

**To representative
community groups.**

18 May 2020

**Independent Advisory Group on police use of temporary powers relating
to the coronavirus**

As you may be aware, the Scottish Police Authority and Police Scotland have set up an Independent Advisory Group (IAG) on police use of temporary powers relating to the current coronavirus emergency, to provide independent human rights based scrutiny of Police Scotland's use of the new emergency powers and its impact on communities and individuals. The group is chaired by human rights lawyer, John Scott QC Solicitor Advocate, and it reports in public to the Scottish Police Authority on a regular basis. There is additional information below.

Listening to the views and experiences of those impacted by use of these extraordinary powers is therefore central to the work of the IAG. The Group is committed to seeking to involve the voices of community and grassroots representatives and any groups that may be most impacted or disadvantaged by the use of these temporary powers.

I was asked to join the IAG in my capacity as Chair of the Police Scotland National Independent Strategic Advisory Group (NISAG). This role is informed by my experience in representative umbrella groups such as BEMIS, the Scottish ethnic minority umbrella organisation, Interfaith Scotland, and elsewhere, and I am therefore very keen to hear the views and experiences of members of minority communities on how they are affected by how the new legislation is being policed.

We would therefore be very grateful for your assistance and I am writing to offer my support and encourage you and your wider community networks to participate in sharing experiences and offering views to inform the IAG's work on use of the emergency powers.

A number of feedback and information gathering routes have been set up to support the work of the Independent Advisory Group:

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- You can tell us about your experiences, views, and opinions (anonymously if you wish) using the form at <https://covid19iag.citizenspace.com/>
- You can share your views and experiences by email to COVID19IndependentAdvisoryGroup@spa.pnn.police.uk
- If you do not have access to email or the internet, you can record a telephone message (up to 5 minutes) at 0131 440 6874.
- You can respond in writing to -
COVID-19 IAG
c/o Scottish Police Authority
1 Pacific Quay
Glasgow G51 1DZ
- Some people may prefer to speak directly with members of the Independent Advisory Group, so please let us know if that is the case.
- Finally, you may wish to speak to me direct. If you e-mail me at nisag.chair@gmail.com I will try to get back to you as soon as possible.

All responses will be shared with the Chair and all the other members of the Independent Advisory Group.

Please note that engaging with the IAG is not the correct channel for formal complaints about policing. For anyone wishing to make a complaint, more information is available at www.spa.police.uk/assets/617667/complaintsguide.

If you have any queries or would like to contact me informally for more information, please do get in touch by e-mail at the address above.

With very best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Ephraim Borowski

Background Information

On 25 March 2020, the UK Parliament passed the Coronavirus Act 2020 in a single day, with Royal Assent received the same day. On 27 March, the Health Protection (Coronavirus) (Restrictions) (Scotland) Regulations were laid before the Scottish Parliament and came into force the same day. This was a Government response to a national public health emergency of an unprecedented scale.

Police Scotland's officers and staff are applying these temporary powers in Scotland and the judgements they make will come under growing pressure as the period of restriction continues, even when restrictions are eased.

You can find full information about the Independent Advisory Group online at <http://www.spa.police.uk/performancepages/618379/> including an introduction to the work of the group, Terms of Reference, and regular updates on the work of the group.

Membership

John Scott QC Solicitor Advocate, (Chair)

Bruce Adamson, Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland

Aamer Anwar, Solicitor and Human Rights Campaigner

Ephraim Borowski, Chair of the National Independent Strategic Advisory Group

Tressa Burke, Chief Executive Glasgow Disability Alliance

Martyn Evans, Scottish Police Authority

Gill Imery, HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS)

Dr Elizabeth Kelly, NHS Scotland, Associate Carnegie UK Trust

Susan Kemp, Scottish Human Rights Commission

DCC Will Kerr, Police Scotland

John Logue, Deputy Crown Agent Operational Support, COPFS

Naomi McAuliffe, Programme Director Scotland, Amnesty International

Professor Susan McVie, University of Edinburgh

Alastair Pringle, Executive Director, Equality and Human Rights Commission

Dr Catriona Stewart, Scottish Women's Autism Network