that neighbourhood teams are actively engaged in both proactive and reactive activity, including addressing local priorities, responding to emerging issues, and working in partnership to deliver problem-solving approaches.
• AA referenced a range of crime types currently impacting communities, including retail crime, where repeat offending and demand on businesses continues to require a coordinated policing and partnership response, and rural crime, which presents distinct challenges due to geography, isolation, and offending patterns such as theft of equipment and vehicles.
• AA also noted specific localised issues involving pony and trap activity, which can present risks in relation to road safety, anti-social behaviour, and community concern, requiring a measured and proportionate approach to engagement and enforcement.
• It was emphasised that neighbourhood activity is intelligence-led and directed through tasking processes to ensure resources are deployed effectively and proportionately.
• The role of neighbourhood officers in maintaining visibility, building relationships, and supporting crime prevention was reinforced, alongside the need for flexibility in responding to changing demand and community concerns. This update demonstrated the breadth of neighbourhood policing responsibilities and its contribution to both crime reduction and public reassurance, aligning with wider priorities around trust, confidence, and community engagement.

Mental Health Partnership Discussion – (SA)

• SA contributed in relation to police demand in Mental Health Act scenarios, particularly where risk of violence has been identified.

• SA outlined that police attendance is extremely valuable and supports safe and effective management of incidents.

• SA stated that the presence of a uniformed officer “really de-escalates the situation”, particularly when patients are acutely unwell.

• SA praised officers for professionalism, noting effectiveness despite this not being their primary specialism.

• SA advised that reducing policing capability in this area would be “an absolute mistake”, citing safety risks.

• MS acknowledged this as significant external assurance of policing value and partnership effectiveness.

8. Any Other Business

• SJ advised that the National IAG Conference will take place on 27 October and will be available online, with details to follow closer to the time.

Action	Owner	Deadline
Circulate draft IAG report	MS	Pending
Share conference details	SJ	Pre-Oct 2026
Confirm next meeting date	Admin / Chair	Within 2 weeks

Date of next meeting: TBC