



The 4th National IAG Conference Summary Report



June 2004

1. Introduction

The 4th annual Independent Advisory Group conference took place at the Hanover International Hotel in Hinckley from 24 to 25 May 2004. The 276 people that attended this event represented around 100 agencies. The event heard from nine keynote speakers whose interesting presentations provoked lively debate. The conference was further enlivened by the presence of AFTA thought, a group which trains through drama, who used small dramatic vignettes to illustrate the key points that the speakers were making and other issues relating to attitudes towards diversity.

The interactive element of the conference was further enhanced by the use of a keypad voting system. This enabled the delegates to vote on issues and see their aggregated views displayed on the screen at the conference. The conference was seen as a very successful one which was well organised. It successfully re-enthused people for the work of the IAG and left them ready for the challenges of the year ahead!

The following is a broad description of the key areas that the speakers covered.

DAY ONE (MAY 24TH 2004)

2. Linda Bellos

Linda Bellos (chair) opened the conference on day one.

2.1 Biography of Linda Bellos

Linda Bellos is the founding partner of Diversity Solutions Consultancy Ltd. She has worked for over 20 years with both the public and private sector on change management issues and policy formulation.

She was elected Leader of Lambeth Council in 1986, one of the first black women to gain such a position. Her work on mainstreaming equality and diversity within the British Army and the Metropolitan police has given her an insight into some of the UK's major institutions. She is an Independent Advisor to the Metropolitan Police, the Crown Prosecution Service and the Association of Chief Police Officers.

2.2 Presentation Summary

Linda Bellos welcomed the delegates to this conference. She said that it was good to see many IAG representatives at the conference and she commended the way that the conference was organised. She said that whilst the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report had emphasised the value of Independent Advisory Groups, some police forces were still rather wary of them due to a fear of a breach of confidentiality. However, the key to a successful working relationship was the credibility of the IAG and a local relationship that adhered to national standards.

She said that it was important that the IAG could represent the constellation of all the various communities of interest who might make up an Independent Advisory Group. This had significant resource implications. Police Services needed to recognise the valuable resource that they had with their IAG's. There were still significant issues around the support of IAG's – for example – could they be truly independent bodies if they were supported by the police. She posed the question whether IAG's should select their own members. She emphasised the need for IAG's to communicate with each other outside of the annual conference.

3. Matt Baggott

3.1 Biography of Matt Baggott

Matt Baggott joined Leicestershire Police as Chief Constable in December 2002. He currently chairs the ACPO's Race and Diversity Business Area. He also represents the police service on the Lawrence Steering Group. He spent the first 20 years of his service with the Metropolitan Police serving in Tooting, Brixton and Peckham. He headed the Metropolitan Police Team assisting the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry.

3.2 Presentation Summary

Matt Baggott commended the team who had organised the conference on behalf of Leicestershire Constabulary; he said that they had done an excellent job.

He then outlined the challenges that the police service was facing today. He said that in the recent past, there were – in Leicestershire – about 33 major incidents a year. This figure had gone up to about 70 a year. There had been a massive increase in drug dealing recently. There were also many more calls for assistance to the police. He said that there was now no such thing as a simple neighbourhood anymore, global issues could impinge on any community. However, unless the police service had an in-depth relationship with the people that they serve they could not succeed. They also needed good knowledge about these people too.

He emphasised that the police could no longer rely on traditional methods of policing if there was no relationship with the community. Indicating that it is impossible to rely on specialist relationship building units to build meaningful relationships with communities. He suggested that modern policing requires a more integrated and holistic approach to working with communities. The police service has made enormous progress but it still relies too much on these specialist units and is sometimes too focused on managerial issues. Large systems are generated to cope with a complex task and this can generate an impersonal service – the style should be transformational and not managerial.

He dealt with the issues that the television programme ‘The Secret Policeman’ raised. He said that ACPO (Association of Chief Police Officers) had sent a race and diversity audit questionnaire to every Police Service asking for policy and procedure in this area to be examined. He said that he needed to have confidence that all the Police Services were taking these issues seriously. He outlined four key areas of development:

- Operational policing needs to have equality at the heart of it – police officers need to be assessed on how good they are at operating these principles;
- There is a need to focus on internal processes – for example complaints;
- There is also a need to focus on external process – for example use of stop and search;
- There needs to be more effort given to community cohesion.

4. Trevor Philips

4.1 Biography of Trevor Phillips

Trevor Phillips is a writer and broadcaster who worked at LWT from 1980 until 2000. He worked there as a researcher, a producer and Head of Current Affairs. He was elected to the London Assembly in 2000 and became Chair of it later in the same month until 2003.

Since March 2003 Trevor Phillips has been chair of the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE).

He is Managing Director of Pepper Productions and sits on the Board and is a trustee of a number of organisations including the Runnymede Trust and the Sickle Cell Society.

4.2 Presentation Summary

Trevor Phillips said that he was going to talk about community cohesion. He said that he doesn't like the term, as it only seems to apply to the BME communities. He said he preferred the term 'the integrated society' where values and loyalties are shared. He said that Britain had always been a multi-cultural society – it was now important to put equality of outcomes to the forefront together with the celebration of differences in society.

The role of leadership in communities was very important. The Independent Advisory Groups came out of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry. This emphasised that the police need to maintain relationships with all communities. Such communities need to wield power over the institutions of British society. However, there is a long way to go until the police are fully trusted by all communities. The varying rates of the 'Stop and Search' powers were indicative of the progress that needed to be made.

There was clearly a need to ensure that membership of the police service reflected the make up of British society. The recent television programme 'The Secret Policeman' showed that there was a need to change the culture of the police service and weed out prejudice. As a result of this programme, the CRE had launched a formal investigation into the work of the police service in England and Wales. There was clearly a need to redress the lack of people from the BME communities – this imbalance needs to be redressed through recruitment and retention. There should be a process of accelerated integration, which could be guided from outside the police. The police need to generate support from IAG's for this strategy and use IAG's as a conduit for information to and from the BME communities.

In this context, specialist IAG's are helpful. Both rates for murder and gun crime are going down. Gun related crime has fallen by 7%. The Metropolitan Police no longer say 'black on black' crime, which is indicative of progress. However, to properly defeat gun crime, the community and the police need to develop better trust. For crime to be properly tackled in the black community, the root causes of this must be tackled – for example the inequalities in the labour market. On average, an African Caribbean person – with the same qualifications as a White person – will earn £250,000 less over their lifetime. Efforts are also being made to engage with the Asian community – the Safer Communities initiative in Tower Hamlets has led the Fire Service to make efforts to enhance their links with them.

This type of initiative is welcome but there are still new communities that need our attention. The two that he highlighted are travellers and gypsies, and asylum seekers. Overt expressions of racism continue towards travellers and gypsies. Only 20% of their children are in school by key stage 3 and there are problems about the provision of sites for them. There is little or no work done with this group and a general lack of information. They feel that the police don't protect them. The Metropolitan Police have a gypsy and traveller IAG and Trevor said that he would like to see this replicated elsewhere.

He said that there is a problem with the media portrayal of asylum seekers. There has always been an influx of people into this country but inaccurate reporting plays a large part in swaying public opinion. There is a need to establish more trust with this group. The process of dispersal did not help and we need to learn from this. The police need to improve their relations with workers who are legally resident here – IAG's can help here.

5. Questions

- ***IAG's are seen as being purely for the police service – other agencies need help. Should IAG's have a role in this?***
- The principle is right but different organisations have different ways of linking with their communities (TP)
- ***What infrastructure in the community will support IAG's? What about the community organisations that produce the BME adults of the future?***
- We shouldn't impose a structure on how IAG's work. However, Local Strategic Partnerships may have a role in developing this type of facility for other agencies (MB)
- It is difficult to have one group that covers all the agencies – it could lose focus (LB)
- ***What do we mean by independent in the context of Independent Advisory Group. How could IAG's broker and facilitate communication for and with the police?***
- It depends on the subject. There needs to be some structure around the processes of IAG's. There is a need for general good communication. (MB)
- IAG's need to have operating rules. They need to ensure that they can measure things, as expressions of anger do not shift attitudes. IAG's need to have independent access to the public not through a police press officer (TP)
- IAG members change regularly. This doesn't help with liaison. Similarly, the government handles immigration badly and this doesn't help. We do need to get people together whilst acknowledging the cultural baggage they bring.
- Social events and the provision of food can be very useful at breaking down barriers. (LB)
- There should be continuity of attitude – personality shouldn't matter in this. (MB)

6. The Right Reverend Tim Stevens – Bishop of Leicester

6.1 Biography of Tim Stevens

Tim Stevens was appointed Bishop of Leicester in June 1999. He worked as a curate in East Ham in East London and then became Team Rector of Canvey Island in Essex. As the Bishop's Urban Officer in the Chelmsford Diocese and as Archdeacon of West Ham he was engaged in developing Church Urban Fund Projects. He has a particular interest in interfaith relations.

6.2 Presentation Summary

Tim Stevens emphasised that Faith Groups can become integral to the IAG process. He said that Leicester is a truly multi-racial city and described the Council of Faiths that was set up in 1986. This group fosters inter-faith dialogue.

He said that 2001 was a pivotal year for race and faith relations in the city. The events at the Twin Towers in New York and the riots in Burnley, Oldham and Bradford had indicated a need for action. Initiatives included the setting up of a faith leaders forum, public interfaith prayers and the commissioning of research into community cohesion. Locally these had all been helpful. These reports emphasised the value of faiths in aiding community cohesion locally.

He outlined the major areas of faith input into community cohesion locally. These are:

- The Faith Leaders Forum and Council of Faiths
- Inter-faith Dialogue Groups
- Leicester Multi-Cultural Advisory Group
- Police – Faith Liaison initiatives

6.2.1 The Faith Leaders Forum and Council of Faiths

This brings together faith leaders and the police to respond to the impact of global events on cohesion locally.

6.2.2 Inter-faith dialogue groups

These form a constructive role in building cohesion and understanding between major faith groups, for example Hindu/Christian and Muslim/Christian.

6.2.3 Leicester Multi-Cultural Advisory Groups

This includes leaders from local government, police, business, education, media and faiths. It enables a process of coordinated reflection and action to occur.

6.2.4 Police – Faith Liaison initiative

Regular liaison between the police and various distinct faith groups.

He concluded by saying that the faith community had a major role to play in community cohesion and should not be overlooked.

7. Sharon Luke – Pantry

7.1 Biography of Sharon Luke – Pantry

Sharon Luke Pantry runs her own legal consultancy and diversity training company. She has been a Member of Northamptonshire Police Service for the last five years where she has led on diversity and community cohesion. She is also vice-chair of the Black and Minority Ethnic support network group for the Association of Police Authorities.

7.2 Presentation Summary

Sharon Luke – Pantry gave an overview of the role of the Police Service in the development of IAG's. She outlined five key areas:

- The changing face and attitudes of the community
- The role of the Police Service in supporting the setting up of the IAG
- The Northamptonshire case study
- The true value of the IAG to the Police Service
- How can the police, Police Service and IAG work together?

7.2.1 The changing face and attitudes of the community

She highlighted the different needs and aspirations that existed and the way that demographics had changed. She asked how the various communities could be bound together to work in partnership with the police to deliver a type of policing that suits all needs. She said that existing target communities were more educated and more assertive

7.2.2 The Role of the Police Service

The Police Service has an important role in acting as a critical friend as well as monitoring sensitive issues like the use of stop and search, use of force during arrests and other potentially contentious areas. The Police Service needs to share power with the community but it is challenging to all Police Services to set up something that is genuinely independent. The role of the Police Service needs to be diluted and the IAG should be independent.

7.2.3 The Northamptonshire Case study

This piece of work demonstrated the value of a staged approach to setting up an IAG. The process started with a broad PR exercise to get the message across. A community meeting followed on from this. An independent facilitator was chosen to help this group choose their own chair. Sharon emphasised the need to have a broad and diverse membership of the IAG.

The community view that was expressed in Northampton was that they were willing to work with the Police Service but did not want a talking shop. The need to get out into the community was emphasised. Young people are a particular target group for this type of work – particularly those excluded from school, those hanging round parks and so on. Patience was the keyword here, together with a commitment to be in it 'for the long run'.

7.2.4 The positives and negatives of this piece of work

- **Positives:** It was acknowledged that simply having an IAG was good news! Also though, having a resource that tapped into the skills, knowledge and talent of the community was very helpful.
- **Negatives:** It can prove difficult when setting up an IAG; to overcome suspicion and scepticism and the complexity and bureaucracy inherent in the system can put some people off.

7.2.5 The value of an IAG

The value of a well functioning IAG is that it adds an independent direct link to the community. It improves existing relationships and adds value to the operations of the police service.

Sharon's final point was that the process of IAG development was a good contribution to the building of community capacity.

The conference finished for the day, but reconvened later in the evening for question time.

8. Question time – Monday evening

Four questions were asked of the panel of Matt Baggott, Linda Bellos, Hamza Vayani, Sharon Luke-Pantry and Tim Stevens. Among the issues that was highlighted were:

- 44% of conference delegates¹ felt that IAG's should primarily support and promote themselves. 36% of delegates voted that IAG's should be supported and promoted by the Police Service and 15% by the Police Service.
- The need for good quality information to be provided about community cohesion was emphasised. That said, people recognised that quick results couldn't be guaranteed in this area and that the 'softer' issue of relationship building was not always measurable.
- IAG's needed to comprise people that the public has confidence in – people who are in touch, representative, can see the bigger picture and listen to views that conflict to their own.

¹ Post question time discussion

Day Two (May 25th 2004)

9. Introduction by the chair

Linda said that it's good to see so many IAG members here. It's important to remember that IAG's can bring a community voice into the police agenda. Also IAG's represent the majority view of people in this country.

10. Cressida Dick

10.1 Biography of Cressida Dick

Cressida Dick is a Commander in the Metropolitan Police's Specialist Crimes Directorate that is responsible for organised and cross border crimes. Operation 'Trident' falls within this unit's area of responsibility.

She has worked for both the Metropolitan and Thames Valley Police. In May 2002 she became Head of the Diversity Directorate at New Scotland Yard. This gave her pan – London responsibility for the implementation of the recommendations from the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report and developing the Metropolitan Police's wider diversity policies.

10.2 Presentation Summary

She said that gun crime has a large effect on communities. It is a sad fact that if a young black man is shot in London today, it is unlikely to hit the headlines. Gun crime does a number of things:

- It wrecks lives
- It creates fear
- It effects confidence in and between communities
- It erodes the confidence between the police and other agencies
- It has a huge economic cost with a loss of investment and provoking 'middle class flight'
- It has a profound effect on young people's lives

There is often a lack of witnesses to incidents. The Black community can feel over policed and under protected. Consequently there is a need to improve trust between the police and:

- The communities that we serve
- Victims
- Families
- Witnesses

The next result of these changes could be to produce better intelligence.

Trident, which started in March 1998 in Lambeth, is a police led operation to deal with firearms crimes. By July 1999 Operation Trident was expanded to cover the

whole of the Metropolitan Police Service area. The crimes that Operation Trident tackled were complex, sometimes created danger and required that police officers have tact, diplomacy, sensitivity and empathy.

The Trident approach emphasises:

- Effective investigation
- Focussed relentless pro-activity
- Huge investment in intelligence
- Effective joint working
- Involving and engaging communities
- Building confidence
- Having independent advice

This has resulted in 50% fewer trident murders in 2003/4 than in 2001/2 and a general drop of 22% from the year before. There has been a slight rise in non-fatal shootings.

The Trident results are:

- Awareness – Londoners know about it
- The approach has won awards
- It has a good reputation
- It builds confidence in communities
- People want to work with the project

11. Cheryl Sealey

11.1 Biography of Cheryl Sealey

Cheryl has 17 years experience as a community activist in the areas of gun violence, supporting victims, supporting young people and other vulnerable groups in the community.

She is Chief Executive of SALT – a human rights organisation. She is a member of a number of organisations including Lambeth's Crime and Disorder Partnership. She is also an adviser to the Home Secretary and Commander Cressida Dick.

11.2 Presentation Summary

Cheryl talked about the reasons why she got involved in the Trident IAG. This was due to her horror at the murder of two young mothers. She outlined what the Trident IAG could contribute to the fight against gun crime. It received regular statistical data and briefings on gun related incidents. It also provides a challenge, advice, expertise, community knowledge and awareness to guide police Trident related operations.

The Trident IAG has a role in the support of victims as well as acting as a bridge between the police and families. Witnesses were still experiencing fear of reprisal attacks which was an issue that the IAG was concerned about.

The Trident IAG model has been rolled out nationally as indicative of best practice. It has improved police/community relations and launched a major advertising campaign.

In the longer term, the aims of Trident and its attendant IAG is to work more proactively in the community, enhance the witness protection schemes and obtain funding to tackle the 'grass roots' causes of gun crime.

12. The Reverend Derek Webley

12.1 Biography of Derek Webley

Reverend Derek Webley is the District Bishop of the New Testament Church of God covering a large part of Solihull and Birmingham. He is also an independent member of the West Midlands Police Service. He is heavily involved in Birmingham based community groups as well as being the chair of the Council of the Birmingham Black Led Churches.

He works closely with white faith leaders across Birmingham and has provided a link between the West Midlands Police Service and the local black communities.

12.2 Presentation Summary

Derek Webley talked about the role of IAG's in critical incident management. He defined a critical incident as 'any incident where the effectiveness of the police response is likely to have a significant impact on the confidence of the victim, their family and/or the community'. The advantage of having IAG's involvement in such incidents at an early stage was outlined.

Some of the benefits of such a process to police investigations are:

- The capacity to challenge mindsets
- Demonstrating a willingness to be open and accountable
- Building up trust from the community and the family
- Obtaining good ongoing advice from people with real knowledge of the community – both strategic and tactical

The key to the development of a productive relationship was getting the right advisor on the IAG. Derek outlined 6 key factors for such a person:

- They need to be grounded in the community
- They need to have an understanding of big organisations
- They must have common sense
- They must remain an uncomfortable figure for the police
- They must have integrity
- They must be able to keep their counsel

Conversely, he outlined 6 key points for the police to bear in mind when working in this setting:

- There is a need to identify the incident as being critical at a very early stage

- The police need to really listen to the advice offered
- Advisors need to be consulted at every stage of the investigation
- Advisors should not be used as part of the investigation team
- This relationship should not be about 'box ticking'
- Independence should be the watch word that all adhere to

He concluded by re-emphasising of a productive partnership between an IAG and the police in critical incident management.

13. Yasmin Alibhai Brown

13.1 Biography of Yasmin Alibhai Brown

Yasmin Alibhai Brown is a writer and journalist who has written for a number of newspapers and now has a regular column in 'The Independent'. Since 1996 she has been a research fellow at the Institute for Public Policy Research. She is also a senior fellow at the Foreign Policy Centre.

She advises key institutions on race matters and has written a number of books on the subject.

13.2 Presentation Summary

Yasmin said that her session would pose more questions than answers. She wants to ask whether you can have too much sensitivity?

Do we understand the complexity of the society that we live in. Are we using models and solutions that are outdated?

British society has moved faster than the policy makers have understood. Multi-culturalism came into being during Mrs. Thatcher's tenure as Prime Minister but it has outlived its usefulness. In 1999, she convened three seminars to look at:

- The needs of disadvantaged Muslims
- Protecting dual heritage people
- Dealing with flashpoints in the community

These seminars generated some strong feelings as people couldn't believe that other groups in society could experience racism.

She said that we needed to look at the trends in society and consider some key questions:

- What are the changes in society?
- What do we mean by community?
- Is community always a good thing?
- Who are the 'fronts' for these communities?
- When does the concept of community become a problem?

It is important to think beyond existing boundaries. The challenge is not to feel for people who are like you but how do you feel empathy for people who are utterly unlike you? We need to develop our empathy as well as moving away from a narrow

definition of community. Globalism has created rampant anxiety and re-tribalised the world. These tribes are getting smaller.

We are now entering a phase of the MOPE culture. This means

- Most
- Oppressed
- People
- Ever

MOPE indicates that many people feel oppressed in today's society. However, there are three groups that are particularly likely to face institutional racism. These are:

- Black men and boys
- Muslim men
- Brown skinned men (e.g. asylum seekers)

Yasmin said that she didn't like the concept of celebratory multi – culturalism. We shouldn't expect that black people have to be on their best behaviour all the time. It needs to be accepted that black people can be bad. When the CRE holds Black people up as a role model, it can be seen as demeaning to the black community. We need to debate difficult issues in public, for example black perpetrators of crime against white people. We need to accept that bad things happen in the Black community – for example black women who don't get public services as people are afraid of treading on 'cultural toes'. We need to move to a collective equality commission – cohesion cannot happen at a local level if it's not organised at a national level.

14. Hamza Vayani

14.1 Biography of Hamza Vayani

Hamza Vayani is the founder and Chief Executive of youth VOICE – a young people led organisation working with young people across Leicestershire from the ages of 8 to 25.

He is a Millennium Volunteer who was awarded Millennium Volunteer of the Year in the East Midlands in 2004. He is also an executive member of Leicester's Racial Equality Council.

14.2 Presentation Summary

Hamza opened his presentation by giving a brief history of the organisation 'Youth Voice'. It is based in Leicester and is totally young people led. It is an organisation with the youngest grouping of directors aged 18-24 in England and Wales. Highlights of the organisations history include:

2001

Youth Voice is represented at the UN conference

2002

Ran 'Faces in Da Crowd' for three months in Leicester. This involved 150 people. The organisation was runner up in the 'Crimebeat' award for sketches exploring discrimination.

Secured NRF funding until March 2002
Became a formally registered not for profit company
Started recruiting staff

2003

Opened offices to the public
Started to deliver projects including Millennium volunteers

2004

Established an electronic system that enables each member to have a mentor
Develops their on-line presence

He then outlined his key messages. These are:

- There is a need for resilience
- There is a need to show that the organisation is 'here to stay'
- There is a need for the organisation to remain sustainable.

The lessons that the organisation has learnt from the NRF include:

- The need to be mainstreamed and sustainable
- Not to be reliant on one funder
- Having robust performance management systems

He concluded by offering some thoughts on the way to engage young people in the IAG process. He said initial investment was vital. Also, clarity, consistency and the capacity to demonstrate quick wins are all helpful in engaging young people. The process should be fun – also agencies should be responsive and outline clearly their limits.

15. Final questions and chair's summing up

15.1 Final Questions

Linda Bellos said that she would take any final questions that delegates might have prior to her summing up the main issues that the conference had raised.

One delegate raised some concern that this conference had been too focussed on race with insufficient time given to other IAG member groups.

Linda said that it was important not to see things that had been raised at the conference purely in terms of race. It was important to see the links between all groups and their experiences. When people talked about discrimination, lessons should be broadly applied.

Another delegate said that all IAG representatives were in the same boat. It was not a competition to see who is the most oppressed. Given that everybody was in the same boat, it was vital that people started rowing together.

15.2 Chair's summing up

Linda said that the day's presentations had been very good. She will take the important lessons from these away with her.

She said that there were many factors that determined whether IAG's are successful and one area's successes could not necessarily be transferred to another area. Common factors that may produce a successful IAG include having respect for each other, having an 'action culture' and having the ability to engage with real people.

She said it had been a good conference that has illustrated the diversities of IAG's operating. She said that it was important to remember that no one sat in unique boxes – all our experiences are unique.